COUNTY OF LOS ANGELES

GENERAL PLAN

LAND USE ELEMENT

LAND USE ELEMENT

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INTRODUCTION

The Land Use Element sets forth countywide policy for the general location and intensity of land use. It describes important countywide land use objectives and establishes policies based on identified needs. The Element serves as a tool for coordinating future development and revitalization plans of both the public and private sectors.

The objectives and policies of the Land Use Element support the countywide General Plan policy of encouraging a more concentrated urban pattern through the revitalization of deteriorating urban areas, infilling of bypassed lands and focusing of new urban development in the most suitable locations. The Element calls for a distribution of use intensities within urban areas necessary to carry out this policy. It also reinforces the Plan's general policies of conserving natural resources and protecting population from natural hazards by careful management of development in sensitive areas.

The Land Use Element is countywide in scope and addresses land use issues affecting both cities and unincorporated communities. It reflects the philosophy of working closely with cities to improve land use planning, and was prepared in cooperation with city representatives, area planning councils and the League of California Cities. As such, the Element constitutes a collective statement of city and County policy, and provides an instrument for communicating local policy to regional, State and federal agencies.

The County specifically supports the retention and strengthening of decision-making by local governments through an intergovernmental coordination process responsive to local and countywide needs.

BACKGROUND

Los Angeles County encompasses 2,613,000 acres of land (4,083 square miles). In 1975, approximately 1,133 square miles were devoted to urban use, more than 97 percent of which was south of the San Gabriel Mountains.

As Table 3.1 shows, in 1975 nearly 75 percent of the total land in the County was either committed to open space use, in agricultural production, or vacant.* Residential uses accounted for only 16 percent of the total land, but constituted over 55 percent of the urban area. Although major commercial uses (shopping centers, stores, office buildings, etc.) are visually dominant, they accounted for only 2 percent of the total, and less than 7 percent of the urban area.

Trends

Between 1970 and 1975, development trends toward both centralization and decentralization occurred in Los Angeles County. Within established urban areas, where vacant land is scarce, relatively high intensity uses became the dominant form of new development. Medium and high density housing, office and centers, and industrial uses accounted for nearly half of all new development in existing urban communities. Detached single family homes and other low intensity uses, however, continued to be the dominant form of new development in outlying urban fringe areas, constituting over 75 percent of new urban expansion. (See Table 3.2)

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*Nearly 67,000 acres (108 square miles) within the 1975 urban area were bypassed vacant or agricultural parcels of two acres or larger. This figure does not include the sizable inventory of parcels under two acres.

TABLE 3.1

LOS ANGELES COUNTY

1975 LAND USE INVENTORY

BY LAND USE TYPE

(In Acres)

Land Use	Urban	Percent	Nonurban	Percent	Total	Percent
Residential	401,000	55	7,700	*	408,700	16
Low Density	349,500	48	7,500	*	357,000	14
Medium & High Density	51,500	7	200	*	51,700	2
Commercial	47,400	7	1,000	*	48,400	2
Industrial	73,800	10	11,100	*	84,900	3
Public & Semi-Public Facilities	82,300	11	27,100	1	109,400	4
Vacant & Agricultural	66,900	9	992,300	53	1,059,200	41
Open Space**	53,800	7	848,900	45	902,700	34
TOTAL	725,200	100%	1,888,100	100%	2,613,300	100%

* Less than one percent

** Committed to a long-term open space use

NOTE: Totals may not add correctly due to rounding

SOURCE: Los Angeles County Department of Regional Planning, Land Use Survey, 1975.

TABLE 3.2

NEW URBAN DEVELOPMENT

IN LOS ANGELES COUNTY

1970 to 1975

BY LAND USE TYPE

(In acres)

Land Use	Infill on Bypassed Land	Percent	Urban Expansion	Percent	Total	Percent
Residential	4,000	30	5,900	79	9,900	48
Low Density	2,900	22	5,500	74	8,400	41
Medium & High Density	1,100	8	400	5	1,500	7
Commercial	1,300	10	300	4	1,600	8
Industrial	4,000	30	300	4	4,300	21
Other Urban (including parks)	3,800	29	1,000	13	4,800	23
TOTAL	13,100	100%	7,500	100%	20,600	100%

NOTE: Totals may not add correctly due to rounding.

SOURCE: Los Angeles County Department of Regional Planning, Land Use Survey, 1970 and 1975

Centralization takes place through both infilling of by-passed vacant parcels within existing urban communities, and recycling of older urban areas to more intensive use. During the first half of the 1970's, over 13,000 acres (20 square miles) of by-passed vacant land were developed to urban use.* Most of this land was committed to residential and industrial use. Although development of by-passed land has occurred in past decades, the 1970-75 trend analysis indicates that it is taking place at nearly twice the rate of new development on the urban fringe, representing a significant reversal of dominant trends prior to 1970.

The recycling of older urban areas to more intensive use has resulted in significant changes in the urban land use pattern. Between 1970 and 1975, it is estimated that over 4,800 acres were recycled from less intensive uses to medium and high density housing.

This emerging trend toward centralization has many positive aspects. For example, the concentration of new development within existing urban areas allows for more efficient utilization of public services and facilities, reduced energy consumption, and improved air and water quality. Such development further reduces the need to urbanize less suitable urban fringe areas, and diminishes the associated impacts on natural and scenic resources.

Decentralized development has occured at a slower but still significant rate. Between 1970 and 1975, 7,500 acres (nearly 12 square miles) of vacant and agricultural fringe lands were urbanized. Much of this new development consisted of single family residential construction in eastern San Gabriel Valley, northwestern San Fernando Valley, Santa Clarita Valley, Cerritos, Agoura and Calabasas.

*Excluding parcels of less than two acres.

