

## **5.0 ENVIRONMENTAL IMPACT ANALYSIS**

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### **11. LAND USE AND PLANNING**

#### **1. INTRODUCTION**

This section addresses the consistency of the Project with applicable local and regional land use plans and policies and evaluates the relationship between the Project and surrounding land uses. The land use compatibility analysis is based on existing uses and land use patterns in the Project vicinity. This section also evaluates whether the Project would physically divide an established community.

The approximately 501.4-acre Project Site is located in the Santa Clarita Valley (Valley) in unincorporated Los Angeles County (County), west of Interstate 5 (I-5) and the Old Road, south of Six Flags Magic Mountain theme park (Six Flags Magic Mountain), north of the existing community of Westridge, and directly east of the approved Newhall Ranch Specific Plan (Specific Plan) area.<sup>1</sup> The Project Site includes 382.3 acres within proposed Vesting Tentative Tract Map No. 53295 (VTTM 53295) and a 119.1-acre area consisting of External Map Improvements intended for supporting infrastructure improvements, as described further below.

#### **2. ENVIRONMENTAL SETTING**

##### **a. Regulatory Setting**

##### **(1) County Regulations**

Two primary land use plans govern land development in the Santa Clarita Valley: the County of Los Angeles General Plan (General Plan) and the Santa Clarita Valley Area Plan: One Valley One Vision 2012 (Area Plan). In addition, the County's Planning and Zoning Code (County Code Title 22) dictates permitted land uses and associated development requirements based on specified zoning designations. The County also regulates development through the hillside management requirements and Green Building Standards within Title 31, both described below. It is noted that the Project Site is located outside of the County's recently adopted Rural Outdoor Lighting District.

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<sup>1</sup> As discussed below, portions of the western edge of the Project Site are located within the Newhall Ranch Specific Plan area.

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**(a) County of Los Angeles General Plan**

The County's General Plan directs future growth and development in the unincorporated areas of the County. The current General Plan was approved by the Los Angeles County Board of Supervisors in November 1980.

The General Plan contains a number of Elements that address specific issues and establish various goals, policies, and objectives that pertain to the County as a whole. These Elements, several of which were updated or amended between 1987 and 2008, guide the County's land use policies. The following adopted General Plan Elements are applicable to the Project: Land Use; Housing; Transportation; Conservation and Open Space; Safety; Noise; Scenic Highway; Water and Waste Management; and Economic Development. Each of these Elements and their applicable policies are discussed below. The General Plan provisions known as the Development Monitoring System (DMS) also are discussed further below in Subsection 2.a.(1)(g), County Development Monitoring System.

As also discussed further below, the County is in the process of updating its General Plan; a draft General Plan update has been released for public review and comment, and the public hearing process has been initiated.

**(i) General Goals and Policies**

The General Goals and Policies Chapter outlines broad goals and policies applicable on a County-wide level. Within this section are a series of policy maps that define the overall character of the County. The General Goals and Policies are listed in the County of Los Angeles General Plan Consistency Analysis (General Plan Consistency Analysis) provided in **Appendix 5.11A** of this Draft EIR.

**(ii) Land Use Element**

The General Plan Land Use Element sets forth policies for the general location, distribution, and intensity of land use. The Land Use Element thus serves as a tool for coordinating future development within both the private and public sectors.

The Land Use Element contains a series of general objectives and specific policies to direct growth and development. The primary objectives of the Land Use Element that apply to the Project include the following:

- To provide for land use arrangements that take full advantage of existing public service and facility capacities;

- To coordinate land use with existing and proposed transportation networks;
- To situate commercial activities in viable clusters that conveniently serve their market areas;
- To encourage high quality design in all development projects, compatible with and sensitive to the natural and manmade environment;
- To foster compatible land use arrangements that contribute to reduced energy consumption and improved air quality; and
- To encourage more efficient use of land, compatible with and sensitive to natural ecological, scenic, cultural and open space resources.

Specific policies listed in the adopted Land Use Element are listed in the General Plan Consistency Analysis provided in **Appendix 5.11A**. Project consistency with such policies is also evaluated therein. The Land Use Element also reinforces General Plan policies for conserving natural and ecological resources and protecting County residents from natural hazards through careful management of development in sensitive areas. This is reflected in part in the County's hillside management regulations, discussed below.

### ***(iii) Housing Element***

While the current General Plan was adopted in 1980, the Housing Element was updated in 2014 in accordance with state requirements. This Element includes an assessment of future housing needs, identifies land availability/constraints to housing, provides quantified housing objectives (for 2014 through 2021), and defines goals and policies to promote housing development to meet the identified needs. Additionally, the Housing Element includes an Adequate Sites Inventory that identifies sites to accommodate the fair share of the regional housing need for the County's unincorporated areas, also known as the Regional Housing Needs Assessment allocation. As discussed further in **Section 5.14**, Population, Housing, and Employment, of this Draft EIR, the unincorporated areas have been assigned an RHNA allocation of 30,145 residential units for the 2014–2021 Housing Element planning period. Housing Element goals and policies relevant to the Project include: the provision of a wide range of housing types in sufficient supply to meet the needs of current and future residents; ensuring adequate sites to accommodate the County's RHNA allocation; creating sustainable communities with access to employment opportunities, community facilities and services, and other amenities; and encouraging mixed-use developments along major commercial and transportation corridors. Specific policies listed in the adopted Housing Element are listed in the General Plan Consistency Analysis provided in **Appendix 5.11A**.

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#### ***(iv) Transportation Element***

The General Plan Transportation Element sets forth policies for the continued development of a comprehensive transportation system for the County. The Transportation Element concurs with the policy positions of the Los Angeles County Metropolitan Transit Authority (Metro) and the Southern California Association of Governments (SCAG) on the need for the continued development and construction of a comprehensive public transportation system. The Transportation Element also reflects the location of existing and future transit corridors. Key features of the Transportation Element are the Transportation Plan, Highway Plan, and Bikeway Plan, as well as the associated Transportation Policy Map and Highway Policy Map. These policy maps depict the existing transportation system and identify needed additions and improvements, in accordance with the General Plan's growth and development policies.

The Transportation Policy Map identifies major transportation corridors and includes I-5 as a designated freeway and State Route 126 (SR-126) as an expressway. The Old Road, Magic Mountain Parkway, Rye Canyon Road, and Commerce Center Drive are all are designated as major highways. Transportation Element policies are listed in the General Plan Consistency Analysis provided in **Appendix 5.11A**.

#### ***(v) Conservation and Open Space Element***

The Conservation and Open Space Element sets policy direction for the open space-related resources in the County. These resources include land and water areas devoted to recreation, scenic beauty, conservation, and the use of natural resources. To protect areas of significant natural resources, the Conservation and Open Space Element recommends the retention of non-urban or open space areas. Special emphasis is on the protection of hillside character and Significant Ecological Areas (SEAs). The Conservation and Open Space Element also has goals to protect sites of historical, archaeological, scenic, and scientific value.

Within the Conservation and Open Space Element, the Conservation and Open Space Policy Map designates and categorizes all open space uses within the unincorporated areas of the County. The majority of the Project Site is designated as a Special Management Area, defined as an area where special safety or mitigation measures are necessary to ensure the protection of natural or scenic resources, property, and/or human life. Such areas include, among others, hillside management areas, flood prone areas, habitat management areas, open space easements, national forests, and agricultural preserves. The Conservation and Open Space Element specifically indicates the Special Management Area designation is not intended to preclude development.

The Special Management Areas Policy Map further classifies individual management areas and designates much of the Project Site as Hillside Management, defined as property with natural slopes of 25 percent or greater. Hillside management is discussed further below. The Special Management Areas Policy Map also designates portions of the Project Site as a Mineral Resource Area (i.e., where past oil extraction has occurred) and a Flood Prone Area (i.e., adjacent to the Santa Clara River (River)), and denotes a Major Fault Zone near the northern portion of the Project Site. Scenic highways are also mapped on the Special Management Areas Policy Map and include I-5 and SR-126 in the Project vicinity, although neither of these roadways have been adopted by the County as scenic highways (see discussion of the Scenic Highway Element, below). Specific policies set forth in the Conservation and Open Space Element are listed in the General Plan Consistency Analysis provided in **Appendix 5.11A**.

### **(vi) Safety Element**

The Safety Element represents the long-range emergency response plan for the County and addresses the protection of people from unreasonable risks associated with natural disasters. It also seeks to reduce future loss of life, injuries, and socioeconomic disruption from other safety issues, including the management of hazardous materials. The Safety Element addresses the following issues: seismic hazards, geologic hazards, wildland and urban fires, management of hazardous materials, emergency response resources, and safety-oriented research.

The Safety Element maps designate the Project Site as an area of high fire hazard (Fire Zone 4, now referred to as a Very High Fire Hazard Severity Zone) and denote petrochemical uses (i.e., oil fields). The areas within and along the River, including the northern portion of the Project Site (i.e. the External Map Improvements), are identified as located within a 100-year floodplain, as dam inundation areas, and subject to liquefaction. In addition, the Holser fault is mapped north of the Project Site, running roughly east-west, and identified as active.<sup>2</sup> A shallow surficial landslide area is also identified in the northwestern portion of the Project Site. Hazards associated with these designations are addressed in **Section 5.6**, Geology and Soils; **Section 5.8**, Hazards and Hazardous Materials; **Section 5.9**, Hydrology and Water Quality—Hydrology; and **Section 5.15**, Public Services—Fire Protection, of this Draft EIR. Safety Element policies pertaining to

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<sup>2</sup> *The Holser fault is actually classified as potentially active and is situated approximately 2 miles northwest of the Project Site. The Holser fault is not located within an Alquist-Priolo Earthquake Fault Zone. However, the potentially active Airport Mesa and Saddle faults of the Holser structural zone are located in close proximity to the Project Site. Specifically, the eastern extremity of the Airport Mesa fault extends into the External Map Improvements area in the northern portion of the Project Site, while the Saddle fault lies approximately 1,700 feet to the west. Refer to **Section 5.6**, Geology and Soils, of this Draft EIR for further discussion.*

environmental safety issues, including fire and flood hazards, are listed in the General Plan Consistency Analysis provided in **Appendix 5.11A**.

***(vii) Noise Element***

The Noise Element addresses noise sources in the County's unincorporated areas and identifies noise standards and land use compatibility guidelines to protect noise-sensitive land uses from undesirable noise levels. The Noise Element specifically identifies interior and exterior noise standards as well as construction standards. Noise Element policies are listed in the General Plan Consistency Analysis provided in **Appendix 5.11A**.

***(viii) Scenic Highway Element***

The General Plan Scenic Highway Element identifies and protects roadways of scenic value via written and mapped policy in conjunction with associated implementation strategies. Such policies are designed to acknowledge and maintain the aesthetic, cultural, historical, recreational, and environmental features of scenic routes. The Scenic Highway Element recognizes problems and issues that hinder such resources, identifies opportunities to enhance and protect scenic features throughout the County, and offers criteria and standards for scenic corridor protection (e.g., designation of roadways on the State Master Plan of Scenic Highways). While no designated scenic highways exist in the general Project vicinity, segments of I-5 and SR-126 near the Project Site are classified on the Scenic Highway System map (Figure SH-2 of the Scenic Highway Element) as First Priority Scenic Routes, indicating they are proposed for further study and eligible for scenic highway designation by the California Scenic Highway Program. Scenic Highway Element policies are listed in the General Plan Consistency Analysis provided in **Appendix 5.11A**.

***(ix) Water and Waste Management Element***

The Water and Waste Management Element addresses water resources and their availability and identifies standards and guidelines for their distribution and conservation. The Water and Waste Management Element also addresses solid waste management, landfill operation, and recycling opportunities critical to the County, as well as issues relating to flood control, aquifer replenishment, sewerage, and water reclamation systems. Within this Element, the Flood Protection Policy Map designates areas along and including the Santa Clara River as Areas Needing Flood Management Protection; the northernmost portion of the Project Site where drainage and water quality infrastructure is proposed falls within the flood management protection zone (but would not require flood protection given the type of use). Water and Waste Management Element policies are listed in the General Plan Consistency Analysis provided in **Appendix 5.11A**.

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**(x) Economic Development Element**

The Economic Development Element identifies goals and policies designed to promote employment, business and investment opportunities, economic growth, and tourist attractions in the County. While the majority of policies set forth in the Economic Development Element apply most directly to County government agencies, one policy applies to the Project; all of the policies are listed in the General Plan Consistency Analysis provided in **Appendix 5.11A**.

**(b) Draft General Plan Update**

The County is in the process of updating the General Plan in compliance with California Government Code Sections 65300.7, 65301, and 65302. The Los Angeles County General Plan 2035 (Draft General Plan) was released to the public in January 2014, and a Draft EIR addressing the Draft General Plan was published in June 2014.

The Draft General Plan is a comprehensive update of the current General Plan and is intended to reflect changing demographics, growth, and infrastructure conditions in the County. The update process includes setting goals and policies to address immediate issues and concerns while maintaining an awareness of the long-term implications and consequences of the County's proposed actions. The Draft General Plan will replace all elements of the current adopted General Plan, except for the Housing Element, which was updated and adopted on February 4, 2014 and certified by the State on April 30, 2014.

At the time of this analysis, the policies set forth in the adopted General Plan remain applicable to the Project. However, for informational purposes and in recognition of the County's current effort to update the General Plan, a discussion of Project consistency with the Draft General Plan is also provided in the analysis of impacts below.

The Draft General Plan is comprised of the following elements: Land Use, Mobility, Air Quality, Conservation and Natural Resources, Parks and Recreation, Noise, Safety, Public Services and Facilities, Economic Development, and Housing, each of which is briefly described below.<sup>3</sup>

- The Land Use Element designates land uses, and provides strategies and planning tools to facilitate and guide future development and revitalization efforts.

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<sup>3</sup> *General Plan Element descriptions excerpted from Los Angeles County General Plan 2035, Public Review Draft, pages 11-12, January 2014.*

- The Mobility Element provides an overview of the transportation infrastructure and strategies for developing an efficient and multimodal transportation network. The Highway Plan and the Bicycle Master Plan are sub-components of the Mobility Element.
- The Air Quality Element summarizes air quality issues and outlines the goals and policies that will improve air quality and reduce greenhouse gas emissions. The Community Climate Action Plan is a sub-component of the Air Quality Element.
- The Conservation and Natural Resources Element guides the long-term conservation of natural resources and preservation of available open space areas.
- The Parks and Recreation Element plans and provides for an integrated parks and recreation system that meets the needs of residents.
- The Noise Element reduces and limits the exposure of the general public to excessive noise levels. The Noise Element sets the goals and policy direction for the management of noise.
- The purpose of the Safety Element is to reduce the potential risk of death, injuries, and economic damage resulting from natural and man-made hazards.
- The Public Services and Facilities Element promotes the orderly and efficient planning of public services and facilities and infrastructure in conjunction with development and growth.
- The Economic Development Element outlines economic development goals, and provides strategies that contribute to economic well-being.
- The Housing Element analyzes and plans for existing and future housing needs. The Housing Element addresses the housing needs of all income levels and accommodates a diversity of housing types and special needs.

***(c) Santa Clarita Valley Area Plan: One Valley One Vision 2012***

The County has adopted a number of community-driven area plans, which are part of the General Plan and designed to more accurately address the needs of local communities and specific geographic areas throughout the County. These area plans are intended to refine and be consistent with the policies of the General Plan, as applied to a smaller geographic area, and provide the planning framework for that area while advancing the overarching policies of the General Plan.

The recently updated Santa Clarita Valley Area Plan: One Valley One Vision 2012,<sup>4</sup> sometimes referred to as OVOV, was adopted by the County on November 27, 2012, and became effective on December 27, 2012.<sup>5</sup> The overall OVOV process was a joint planning effort with the City of Santa Clarita that recognized the mutual need to coordinate land uses and development with the provision of adequate infrastructure, conservation of natural resources, and common objectives for the Santa Clarita Valley. That said, the Area Plan pertains specifically to the unincorporated areas of the Valley, whereas the City's planning documents specifically address the incorporated areas within the City.

The updated Area Plan is intended to serve as a long-term guide for development of the unincorporated Santa Clarita Valley in conjunction with the incorporated Valley areas over the next 20 years. The Area Plan is based on a series of guiding principles that implement the vision defined for the Valley: to sustain and enhance environmental resources, economic vitality, and the social well being of its residents. The principles address such issues as growth management, environmental resources, land use, residential neighborhoods, economic vitality, mobility, infrastructure, schools and public services, and recreation. More specifically, the Area Plan sets forth area-wide planning policies for the Valley and establishes objectives for the individual communities in the Valley. The following Elements are included in the Area Plan and are applicable to the Project: Land Use; Circulation; Conservation and Open Space; Safety; and Noise. These Elements and applicable content therein are summarized below.