Decentralization is also occuring in the industrial sector. Major factors contributing toward this trend include the growing obsolescence of existing industrial facilities; the lack of room for expansion within established urban areas; and, modern site design standards for industrial plants, which require more space for on-site parking, loading facilities and landscaping. These factors, in addition to an increase in warehousing and other non-intensive industrial activities, have encouraged many new industries to locate in outlying urban fringe areas where land is more readily available.

While the continuing trend toward decentralized development reflects a demand for additional residential and industrial land, related costs and constraints are becoming apparent. The decreasing supply of land readily convertible to urban use, especially in the southern portions of the County, has increased pressure for development of steep, less suitable fringe lands. Although such lands may offer amenities for upper income residential development, they are generally more expensive to develop and service, increasing both private and public costs.

In addition, such lands are typically subject to a variety of natural hazards including landslides, erosion and brushfires, and are often the most scenic and ecologically significant areas remaining in the County. Inappropriate development in these outlying areas can have adverse consequences including increased exposure to natural hazards, the loss of productive agricultural land and mineral resource areas, and degradation of critical watershed and habitat areas.

A major factor aggravating efforts to control inappropriate development in outlying areas is the extensive number of existing undeveloped lots and parcels. While for a number of reasons the status of such parcels as legal building sites is questionable, it can generally be concluded that most do not meet current

Plan policies and standards for development. As a result, unregulated development of existing substandard lots and parcels could generate additional impacts in terms of the cost of providing public services, the loss of significant resources, the intrusion into natural resource/hazard areas and the possible adverse impact on surrounding communities.

The diverging trends toward both centralized and decentralized development are summarized on Table 3.3. As the Table shows, the amount of new development between 1970 and 1975 differed widely from planning area to planning area. Although there was considerable development of bypassed vacant lands within older urban communities, total land consumption (i.e., infill and expansion) was greatest in newer suburban areas. The East San Gabriel Valley and San Fernando planning areas alone accounted for 35 percent of total new urban development.

Because prime buildable land in established urban areas is growing scarce, and development of less suitable land in urban fringe areas is increasingly costly, remaining land supplies must be treated as a valuable resource and used more efficiently than in the past. Future development proposals will require careful consideration to ensure that proposed uses are compatible with both the natural and manmade environment. Such compatibility serves to maintain and enhance property values, reduce service costs, conserve natural resources and protect the public from natural hazards.

Decision Making

Governmental agencies do not always have sufficient information to monitor development activity on a cumulative basis, particularly during periods of rapid urban growth. As a result, land use decisions are often made incrementally. Considered individ-

TABLE 3.3

NEW URBAN DEVELOPMENT

IN LOS ANGELES COUNTY

1970 to 1975

BY PLANNING AREA

(In acres)

Planning Area	Infill on Bypassed Land	Urban Expansion	Total New Urban Development
San Fernando	2,600	700	3,300
Burbank/Glendale	500	500	1,000
West San Gabriel Valley	900	200	1,100
East San Gabriel Valley	1,900	2,200	4,100
Malibu/Santa Monica Mtns.	200	1,400	1,600
West	600	800	1,400
Central	600	0	600
East Central	400	0	400
Southeast	1,500	100	1,600
South	1,900	0	1,900
Southwest	1,300	0	1,300
Santa Clarita Valley	200	500	700
Antelope Valley	200	1,100	1,300
Channel Islands	*	*	*
TOTAL	13,100	7,500	20,600

*Less than 100 acres

SOURCE: Los Angeles County Department of Regional Planning, Land Use Survey, 1970 & 1975.

ually, these decisions respond to short term market needs, and may appear to create desirable new use patterns. Cumulatively, however, they may create undesirable long-term social, economic and environmental impacts. Improved information systems and monitoring tools are urgently needed to guide the land use decision-making process.

Another major factor influencing the manner in which valuable land resources are used is the diffused nature of the public decision-making process. Eighty-one cities within Los Angeles County have local land use planning and zoning authority. Coordinating the planning activities of the cities with those of the County, the Southern California Association of Governments, special districts, and various State and federal agencies, is exceedingly complex.

Local planning programs sometimes have competing objectives, and at times, the land use decisions of one jurisdiction have external impacts. Conflicts, when they occur, need to be resolved through a cooperative process that is equitable to all parties. At present, no fully adequate mechanisms exist. Although the County's authority is limited, it can provide the necessary leadership to improve interjurisdictional coordination. Both improved tools and cooperative institutional arrangements are necessary if our remaining land resources are to be utilized wisely.

OBJECTIVES

The objectives of the Land Use Element are:

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

-To maintain and enhance the quality of existing residential neighborhoods;

-To coordinate land use with existing and proposed transportation networks;

-To situate commercial activities in viable clusters that conveniently serve their market areas;

-To provide commercial and industrial lands sufficient to accommodate the projected labor force;

-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;

-To provide a land use decision-making process supported by adequate information and ongoing citizen participation; and,

-To encourage more efficient use of land, compatible with and sensitive to natural ecological, scenic, cultural and open space resources.

NEEDS AND POLICIES

The policies set forth below are designed to address identified critical needs, including the need to use land more efficiently; ensure compatibility of development; conserve resources and enhance environmental quality; improve the land use decision making process; and, improve inter-agency coordination in land use planning.

POLICY STATEMENTS

Use Land More Efficiently

As readily developable prime land becomes increasingly scarce, there is a growing need to treat remaining supplies as a valuable resource.

POLICY

1. Concentrate well designed high density housing in and adjacent to centers to provide convenient access to jobs and services without sacrificing livability or environmental quality.

2. Encourage development of well designed twinhomes, townhouses and garden apartments, particularly on by-passed parcels within existing urban communities.