### ***(i) Land Use Element***

The Area Plan Land Use Element guides the type, location, intensity, and density of future land uses through the Land Use Policy Map and associated land use designations. The Element also contains goals, policies, and implementation measures to ensure that new development and land uses reflect community goals, enhance quality of life, are supported by adequate services and infrastructure, ensure public safety, and conserve valuable resources. The Land Use Element describes the various communities that make up the Valley and identifies planning issues unique to each of them. While the Project Site does not fall squarely within one of the defined communities, the western portions of the Project Site (i.e., some of the External Map Improvements) are located within the Newhall Ranch Specific Plan area, which is also addressed in the Land Use Element and discussed further below.

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<sup>4</sup> *The Santa Clarita Valley is defined as the area generally bounded by the Ventura County line on the west, the Los Padres and Angeles National Forest areas on the north, the Angeles National Forest on the east, and the major ridgeline separating Santa Clarita from the San Fernando Valley on the south.*

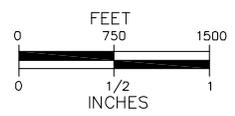
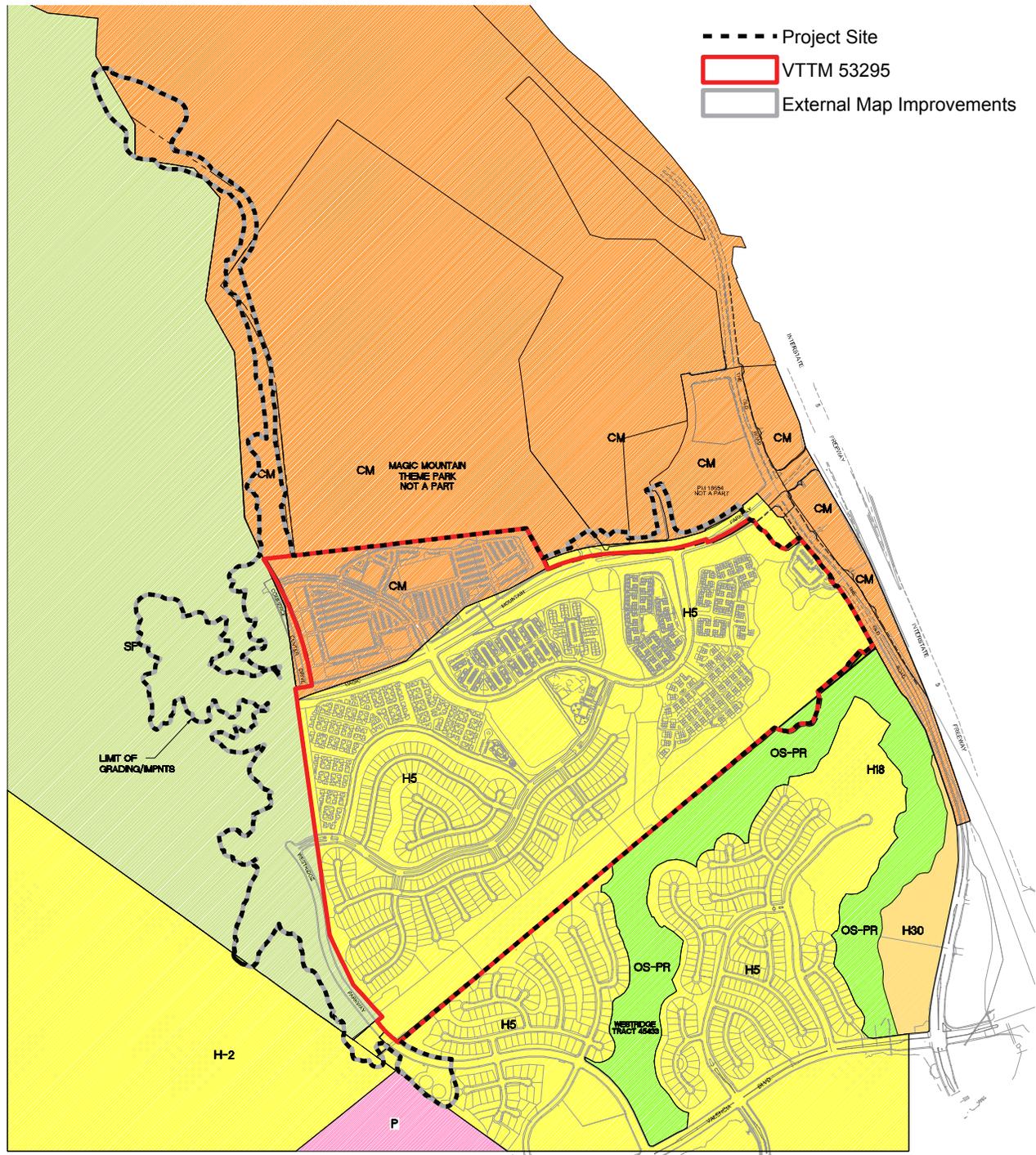
<sup>5</sup> *Although the 1990 Area Plan was in effect at the time of the Notice of Preparation (NOP) in June 2010, given the passage of time since the NOP, the adopted 2012 Area Plan is addressed herein.*

The Land Use Policy Map establishes land use designations to guide the development of property within the Area Plan boundaries. As shown in **Figure 5.11-1**, Area Plan Land Use Designations, on page 5.11-11 and summarized in terms of acreage in **Table 5.11-1**, Land Use Designations On-Site, on page 5.11-12, the Project Site comprises several land use designations. Specifically, the Area Plan designates the Project Site (including VTTM 53295 and the External Map Improvements area) as H2—Residential 2, H5—Residential 5, CM—Major Commercial, OS-PR—Parks and Recreation, and SP—Newhall Ranch Specific Plan. These land use designations are defined as follows:

**H2—Residential 2:** The H2 designation allows residential neighborhoods at densities that require urban services, particularly in urban/rural interface areas where such neighborhoods provide a transition between higher density, urban development and rural communities. Allowable uses include single-family homes and other residential uses at a maximum density of two dwelling units per acre. Supportive commercial and institutional uses serving the local area also may be allowed without a General Plan or Area Plan Amendment, but may require a zone change, conditional use permit (CUP), and/or other approvals. Density-controlled development (clustering) is encouraged on lands with significant environmental and/or topographical features or resources in order to preserve open space for the protection of these natural features or resources, to provide recreational amenities, or to act as a buffer for surrounding rural communities. Permitted uses are subject to the requirements of the underlying zoning designation.

**H5—Residential 5:** The H5 designation provides for residential neighborhoods that typify much of the planning area. Allowable uses in this designation include single-family homes and other residential uses at a maximum density of five dwelling units per acre. Supportive commercial and institutional uses serving the local area also may be allowed without a General Plan or Area Plan Amendment, but may require a zone change, CUP, and/or other approvals. Density-controlled development (clustering) is encouraged on lands with significant environmental and/or topographical features or resources in order to preserve open space for the protection of these natural features or resources or to provide recreational amenities. Permitted uses are subject to the requirements of the underlying zoning designation.

**CM—Major Commercial:** The CM designation is intended to promote the development of regional focal points for commercial, entertainment, and cultural uses serving the general public and drawing from a large market area. Permitted uses include retail stores and regional shopping centers; theatres and other large-scale entertainment uses; corporate offices and financial institutions; day care centers; and hotels, restaurants, and other hospitality services. Such uses are



**Figure 5.11-1**  
Area Plan Land Use Designations

**Table 5.11-1  
Land Use Designations On-Site**

<b>Area Plan Land Use Designation</b>	<b>VTTM 53295 (ac)</b>	<b>External Map Improvements (ac)</b>
H2—Residential 2	—	1.4
H5—Residential 5	328.4	11.4
CM—Major Commercial	52.4	30.9
OS-PR—Parks and Recreation	1.5	—
SP—Newhall Ranch Specific Plan	—	75.4
<b>Total</b>	<b>382.3</b>	<b>119.1</b>
<i>Source: Alliance Land Planning &amp; Engineering, Inc., 2014.</i>		

subject to a maximum FAR of 2.0. Multi-family dwellings (including live-work units) are also allowed, with a minimum density of 18 dwelling units per acre and a maximum density of 50 dwelling units per acre, as are mixed-use developments combining multi-family residential and commercial uses, subject to the same residential density and commercial FAR limitations. All such uses are subject to the requirements of the underlying zoning designation.

**OS-PR—Parks and Recreation:** The OS-PR designation identifies open space lands used for public and private parks and golf courses. Specific allowable uses, maximum intensity standards, and development standards are determined by the underlying zoning designation.

**Newhall Ranch Specific Plan:** Land with this designation is subject to the adopted Newhall Ranch Specific Plan and the development standards specified therein, including those pertaining to permitted uses and densities. The Specific Plan is discussed further below.

The Land Use Policy Map also identifies Significant Ecological Areas, including the Santa Clara River SEA which encompasses the Santa Clara River within the Project vicinity. However, the Project Site does not fall within the SEA boundaries.

The goals, objectives, and policies set forth in the Area Plan Land Use Element address such issues as urban form, mixed land uses, healthy neighborhoods, economic vitality, mobility, community appearance, environmentally responsible development, environmental justice, and public facilities. Many of these issues focus on defining the distinct communities of the Valley, identifying their specific needs, and enhancing/

protecting their character. These policies are listed in the Santa Clarita Valley Area Plan: One Valley One Vision 2012 Consistency Analysis (Area Plan Consistency Analysis) provided in **Appendix 5.11B** of this Draft EIR. A discussion of the Project's consistency with the Land Use Element is also provided therein.

### ***(ii) Circulation Element***

The Area Plan Circulation Element complements and supports the Land Use Element in that adequate circulation is necessary to achieve desired land use patterns. This Element promotes efficient, cost-effective, and comprehensive transportation systems and addresses such issues as alternative forms of transportation and associated support facilities, increased efficiency and capacity of existing transportation systems, and coordination of land use planning with transportation planning by promoting concentrated, mixed-use development near transit facilities. The goals, objectives, and policies in the Circulation Element are organized by the following topics: the street and highway system, a multi-modal circulation network, vehicle trip reductions, rail service, bus transit, bikeways, and pedestrian circulation. Policies within the Circulation Element are listed in the Area Plan Consistency Analysis provided in **Appendix 5.11B**.

### ***(iii) Conservation and Open Space Element***

The Conservation and Open Space Element establishes a policy framework for the designation and long-term preservation of open space within the Valley and addresses associated uses and benefits including park and recreational facilities, wildlife habitat preservation, scenic views, water recharge and watershed protection, air quality, cultural and historical resources, property values, and community character. The defined goals, objectives, and policies relate to the following issues: responsible management of environmental systems; geological, biological, water, cultural, historic, and scenic resources; air quality and greenhouse gas (GHG) reduction; park, recreation, and trail facilities; and open space. Policies within the Conservation and Open Space Element are listed in the Area Plan Consistency Analysis provided in **Appendix 5.11B**.

### ***(iv) Safety Element***

The Safety Element describes the various natural and man-made hazards that exist in the area and provides guidelines for protecting public health and safety. Specific policies and standards are set forth to minimize risks from identified hazards and address emergency response services. The goals, objectives, and policies set forth in the Safety Element of the Area Plan apply to the following issues: geologic, flood, and fire hazards; hazardous materials; law enforcement; accidents; and emergency planning. These policies are discussed in the Area Plan Consistency Analysis provided in **Appendix 5.11B**.

**(v) Noise Element**

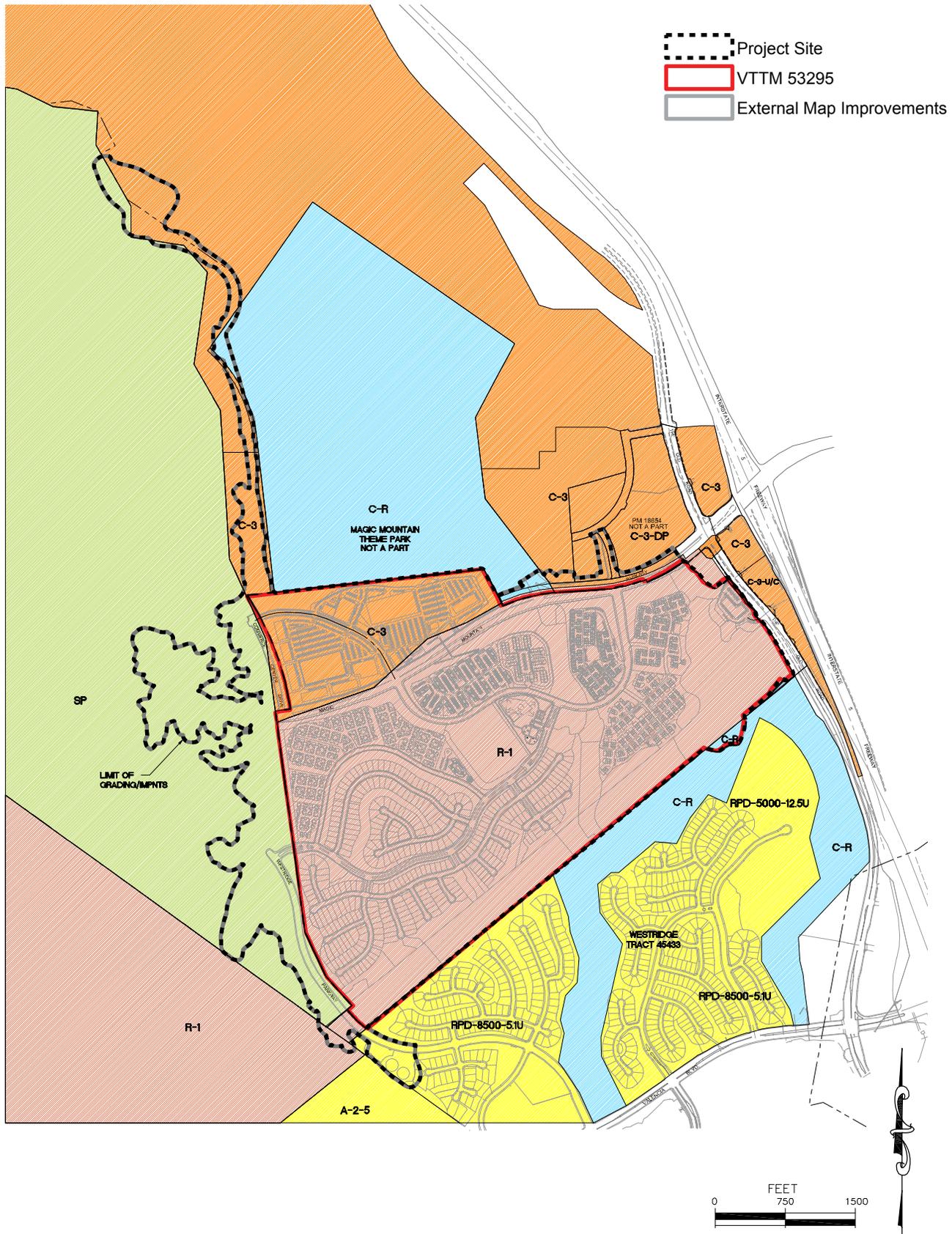
The Noise Element acknowledges that the noise environment affects the quality of life in the Valley. Noise management and the noise compatibility of land uses are important factors in protecting the community welfare, and future development is directed to reduce noise impacts through appropriate planning and project design. The goals, objectives, and policies established in the Noise Element are designed to create a healthy and safe noise environment and protect residences and other noise-sensitive uses from various types of noise. These policies are discussed in the Area Plan Consistency Analysis provided in **Appendix 5.11B**.

**(d) Los Angeles County Subdivision Code and Planning and Zoning Code**

Pursuant to the provisions of the Subdivision Map Act, County Code Title 21 contains the County's subdivision code (also called subdivision ordinance), which applies to all subdivisions and the preparation of subdivision maps, including vesting tentative tract maps. The subdivision code sets forth general requirements with respect to building location, access, dedications, and improvements; design standards regarding access, local streets, highways, and lots; and procedural requirements. Tentative maps must include an exhibit map unless processed with a CUP, in which case the CUP Exhibit "A" serves as the exhibit map. Detailed subset maps for VTTM 53295, including an exhibit map, are presented in **Appendix 3** of this Draft EIR.