3. Place major emphasis on channeling new intensive commercial development into multipurpose centers.

4. Protect prime industrial lands from encroachment of incompatible uses.

5. Where appropriate, promote more intensive use of industrial sites, especially in areas requiring revitalization.

6. Encourage the recycling of abandoned mineral extraction sites to recreational, industrial or other productive use.

Ensure Compatibility of Development

Divergent trends toward decentralization of uses in urban fringe areas and concentration of uses in established urban communities require increased efforts to ensure that new development will be compatible with the natural and manmade environment.

POLICY

7. Assure that new development is compatible with the natural and manmade environment by implementing appropriate locational controls and high quality design standards.

8. Protect the character of residential neighborhoods by preventing the intrusion of incompatible uses that would cause environmental degradation such as excessive noise, noxious fumes, glare, shadowing, and traffic.

9. Promote neighborhood commercial facilities which provide convenience goods and services and complement community character through appropriate scale, design and locational controls.

10. Encourage the clustering of well designed highway oriented commercial facilities in appropriate and conveniently spaced locations.

11. Promote planned industrial development in order to avoid land use conflicts with neighboring activities.

12. Protect major landfill and solid waste disposal sites from encroachment of incompatible uses.

13. Prevent inappropriate development in areas that are environmentally sensitive or subject to severe natural hazards,

and in areas where essential services and facilities do not exist and are not planned.

14. Establish and implement regulatory controls that ensure compatibility of development adjacent to or within major public open space and recreation areas including National Forests, the National Recreation Area, and State and regional parks.

15. Require that new developments in non-urban areas have adequate accessibility to paved roads and water lines of sufficient capacity.

16. Prohibit development of existing substandard parcels when it is determined that such development, individually or in combination with adjacent existing and/or proposed development, will significantly increase exposure to unmitigable public health and safety hazards.

17. Discourage the development of existing substandard parcels when it is determined that such development, individually or in combination with adjacent existing and/or proposed development, will result in: (1) significant degradation of natural resources shared by community residents; (2) overburdening of existing and/or planned public services and facilities; and/or (3) disruption of established community character recognized in the Plan.

18. Ensure that future land division activity within Los Angeles County occurs in strict compliance with State and local laws.

19. Ensure that the recognition of lots created in noncompliance with State and County subdivision laws (i.e., issuance of Conditional Certificates of Compliance) occurs only in a

manner which balances the rights and interests of both the general public and individual property owners.

Conserve Resources and Enhance Environmental Quality

Increasing pressures for urban expansion into outlying areas of significant ecological and scenic resources require that effective measures be taken to conserve and enhance our most valuable natural assets.

POLICY

20. Establish land use controls that afford effective protection for significant ecological and habitat resources, and lands of major scenic value.

21. Protect identified Potential Agricultural Preserves by discouraging inappropriate land division and allowing only use types and intensities compatible with agriculture.

22. In non-urban areas outside of Potential Agricultural Preserves, encourage the retention and expansion of agriculture by promoting compatible land use arrangements and providing technical assistance to involved farming interests.

23. In urban areas, encourage the retention of economically viable agricultural production, e.g., high value crops such as strawberries, cut flowers, nursery stock, etc., through the identification and mitigation of significant adverse impacts resulting from adjacent new development.

24. Promote compatible land use arrangements that reduce reliance on the private automobile in order to minimize related social, economic and environmental costs.

25. Promote land use arrangements that will maximize energy conservation.

26. Protect known mineral resource reserves (including sand and gravel) from encroachment of incompatible land uses.

Improve the Land Use Decision-Making Process

The manner in which land use decisions are made must address cumulative social, economic and environmental effects, and ensure opportunity for citizen participation.

POLICY

27. Provide a land use mix at the countywide, areawide and community levels based on projected need and supported by evaluation of social, economic and environmental impacts.

28. Ensure continuing opportunity for citizen involvement in the land use decision-making process.

29. Improve the land use decision-making process by closely monitoring and evaluating the cumulative impacts of individual projects and by modernizing development regulations.

Improve Inter-Agency Coordination in Land Use Planning

There is a growing need to more effectively coordinate the land use planning activities of local, regional, State, and federal agencies in Los Angeles County.

POLICY

30. Promote improved interjurisdictional coordination of land use policy matters between the County, cities, adjacent counties, special districts, and regional and subregional agencies.

31. Ensure that cities have a voice in land use decisions within their adopted spheres of influence.

LAND USE PROJECTIONS

The following section addresses projected land use change between 1975 and 2000. These projections are not offered as an accurate scientific prediction of future conditions, but rather represent an extrapolation of current trends and conditions modified by the policies set forth in the General Plan. The land use projections were developed in concert with projected population levels, housing needs, and job growth, and reflect the Plan's policy emphases on urban revitalization, resource conservation and focused new development.

Countywide land use projections and subregional allocations are predicated on a careful analysis of the existing land use inventory, recent trends in land consumption for various use types, and the availability of vacant land suitable for urban use. Other factors considered were the capacity of various services and facilities to accommodate additional urban development, and the growth policies and projections of State and regional agencies and the incorporated local jurisdictions.

In general, the projections address two aspects of future land use and development. First, countywide development trends are projected by land use type, reflecting the land demand associated with anticipated population, housing and economic growth. Second, the processes by which such land demand will be met within the various subregions of the County are identified. For example, within older urban areas, land required to accommodate additional homes and jobs will primarily be provided through the process of recycling (demolition and reconstruction) and infilling (development of previously by-passed vacant lands). In newer suburban areas, land demand will primarily be met through the conversion of vacant and agricultural land to urban use (urban expansion).

However, while Plan policy promotes a balanced and more concentrated development pattern, many of the factors affecting the distribution of development between existing and future urban areas are beyond the control of County government. The projected amount of recycling, for example, may not be achievable due to the limitations imposed by community opposition to higher densities, by fiscal limitations of local government, the inability to assemble appropriately sized parcels, and the difficulty of relocating existing residents. In addition, projecting into the future is not an exact science. There is no such thing as a "right" or "correct" projection since the state of the art does not provide for precise quantification of the future. In view of these constraints, the Plan should not be viewed as either promising or requiring the achievement of the specific land use projections outlined below.

Table 3.4 summarizes projected countywide land use changes by type. In addition to moderate urban growth, the table reflects a significant retention of non-urban and agricultural lands in long-term open space use. Of the 117,000-acre decline projected in vacant and agricultural lands, approximately 40,000 acres are expected to be committed to open space uses such as local, regional and State parks, and nature preserves.

The projections also indicate a moderate increase in residential densities, reflecting Plan policies encouraging a more concentrated pattern of urban development. In areas undergoing recycling it is projected that residential development would be cleared at an average of 7.7 dwelling units per acre, and rebuilt at an average of 23.6 units per acre. Aggregate residential infill and expansion is projected to take place at 7.8 units per acre, which compares to an average residential density of 6.6 units per acre in 1975.

While the projections indicate a shift away from single family residential development as the dominant form of new housing construction, they do not suggest that high density apartment living

TABLE 3.4

LOS ANGELES COUNTY

LAND USE PROJECTIONS

1975 to 2000

BY LAND USE TYPE

(In Acres)

	1975	%	2000	%	1975-2000
Low Density Residential	357,000	13.7	374,700	14.3	+17,700
Medium/High Density Residential	51,700	2.0	65,900	2.5	+14,200
Commercial	48,400	1.8	56,300	2.2	+ 7,900
Industrial	84,900	3.2	101,000	3.9	+16,200
Public and Semi-Public Facilities	109,400	4.2	130,200	5.0	+20,800*
Vacant, Non-Urban and Agricultural**	1,059,200	40.5	942,600	36.1	-116,700
Open Space***	902,700	34.5	942,600	36.1	+39,000
TOTAL	2,613,300	100%	2,613,300	100%	

* Includes the 17,300 acre proposed Palmdale Airport.

** Includes Significant Ecological Areas/Habitat Management.

***Committed to long term open space use.

NOTE: Totals may not add correctly due to rounding.

SOURCE: Los Angeles County Department of Regional Planning: Land Use Survey, 1975; Population, Housing, Employment and Land Use (PHEL) Projections.

TABLE 3.5

PROJECTED RECYCLE, INFILL, AND URBAN EXPANSION*

1975 to 2000

BY PLANNING AREA

(In Acres)

Planning Area	Recycle	Infill	Urban Expansion
San Fernando	3,000	4,500	2,000
Burbank/Glendale	2,700	900	200
West San Gabriel Valley	3,300	1,600	200
East San Gabriel Valley	1,700	9,200	6,700
Malibu/Santa Monica Mtns.	100	700	3,600
West	3,200	600	700
Central	6,800	1,200	0
East Central	3,800	1,700	0
Southeast	2,300	3,400	200
South	3,500	4,800	0
Southwest	1,900	3,900	0
Santa Clarita Valley	300	1,400	7,900
Antelope Valley	800	1,900	9,100**
Channel Islands	***	***	***
TOTAL	33,300	35,900	30,600

* These projections include land allocated to urban open space.

** Does not include the proposed 17,300-acre Palmdale Airport.

***Less than 100 acres.

NOTE: Totals may not add correctly due to rounding.

SOURCE: Los Angeles County Department of Regional Planning: Population, Housing, Employment and Land Use Projections.

will become the predominant lifestyle. Instead, the Plan promotes a balanced mix of dwelling unit types with an emphasis on owner-occupied, moderate density twinhomes and townhouses.

The second major facet of land use change is summarized on Table 3.5. This table indicates the projected recycle, infill, and urban expansion activity within the 14 planning areas of the County and thereby distinguishes the major development processes anticipated. It should again be noted, however, that the comparative magnitude of these processes (in terms of acreage involved) does not represent a prediction, but rather reflects the intent and direction of countywide urban form and development policy.

Although the maintenance of sound existing housing stock is emphasized, the Plan projects approximately 33,300 acres of recycle activity within older urban communities between 1975 and 2000. Recycling usually results in an intensification of land use, and much of the projected acreage will involve a conversion of land from low density to medium and high density residential development.

Approximately 36,000 acres of by-passed vacant and agricultural land are projected to be developed to urban use by the end of the century.* This represents only 55% of the base resource of parcels two acres or larger, in recognition of the development difficulties that may be associated with by-passed parcels. Countywide, industrial (11,500 acres) and residential (14,900 acres) uses are anticipated to be the primary consumers of by-passed vacant lands.

The Plan further projects that approximately 31,000 acres of vacant and agricultural urban fringe lands will be converted to

* Includes 3,500 acres of open urban space use, primarily local parks.

urban use by the year 2000.* Most of this urban expansion will occur in the East San Gabriel Valley, San Fernando, Antelope Valley, Malibu/Santa Monica Mountains and Santa Clarita Valley planning areas. Apart from the land requirements of the proposed Palmdale Airport and associated uses, low density residential development is projected to be the major consumer of urban fringe lands.

LAND USE POLICY MAP

The Land Use Policy Map (to be found in the pocket at the back of the Plan) is a graphic illustration of selected Plan policies and projections. It portrays a generalized pattern and distribution of land use, and reflects the broad geographic effects of projected recycle, infill and urban expansion activities within the County. The map however, is not predictive, and does not suggest that all lands allocated for future urban use will be developed by the year 2000. Instead, it provides a policy framework for the preparation and review of more detailed areawide, community, and neighborhood plans, and makes more explicit the relationship of General Plan policy to specific development proposals. It should be noted that the Land Use Policy Map was developed concurrently with other countywide and community plan policy maps, and is one of several that should be consulted during the process of making specific land use decisions.