The Los Angeles County Planning and Zoning Code (County Code Title 22), also referred to as the Zoning Ordinance, regulates development within the County's unincorporated areas through land use designations and development standards regarding allowable uses, density, height, parking, etc.. The Project Site comprises several zoning designations, as illustrated in **Figure 5.11-2**, Existing Zoning Designations, on page 5.11-15 and summarized in terms of acreage in **Table 5.11-2**, Zoning Designations On-Site, on page 5.11-16. As indicated, the Project Site (including VTTM 53295 and the External Map Improvements area) is currently zoned R-1—Single-Family Residence, RPD-8500-5.1U—Residential Planned Development (5.1 dwelling units per net acre), C-3—Unlimited Commercial, C-3-DP—Unlimited Commercial/Development Program, C-R—Commercial Recreation, and SP—Newhall Ranch Specific Plan. Permitted uses and development standards associated with these zoning designations include the following:

**R-1—Single-Family Residence:** This zone permits single-family residences with a minimum floor area of 800 square feet and a minimum lot size of 5,000 square feet, unless otherwise specified. Limited other residential uses, accessory uses, and conditional uses are also permitted. Building heights are limited to 35 feet, exclusive



**Figure 5.11-2**  
Existing Zoning Designations



**Table 5.11-2  
Zoning Designations On-Site**

Zoning Designation	Existing Designations		Proposed Designations <sup>a</sup>
	VTTM 53295 (ac)	External Map Improvements (ac)	VTTM 53295 (ac)
R-1—Single-Family Residence	328.4	5.0	—
RPD-8500-5.1U—Residential Planned Development	—	5.1	—
RPD-5000-5.8U—Residential Planned Development	—	—	319.0 <sup>b</sup>
C-2—Neighborhood Business	—	—	3.9
C-3—Unlimited Commercial	52.4	26.7	57.9
C-3-DP—Unlimited Commercial/Development Program	—	4.0	—
C-R—Commercial Recreation	1.5	2.9	1.5
SP—Newhall Ranch Specific Plan	—	75.4	—
<b>Total</b>	<b>382.3</b>	<b>119.1</b>	<b>382.3</b>

*All acreages represent gross acreage.*  
<sup>a</sup> *No zone change is sought for the External Map Improvements area.*  
<sup>b</sup> *Of this acreage, Magic Mountain Parkway would comprise 12.8 acres and A Street would comprise 6.5 acres.*  
*Source: Alliance Land Planning & Engineering, Inc.; County of Los Angeles Department of Regional Planning, 2013.*

of chimneys and rooftop antennas.<sup>6</sup> Minimum yard requirements are as follows: front yards—20 feet; corner side yards—10 feet on a reversed corner lot or 5 feet on other corner lots; interior side yards—5 feet; and rear yards—15 feet.

**RPD-8500-5.1U—Residential Planned Development (5.1 dwelling units per net acre):** In general, the RPD zone allows any use permitted in the R-1 zone subject to the same limitations and conditions, including auxiliary and transitional uses; front, side, and rear yards; garages and carports; and area requirements. The “8500-5.1U” suffix specifies 5.1 dwelling units per net acre with a minimum lot area of 8,500 square feet. Additional requirements include a building coverage limitation

<sup>6</sup> *Per Los Angeles County Code Section 22.08.080 H, building height is defined as the plumb line distance from the point being measured to the grade.*

of 50 percent of the net area and an open space requirement of 30 percent of the net area. RPD zoning is implemented through the approval of a CUP.

**C-3—Unlimited Commercial:** This zone permits a wide range of neighborhood and regional commercial uses, including sales, service, recreation and amusement, and some agricultural uses, accessory uses, and various conditional uses. Maximum lot coverage is 90 percent of the net lot area, and a minimum of 10 percent of the net lot area must be landscaped. Height limits and yards are not specified, and parking requirements are set forth in Chapter 22.52, Part 11.

**C-3-DP—Unlimited Commercial/Development Program:** This zone permits C-3 uses in conformance with approved development plans and exhibits, subject to the approval of a CUP. Submittal requirements and criteria for consideration are set forth in Chapter 22.40, Part 2 and are designed to provide necessary safeguards to ensure completion of the proposed development as specified.

**C-R—Commercial Recreation:** This zone permits a variety of entertainment and amusement activities of a commercial nature, including amusement parks, campgrounds, tennis courts, golf courses, and limited agriculture. Height limits and yards are not specified, and parking requirements are set forth in Chapter 22.52, Part 11. General lot requirements are not specified, with the exception of certain uses.

**SP—Newhall Ranch Specific Plan:** Land with this designation is subject to the adopted Newhall Ranch Specific Plan and the development standards specified therein, including those pertaining to permitted uses and densities. The Specific Plan is discussed further below.

Additional sections of the Zoning Code specify other development standards and address such issues as general design requirements, parking requirements, and signage. Furthermore, Section 22.56.215, discussed below, requires CUPs for residential development in hillside management areas to protect environmentally sensitive areas.

#### ***(e) Los Angeles County Hillside Requirements***

As previously indicated, much of the Project Site contains hillside land, defined as mountainous and hilly areas with 25 percent slopes or greater, and is designated as H5—Residential 5.

The County sets forth development requirements for Hillside Management Areas in its Hillside Management Area Ordinance (County Code Section 22.56.215). The

Ordinance does not preclude development within hillside areas, but rather ensures that development maintains, and where possible enhances, the natural topography, resources, and amenities of the hillside management areas. Residential developments meeting specified density thresholds in hillside areas require a CUP, as well as preparation of geology and soil reports identifying active or potentially active faults at and near the proposed site and the stability of the area within various defined slope categories.

The County's current General Plan, as amended in conjunction with the 2012 adoption of the Santa Clarita Valley Area Plan, addresses hillside development with detailed information provided in Appendix A of the Land Use Element, which describes Hillside Management/Performance Review Procedures for development projects in hillside areas. Based on an overarching policy to "manage development in hillside areas to protect their natural and scenic character and to reduce risks from fire, flood, mudslide, erosion and landslide," the review process is intended to ensure site suitability, public safety, resource protection, the protection of scenic and open lands, as well as to ensure that development in urban hillside areas is safe, functionally and attractively designed, and compatible with surrounding uses.<sup>7</sup> Residential development must avoid or mitigate public safety impacts and preserve distinct visual characteristics, and a variety of housing types of various price ranges is encouraged. General conditions for development are specified and address density standards for residential uses, density transfers from steeper to more level land, and natural or open space standards.

The Conservation and Open Space Element of the adopted General Plan also addresses hillside issues. The Hillside Management designation is intended to protect the character and natural resource value of hillsides, including ridgelines, and minimize hazards associated with hillside development through innovative and sensitive design.

#### ***(f) Los Angeles County Green Building Program***

Three ordinances were adopted by the County in furtherance of its Green Building Program in October 2008 and became effective in January 2009. One of those ordinances, known as the Green Building Standards ordinance, applied to four categories of development, with corresponding requirements for each: (1) small residential and nonresidential projects; (2) medium-sized residential projects; (3) medium-sized (i.e., 10,000 to 25,000 square feet) nonresidential, commercial, mixed-use, or first-time tenant improvement projects; and (4) large nonresidential, commercial, mixed-use, or first-time tenant improvement projects greater than 25,000 square feet, and all new high-rise buildings greater than 75 feet in height.

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<sup>7</sup> *County of Los Angeles General Plan Land Use Element, Appendix A, page III-59.*

In response to mandates set forth in the 2013 California Green Building Standards Code (CCR, Title 24, Part 6), commonly referred to as the CALGreen Code, the County adopted the Los Angeles County Green Building Standards Code (County Code Title 31), which adopts and incorporates by reference specified provisions of the CALGreen Code.<sup>8</sup> The purpose of Title 31 is to facilitate sustainability via planning and design; energy efficiency; water efficiency and conservation; material conservation and resource efficiency; and environmental air quality. Title 31 also references County Code Chapter 12.84, which provides low impact development (LID) requirements that address water conservation. Title 31 is currently being revised to provide clarity for the development community, ensure consistency with the State and other local agencies, and advance sustainable construction standards in the County.

Further discussion of green building, drought-tolerant landscaping, and LID requirements is provided in **Section 5.3**, Air Quality; **Section 5.4**, Biological Resources; **Section 5.7**, Greenhouse Gas Emissions; **Section 5.9**, Hydrology and Water Quality—Hydrology; **Section 5.10**, Hydrology and Water Quality—Water Quality; **Section 5.21**, Utilities and Service Systems—Water Supply and Service; and **Section 5.23**, Utilities and Service Systems—Energy, of this Draft EIR.

#### ***(g) County Development Monitoring System***

The County General Plan includes provisions known as the Development Monitoring System to give the County planning agency—the Regional Planning Commission and/or Department of Regional Planning (collectively referred to herein as the County Planning Agency)—information about the existing capacity of available specified public services in the four major Urban Expansion Areas of the General Plan (Antelope Valley, Santa Clarita Valley, Malibu/Santa Monica Mountains, and East San Gabriel Valley).<sup>9</sup> The primary purpose of the DMS is to ensure that new development in Urban Expansion Areas will occur in a manner consistent with stated DMS policies and will pay for the expansion costs that it generates. Additionally, the DMS requires analysis of certain environmental factors associated with a development application. Specifically, the DMS requires each development application to determine whether or not it will have a significant environmental effect relative to natural resources and open space. For further information with regard to the DMS, please see **Section 4.1**, Environmental and Regulatory Setting, of this Draft EIR.

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<sup>8</sup> *The County's 2008 ordinances are being repealed, and the more recently adopted Title 31 requirements will apply to this Project.*

<sup>9</sup> *See Resolution of the Board of Supervisors of the County of Los Angeles Relating to Plan Amendment Case No. SP 86-173, adopted on April 21, 1987.*

**(i) Project Subject to DMS**

The Project is located within the Santa Clarita Valley, an Urban Expansion Area within the DMS, and includes a subdivision map application (Vesting Tentative Tract Map (VTTM) 53295). Therefore, the Project is subject to a DMS analysis or its equivalent.

**(ii) DMS Access Provisions**

As stated above, the DMS requires analysis of the access factors associated with a development project in an Urban Expansion Area. Under the DMS, where applicable, a project must be located within reasonable proximity to commercial development and job opportunities (generally within five miles) and served by an acceptable level of road service. If it is determined that the project is not located in proximity to commercial and employment facilities, mitigation measures set forth in the DMS must be considered and applied prior to any approval of the project.

As applied, the Project satisfies the DMS access requirements because the site is located adjacent to Six Flags Magic Mountain, within 0.25 mile from Castaic Junction and the Valencia Commerce Center, and approximately 0.25 mile from the Valencia Industrial Center. All of these existing development areas are served by County or other public services and provide substantial commercial services and job opportunities.

**(iii) DMS Environment Provisions**

The DMS states that “urban development is appropriate...where critical regional resources are protected or the general public is recompensed in some manner for its full or partial loss....”<sup>10</sup> Among the environmental factors to be evaluated for the DMS are natural resources and open space. The Project Initial Study provided general information concerning land use and natural resources and determined an EIR would be required. As previously indicated, the analysis herein addresses the consistency of the Project with applicable local and regional land use plans and policies, including, for example, County requirements pertaining to development in hillside areas and oak tree impacts, as discussed further below.

**(iv) DMS Environment Factors and Criteria**

The DMS environmental factors and criteria to be considered when evaluating whether a project will have a significant effect with respect to natural resources include

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<sup>10</sup> County of Los Angeles Department of Regional Planning, *A Plan Amendment To The Los Angeles County General Plan Dealing With Development Monitoring, Plan Amendment No. SP 86-173, p. 1.*

whether the project is located in an area designated as a Significant Ecological Area in the General Plan Conservation and Open Space Element, or whether it is characterized by significant hillsides, riparian habitat, or oak trees. Environmental factors and criteria to be considered with respect to open space include whether the project site is shown as publicly held or privately dedicated open space in the Conservation and Open Space Element.

While the use of DMS maps and data is called for in order to conduct this analysis, the General Plan policy maps combined with land use and natural resource surveys conducted as part of the studies appended to this Draft EIR provide more current information regarding site-specific conditions, which is used herein. More specifically, the land use analysis provided herein is based on aerial photography, land use maps, and field surveys in which surrounding uses were identified and characterized. Additionally, as discussed at length in **Section 5.4**, Biological Resources, of this Draft EIR, the biological resources analysis is based on more than 100 biological surveys conducted both on and near the Project Site over a span of 22 years. This information is used in lieu of DMS maps and data because:

- (1) The data presents the specific conditions within and adjacent to the Project Site, including existing land uses, plant species, vegetation communities, and other habitat characteristics;
- (2) The data is considered current and the best available information from biological experts and includes site-specific information;
- (3) The data takes into account current regulatory requirements, including state regulations and County Code requirements, that are designed to ensure the protection of natural and open space resources; and
- (4) The data is considered by County staff to be equivalent to the data called for in the DMS as it relates to natural resources and open space.

Based on the information provided herein, the County Planning Agency shall apply the factors and criteria to the Project's location and determine whether or not the Project will have a significant impact on natural resources and open space.

#### ***(h) Newhall Ranch Specific Plan***

As previously indicated, portions of the Project Site are located within the Newhall Ranch Specific Plan area. The Specific Plan site comprises 11,999 acres situated approximately 0.5 mile west of I-5 and largely southwest of the junction of I-5 and SR-126, generally between Six Flags Magic Mountain on the east and the Los Angeles/Ventura County line on the west. Refer to **Figure 5.11-1**, Area Plan Land Use Designations, and

**Figure 5.11-2**, Existing Zoning Designations, for a depiction of the relationship between the Project Site and Specific Plan boundaries.

The Specific Plan involves the long-term development of a broad range of residential and non-residential land uses and associated amenities within five urban villages. As approved by the County Board of Supervisors, the Specific Plan allows up to 21,308 dwelling units (including 423 second units); 629 acres of mixed-use development; 67 acres of commercial uses; 249 acres of business park uses; 37 acres of visitor-serving uses; 1,014 acres of open space (including 181 acres of community parks and 833 acres in other open spaces); 5,159 acres in Special Management Areas; 50 acres in 10 neighborhood parks; a 15-acre lake; a public trail system; an 18-hole golf course; two fire stations; a public library; an electrical substation; reservation of five elementary school sites, one junior high school site, and one high school site; the 6.8-million-gallon-per-day (mgd) Newhall Ranch Water Reclamation Plant (WRP); and other associated community facilities within Newhall Ranch. Buildout of Newhall Ranch is projected to occur over approximately 25 to 30 years, depending upon economic and market conditions.

Of the urban villages proposed under the Specific Plan, the Mission Village community (VTTM 061105) is located immediately west of the Project Site. Approved by the County's Board of Supervisors in 2012 but not yet constructed, Mission Village includes 4,055 residential units (of which 351 are single-family units); 1,555,100 square feet of commercial and mixed uses; 693 acres of open space, including 26.8 acres for public parks, 14.7 acres for private recreational facilities, and 85.8 acres in three spineflower preserves connected to open space; a 9.5-acre elementary school site; and fire station, library, and bus transfer station sites. Mission Village also includes trails, paseos, and other mobility and roadway improvements, as well as water, wastewater, electrical, and other infrastructure improvements.

The western portions of the Project Site, where some of the External Map Improvements are proposed, fall within the boundaries of Mission Village. The Project's External Map Improvements within this area include a segment of Commerce Center Drive, the extension of Westridge Parkway, all or portions of several debris basins, a small portion of a water quality basin, and a grading borrow site. While these improvements are proposed as part of and will support the Entrada South Project, several of them also are part of and will support the separate, approved Mission Village project. Refer to **Section 3.0**, Project Description, of this Draft EIR for further discussion of the "shared" improvements between Mission Village and Entrada South. In essence, should Mission Village be developed first (which may be likely given its approved status), certain improvements will occur pursuant to the Mission Village approval and will no longer be undertaken as part of Entrada South. Nonetheless, this EIR evaluates all of the improvements proposed as part of the Project.

**(i) Newhall Ranch Resource Management and Development Plan and Spineflower Conservation Plan**

The Project Site is also located within the area covered in the Project Applicant's separate Newhall Ranch Resource Management and Development Plan and Spineflower Conservation Plan (RMDP/SCP project), as shown in **Figure 3-5**, RMDP/SCP Project Area, in **Section 3.0**, Project Description, of this Draft EIR. The RMDP/SCP project was the subject of a joint Environmental Impact Statement/Environmental Impact Report (EIS/EIR) (SCH No. 2000011025) that identified the significant environmental impacts associated with implementation of the RMDP/SCP Project and its alternatives, as well as mitigation measures to avoid or minimize such impacts.<sup>11</sup> The U.S. Army Corps of Engineers (Corps) and the California Department of Fish and Wildlife (CDFW) acted as the lead agencies with respect to the joint EIS/EIR, which was prepared in accordance with both the National Environmental Policy Act, 42 U.S.C. Sections 4321, et seq. (NEPA) and the California Environmental Quality Act, Pub. Res. Code Sections 21000 et seq. (CEQA).<sup>12</sup> The CDFW issued a permit for its jurisdiction on December 3, 2010, and the Corps issued a permit for its jurisdiction on October 17, 2012.

The RMDP component of the RMDP/SCP Project is a conservation, mitigation, and permitting plan for the long-term management of sensitive biological resources and development-related infrastructure in the Santa Clara River and tributary drainages within the Specific Plan area and along the extension of Magic Mountain Parkway through the Project Site. This roadway extension is intended to provide access to development within the approved Specific Plan area, the Project Site, and the surrounding region. The RMDP/SCP project includes issuance of a long-term, individual Clean Water Act (CWA) Section 404 permit to authorize jurisdictional impacts to the Santa Clara River and tributary drainages within the RMDP area, including two unnamed drainages within the Project Site (Unnamed Canyons 1 and 2).