The countywide Land Use Policy Map depicts nine generalized land use classifications, each of which is intended to describe the dominant use characteristics within the area covered. Due to the nature and scale of the map, use patterns of less than fifty acres are generally not shown. In addition to generalized land use patterns, the map illustrates key land development and management concepts discussed in other countywide chapters and elements, and relates these to a

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*Includes 1,800 acres of open space use, but does not include the proposed 17,300-acre Palmdale Airport.

series of general development standards and conditions. The Land Use Policy Map legend is discussed below:

1. Low Density Residential*

   The map depicts areas particularly suitable for single family detached housing units, including large lot estates and typical suburban tract developments. Densities typically range from one to six units per gross acre. The intent of this classification is to maintain the character of existing low density residential neighborhoods and also to provide additional areas to accommodate future market demand.

2. Low-Medium Density Residential

   This classification identifies areas particularly suitable for small lot single family residences, twinhomes, duplexes and townhouse development. The intent of this category is to encourage housing alternatives, at densities ranging from six to twelve units per gross acre.

3. Medium Density Residential

   Medium Density Residential areas are suitable for multiple unit development including garden apartments and multi-plex development in addition to high density townhouse developments. Such areas are typically located along major transportation corridors, in or near urban community centers.

*Note: Within the generalized residential areas mapped, a variety of use types and intensities presently exist. Such uses typically include local commercial and industrial services, schools, churches, local parks and other community-serving public facilities. It is not the intent of General Plan policy to preclude further development or expansion of such uses within areas depicted as residential on the Land Use Policy Map nor is it the intent of the General Plan, including mapped or textual policies, to preclude approval of final maps and development approvals (permits) related thereto which are in substantial conformance with a tentative map approved or extended by the County of Los Angeles since December 31, 1978, except as California State law may otherwise specify.

Development generally does not exceed two stories in height, and ranges in density from 12 to 22 units per gross acre.

4. High Density Residential

High Density Residential areas are suitable for medium and high-rise apartments and condominiums, three or more stories in height. The intent of this classification is to provide for high density residential development in appropriate locations, conveniently accessible to, or within multipurpose urban centers. Densities generally exceed 22 units per gross acre.

5. Major Commercial

The extent of Major Commercial areas depicted on the Land Use Map reflects the County's status as both a major regional employment center and a national and international center of business, trade and finance. Typical use patterns include central business districts, regional office complexes, major shopping malls and centers, major commercial recreation facilities and a range of mixed commercial retail and service activities. Community and neighborhood-serving commercial uses generally are not shown, and can be appropriately established at locations which conveniently serve local market areas.

6. Major Industrial

The Map depicts areas which are generally appropriate for major industrial uses including manufacturing of all types, mineral extraction sites, refineries, warehousing and storage, and product research and development. The intent of this category is to assure that sufficient land is allocated for a wide range of industry and industry-related activities serving both the domestic and export markets and providing jobs for a large portion of the resident labor force. Again, small scale local industrial services are not shown and may be established to serve local needs.

7. Public and Semi-Public Facilities

Major existing and proposed public and semi-public uses depicted on the Map include airports and other major transportation facilities, solid and liquid waste disposal sites, utilities, public buildings, public and private educational institutions, religious institutions, hospitals, detention facilities and fairgrounds. This classification provides for the continued operation, expansion and construction of new facilities, as necessary, to serve current and future County residents.*

8. Non-Urban

Non-urban lands primarily include mountain, foothill, and high desert areas of the County, not currently planned for urban use or scheduled to receive an urban level of service. The intent of this classification is to maintain the character of dispersed non-urban settlements and communities; provide for agricultural and mineral production; preserve areas of significant natural and scenic resources; and avoid intensive development of areas subject to severe natural hazards or lacking essential services and facilities.

Within non-urban areas, a wide variety of uses and activities may be appropriate. Non-urban residential uses are permitted subject to established density, design and service standards. Local and highway-oriented commercial and industrial uses may also be appropriately located in non-urban areas to serve the needs of local residents and travelers. In addition to local industrial uses, a number of manufacturing activities requiring remote or secluded locations for product

*General Plan policy in this regard applies to a range of public facilities not reflected on the Land Use Policy Map. In the event that public use of mapped or unmapped facilities is terminated, alternative uses compatible with surrounding development, in keeping with community character, and consistent with the intent of overall Plan objectives may be permitted.

development, testing and storage can be appropriately situated in outlying non-urban areas.

Public and semi-public uses typically located in non-urban environs include solid and liquid waste disposal sites, utility and communication installations, schools and other public facilities necessary to serve the needs of non-urban populations. Most major existing facilities of this type, however, are shown within the Public and Semi-public and Open Space land use classifications.

A range of private and commercial recreation uses and specialized activities are also appropriate within non-urban areas of the County. Resort and recreational uses, including visitor accommodations, services and facilities, are appropriate in non-urban areas when designed in a manner compatible with, and sensitive to, surrounding natural resources and scenic amenities. Permitted specialized activities include nature study centers, scientific research and educational facilities, camps, lodges and retreats. Other specialized uses may be appropriate within non-urban areas depending on their specific impact, compatibility and growth inducing characteristics.

9. Open Space

Open space areas include both public and privately owned lands committed to long term open space use, and lands intended to be used in a manner compatible with open space objectives. Major open space areas reflected on the map include regional parks, beaches, golf courses, cemeteries, sanitary landfills and military reservations. Two of the major open space areas depicted are the Angeles and Los Padres National Forests and the open space easement on Santa Catalina Island.

Private holdings within the National Forests are not shown. These lands, however, are generally characterized by high

fire, geologic, and/or flood hazards, and are subject to applicable non-urban land management provisions of the Plan (see General Conditions and Standards for Development).

The agreement for the Catalina Island Open Space Easement sets forth specific uses permitted. These include passive recreation, regulated scientific study and agricultural uses. Under some circumstances, utility and communication facilities and low intensity visitor accommodations may be permitted, subject to review by the Regional Planning Commission. However, facilities designed to enhance access to and enjoyment of this open space and recreational resource are encouraged.

A variety of activities and uses, including those permitted within the Catalina Island Open Space Easement, uses essential to the protection of public health and safety, activities involving the extraction of mineral resources, and certain forms of commercial recreation may be appropriate within open space lands identified on the Land Use Policy Map. Specific determinations as to the appropriateness of the proposed use should be based upon the need for the proposed use, its compatibility with identified resource or hazard factors and the degree to which it furthers the objectives of the open space designation.

It should be noted that due to the scale and generalized nature of the Land Use Policy Map it is conceivable that parcels not intended for long term open space use have been included within the Open Space classification. It is not the intent of the Land Use Element to preclude reasonable use of such properties. Decisions regarding the most appropriate use of specific parcels in such instances should be guided by compatibility and land suitability criteria (see General Conditions and Standards for Development).

The remaining two legend items (i.e., Rural Communities and Significant Ecological Areas/Habitat Management) reflect key land development and management concepts of the Plan, and directly influence future land use and development activities within the areas covered. They are identified on the Land Use Policy Map to graphically link selected general development, conservation, open space and land use policies, and to illustrate areas in which various conditions and standards for development will apply. Due to graphic limitations, the various types of Special Management Areas identified in the Conservation and Open Space Element are not reflected on the Land Use Policy Map. They are however, addressed in later sections of this chapter (see General Conditions and Standards for Development).

10. Rural Communities

As described in the General Goals and Policies Chapter, Rural Communities are essentially clustered non-urban settlements served by a non-urban level of commercial and public facilities. These communities vary in terms of size and intensity of development, and range in function from rustic bedroom communities within or near highly urbanized communities, to focal points or activity nodes serving more dispersed non-urban areas.

In most instances, the Rural Communities depicted will experience little significant growth by the year 2000. Where further development does occur, it should be of an "infill" nature, consistent with existing community character and service levels. The intent of Plan policy is to permit such future development at non-urban, and in some instances, low urban intensities.

There are instances, however, where identified Rural Communities are associated with existing or emerging regional recreational areas (Gorman and the Santa Catalina Island Two Harbors areas are prime examples*). In these cases,

*The Two Harbors area will be the subject of a detailed plan, to be included as part of the Local Coastal Program for Santa Catalina Island.

provision of visitor accommodations and services may accelerate normal community growth. Such development may be appropriate within the Rural Community classification, providing that it is compatible with the recreational and natural resource assets of the area, and does not create a demand for public investment in major urban service systems.

11. Significant Ecological Areas/Habitat Management

The Significant Ecological Areas/Habitat Management classification (SEA) identifies lands having important biological resources. This classification, as set forth in the Conservation and Open Space Element, includes habitats of rare and endangered species, sites with critical fish and wildlife values, relatively undisturbed areas of typical natural habitat and regionally scarce biotic resources.* The intent of the countywide General Plan is to preserve and enhance, to the extent possible, SEAs for the benefit of prevent and future County residents.

In addition to regulated scientific study and limited recreational activities, a range of more intensive uses may be permitted within SEAs where it can be demonstrated by a detailed biotic survey and project analysis that the proposed development is highly compatible with the resource values present. In the absence of specific project proposals and detailed biotic data, the countywide Land Use Element has not attempted to identify, in other than the most general terms, appropriate use types and intensities within significant ecological areas. The Element does however set forth the general process and criteria for evaluating specific use proposals as they arise (see General Conditions and Standards for Development).

*The Significant Ecological Area/Habitat Management classification includes Buffer Areas depicted on the Special Management Areas Policy Map of the Conservation and Open Space Element.

GENERAL CONDITIONS AND STANDARDS FOR DEVELOPMENT

It has been previously noted that the textual and mapped policies of the Land Use Element are countywide in scope, and to a large degree reflect the land use plans of other local jurisdictions and unincorporated communities. As such, the Element provides an overview of countywide land use policy and the perspective necessary to identify and resolve regional land use issues. In this capacity, the General Plan Land Use Element serves as a key tool for improving interjurisdictional coordination in land use planning matters.

In addition to this countywide perspective, the Element must also provide a basis for more specific land use planning and decision-making activities within unincorporated areas. To this end, the County has emphasized the development of relatively detailed land use plans for its major unincorporated communities. These community and areawide plans are referenced and included here as localized refinements of General Plan land use policy. Together, they constitute the primary tools for guiding decisions relative to local land use and development patterns.*

The introductory chapter of the General Plan discusses in broader context the relationship between the countywide and

*Areawide and community plans adopted or in preparation include the following: Hacienda Heights Community Plan; Rowland Heights Community Plan; East Los Angeles Community Plan; West Hollywood Community Plan; Diamond Bar Community Plan; Malibu/Santa Monica Mountains Areawide General Plan; Santa Clarita Valley Areawide General Plan; Antelope Valley Areawide General Plan; and the Los Angeles County Local Coastal Program. There are, in addition, a number of other local and community planning programs envisioned in the coming years. Upon adoption, such plans will be formally incorporated as Community Elements of the General Plan.

areawide/community components of the General Plan. While recognizing the role of adopted areawide/community plans in regulating local land use and circulation patterns, the countywide Land Use Element provides guidance for the resolution of specific issues when one of the following conditions exist:

- -The specific issues involved, individually or collectively, constitute a regional land use concern.
- -No adopted local plan covers the area in question or addresses the issue at hand.