The SCP component of the RMDP/SCP project is a conservation and management plan to permanently protect and manage a system of preserves designed to maximize the long-term persistence of the San Fernando Valley spineflower (*Chorizanthe parryi* ssp. *fernandina*; spineflower), a federal candidate and state-listed endangered plant species. The SCP encompasses the Specific Plan area, Valencia Commerce Center, and the Project Site, in order to conduct conservation planning and preserve design on the Project Applicant's land holdings in Los Angeles County that contain known spineflower

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<sup>11</sup> *Newhall Ranch Resource Management and Development Plan and Spineflower Conservation Plan, Final Joint Environmental Impact Statement and Environmental Impact Report, June 2010.*

<sup>12</sup> *The California Department of Fish and Wildlife was formerly called the California Department of Fish and Game (CDFG).*

populations. A 27.2-acre area of the Project Site, located in the southeast corner and zoned Open Space, is designated as a Spineflower Conservation Area (Entrada South Spineflower Preserve, generally referred to herein as the Spineflower Preserve).

The Project Applicant is relying upon the SCP to obtain federal and state permits and agreements from the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service (USFWS) and CDFW to protect and manage spineflower preserves and authorize take (i.e., removal) of spineflower in areas located outside of the designated preserves. The USFWS has issued a Candidate Conservation Agreement that commits the Project Applicant to implement conservation, management, and monitoring measures for spineflower, including within the Entrada South Spineflower Preserve, as set forth in the SCP.

The proposed development within the Project Site will rely upon the SCP and associated take authorizations. Thus, the SCP facilitates development of the Project Site; as proposed, the Project is consistent with the approved SCP.<sup>13</sup> Accordingly, no further analysis related to consistency with the RMDP/SCP project is provided herein. Furthermore, as a number of the RMDP/SCP mitigation measures specified in the EIS/EIR apply to the Project, the mitigation measures identified in this Draft EIR refer to any corresponding RMDP/SCP measures, as appropriate.

On June 7, 2011, the USFWS issued a favorable “no jeopardy” Biological Opinion for the Newhall Ranch RMDP/SCP project. On August 31, 2011, the Corps approved the EIS portion of the EIS/EIR for the Newhall Ranch RMDP/SCP project and issued its “Record of Decision,” provisionally approving Newhall’s requested CWA Section 404 permit, discussed below. On September 14, 2012, the LA Regional Water Board approved Order No. R4-2012-0139, which includes a Section 401 water quality certification and waste discharge requirements for the Newhall Ranch RMDP/SCP project. Additionally, the Corps issued its final Section 404 permit on October 19, 2012. These documents are provided in **Appendices 2C, 2D, 2E, and 2F**, respectively, of this Draft EIR.

### ***(i) Land Use Impacts***

The land use analysis within the RMDP/SCP EIS/EIR determined that Alternative 2 (i.e., the preferred Project) would result in a significant impact due to the establishment of a spineflower preserve within the Entrada South Project Site, which at that time was zoned

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<sup>13</sup> *The Water Tank Site in the southwestern corner of the Project Site (within the External Map Improvements area), currently located in the adjacent Westridge community adjacent to existing potable and reclaimed water tanks, was not covered by the RMDP/SCP project. The Water Tank Site was graded as part of the Westridge project and reserved for a future water tank. Although not addressed within the RMDP/SCP EIS/EIR, this area was evaluated in the Westridge Environmental Impact Report (SCH No. 1990011146),*

for agricultural uses. Based on that zoning, establishment of the Entrada spineflower preserve would result in a significant land use impact because the preserve would permanently prohibit agricultural activities on an area with agricultural zoning. This impact was determined to likely be temporary because an application had been filed with the County to change the zoning. Since that time, a zone change has been implemented for the Project Site, and the area proposed for establishment of the Spineflower Preserve is now zoned R-1—Single-Family Residence and C-R—Commercial Recreation. The proposed Spineflower Preserve is consistent with these zoning designations.

The EIS/EIR also determined that a mitigation measure to avoid the former zoning conflict by not establishing the Entrada spineflower preserve until the County approved the zone change for the preserve site was not an appropriate measure because if the zone change were not approved the preserve could not be established, which would have been inconsistent with the resource protection objectives of the RMDP/SCP project. At that time, the Applicant had already requested the approval of a zone change to eliminate the zoning conflict. However, the EIS/EIR acknowledged that approval of the requested zone change was beyond the control of the Applicant. In any event, as the zone change was ultimately approved, no zoning conflict now exists, and the previously identified significant land use impact associated with the RMDP/SCP project has been eliminated.

#### ***(ii) Newhall Ranch Section 404 Permit***

The Corps issued the Applicant the final CWA Section 404 permit (Permit No. SPL-2003-01264-AOA) for the Newhall Ranch RMDP/SCP project on October 17, 2012.<sup>14</sup> As part of that permit, the Corps imposed special conditions with which the Applicant must comply, as discussed throughout the relevant analysis sections of this Draft EIR (see **Section 5.2**, Agricultural and Forest Resources; **Section 5.4**, Biological Resources; **Section 5.5**, Cultural and Paleontological Resources; **Section 5.9**, Hydrology and Water Quality—Hydrology; **Section 5.10**, Hydrology and Water Quality—Water Quality; and **Section 5.12**, Mineral Resources).

#### ***(iii) Newhall Ranch Section 401 Water Quality Certification***

By federal law, no Section 404 permit can be issued until a CWA Section 401 water quality certification has been issued or waived by the Regional Water Quality Control Board (Regional Water Board). On September 14, 2012, the Los Angeles Regional Water Quality Control Board (LA Regional Water Board) approved Order No. R4-2012-0139, which includes the CWA Section 401 water quality certification and waste discharge requirements

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<sup>14</sup> See **Appendix 2F** of this Draft EIR for a copy of Newhall's final Section 404 permit and associated Record of Decision (August 2011).

for the Newhall Ranch RMDP/SCP project.<sup>15</sup> As part of both the Newhall Ranch Section 401 water quality certification and the Newhall/California Coastal Conservancy Agreement (August 6, 2012) entered into in conjunction with the Section 401 process, general conditions were imposed, with which the Applicant must comply, as discussed throughout the relevant analysis sections of this Draft EIR (see **Section 5.2**, Agricultural and Forest Resources; **Section 5.3**, Air Quality; **Section 5.4**, Biological Resources; **Section 5.6**, Geology and Soils; **Section 5.8**, Hazards and Hazardous Materials; **Section 5.9**, Hydrology and Water Quality—Hydrology; and **Section 5.10**, Hydrology and Water Quality—Water Quality).

## (2) Regional Regulations

Regional land use plans that govern the Project Site and surrounding area include the Southern California Association of Governments' 2012–2035 Regional Transportation Plan/Sustainable Communities Strategy (2012–2035 RTP/SCS), Growth Vision Report, and Regional Comprehensive Plan (RCP); the Los Angeles County Congestion Management Plan (CMP), administered by the Los Angeles County Metropolitan Transportation Authority, which regulates regional traffic issues; and the South Coast Air Quality Management District's (SCAQMD) Air Quality Management Plan (AQMP), which addresses attainment of State and federal ambient air quality standards throughout the South Coast Air Basin (Basin).

### (a) 2012–2035 Regional Transportation Plan/Sustainable Communities Strategy

SCAG is the federally designated metropolitan planning organization for six Southern California counties, including the County of Los Angeles. SCAG is mandated to create plans for transportation, growth management, hazardous waste management, and air quality. On April 4, 2012, the SCAG Regional Council adopted the 2012–2035 Regional Transportation Plan/Sustainable Communities Strategy, the mission of which is “leadership, vision and progress which promote economic growth, personal well-being, and livable communities for all Southern Californians.”<sup>16,17</sup> In contrast to previous versions of the RTP, the new plan places a greater emphasis on sustainability and integrated planning and identifies mobility, economy, and sustainability as the three principles most critical to the

<sup>15</sup> See **Appendix 2E** of this Draft EIR for a copy of Newhall's final Section 401 water quality certification (September 2012).

<sup>16</sup> SCAG 2012–2035 Regional Transportation Plan/Sustainable Communities Strategy, p. viii, available at <http://rtpscscs.scag.ca.gov/Pages/2012-2035-RTP-SCS.aspx>, accessed March 4, 2015.

<sup>17</sup> Although the 2008 RTP was in effect at the time of the Project's NOP, given the passage of time since the NOP, the updated RTP-SCS is addressed herein.

future of the region. As part of this new approach, the 2012–2035 RTP/SCS establishes commitments to: reduce emissions from transportation sources in order to comply with Senate Bill (SB) 375, the Sustainable Communities and Climate Protection Act of 2008; improve public health; and meet the National Ambient Air Quality Standards. The 2012–2035 RTP/SCS also establishes High-Quality Transit Areas, which are described as generally walkable transit villages or corridors that are within one half-mile of a well-serviced transit stop or a transit corridor with 15-minute or less service frequency during peak commute hours.<sup>18</sup> Local jurisdictions are encouraged to focus housing and employment growth within High-Quality Transit Areas. The Project Site is not located within a High-Quality Transit Area.<sup>19</sup> However, as SCAG reviews new regional projects based on consistency with the adopted RTP/SCS, an analysis of the Project’s consistency with applicable regional goals and guiding policies from the 2012–2035 RTP/SCS is provided in the SCAG Policy Consistency Analysis provided in **Appendix 5.11C** of this Draft EIR.

### **(b) Growth Vision Report**

In an effort to maintain the region’s prosperity, continue to expand its economy, house its residents affordably, and protect its environmental setting as a whole, SCAG has collaborated with interdependent sub-regions, counties, cities, communities, and neighborhoods in a process referred to by SCAG as Southern California Compass, which resulted in the development of a shared Growth Vision Report for Imperial, Los Angeles, Orange, Riverside, San Bernardino and Ventura Counties. SCAG began Compass in 2002, spearheaded by the Growth Visioning Subcommittee, which consists of civic leaders from throughout the region. The shared regional vision sought to address issues such as congestion and housing availability, which may threaten the region’s livability.

The underlying goal of the growth visioning effort is to make the SCAG region a better place to live, work, and play for all residents regardless of race, ethnicity, or income. To organize the strategies for improving the quality of life in the SCAG region, a series of principles was established by the Growth Visioning Subcommittee are included in the Growth Vision Report. The four principles are intended to promote and maximize regional mobility, livability, prosperity, and sustainability. Decisions regarding growth, transportation, land use, and economic development should support and be guided by these principles. Specific policy and planning strategies also are provided as a way to

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<sup>18</sup> SCAG 2012–2035 Regional Transportation Plan/Sustainable Communities Strategy, p. 114, available at <http://rtpscsc.scag.ca.gov/Pages/2012-2035-RTP-SCS.aspx>, accessed March 4, 2015.

<sup>19</sup> SCAG 2012–2035 Regional Transportation Plan/Sustainable Communities Strategy, Exhibit 4.9: High-Quality Transit Areas (HQTAs) SCAG Region, p. 136, available at <http://rtpscsc.scag.ca.gov/Pages/2012-2035-RTP-SCS.aspx>, accessed March 4, 2015.

achieve each of the principles. The Project's consistency with the Growth Vision principles is discussed in the SCAG Policy Consistency Analysis provided in **Appendix 5.11C**.

### **(c) Regional Comprehensive Plan**

SCAG also prepared and issued the 2008 Regional Comprehensive Plan in response to SCAG's Regional Council directive in the 2002 Strategic Plan to define solutions to interrelated housing, traffic, water, air quality, and other regional challenges.<sup>20</sup> The 2008 RCP is an advisory document that describes future conditions if current trends continue, defines a vision for a healthier region, and recommends an Action Plan with a target year of 2035. The RCP may be voluntarily used by local jurisdictions in developing local plans and addressing local issues of regional significance. The plan incorporates principles and goals of the Compass Blueprint Growth Vision and includes nine chapters addressing land use and housing, transportation, air quality, energy, open space, water, solid waste, economy, and security and emergency preparedness. The action plans contained in the RCP provide a series of recommended near-term policies that developers and key stakeholders should consider for implementation, as well as potential policies for consideration by local jurisdictions and agencies when conducting project review.

The 2008 RCP replaced SCAG's 1996 Regional Comprehensive Plan and Guide (RCPG) for use in SCAG's Intergovernmental Review (IGR) process. SCAG's Community, Economic and Human Development Committee and the Regional Council took action to accept the RCP, which now serves as an advisory document for local governments in the SCAG region for their information and voluntary use in developing local plans and addressing local issues of regional significance. However, as indicated by SCAG, because of its advisory nature, the RCP is not used in SCAG's IGR process. Rather, SCAG reviews new regional projects based on consistency with the 2012–2035 RTP/SCS and Compass Growth Vision.<sup>21</sup>

### **(d) Air Quality Management Plan**

The SCAQMD was established in 1977 pursuant to the Lewis-Presley Air Quality Management Act. The SCAQMD is responsible for bringing air quality in the South Coast Air Basin into conformity with federal and State air pollution standards. The SCAQMD is also responsible for monitoring ambient air pollution levels throughout the Basin and for

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<sup>20</sup> SCAG, *2008 Regional Comprehensive Plan*, [www.scag.ca.gov/rcp/pdf/finalrcp/f2008RCP\\_ExecSum.pdf](http://www.scag.ca.gov/rcp/pdf/finalrcp/f2008RCP_ExecSum.pdf), accessed March 4, 2015.

<sup>21</sup> Prior to publication of the 2008 RTP, projects considered to be regionally significant based on SCAG criteria were required to provide an analysis of consistency with the 1996 RCPG goals and policies. However, SCAG now considers the RCPG superseded by the 2012–2035 RTP/SCS.

developing and implementing attainment strategies to ensure that future emissions will be within federal and State standards. An updated AQMP was adopted by the AQMD Governing Board on December 7, 2012.<sup>22</sup> The 2012 AQMP incorporates the latest scientific and technological information and planning assumptions, including SCAG's 2012–2035 RTP/SCS and updated emission inventory methodologies for various source categories. The 2012 AQMP also includes the new and changing federal requirements, implementation of new technology measures, and the continued development of economically sound, flexible compliance approaches. The AQMP provides policies and measures to guide responsible agencies in achieving federal standards for healthful air quality in the Air Basin and incorporates a comprehensive strategy aimed at controlling pollution from all sources. Further discussion of the AQMP can be found in **Section 5.3**, Air Quality, of this Draft EIR.

### **(e) Congestion Management Program**

The Los Angeles County Metropolitan Transportation Authority administers the Congestion Management Program, a State-mandated program designed to provide comprehensive long-range traffic planning on a regional basis. Adopted by the Metro Board on October 28, 2010, the updated 2010 CMP includes a hierarchy of highways and roadways with minimum level of service standards, transit standards, a trip reduction and travel demand management element, a program to analyze the impacts of local land use decisions on the regional transportation system, a seven-year capital improvement program, and a County-wide computer model used to evaluate traffic congestion and recommend relief strategies and actions.<sup>23</sup> The CMP guidelines call for evaluation of designated roadway intersections to which a project could add 50 or more trips during either the A.M. or P.M. peak hour. The guidelines also require evaluation of freeway segments to which a project could add 150 or more trips in each direction during peak hours. Please refer to **Section 5.20**, Transportation/Traffic, of this Draft EIR, for further discussion of the CMP.

## **b. Existing Conditions**

### **(1) Project Site**

As shown in the aerial photo provided in **Figure 3-4**, Aerial Photo of Project Site, in **Section 3.0**, Project Description, of this Draft EIR, the approximately 501.4-acre Project Site is comprised predominantly of vacant, undeveloped land, with some agricultural uses,

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<sup>22</sup> Although the 2007 AQMP was in effect at the time of the NOP, given the passage of time since the NOP, the updated AQMP is addressed herein.

<sup>23</sup> Although the 2004 CMP was in effect at the time of the NOP, given the passage of time since the NOP, the updated CMP is addressed herein.

a small plant nursery used by the adjacent Six Flags Magic Mountain, abandoned oil wells, and associated unpaved access roads. With respect to agricultural uses, approximately 7.45 acres in the northernmost portion of the Project Site are used as pasture. The Six Flags Magic Mountain nursery, located in the central western portion of the Project Site, includes two structures, a greenhouse/landscaping office/storage building and a tool shed. In addition, an estimated 19 possible former oil well sites are located on the Project Site, including 3 potential but unconfirmed former wells. A number of unpaved access roads lead to the associated drill pads, which vary in size and configuration but are generally flat and level, typically formed by past cut and fill activity. Finally, the southern boundary of the Project Site is developed with Southern California Edison electric transmission lines and towers, and a high pressure natural gas transmission pipeline traverses the southernmost portion of the Project Site from east to west. It is likely that smaller-diameter pipelines associated with past oil field operations also may be present.

The topography of the site varies and includes several major canyons that divide mountainous areas of low relief. These canyons are known as Magic Mountain Canyon, located near the western Project Site boundary, and three unnamed drainages (Unnamed Canyons 1, 2, and 3), all of which drain northerly to the River. The elevations on-site range from approximately 1,000 feet above mean sea level (AMSL) along the Santa Clara River to approximately 1,400 feet AMSL on the ridges in the southwestern portion of the Project Site.