Within this context the following general conditions and standards for development are set forth to clarify General Plan policy with regard to regional land use concerns, and to provide guidance for decision-making in the absence of applicable community level planning.

URBAN RESIDENTIAL DEVELOPMENT

General: The residential use classifications of the Land Use Policy Map are intended to describe dominant housing characteristics within the areas covered and are representative of permitted density ranges established by various city and community plans throughout Los Angeles County. Within unincorporated areas, adopted community and areawide plans serve to refine these generalized classifications and establish more specific density standards and conditions for development. Where no such local plan exists, the density ranges established by the countywide General Plan will guide decision-making relative to specific residential development proposals.* In addition, such countywide standards may be interpreted to reflect more specific use provisions of an adopted city plan

*Minor density variations may be permitted to accommodate specific lot size and net area provisions of the Zoning Ordinance.

applicable to unincorporated territory within its designated sphere of influence.

Within the range of entitlements established by urban residential land use classifications, transfer of density within a project site is generally encouraged as a means of reducing potential adverse impacts, preserving scenic areas and providing increased open space and design amenities. However, density transfer should be discouraged when it is determined that:

1) the proposed development is not in keeping with established community character recognized in a locally adopted plan; and/or,

2) the proposed project will overburden existing and/or planned services, facilities or infrastructure.

Unincorporated community and areawide plans may -- and are encouraged to -- refine and expand upon the above provisions governing density transfer.

Residential Infill: General Plan policy supports a more concentrated form of urban development. More specifically, it encourages residential infill at densities compatible with and slightly higher than those of surrounding uses. In light of this policy emphasis, new residential development within existing urban areas, not covered by a more detailed community or areawide plan, may be permitted at densities exceeding those depicted on the Land Use Policy Map subject to conformance with the following criteria:

1) The proposed project will not disrupt sound residential neighborhoods nor adversely affect the character of the established community;

2) The proposed project site is of sufficient size to accommodate design features (setbacks, landscaping, buffering, etc.) necessary to ensure compatibility with surrounding uses;

3) The proposed project will not overburden existing public services and facilities;

4) The proposed use will not disrupt or adversely impact local traffic and parking conditions; and

5) Compatibility of the proposed project with surrounding uses, in terms of scale, intensity and design, is ensured through specific site plan review.*

Low and Moderate Income Housing: General Plan policy strongly supports the provision of critically needed low and moderate income housing.** In support of this policy emphasis, the Plan proposes the development and application of density bonus and other programs designed to stimulate production of such housing by both the public and private sectors.

The General Plan further recognizes, however, that the precise design and location of future low and moderate income housing cannot adequately be reflected by mapped land use policy at either the countywide or local areawide/community levels. Thus,

*While at present the Conditional Use Permit process is the primary mechanism available to assure compliance with an approved site plan, new and improved development controls may be employed as they become available.

**The Housing Element discusses in detail the topic of low and moderate income housing, sets forth applicable locational criteria, and describes a variety of mechanisms which may be employed to encourage the provision of critically needed units.

adopted programs for the development of low and moderate income housing units may modify the urban use type and intensity standards established by generalized countywide, areawide and community land use plans. Such programs shall include appropriate design and density parameters for specific development proposals that reflect the following considerations:

1) The compatibility of the proposed project, in terms of scale and design, with surrounding land uses and established community character;

2) The viability of the proposed project in terms of a long term commitment and ability to meet identified low and moderate income housing needs; and,

3) The location of the proposed project relative to shopping and employment opportunities, and accessibility to necessary public services and facilities.

NON-INDUSTRIAL USES WITHIN MAJOR INDUSTRIAL AREAS

The countywide General Plan recognizes the limited supply of prime land available for future industrial growth and development. This scarcity is particularly acute in the southern portions of the County where the majority of the current and projected labor force will reside. The Plan also recognizes, however, that the Major Industrial category depicted on the Land Use Policy Map is, due to mapping scale and data resource factors, generalized in nature, and may in fact include areas with limited potential for industrial development. Therefore, establishment of non-industrial uses within identified Major Industrial areas, not covered by a more detailed areawide or community plan, may be permitted subject to findings of compliance with the following conditions:

1) The area in question is not suitable for present or future industrial use due to conflicts with existing or emerging

land use patterns, lack of sufficient and adequate access, or the presence of site specific physical characteristics posing severe constraints for industrial development; or the proposed use demonstrates a desirable, compatible and well-integrated pattern of employment and housing opportunities, and thereby furthers General Plan objectives pertaining to reduced energy consumption and improved air quality.

2) The proposed non-industrial use, individually or in combination with adjacent uses, will not adversely impact the viability of surrounding areas for the maintenance or expansion of industrial activities.

3) Compatibility of the proposed non-industrial use with current and future industrial activities in the area is ensured through specific site plan review and approval.

LOCAL COMMERCIAL AND INDUSTRIAL SERVICES

Due to the scale and nature of the countywide Land Use Policy Map, locally-serving commercial and industrial uses are generally not shown. Such localized land use types and associated development standards are more appropriately addressed by detailed community and areawide plans. However, in order to provide guidance for decision making in the absence of an adopted local plan, the following general conditions and standards are provided.

Definition: For purposes of the countywide Land Use Element, local commercial and industrial uses are defined as individual enterprises, or small scale multi-use centers, serving the needs of the local community. Such uses include:

1) Facilities providing neighborhood or community convenience goods and services;

2) Highway or roadside facilities and services of a minor nature (i.e., gas stations, cafes, motels, etc.);

3) Local community/neighborhood-serving office and professional services; and

4) Light industrial uses of a minor nature, as defined by the scale of the facility, number of employees, service area, and general compatibility within the community setting (it is not the intent of countywide land use policy to prohibit the establishment or continued operation of local "cottage industry" uses where compatible with surrounding land use patterns).