Given the undeveloped nature of the majority of the Project Site, native and naturalized habitats are present and are representative of those found in the Valley and the River watershed in particular. Vegetation communities within the Project Site include California sagebrush scrub, California sagebrush–California buckwheat scrub, big sagebrush scrub, undifferentiated chaparral scrubs, California annual grasslands, river wash, a limited amount of valley oak forest and woodland, and limited areas of other riparian and bottomland habitats, as discussed further in **Section 5.4**, Biological Resources.

## **(2) Surrounding Area**

The Santa Clarita Valley has experienced substantial population growth and urban development in recent years. The majority of this development is concentrated between and adjacent to I-5 and State Route 14 (SR-14), although much of the land west of I-5 has been approved for future development as well. Land uses surrounding the Project Site include residential subdivisions and commercial recreation and commercial/business park uses, combined with a variety of agricultural, oil production, and industrial uses. To a large extent, the existing topography on-site and I-5 separate the Project Site from surrounding uses.

More specifically, as shown in **Figure 3-3**, Project Site and Surrounding Uses, in **Section 3.0**, Project Description, of this Draft EIR, Six Flags Magic Mountain is located north of VTTM 53295 and east of the External Map Improvements that comprise the northern portion of the Project Site. Six Flags Magic Mountain is a 260-acre commercial recreation facility featuring major roller coasters and rides, games, and attractions. Also located to the north is the proposed Entrada North community. To the east across The Old Road and I-5 is the City of Santa Clarita, which comprises approximately 58 square miles and includes the communities of Canyon Country, Newhall, Saugus, and Valencia. The existing residential community of Westridge is located immediately south of the Project Site, while the proposed Legacy Village community is located to the southwest.

To the west is vacant land within the Newhall Ranch Specific Plan area. The approved Mission Village community within the Specific Plan area is located immediately west of the Project Site. As previously indicated, Mission Village is an approved (but not yet constructed) urban village that includes residential, commercial, and mixed uses along with supporting public services, amenities, and infrastructure. Notably, the 1,261.8-acre community includes 693 acres of open space and trails, including an 85.8-acre Spineflower Preserve. As previously discussed, the western portions of the Project Site, where some of the External Map Improvements are proposed, fall within the boundaries of Mission Village.

Like the Project Site, some of the immediately surrounding lands have been used for oil extraction, and 20 possible oil wells have been identified off-site near the Project Site's boundaries, including within Six Flags Magic Mountain and the Specific Plan area.

Additionally, the Santa Clara River is located north of Six Flags Magic Mountain and the northern portion of the Project Site. The Upper Santa Clara River Watershed consists of the portion of the River watershed located within the County. The principal tributaries are Castaic Creek, San Francisquito Creek, Bouquet Creek, and the South Fork of the Santa Clara River.

### **3. ENVIRONMENTAL IMPACTS**

#### **a. Methodology**

The analysis of potential land use impacts considers the consistency of the Project with adopted plans, policies, and ordinances that regulate land use on the Project Site and the compatibility of proposed uses with surrounding land uses. The determination of consistency with applicable land use policies and ordinances is based upon a review of the previously identified planning documents that regulate land use or guide land use decisions pertaining to the Project Site. CEQA Guidelines Section 15125(d) requires an EIR to discuss inconsistencies with applicable plans. Projects are considered consistent with

applicable plans if they are compatible with the general intent of the plans and would not preclude the attainment of their primary goals.

The intent of the compatibility analysis is to determine whether the Project would be compatible with existing surrounding development in terms of land use, size, intensity, density, scale, and other physical and operational factors. The analysis relatedly determines whether existing neighborhoods, communities, or land uses would be disrupted, divided, or isolated by the Project and considers the duration of any disruptions. The compatibility analysis is based on aerial photography, land use maps, and field surveys in which surrounding uses were identified and characterized. The analysis addresses general land use relationships and urban form, based on a comparison of land use relationships in the area surrounding the Project Site under current conditions to those that would occur with Project implementation.<sup>24</sup>

### **b. Proposed Design Elements/Project Design Features**

A complete description of the Project and associated development characteristics is provided in **Section 3.0**, Project Description, of this Draft EIR. As discussed therein, the Project consists of the development of approximately 501.4 acres, of which 382.3 acres are located within proposed VTTM 53295. VTTM 53295 includes 339 single-family units, 1,235 multi-family units, and 730,000 square feet of commercial uses anticipated to be comprised of approximately 435,000 square feet of office uses and approximately 295,000 square feet of commercial retail uses.<sup>25</sup> In addition, it includes a 9.4-acre elementary school, a 5.6-acre public neighborhood park, 101.7 acres of open space areas, two private recreational centers within 2.9 acres, and a 27.2-acre Spineflower Preserve.<sup>26</sup> As shown in **Figure 3-6**, Project Planning Areas and Proposed Land Uses, in **Section 3.0**, Project Description, of this Draft EIR, VTTM 53295 is comprised of 14 Planning Areas (PAs). VTTM 53295 would be subdivided into a total of 500 lots, as shown in **Figure 3-7**, VTTM 53295, also in **Section 3.0**, Project Description. Detailed subset maps of VTTM

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<sup>24</sup> Given the time that has elapsed since publication of the NOP in 2010, updated existing conditions are addressed where substantial changes have occurred, as appropriate.

<sup>25</sup> As discussed in **Section 3.0**, Project Description, of this Draft EIR, some of the residential units may contain a living suite, defined as a room or series of rooms connected to the remainder of the dwelling unit by at least one interior connection, comprising no more than 25 percent of the gross floor area of the dwelling unit and no more than 1,000 square feet, as approved by the Director of Regional Planning or a Hearing Officer. Living suites are considered part of the main dwelling unit and, in combination with the main dwelling unit, are intended for occupancy by a single family or household.

<sup>26</sup> Open space acreage refers to lots within the tract map designated as open space. Additional open space areas, such as natural drainage courses, roadway medians, and landscaped parkways adjacent to on-site roadways, in addition to the proposed park, recreation centers, and Spineflower Preserve, bring the total open space area to approximately 153 acres.

53295 are presented in **Appendix 3** of this Draft EIR. Facilities and infrastructure proposed as part of the Project consist of a network of roads and trails, drainage and water quality improvements, dry utilities systems, a potable water system, a recycled water system, and a sanitary sewer system.

The Project Site also includes a 119.1-acre area consisting of External Map Improvements, including grading, utility, roadway, drainage, and other infrastructure improvements which are outside VTTM 53295, but which are necessary to support full Project implementation. The External Map Improvements include roadway improvements, including improvements to portions of Magic Mountain Parkway, Media Center Drive, and Commerce Center Drive, as well as the extension of Westridge Parkway to B Drive. Other External Map Improvements include: a water quality basin; debris basins; storm drain/flood control improvements and associated access roads; a potable water system, including a new water tank and an expanded booster station; wastewater and recycled water systems; relocation of a gas line with the extension of Westridge Parkway; and a grading borrow site to the west of VTTM 53295 within Mission Village. As previously indicated, some of the proposed External Map Improvements in the western portions of the Project Site also fall within the boundaries of Mission Village.

The Project would create a mixed-use community with high quality, pedestrian-scaled buildings, varied architecture, public and private open space, and street frontage improvements, while respecting the natural resources and natural features found on-site through the preservation of natural open space areas, incorporation of bank stabilization along certain slopes to reduce erosion potential, and restoration of a portion of the drainage course referred to as Unnamed Canyon 2. The proposed layout of Project development presents a logical transition in land use type and intensity, with the majority of commercial uses located in the northern portion of VTTM 53295, adjacent to Six Flags Magic Mountain; multi-family and park/institutional uses in the central portion of the site; and single-family residential uses as well as an open space corridor in the southern portion, adjacent to the existing Westridge community. This layout, and in particular the on-site circulation network, would be integrated with the existing Westridge community to the south, the approved, but unbuilt, Mission Village community to the immediate west, and the proposed Entrada North development to the north. The Project's design would generally reflect the character of some of the more recently developed communities in the surrounding area, such as Westridge, and would be compatible with the proposed design and character of future development within the Specific Plan communities to the west and Legacy Village to the southwest. More specific aspects of each of the major Project components are provided below.

- **Single-Family Residential Component (339 detached units).** The single-family housing type would be characterized by a traditional lot orientation. These

lots are proposed to be located along private streets and drives, and lot sizes would predominantly range from approximately 4,500 to 6,050 square feet. Building heights would be limited to 35 feet. Typical building elevations for single-family detached units are depicted in **Figure 3-9**, Typical Elevations—Single-Family Units, in **Section 3.0**, Project Description. Setbacks would comply with the zoning requirements set forth for the RPD-5000-5.8U zoning proposed in the residential areas of the Project Site.<sup>27</sup> Together with the multi-family units (described below), an overall residential density of just under 5.0 dwelling units per acre averaged over the residential portion of the site would be provided.

- **Multi-Family Residential Component (1,235 units).** The multi-family units would include condominium (attached and detached), duplex, triplex, townhome, and/or condominium/apartment style buildings. Parking may be at-grade, subterranean, and/or structured. Maximum building heights would be limited to 50 feet in most Planning Areas, except for PAs 4 and 10 where 35-foot and 60-foot limits, respectively, are proposed. Typical building elevations for the attached multi-family housing are depicted in **Figure 3-10**, Typical Elevations—Multi-Family Units, in **Section 3.0**, Project Description. Setbacks would comply with RPD-5000-5.8U zoning requirements.
- **Commercial Component (730,000 square feet).** The commercial areas would include retail/commercial and office uses connected to the surrounding residential and institutional uses by vehicular, transit, and pedestrian networks that include streets, trails, a pedestrian bridge over Magic Mountain Parkway, courtyards, and other outdoor features. North of Magic Mountain Parkway (PAs 1 through 3), building heights would range from one to four stories with a maximum of 80 feet, while development within the commercial area along The Old Road (Planning Area 14) would be limited to two stories or a maximum of 50 feet, and together the commercial areas would have an average FAR of 0.35. Pedestrian-oriented features such as awnings, street lamps, and landscape elements would be introduced to activate the public realm. Parking would be provided in both surface and structured parking lots. Building setbacks would not be required, per the C-3 and C-2 zones, which are proposed in PAs 1 through 3 and PA 14, respectively.<sup>28</sup>
- **Elementary School.** The Project includes a 9.4-acre elementary school site located in the central portion of VTTM 53295, as shown in **Figure 3-11**, Saugus Union School District Elementary School Site, in **Section 3.0**, Project

<sup>27</sup> Per County Code sections 22.20.460 and 22.20.120, setback requirements for the RPD-5000-5.8U zone are the same as R-1 yard requirements and are summarized as follows: front yard—20 feet; rear yard—15 feet or 20 percent of the average depth of a shallow lot, but not less than 10 feet; side yards—5 feet or 10 percent of the average width of a narrow lot, but not less than 3 feet for interior lots, or 5 feet for corner lots except on a reversed corner lot, which is 10 feet.

<sup>28</sup> Per County Code sections 22.28.130 et seq. and 22.28.180 et seq.

Description. Design of the school would adhere to development standards set forth by the Saugus Union School District. Outdoor play areas and a turf field would be provided, along with appropriate parking and drop-off areas, and pedestrian and bicycle access would be available via nearby trails and paseos connecting to the surrounding residential areas.

- **Park and Recreation Areas.** A 5.6-acre public neighborhood park would be developed within VTTM 53295 immediately east of the elementary school site, as illustrated in **Figure 3-12**, Public Neighborhood Park, in **Section 3.0**, Project Description. As described therein, the park would include various amenities and improvements, including play areas and a ball court and field, picnic and seating areas, internal walkways, landscaping, parking, and security lighting. In addition, two private neighborhood recreation centers are planned on approximately 2.1 acres west of Planning Area 8 and a 0.8-acre lot east Planning Area 5. The layout of the larger of the two recreation centers is depicted in **Figure 3-13**, Larger Neighborhood Recreation Center, in **Section 3.0**, Project Description. Separate smaller recreation areas would be located throughout the multi-family Planning Areas within VTTM 53295 and may contain facilities for passive or active uses.
- **Spineflower Preserve and Open Space.** The Project includes a 27.2-acre Spineflower Preserve located within the eastern portion of the Project Site, as shown in **Figure 3-8**, Entrada South Spineflower Preserve, in **Section 3.0**, Project Description. This area would be used solely for habitat preservation and would remain undeveloped. In addition, 101.7 acres of open space would be provided throughout the Project Site, including along Magic Mountain Parkway, along the southern site boundary where the Southern California Edison electric transmission lines and towers are located, and interspersed between the residential and commercial uses.<sup>29</sup>
- **Community Trails, Bike Lanes, Paseos, and Recreational Trails.** As shown in **Figure 3-14**, Project Trails Plan, in **Section 3.0**, Project Description, an extensive community trail system would be developed throughout the Project Site and would connect to the Specific Plan trail system to the west and the existing community of Westridge to the south. As illustrated, the proposed trail system would include community trails, bike lanes, paseos, and recreational trails. As described further in **Section 3.0**, Project Description, certain trail types would be located in landscaped parkways and may or may not be paved.

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<sup>29</sup> *Open space acreage refers to lots within the tract map designated as open space. Additional open space areas, such as natural drainage courses, roadway medians, and landscaped parkways adjacent to on-site roadways, in addition to the proposed park, recreation centers, and Spineflower Preserve, bring the total open space area to approximately 153 acres.*

- **Other Improvements and Infrastructure.** The Project's circulation system would include arterials, residential collectors, and private drives, as shown in **Figure 3-15**, Project Circulation Plan, in **Section 3.0**, Project Description. Cross-sections of the various proposed street types are depicted on the detailed subset maps of VTTM 53295 provided in **Appendix 3**.

The Project would also include a system of drainage, flood control, and water quality improvements, shown in **Figure 3-16**, Project Drainage and Water Quality Plan, in **Section 3.0**, Project Description, which would include storm drains, debris basins, water quality basins, and inlet and outlet structures. As illustrated in Figures 5-4 through 5-13 of the Water Quality Technical Report provided in **Appendix 5.10**, the various water quality features (i.e., Best Management Practices, or BMPs) introduced, potentially including bioretention or bioinfiltration facilities, would include natural elements such as grass or turf, plants and shrubs, small ponds, stones, and mulch, and thus would appear as landscaped areas. Similarly, the proposed debris basins would have a natural-looking appearance with vegetation or water features. Additionally, much of Unnamed Canyon 2 (depicted in **Figure 5.9-1**, Existing Tributary Drainage Features, in **Section 5.9**, Hydrology and Water Quality—Hydrology) would be restored as an open, vegetated drainage channel and thus would retain the look and feel of a natural canyon, providing visual relief within the residentially developed portions of the Project Site.

The Project's major utility systems, including potable water, recycled water, wastewater, electricity, natural gas, and cable/internet, would be placed underground, and utility/service areas would be treated through the use of color, landscaping, screening, etc. to minimize visual impact. In addition, rooftop equipment would be screened from view from public streets. As part of the Project's potable water system, a 4.0-million-gallon reservoir tank would be constructed on an existing tank site pad located adjacent to Westridge Parkway to the south of VTTM 53295. This water tank would be located adjacent to an existing 4.0-million-gallon water tank.

- **Landscape Plan.** As part of the Project, a comprehensive landscape plan would be implemented to enhance the existing natural features in the Project vicinity. In accordance with the County's drought-tolerant landscaping requirements (County Code Title 31), at least 75 percent of the Project's landscaped area would contain plants from the Los Angeles County Drought-Tolerant Plant List.<sup>30</sup> In addition, native trees, including oak trees, would be planted and enhanced with complementary native vegetation. Landscaping would be integrated into the

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<sup>30</sup> The Department of Regional Planning is currently working on an ordinance to repeal Green Building and Drought Tolerant Landscaping requirements from Title 22. However, drought-tolerant landscaping requirements are now addressed in the Green Building Standards Code in Title 31.

design of Project structures and would include grass/turf yards, small plants and shrubs, street trees, and landscaped parkways and medians.

Project implementation would require the removal of up to 67 oak trees, including 3 heritage oak trees, and encroachment on up to 11 other oak trees, including 1 heritage oak tree. As such, the Project would require the planting of up to 158 new oak trees of 15-gallon size per the County's Oak Tree Ordinance and current County practices. Refer to **Section 5.4**, Biological Resources, of this Draft EIR for further discussion.

- **Lighting.** Project lighting would be designed to ensure visibility and safety while minimizing light spillover and skyglow. As part of the Project's security features, roadways, entryways, and parking areas would be well illuminated and designed to eliminate areas of concealment. Measures such as light control devices on fixtures and careful fixture placement would be implemented to ensure minimal light spillover onto native habitat areas, including the Spineflower Preserve. Fixtures may include post lights, building mounted fixtures, and landscape lighting, all of which would be carefully placed and directed to reduce glare and maximize comfort, security, and visibility.
- **Signage.** Project signage would be limited primarily to ground-level and wayfinding pedestrian/vehicular signage, entry monument signs, and building identification signage. Project signage would be in keeping with the character of other nearby residential communities and commercial districts, and any associated lighting would be kept to the minimum sufficient to provide visibility and interest without creating bright light spots or light spillover.
- **Site Grading.** Project grading would require the removal and recompaction of approximately 7.8 million cubic yards of existing earth material in a balanced cut and fill operation. In addition to mass grading and fine grading, remedial grading of approximately 2.0 million cubic yards of material may also be required depending upon site-specific soils and future geotechnical investigations. The detailed subset maps of VTTM 53295, provided within **Appendix 3**, depict the Project's grading plan and contours. Included in the overall 7.8 million cubic yards of grading is approximately 1.4 million cubic yards for the External Map Improvements, including an approximately 400,000-cubic-yard borrow site within the External Map Improvements area from which 200,000 cubic yards would be imported into VTTM 53295 as part of the requested CUP. The remaining 200,000 cubic yards would be used as fill elsewhere within the External Map area.

In general, Project grading would respect the natural topographic trends that exist on-site, with the highest elevations in the southern portion of the Project Site and the lowest elevations in the northern portion near the River. Graded slopes would be contoured to blend with natural slopes and would be landscaped and irrigated pursuant to County grading and erosion control requirements.

Moreover, large areas along the southern site boundary, as well as in the southeast corner of the Project Site, where open space and the Spineflower Preserve, respectively, are proposed, would remain in their natural condition.

A discussion of proposed development by Planning Area is provided in **Section 3.0**, Project Description, of this Draft EIR and summarized in **Table 3-1**, Proposed Land Use by Planning Area, therein. In addition, **Table 3-2**, Project Statistical Summary, therein summarizes each land use type in terms of total acreage, number of lots, lot size, number of dwelling units or commercial square footage, and density.

As also discussed in **Section 3.0**, Project Description, the underlying purpose of the Project is to create a mixed-use community through infill development that is interconnected with the surrounding communities, respects the natural resources and features found on-site, and integrates land use, housing, and transportation considerations in furtherance of SB 375. The Project is also designed to accommodate some of the regional growth projected by SCAG while implementing sustainability and “smart growth” principles, including an appropriate mix of land uses, job generation, design principles to reduce vehicle miles traveled and commuting distances, access to transit, the provision of open space and recreational amenities, trail connectivity, the preservation of natural areas, water and energy conservation, efficient interior climate control, and the incorporation of green building techniques. The Project design would also comply with and carry out the resource conservation, management, and permitting responsibilities associated with the Newhall Ranch RMDP/SCP, including establishment of a Spineflower Conservation Area, and respect development associated with and be sensitive to the development standards set forth in the Newhall Ranch Specific Plan.

In order to provide a degree of development flexibility over the course of Project buildout, the density of development and location of buildings within individual Planning Areas may be adjusted so long as the overall average Project density on-site is not increased. For example, the density in one Planning Area may be increased if a corresponding decrease in density occurs in one or more other Planning Areas. Additionally, changes in dwelling unit construction types will be permitted, such as a change from attached to detached units. However, the general land use categories (e.g., single-family residential, commercial, park) defined for each Planning Area, as discussed above, would not change, and in no case would the maximum number of single-family or multi-family units or the total floor area of commercial uses on-site increase.

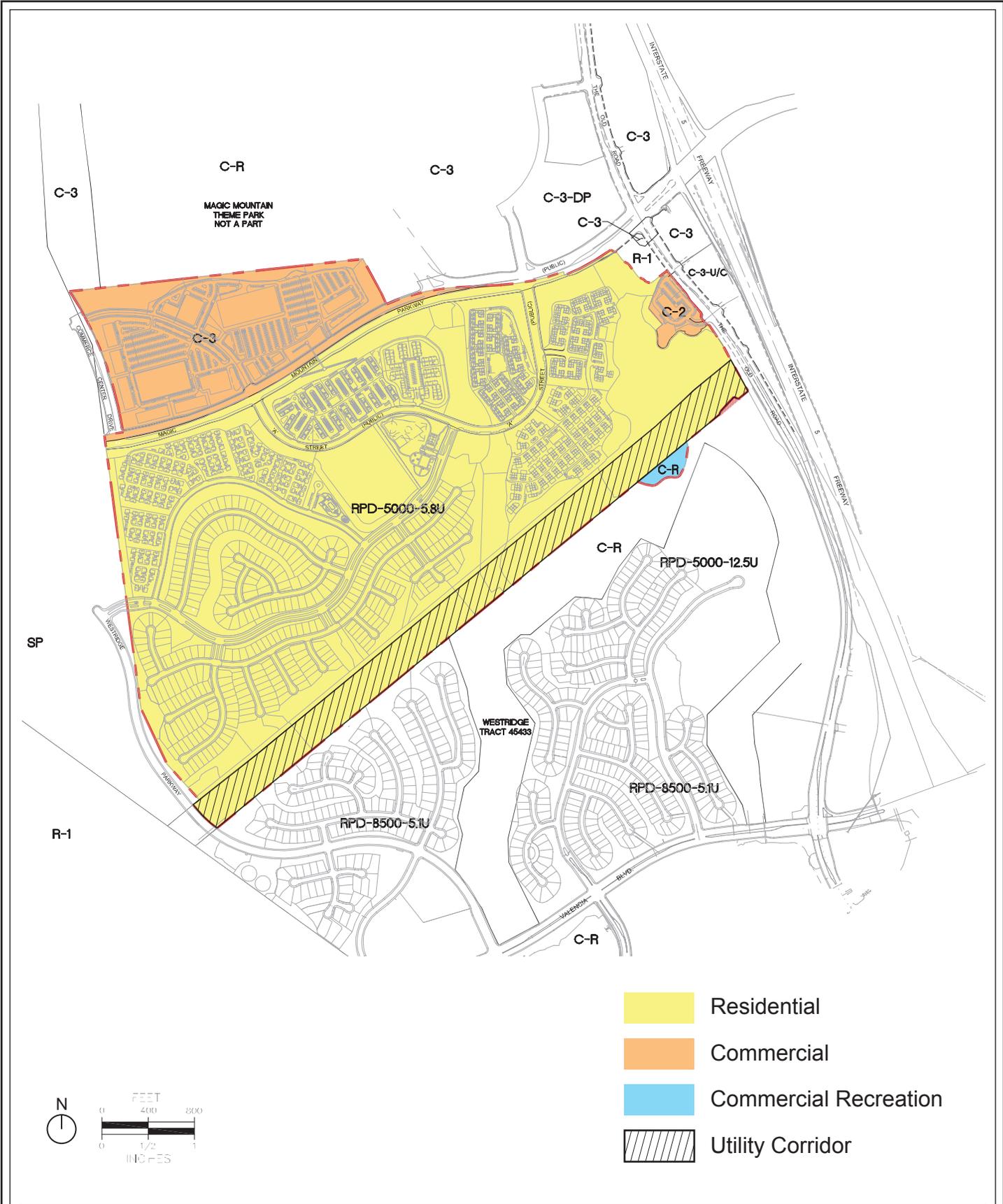
The Project may be built out in phases or all at once. Given the size of the Project, the adjacent developed areas, and existing infrastructure, it is likely that the Project Site would be mass graded all at one time to allow for construction of secondary access and utilities. Actual development of the proposed land uses would be based on market

conditions and adjacent development. For purposes of this analysis, it is assumed that some residential units initially may be developed together with an appropriate amount of retail and commercial space to serve the residential population, with additional retail and commercial uses constructed as increasing development of the Project warrants (i.e., based on internal demand for such uses). Based on current projections, complete Project buildout is assumed to take place approximately nine years from receipt of all necessary entitlements. Accordingly, Project occupancy is assumed to begin in 2018, with buildout occurring in 2024.

### c. Requested Entitlements

The following entitlements are sought in conjunction with proposed development of the Project Site:

- **VTTM No. 53295.** Approval of this Vesting Tentative Tract Map is requested to create 339 single-family lots, 38 condominium lots for 1,235 multi-family units, 19 commercial lots, 66 open space lots, 24 lots for private drives, 9 lots for other landscaped areas, two private recreation lots, two public facility lots (public park and public school), a Spineflower Preserve lot, and utility improvements. The proposed tract map would subdivide 382.3 acres of the Project Site into a total of 500 lots.
- **Zone Change No. 00-210.** The zone change request would change the existing R-1 zoning within VTTM 53295 to RPD-5000-5.8U, C-2, and C-3. Refer to **Table 5.11-2**, Zoning Designations On-Site, for a summary of the zone change acreages and **Figure 5.11-3**, Proposed Zoning Designations for VTTM 53295, on page 5.11-40 for an associated map. No zone change is necessary for the External Map Improvements area.
- **Conditional Use Permit No. 00-210.** The CUP would authorize: (1) grading within the Project Site in excess of 100,000 cubic yards; (2) implementation of the Residential Planned Development (RPD) zoning classification; (3) development in a hillside management (HM) area; (4) construction of an off-site water tank; and (5) reduction of minimum lot area from 5,000 square feet to a minimum of 4,500 square feet on the lesser of 16 single-family lots or five percent of single-family lots.
- **Oak Tree Permit No. 200700018.** The County Zoning Code contains provisions to protect trees of the oak genus. As a result, the removal or damage of certain “protected” oak trees is unlawful without a permit (Los Angeles County Zoning Code, Section 22.56.2050). With respect to the 104 oak trees located on-site, an Oak Tree Permit would be required for the removal of up to 67 oak trees, including 3 heritage oaks, and encroachment on up to 11 oak trees, including 1 heritage oak (26 oak trees would not be impacted). Included in these numbers are 20 removals, including the 3 heritage oaks, and 4 encroachments that are



**Figure 5.11-3**  
Proposed Zoning Designations for VTTM 53295

also covered by Oak Tree Permit No. 200500032 for Mission Village. If the approved Mission Village project is constructed first, 20 of the 67 oak trees would be removed and 4 trees would be encroached upon in conjunction with that development, thus the Project when built would require the removal of 47 oak trees (no heritage oaks) and 7 encroachments.

- **Parking Permit No. 200700013.** The Parking Permit is requested to authorize reciprocal parking across lot lines and future shared parking for designated lots.

Additional permits and approvals would also be sought in order to implement various Project components, as follows:

- County Sanitation Districts of Los Angeles County (Santa Clarita Valley Sanitation District)—Annexation into Sanitation District;
- Los Angeles Local Agency Formation Commission (LAFCO)—Annexation into Sanitation District; possible extension of Valencia Water Company service area;
- LA Regional Water Board—Section 401 certification or, alternatively, waste discharge requirements; construction de-watering permits;
- CDFW—Streambed Alteration Agreement per Fish & Game Code Section 1601 et seq.; Section 2081 Incidental Take Permits authorizing impacts to listed plant and animal species;
- Corps—Section 404 permit under the federal Clean Water Act;
- USFWS—Candidate Conservation Agreement to be made part of the Spineflower Conservation Plan;
- SCAQMD—Various permits for air emissions required under the AQMP;
- California Public Utilities Commission—Approval of Valencia Water Company service area extension to provide water to the Project Site (if VWC remains a regulated utility, such approval shall be obtained from the CPUC);
- California Department of Transportation (Caltrans)—Approvals of improvements to ramps, intersections, and freeway mainline segments; and
- City of Santa Clarita—Encroachment permits to construct off-site roadway improvements, if necessary.

Beyond the aspects of the Project discussed above, no specific Project Design Features (PDFs) are proposed with respect to land use.

### c. Significance Thresholds

Based on Appendix G of the CEQA Guidelines, the Los Angeles County Department of Regional Planning has determined that a project would have a potentially significant impact related to land use and planning based on the following criteria:

**Threshold 5.11-1:** Would the project physically divide an established community?

**Threshold 5.11-2:** Would the project be inconsistent with the applicable County plans for the subject property including, but not limited to, the General Plan, specific plans, local coastal plans, area plans, and community/neighborhood plans?

**Threshold 5.11-3:** Would the project be inconsistent with the County zoning ordinance as applicable to the subject property?

**Threshold 5.11-4:** Would the project conflict with Hillside Management Criteria, SEA conformance criteria, or any other applicable land use criteria?

For purposes of CEQA, environmental impacts ordinarily are those that result in substantial and adverse changes in the physical environment. An inconsistency between a project and a plan is a policy or legal determination rather than a physical impact on the environment. However, where a plan is adopted for the purpose of avoiding or mitigating a physical impact on the environment, an inconsistency may indicate the project could result in a significant effect on the environment.

As discussed in the Initial Study prepared for the Project, provided in **Appendix 1A** of this Draft EIR, implementation of the Project would not physically divide an established community since the site is currently vacant. Additionally, the adjacent communities (e.g., Westridge and future Mission Village) are distinct and generally self-contained communities that would not be physically divided by Project development.<sup>31</sup> Furthermore, the Project's proposed infrastructure systems would be integrated with those of the nearby planned subdivisions. In particular, many of the utility and drainage improvements would be buried underground, and above-ground improvements would be aligned with roadways or sited in areas designated for infrastructure so as not to interfere with the relationships between land uses within the planned subdivisions. The extension of Magic Mountain Parkway would run through the Entrada South, Mission Village, and Homestead South communities and has been anticipated and integrated into the designs of each project. Thus, there

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<sup>31</sup> *To the extent some of the External Map Improvements proposed under the Project are located within Mission Village, such improvements would also serve Mission Village and are included in that project as well. Refer to **Section 3.0, Project Description**, of this Draft EIR for further discussion of the "shared" improvements between Mission Village and Entrada South.*

would be no impact with respect to Threshold 5.11-1. No further discussion of this issue is necessary.

#### **d. Project Impacts**

**Threshold 5.11-2:** Would the project be inconsistent with the applicable County plans for the subject property including, but not limited to, the General Plan, specific plans, local coastal plans, area plans, and community/neighborhood plans?

**Threshold 5.11-3:** Would the project be inconsistent with the County zoning ordinance as applicable to the subject property?

**Threshold 5.11-4:** Would the project conflict with Hillside Management Criteria, SEA conformance criteria, or any other applicable land use criteria?

As discussed earlier, the Project Site is not located within a designated SEA. Therefore, no further discussion of this issue is provided herein.

#### **(1) Consistency with County Plans, Policies, and Regulations**

As previously discussed, Project development would be subject to several County land use plans, including the County's General Plan, the Santa Clarita Valley Area Plan, and the Zoning Code. The Project's consistency with relevant aspects of each applicable plan is discussed below, focusing on the plan elements that are most pertinent to individual development projects in the Project area. Additionally, refer to the General Plan Consistency Analysis and Area Plan Consistency Analysis provided in **Appendices 5.11A** and **5.11B**, respectively, for detailed analyses of the Project's consistency with specific policies in the adopted General Plan and Area Plan.

##### ***(a) County of Los Angeles General Plan***

The Project would be consistent with the general intent of the adopted General Plan. An analysis of the Project's consistency with applicable General Plan policies is provided in the General Plan Consistency Analysis provided in **Appendix 5.11A**. The discussion below focuses on the General Plan's General Goals and Policies, Land Use Element, and Conservation and Open Space Element.

##### ***(i) General Goals and Policies***

With regard to the policies set forth in the General Goals and Policies Chapter, the Project's design would promote an arrangement of land uses that protects areas that have significant natural resources and scenic values while promoting environmental sustainability and urban livability. Site grading would generally follow the natural

topographic trends on-site, and major natural features, such as the River to the immediate north and the 27.2-acre Spineflower Preserve, would be preserved. Additionally, transit would be promoted in the Project's traditional neighborhood design and would include on-site bus stops (future bus transit routes are anticipated to be extended along Magic Mountain Parkway in the Project area by Santa Clarita Transit as part of a comprehensive Valley-wide transit system; on-site bus stop locations will be determined in consultation with Santa Clarita Transit), as discussed further in **Section 5.20**, Transportation/Traffic, of this Draft EIR. The Project also includes numerous features to ensure future energy conservation, such as energy efficient lighting and solar energy elements (see PDF ES 5.23-1 in **Section 5.23**, Utilities and Service Systems—Energy, and PDFs ES 5.7-1 through ES 5.7-3 and PDF ES 5.7-8, detailed in **Section 5.7**, Greenhouse Gas Emissions. The proposed drainage and flood control plan would implement current LID standards and exceed National Pollutant Discharge Elimination System (NPDES) permit requirements. Finally, the Project would provide needed housing within an infill site that is adjacent to existing, approved, and planned infrastructure, urban services, transportation corridors, transit facilities, and major employment centers. Therefore, the Project would be generally consistent with the intent of the General Goals and Policies Chapter of the adopted General Plan. Refer to the General Plan Consistency Analysis provided in **Appendix 5.11A** for further discussion.

***(ii) Land Use Element***

With regard to the policies set forth in the Land Use Element, the Project would create a mixed-use community comprised of mutually supportive land uses that offer housing, employment, shopping, recreation, and other community-serving activities and opportunities. As discussed above, the Project would respect the natural resources and natural features found on-site through the preservation of natural open space areas, incorporation of bank stabilization along certain slopes to reduce erosion potential, and restoration of a portion of the drainage course referred to as Unnamed Canyon 2. The Project includes numerous features including walking trails and transit improvements to promote pedestrian connectivity and reduce vehicle miles traveled. Further, while the Project would convert approximately 6.2 acres of Prime Farmland to non-agricultural uses, as discussed in **Section 5.2**, Agricultural and Forestry Resources, of this Draft EIR, impacts to agricultural resources would be fully mitigated through a permanent agriculture conservation easement within the Salt Creek conservation area and on adjoining agricultural lands.

In addition, criteria for hillside development are set forth in Appendix A of the Land Use Element. The general conditions for development provided therein address density standards for residential uses, density transfers from steeper to more level land, and natural or open space standards. Accordingly, a CUP for hillside development would be sought. In general, Project grading would respect the natural topographic trends that exist on-site, with the highest elevations in the southern portion of the Project Site and the lowest

elevations in the northern portion near the River. Moreover, the layout of proposed development would avoid substantial grading of much of the steepest terrain on-site, including the southernmost portions of the Project Site, and stabilization fill slopes would be constructed where needed. Graded slopes would be contoured to blend with natural slopes and would be landscaped and irrigated pursuant to County grading and erosion control requirements. In addition, an estimated 153 acres of VTTM 53295 would be retained as natural or open space; when accounting for private yards, more than 50 percent of the Project Site would consist of open space, as defined in Appendix A.<sup>32</sup> In accordance with the public safety performance criteria, the Project would meet applicable County and state subdivision requirements, hillside hazards (e.g., landslides, erosion, etc.) would be appropriately mitigated, and Project grading would comply with County grading requirements, as discussed in **Section 5.6**, Geology and Soils, of this Draft EIR. Furthermore, site design performance criteria would be met through the preservation of certain natural features on-site, including portions of drainage courses, the protection of valued views of and across the Project Site, and the landscaping of graded slopes, as discussed in **Section 5.1**, Aesthetics, Views, and Light and Glare. As such, the required findings regarding public safety, resource protection, development suitability, and quality of design can be made.

Overall, the Project would be consistent with the general intent of the Land Use Element of the adopted General Plan. Refer to the General Plan Consistency Analysis provided in **Appendix 5.11A** for further discussion.

### ***(iii) Conservation and Open Space Element***

According to the Conservation and Open Space Policy Map, the majority of the Project Site is designated as a Special Management Area, defined as an area where special safety or mitigation measures are necessary to ensure the protection of natural or scenic resources, property, and/or human life. The Special Management Areas Policy Map designates much of the Project Site as Hillside Management and portions of the site as a Mineral Resource Area (i.e., where past oil extraction has occurred) and a Flood Prone Area (i.e., adjacent to the Santa Clara River) and denotes a Major Fault Zone near the northern portion of the Project Site. Additionally, I-5 and SR-126 in the vicinity of the Project Site are mapped as Scenic Highways (although they have not been formally adopted as such).

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<sup>32</sup> *The 153 acres of open space includes designated open space lots, natural drainage courses, roadway medians, and landscaped parkways adjacent to on-site roadways, in addition to the proposed park, recreation centers, and Spineflower Preserve.*

With regard to hillside management, a CUP for hillside development would be required, as discussed above. In accordance with the Hillside Management Area Ordinance, the Geotechnical Reports prepared for the Project, included in **Appendix 5.6** of this Draft EIR, address all relevant issues regarding faults and slope stability. The Project will be reviewed for compliance with applicable criteria set forth in the Hillside Management/Performance Review Procedures (Appendix A of the Land Use Element). In particular, public safety impacts would be avoided or mitigated to the extent possible, and impacts related to compliance with Hillside Management Area Ordinance or other hillside design standards would be less than significant. Therefore, the Project would not substantially conflict with the Hillside Management designation.

With regard to mineral resources, as discussed in **Section 5.12**, Mineral Resources, of this Draft EIR, 19 possible former oil well sites are located on the Project Site, and a high pressure natural gas transmission pipeline traverses the southernmost portion of the Project Site. As discussed in more detail in **Section 5.8**, Hazards and Hazardous Materials, of this Draft EIR, the Project Site does not include any active mineral extraction operations, and all of the known former oil and gas wells on-site have been abandoned. Moreover, ongoing oil and gas extraction activities within the surrounding area and potential future extraction from beneath the site would not be hindered by Project development. Therefore, Project implementation would not result in the loss of availability of a known mineral resource of value, nor would it result in the loss of availability of a locally-important mineral resource recovery site. As such, the Project would not substantially conflict with the Mineral Resource Area designation on the Project Site.

With regard to flood prone areas, the northernmost portion of the Project Site falls within the flood management protection zone adjacent to the Santa Clara River corridor. However, the drainage and water quality infrastructure proposed in this area would not require flood protection.

With regard to fault zones, the Major Fault Zone shown in the Project vicinity on the Special Management Areas Policy Map corresponds with the Holser fault. As discussed in **Section 5.6**, Geology and Soils, of this Draft EIR, the last known movement on the Holser fault was approximately 40,000 to 100,000 years ago and, thus, the fault is considered potentially active. By definition, potentially active faults have not demonstrated movement within the last 11,000 years. As such, the probability of ground rupture associated with potentially active faults occurring within the Project site during the life of the Project is considered to be very low. Likewise, the potentially active Airport Mesa and Saddle faults within the Holser structural zone would have a low potential for ground rupture. Therefore, the Project would not expose people or structures to substantial adverse effects related to fault rupture associated with these fault. As such, the Project would not substantially conflict with the Major Fault Zone designation on the Project Site.

With regard to scenic highways, as discussed in **Section 5.1**, Aesthetics, Views, Light and Glare, of this Draft EIR, although the Project Site would be visually altered, none of the existing visual features to be removed are considered unique. Panoramic views of the Valley and surrounding mountains would continue to be available to the public from various locations within the Project vicinity, and view impacts would be less than significant. It is also noted that while the Special Management Areas Policy Map identifies I-5 and SR-126 in the Project vicinity as Scenic Highways, both are classified in the Scenic Highway Element as First Priority Scenic Routes, indicating they are proposed for further study.<sup>33</sup> Thus, the Project would not substantially conflict with the Scenic Highway designations in the Special Management Areas Policy Map.

With regard to the policies set forth in the Conservation and Open Space Element, the Project would create a mixed-use community with high quality, pedestrian-scaled development as well as public and private open space, while respecting the natural resources and natural features found on-site through the preservation of natural open space areas, incorporation of bank stabilization along certain slopes to reduce erosion potential, and restoration of a portion of the drainage course referred to as Unnamed Canyon 2. In general, Project grading would respect the natural topographic trends that exist on-site, and graded slopes would be contoured to blend with natural slopes. The Project includes numerous features including walking trails and transit improvements to promote pedestrian connectivity and reduce both vehicle miles traveled and air pollution. The Project also includes a 27.2-acre Spineflower Preserve. As such, the Project would be generally consistent with the overall intent of the Conservation and Open Space Element of the adopted General Plan. Refer to the General Plan Consistency Analysis provided in **Appendix 5.11A** for further discussion.

### ***(b) Los Angeles County General Plan 2035***

As previously discussed, the County is in the process of updating the General Plan, and a Draft General Plan was circulated to the public in January 2014. Although the policies set forth in the adopted General Plan remain applicable to the Project, for informational purposes and in recognition of the County's current effort to update the General Plan, a brief discussion of Project consistency with the Draft General Plan is provided below. The discussion focuses on the Land Use Element and other key aspects of the Draft General Plan related to land use.

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<sup>33</sup> *County of Los Angeles General Plan Scenic Highway Element, Appendix A—Scenic Highway System Map Index, pp. SHA-1 through SHA-2, [http://planning.lacounty.gov/assets/upl/project/gp\\_web80-scenic-highway-element.pdf](http://planning.lacounty.gov/assets/upl/project/gp_web80-scenic-highway-element.pdf), accessed March 4, 2015.*

Within the draft Land Use Element, Special Management Areas are designated and include Hillside Management Areas, Mineral Resource Zones, Scenic Resources, Seismic and Geotechnical Hazard Zones, and Very High Fire Hazard Severity Zones, each of which are addressed further in the respective Elements (Conservation and Natural Resources Element, Safety Element, etc.). Refer to the analysis above regarding the adopted General Plan (as well as **Section 5.1**, Aesthetics, Views, and Light and Glare; **Section 5.6**, Geology and Soils; **Section 5.12**, Mineral Resources; and **Section 5.15**, Public Services—Fire Protection, of this Draft EIR) for discussion of Project consistency with these designations.

The draft Land Use Element encourages infill development, land use compatibility, sustainable development, and appropriate community design. As previously indicated, the Project would create a mixed-use community through infill development that is interconnected with the surrounding communities, respects the natural resources and features found on-site, and integrates land use, housing, and transportation considerations. More specifically, the Project's layout, and in particular the on-site circulation network, would be integrated with the existing Westridge community to the south, the approved, but unbuilt, Mission Village community to the immediate west, and the proposed Entrada North development to the north. The Project's design would generally reflect the character of some of the more recently developed communities in the surrounding area, such as Westridge, and would be compatible with the proposed design and character of future development within the Specific Plan communities to the west and Legacy Village to the southwest. The Project also would implement sustainability and "smart growth" principles, including an appropriate mix of land uses, job generation, design principles to reduce vehicle miles traveled and commuting distances, access to transit, the provision of open space and recreational amenities, trail connectivity, the preservation of natural areas, water and energy conservation, efficient interior climate control, and the incorporation of green building techniques. Finally, Project development would be of a quality consistent with the high standards of the greater Valencia community. Accordingly, the Project would support many of the key principles fundamental to the Land Use Element of the Draft General Plan. Overall, the Project would be consistent with the Land Use Element and the general intent of the Draft General Plan.

**(c) Santa Clarita Valley Area Plan: One Valley One Vision 2012**

The Project also would be consistent with the general intent of the Area Plan. Area Plan policies and an analysis of the Project's consistency with those policies that are applicable are provided in the Area Plan Consistency Analysis provided in **Appendix 5.11B**. The discussion below focuses on the Land Use Element and associated land use designations.

As shown in **Figure 5.11-1**, Area Plan Land Use Designations, the Area Plan designates the Project Site (including VTTM 53295 and the External Map Improvements

area) as H2—Residential 2, H5—Residential 5, CM—Major Commercial, OS-PR—Parks and Recreation, and SP—Newhall Ranch Specific Plan. The residential and commercially designated areas generally correspond with the areas proposed for residential and commercial development, respectively, and the types of uses proposed are consistent with those permitted for each land use designation. Additionally, the Project’s residential density across the H5-designated area would be less than five units per acre, and the commercial FAR within the CM-designated area would be well below the Area Plan maximum of 3.0.<sup>34</sup> While the External Map Improvements are located in SP and CM areas, the improvements proposed therein are consistent with the types of infrastructure required to support the various uses permitted within each respective land use designation. Finally, the area designated as OS-PR would remain as open space, as under existing conditions. Therefore, the Project would be consistent with the land use designations set forth in the Area Plan.

As the Area Plan Land Use Element represents a comprehensive, long-term land use plan for the physical development of the Valley, issues addressed include urban form; community character; the protection of natural features, scenic resources, and cultural sites; the provision of open space; minimization of hazards; and quality of life, among others. The Project would create a mixed-use community with high quality, pedestrian-scaled buildings, varied architecture, public and private open space, and street frontage improvements, while respecting the natural resources and natural features found on-site through the preservation of natural open space areas, incorporation of bank stabilization along certain slopes to reduce erosion potential, and restoration of a portion of the drainage course referred to as Unnamed Canyon 2. The proposed layout of Project development presents a logical transition in land use type and intensity, with the majority of commercial uses located in the northern portion of VTTM 53295, adjacent to Six Flags Magic Mountain; multi-family and park/institutional uses in the central portion of the site; and single-family residential uses as well as an open space corridor in the southern portion, adjacent to the existing Westridge community. This layout, and in particular the on-site circulation network, would be integrated with the existing Westridge community to the south, the approved, but unbuilt, Mission Village community to the immediate west, and the proposed Entrada North development to the north. As well, the Project’s design would generally reflect the character of some of the more recently developed communities in the surrounding area, such as Westridge, and would be compatible with the proposed design and character of future development within the Specific Plan communities to the west and Legacy Village to the southwest. Designed as an infill development, the Project also would accommodate some of the regional growth projected by SCAG while implementing sustainability and

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<sup>34</sup> *The residential density calculation methodology employed by the County is detailed in the County’s Memo to File, available at the County Department of Regional Planning.*

“smart growth” principles, including an appropriate mix of land uses, job generation, design principles to reduce vehicle miles traveled and commuting distances, access to transit, the provision of open space and recreational amenities, trail connectivity, the preservation of natural areas, water and energy conservation, efficient interior climate control, and the incorporation of green building techniques. Finally, the Project would support economic development efforts through job creation, the provision of goods and services through community-serving land uses, and the attraction of new businesses.

Based on its characteristics and design, the Project would support many of the community and land use planning principles encouraged in the Land Use Element. Similarly, the Project would support underlying principles set forth in each of the other Area Plan Elements, as indicated in the policy consistency analysis provided in the Area Plan Consistency Analysis provided in **Appendix 5.11B**. Overall, the Project would help implement the defined vision for the Valley by providing for development consistent with Area Plan goals, providing adequate infrastructure, retaining and respecting natural resources, promoting economic vitality, and establishing a high quality of life. Therefore, the Project would be consistent with the Land Use Element and the general intent of the Area Plan.

#### ***(d) Los Angeles County Subdivision Code and Planning and Zoning Code***

With respect to the County’s subdivision code (subdivision ordinance), which applies to vesting tentative tract maps such as the Project, the Project has undergone review by the Subdivision Committee, as required, and VTTM 53295 has been cleared of all holds. Detailed subset maps for VTTM 53295, including an exhibit map (also called an Exhibit “A” map when the VTTM is concurrent with a CUP), are presented in **Appendix 3** of this Draft EIR.

As previously discussed, the Project Site (including VTTM 53295 and the External Map Improvements area) is currently zoned R-1—Single-Family Residence, RPD-8500-5.1U—Residential Planned Development (5.1 dwelling units per net acre), C-3—Unlimited Commercial, C-3-DP—Unlimited Commercial/Development Program, C-R—Commercial Recreation, and SP—Newhall Ranch Specific Plan, as shown in **Figure 5.11-2**, Existing Zoning Designations, and summarized in terms of acreage in **Table 5.11-2**, Zoning Designations On-Site. Pursuant to Zoning Code Section 22.16.070, the Project would involve a zone change to change the existing R-1 zoning within VTTM 53295 to RPD-5000-5.8U, C-2, and C-3. No change of zone is necessary for the External Map Improvements area. Refer to **Table 5.11-2**, Zoning Designations On-Site, for a summary of the zone change acreages and **Figure 5.11-3**, Proposed Zoning Designations for VTTM 53295, for an associated map. Planned residential development or RPD is intended to: promote residential amenities beyond those expected under conventional development; achieve

greater flexibility in design; encourage well-planned neighborhoods through creative and imaginative planning as a unit; and provide for appropriate use of land which is sufficiently unique in its physical characteristics or other circumstances to warrant special methods of development. Planned developments are further intended to reduce developmental problems in hillside areas and preserve areas of natural scenic beauty through the encouragement of integrated planning, integrated design, and unified control of development. In accordance with zoning requirements, a CUP would be sought to implement the RPD zone and other requests as discussed earlier.

The proposed RPD zone would allow 5.8 dwelling units per net acre with a minimum lot area of 5,000 square feet (except for a lot area reduction to 4,500 square feet for a maximum of 16 single-family lots or five percent of single-family homes, whichever is less). Based on compliance with required setbacks and other development standards, the proposed layout and design of the Project would not exceed the allowable building coverage of 50 percent of the net area. In addition, 153 acres or 40 percent of VTTM 53295 would consist of open space, exceeding the 30 percent minimum for open space.<sup>35</sup> Other development characteristics of the Project, such as front, side, and rear yards, would meet R-1 zoning standards, as required. Implementation of the RPD zone would permit development of the proposed residential uses in a manner and at a density that allows for substantial areas of open space throughout the site while protecting the most sensitive natural areas on-site, such as the Spineflower Preserve. Similarly, the proposed C-2 and C-3 zones would allow for the proposed commercial uses in concentrated areas adjacent to major roadways. The Project's commercial development would not exceed the 90 percent net lot coverage limitation set forth for the C-2 and C-3 zones. Further, the zone change would be consistent with the Project Site's land use designations within the Area Plan.

Any decision granting the CUP to authorize the RPD zone change would be based on findings that the Project complies with the intent of planned residential development and provides for, among other things, public safety and convenience, the protection of property values, and preservation of the general welfare of the community. Compliance with the plans and exhibits included in the tract map package (provided in **Appendix 3**) would provide safeguards to ensure the re-zoned area is developed in harmony with the remaining areas of the Project Site and the surrounding area. The Project has also been designed to be consistent with other relevant Zoning Code development standards regarding hillside development, parking, signage, etc. (Refer to the earlier discussion of consistency with hillside management requirements.) In summary, with approval of the requested zone

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<sup>35</sup> As previously discussed, the 153 acres of open space includes designated open space lots, natural drainage courses, roadway medians, and landscaped parkways adjacent to on-site roadways, in addition to the proposed park, recreation centers, and Spineflower Preserve.

change and the associated CUP, the Project would be consistent with the Los Angeles County Planning and Zoning Code.

**(e) Conclusion**

Based on the analysis presented above, the Project would be consistent with the general intent of the adopted General Plan, the Draft General Plan, and the Area Plan. The Project would also comply with applicable Zoning Code requirements. Therefore, impacts would be less than significant.

**(2) County Development Monitoring System**

The above analysis is consistent with the DMS environment criteria related to natural resources. As previously discussed, the Santa Clara River SEA encompasses the Santa Clara River within the Project vicinity, but does not include the Project Site. As such, the DMS criteria regarding SEAs are not applicable to the Project. The Project Site is, however, characterized by hillsides, some riparian habitat, and areas with oak trees. Accordingly, the Project would adhere to the County's hillside management requirements, as discussed above. Project impacts to riparian habitat and other sensitive habitat and vegetation communities, particularly those that fall under the jurisdiction of CDFW and/or USFWS, would be fully mitigated, as discussed in detail in **Section 5.4**, Biological Resources, of this Draft EIR. Similarly, impacts to protected oak trees would be mitigated as required per the County's Oak Tree Ordinance and current County practices, as discussed above and in greater detail in **Section 5.4**, Biological Resources. All such impacts would be mitigated to a less-than-significant level.

The above analysis also is consistent with the DMS environment criteria related to open space. Specifically, although the Conservation and Open Space Element does not designate any portion of the Project Site as publicly held or privately dedicated open space, the Area Plan designates approximately 1.5 acres as OS-PR—Parks and Recreation. This area is located along the southern boundary of the Project Site, adjacent to an existing golf course within the Westridge community. Additionally, this area is included within the proposed Spineflower Preserve, depicted in **Figure 3-8**, Entrada South Spineflower Preserve, in **Section 3.0**, Project Description. Thus, this existing open space area will be retained as open space in the form of a natural preserve.

Accordingly, the analysis herein and in **Section 5.4**, Biological Resources, shows that impacts related to natural resources and open space would be less than significant (with mitigation, in the case of impacts to riparian habitat and oak trees). As such, the Project is consistent with DMS policies as they relate to natural resources and open space.

Additional DMS criteria for infrastructure, access, and environmental factors, including geotechnical hazards, flood hazards and erosion, fire protection, schools, library services, water service, and wastewater service and treatment capacity, are addressed in **Section 5.6**, Geology and Soils; **Section 5.9**, Hydrology and Water Quality—Hydrology; **Section 5.15**, Public Services—Fire Protection; **Section 5.17**, Public Services—Schools; **Section 5.19**, Public Services—Libraries; **Section 5.21**, Utilities and Service Systems—Water Supply and Service; and **Section 5.22**, Utilities and Service Systems—Wastewater, respectively.

### **(3) Consistency with Regional Plans, Policies, and Regulations**

As previously discussed, Project development would be subject to several regional land use plans, including SCAG’s 2012–2035 Regional Transportation Plan/Sustainable Communities Strategy, Growth Vision Report, and Regional Comprehensive Plan; SCAQMD’s Air Quality Management Plan; and Metro’s Congestion Management Program. Project consistency with relevant aspects of the 2012–2035 RTP/SCS and the Growth Vision Report is discussed below. Analysis of consistency with the AQMP is provided in **Section 5.3**, Air Quality, of this Draft EIR, which concludes the Project would be consistent with that plan and the growth assumptions upon which it is based. Similarly, the analysis in **Section 5.20**, Transportation/Traffic, demonstrates that the Project would result in less-than-significant impacts at one CMP intersection after mitigation and along one freeway segment upon completion of pending freeway improvements, and thus would be consistent with the CMP.

#### ***(a) SCAG Plans: 2012–2035 Regional Transportation Plan/Sustainable Communities Strategy and Growth Vision Report***

The Project’s consistency with SCAG goals and principles is evaluated in the SCAG Policy Consistency Analysis provided in **Appendix 5.11C**. In support of those goals and principles, as previously discussed, the underlying purpose of the Project is to create a mixed-use community through infill development that is interconnected with the surrounding communities, respects the natural resources and features found on-site, and integrates land use, housing, and transportation considerations in furtherance of SB 375. The Project is also designed to accommodate some of the regional growth projected by SCAG while implementing sustainability and “smart growth” principles, including an appropriate mix of land uses, job generation, design principles to reduce vehicle miles traveled and commuting distances, access to transit, the provision of open space and recreational amenities, trail connectivity, the preservation of natural areas, water and energy conservation, efficient interior climate control, and the incorporation of green building techniques.

To achieve the goals of the 2012–2035 RTP/SCS, a wide range of strategies are included in the SCS chapter, focusing on four key areas: (1) land use; (2) transportation

network; (3) transportation demand management (TDM); and (4) transportation system management (TSM). The Project's consistency with the transportation-related strategies is analyzed in **Section 5.7**, Greenhouse Gas Emissions, of this Draft EIR. As discussed therein, the Project would be consistent with the actions and strategies contained in the SCS.

The Project's land use characteristics were also compared to the land use assumptions within the 2012–2035 RTP/SCS. This evaluation was based on the number of households identified in SCAG's traffic analysis zones for the Project Applicant's "Westside" area, which is generally located west of I-5 and defined as including the Newhall Ranch Specific Plan area and the adjacent Entrada South, Entrada North, Legacy Village, and Commerce Center areas. Based on that evaluation (See Appendix H of the Air Quality Technical Report, provided in **Appendix 5.3** of this Draft EIR), the SCS's household data (29,776 units) is comparable to the household data (30,178 units) that represents the total amount of development planned within the Project Applicant's Westside area, all other known planned and proposed development projects, and existing land uses. Thus, the Project is consistent with the 2012–2035 RTP/SCS growth patterns.

The four principles that guide the Growth Vision Report focus on maximizing regional mobility, livability, prosperity, and sustainability. As discussed in detail in the SCAG Policy Consistency Analysis provided in **Appendix 5.11C**, the Project includes a variety of features that support these principles, including a mutually supportive mix of land uses including a variety of housing types; pedestrian-scaled development; recreational opportunities and multi-use trails; expanded transit on-site; and the preservation of natural open space areas. Accordingly, the Project would be generally consistent with the applicable goals set forth in the Growth Vision Report.

Based on the analysis presented above, the Project would be consistent with the general intent of the 2012–2035 RTP/SCS, Growth Vision Report, and RCP. Impacts would be less than significant.

#### **(4) Land Use Compatibility**

Land use compatibility addresses whether the Project would be compatible in terms of use, size, intensity, density, scale, and other physical and operational factors with the surrounding environment and associated uses. Land uses surrounding the Project Site include existing and proposed/approved residential subdivisions and commercial recreation and commercial/business park uses, combined with a variety of agricultural, oil production, and industrial uses. To a large extent, the existing topography on-site and I-5 separate the Project Site from surrounding uses.

As previously discussed, the types of land uses proposed under the Project are consistent with the Area Plan land use designations for the site and similar to many of the existing and planned uses in the surrounding area. The proposed layout of Project development presents a logical transition in land use type and intensity, with the majority of commercial uses located in the northern portion of VTTM 53295, adjacent to Six Flags Magic Mountain; multi-family and park/institutional uses in the central portion of the site; and single-family residential uses as well as an open space corridor in the southern portion, adjacent to the existing Westridge community. This layout, and in particular the on-site circulation network, would be integrated with the existing Westridge community to the south, the approved, but unbuilt, Mission Village community to the immediate west, and the proposed Entrada North development to the north. The Project's design also would generally reflect the character of some of the more recently developed communities in the surrounding area, such as Westridge, and would be compatible with the proposed design and character of future development within the Specific Plan communities to the west and Legacy Village to the southwest. In addition, in accordance with PDF ES 5.1-1, presented in **Section 5.1**, Aesthetics, Views, and Light and Glare, of this Draft EIR, Design Guidelines shall be prepared for the Project to address such issues as site planning, architecture, walls and fencing, landscape design, lighting, signage, and general design themes for each of the major land use categories in the community. As a result, Project development would be of a quality consistent with the high standards of the greater Valencia community.

The Project's design would promote an arrangement of land uses that protects areas that have significant natural resources and scenic values while promoting environmental sustainability and urban livability. Specifically, the Project would respect the natural resources and natural features found on-site through the preservation of natural open space areas, incorporation of bank stabilization along certain slopes to reduce erosion potential, and restoration of a portion of the drainage course referred to as Unnamed Canyon 2. The Project also would implement appropriate design features and mitigation measures to address potentially hazardous conditions, including fuel modification activities to reduce fire hazards and the provision of debris basins to prevent excessive runoff, flooding, and erosion. The oak trees to be removed as part of Project development would be replaced as required. Moreover, the Project includes numerous features to ensure future energy conservation, such as energy efficient lighting and solar energy elements.

Construction activities can also be a source of incompatibility; and construction of the Project would result in temporary significant impacts associated with air quality and noise. However, these impacts would be short-term in nature and would be staged to minimize disruption to neighboring streets and properties. Please refer to **Section 5.3**, Air Quality, and **Section 5.13**, Noise, of this Draft EIR for further discussion.

In summary, the Project uses would be compatible with the surrounding uses, and the Project would not interfere with the activities on adjacent sites. The Project would not substantially or adversely change the relationships between the land uses or properties in surrounding neighborhoods or communities, nor would it have the long-term effect of adversely altering a neighborhood or community through ongoing disruption, division, or isolation. Impacts regarding compatibility with surrounding uses would therefore be less than significant.

#### 4. CUMULATIVE IMPACTS

The geographic context for the cumulative impact analysis for land use is the Santa Clarita Valley. Future growth in the Valley would have the potential to alter the existing land use environment due to conversion of vacant land to new development, infill development at increased densities, and/or conversion of existing land uses (e.g., commercial to residential). However, future development projects would be subject to existing zoning and land use designations as well as environmental review by the appropriate jurisdiction. Therefore, such future projects are not expected to fundamentally alter the existing land use relationships in the community. Rather, the concentration of development in the area would be expected to promote a more cohesive, semi-urban environment and provide needed services for the Valley's growing population.

As discussed in more detail in **Section 4.2**, Cumulative Impact Analysis Methodology, of this Draft EIR, cumulative growth through 2024 (i.e., the anticipated Project buildout year) would include growth forecasted in the Area Plan, as well as those few related projects that are not already accounted for within the growth forecasts. **Table 4.2-1**, Related Projects, and **Figure 4.2-1**, Related Projects Map, in **Section 4.2**, Cumulative Impact Analysis Methodology, identify 67 related projects proposed or already approved within the Project vicinity. Based on the land use data for the Project's cumulative scenario, provided in **Appendix 4.2** of this Draft EIR, the following growth is estimated to occur between 2012 and 2024 within the Valley area: 24,539 single-family units, 23,941 multi-family units, 461 mobile homes, and 1,958 senior units; 13.646 million square feet of industrial park and warehouse/manufacturing floor area; 10.257 million square feet of office and business park uses; 7.927 million square feet of commercial center floor area; 97,225 square feet of restaurant uses; 1,103 hotel rooms; educational facilities to accommodate 24,996 students; 31,570 square feet of library space; and miscellaneous other uses including car dealership, movie theater, park/recreation, amusement park, landfill, hospital, post office, and church uses.<sup>36</sup>

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<sup>36</sup> *Stantec Consulting Services, Inc., June 2014.*

Four of the related projects are located in the immediate Project vicinity: Related Project No. 1, Mission Village; Related Project No. 3, Legacy Village; Related Project No. 5, Entrada North; and Related Project No. 17, Parcel Map 18654. Related Project No. 1, Mission Village, and No. 3, Legacy Village, are mixed-use communities similar to the Project, located within or adjacent to the Newhall Ranch Specific Plan area to the west and southwest, respectively, of the Project Site. Related Project No. 5, Entrada North is also a mixed-use community somewhat similar to the Project, located north of the Project Site and east of Six Flags Magic Mountain, including in an area immediately north of the River. All three projects are proposed by the same Applicant as Entrada South. Related Project No. 17 is a commercial retail project immediately north of Magic Mountain Parkway, adjacent to the Project Site.

As previously indicated, the Project's layout, and in particular the on-site circulation network, would be integrated with the existing Westridge community to the south, the approved, but unbuilt, Mission Village community to the immediate west, and the proposed Entrada North development to the north. The Project's design would generally reflect the character of some of the more recently developed communities in the surrounding area, such as Westridge, and would be compatible with the proposed design and character of future development within the Specific Plan communities to the west and Legacy Village to the southwest. In essence, Project development and infrastructure would be integrated with the surrounding communities to create a regional, coordinated destination and promote physical compatibility through single-family residential clustering and transitional land use patterns that buffer residential areas from high-intensity commercial uses. As such, the Project's cumulative impacts regarding land use compatibility would be less than significant.

Like the Project, development of the related projects is expected to occur in accordance with adopted plans and regulations. If plan amendments or zone changes are needed to accommodate particular projects, they would be carried out in accordance with established local procedures, including CEQA review and an evaluation of consistency with policies/regulations adopted for the purpose of avoiding or mitigating a physical impact on the environment. Based on the information available regarding the related projects, the related projects under consideration in the Project area would implement and support important local and regional planning goals and policies. New projects would be subject to appropriate permit approval processes and would incorporate mitigation measures necessary to reduce potential land use impacts. Furthermore, as the Project would be consistent with applicable land use plans, policies, and regulations, the Project would not incrementally contribute to significant cumulative land use inconsistencies. Therefore, no significant cumulative land use impacts are anticipated.

### a. County Development Monitoring System

As previously indicated, the DMS environmental criteria with respect to natural resources focus on whether the project is located in an SEA, as designated in the General Plan Conservation and Open Space Element, or whether it is characterized by significant hillsides, riparian habitat, or oak trees. The environmental criteria regarding open space include whether the project site is shown as publicly held or privately dedicated open space in the Conservation and Open Space Element. A number of the related projects are located within or adjacent to the Santa Clara River SEA, located just north of the Project Site. Furthermore, a number of properties in the Project vicinity contain hillsides, riparian habitat, oak trees, and/or designated open space. In particular, several of the proposed and approved villages within the Newhall Ranch Specific Plan area located west of the Project Site meet some or all of these criteria.

Accordingly, the related projects would be required to mitigate impacts to such resources. As previously discussed, development of the related projects is expected to occur in accordance with adopted plans and regulations, and projects would be subject to appropriate permit and approval processes. Of note, the Specific Plan projects along with the proposed Project are subject to the requirements and mitigation established for the Newhall Ranch RMDP/SCP project. That project serves as both a conservation, mitigation, and permitting plan for the long-term management of sensitive biological resources, as well as a conservation and management plan to permanently protect and manage a system of spineflower preserves.

The cumulative analysis presented above shows that no significant cumulative land use impacts are anticipated, and the Project would not incrementally contribute to significant cumulative land use impacts. The cumulative analysis presented in **Section 5.4**, Biological Resources, of this Draft EIR likewise demonstrates that impacts to natural resources from the Project Applicant's nearby projects would not be cumulatively considerable. Accordingly, the Project is consistent with County General Plan DMS as it relates to natural resources and open space.

Additional DMS criteria for infrastructure, access, and environmental factors, including geotechnical hazards, flood hazards and erosion, fire protection, schools, library services, water service, and wastewater service and treatment capacity, are addressed in **Section 5.6**, Geology and Soils; **Section 5.9**, Hydrology and Water Quality—Hydrology; **Section 5.15**, Public Services—Fire Protection; **Section 5.17**, Public Services—Schools; **Section 5.19**, Public Services—Libraries; **Section 5.21**, Utilities and Service Systems—Water Supply and Service; and **Section 5.22**, Utilities and Service Systems—Wastewater, respectively.

## **5. MITIGATION MEASURES**

### **a. Newhall Ranch RMDP/SCP Mitigation Measures**

Although a significant land use impact was identified within the RMDP/SCP EIS/EIR, no mitigation was recommended. In any event, as previously discussed, that impact has since been eliminated.

### **b. Project-Specific Mitigation Measures**

Based on the Project's proposed design, compliance with regulatory requirements, and the requested entitlements, land use impacts would be less than significant. Therefore, no Project-specific mitigation measures regarding land use would be required.

## **6. LEVEL OF SIGNIFICANCE AFTER MITIGATION**

As indicated, Project-level impacts with respect to land use would be less than significant. Similarly, cumulative impacts would be less than significant.