Guidelines governing the general location, scale, design and circulation characteristics of local commercial and industrial uses (hereafter referred to as local services) are set forth below:

Location:

1) The proposed use should be easily accessible and should be situated at community focal points such as major intersections and established neighborhood shopping facilities.

2) The proposed use should be located so as not to invade or disrupt sound existing residential neighborhoods nor conflict with established community land use, parking and circulation patterns.

Scale:

1) The scale of local service uses, in terms of acreage and permitted floor area, should be limited to that which can be justified by local community and neighbor-

hood needs. In most instances, such uses, individually or in aggregate, should not exceed 10 acres in size.

2) The height of proposed facilities should not exceed the general profile established by existing uses, and should in no event exceed that of neighboring residential development.

3) The overall scale and intensity of proposed local service uses should be in keeping with the surrounding neighborhood or community setting.

Design:

1) Local service uses should be designed, in terms of set-backs, landscaping, lighting and buffering, so as to ensure compatibility with surrounding uses.

2) Proposed local service uses should reflect locally recognized architectural themes and enhance overall community character.

3) Local commercial signs and graphic displays should generally be confined to the facade surface of the business establishment, and should not project above the roofline or disrupt the architectural design of the structure.

4) Free-standing signs should generally be discouraged, and permitted only where they are determined to be aesthetically and functionally appropriate.

5) Off-site signs should be prohibited.

Access and Traffic:

1) The size and intensity of local service uses should be confined to the extent that anticipated traffic generation does not adversely affect conditions on adjacent streets and highways.

2) Access, egress and onsite parking should be provided in a manner which maximizes safety and convenience, and minimizes adverse impacts on surrounding neighborhood and community land use patterns.

OPEN SPACE AREAS

Due to the scale and generalized nature of the Land Use Policy Map, it is conceivable that privately owned lands not intended for long term open space use have been included within the Open Space classification. The Plan therefore seeks to provide a mechanism to guide detailed land use consideration in instances where mapped policy, by itself, is unclear or inadequate. In combination with the textual and mapped policies of the Plan, the general standards and conditions set forth below are intended to provide such a mechanism.

Compatible Uses: Land within the Open Space classification of the countywide General Plan may, as a matter of course, be developed to any use permitted in Zones O-S (Open Space) and W (Watershed) of the Los Angeles County Zoning Ordinance, subject to the conditions and standards of those zones.* Such uses include a variety of agricultural, recreational, mineral extraction, and public and semi-public activities and services.

*Private inholdings within the Angeles and Los Padres National Forests are dealt with separately on page III-52 of the Land Use Element, and are not subject to the conditions and standards set forth for Open Space areas.

Alternative Use Determinations: In the event that development, other than that provided for above, is proposed for property within an Open Space classification not intended for long term open space use, the appropriateness of the proposed project shall be reviewed and determined in light of the following considerations:

Finding: In reviewing a proposal for development within the Open Space classification of the countywide Land Use Policy Map, the Regional Planning Commission shall make a specific finding that the proposed project site was inadvertently included within the open space classification.

Criteria:

1. Land Compatibility/Suitability

   It shall be demonstrated that the subject property is capable of supporting the proposed development without increasing exposure to significant natural hazards or degrading identified critical natural resources. It shall further be established that access to the site is adequate to serve the intended use, and that the provision of necessary services and facilities will not result in undue public costs.

2. Compatibility

   It shall be demonstrated that the proposed development is compatible, in terms of scale and designed character, with surrounding land use patterns. Appropriate use type and intensity standards shall be reflective of those existing or proposed for adjacent non-open space properties.

   It shall further be demonstrated that the scale, design and overall character of the proposed development will not adversely afffect or significantly diminish the open space and recreational potential of adjacent resource areas.

3. Special Considerations

The countywide Land Use Element sets forth a variety of general standards and conditions for development to guide land use decision making in the absence of specific mapped policy (i.e., urban and non-urban residential development standards, residential infill, low and moderate income housing, local commercial and industrial facilities, special management areas, etc.). Where applicable, such general standards and conditions for development shall be employed to guide decisions relative to appropriate alternative use of lands within the Open Space classification.

4. Site Design Review

The appropriateness of a specific development proposal within a designated Open Space Area, in terms of suitability, scale, design and character shall be assured through the review and approval of a specific site plan, with conditions established as necessary through normal zoning or land division procedures.

NON-URBAN RESIDENTIAL DEVELOPMENT

The intent of the General Plan policy with regard to use types and intensities permitted in non-urban areas is outlined in the countywide Land Use Policy Map discussion. The general conditions set forth below expand upon that statement of intent, and are designed to provide guidance for decision-making in the absence of more specific standards and performance criteria.

Except as otherwise provided for by an adopted areawide, community or specific plan, or as modifed by the special management and rural community provisions of the General Plan, non-urban residential development may be permitted at densities ranging from a baseline of one unit per five acres, to a maximum of

one unit per acre.* All proposals for non-urban residential development which exceed the countywide density baseline shall be subject to substantial compliance with the following conditions:**

1) The proposed use will not adversely affect local environmental quality or degrade significant natural resources such as sensitive habitat areas, riparian woodlands, and scenic vistas.
2) The proposed use will not be detrimental to public health and safety because of hazardous or special conditions.
3) The proposed use will not substantially contribute to the deterioration of air or water quality.
4) The proposed use, individually or in combination with other existing and proposed use patterns, will not require extension or expansion of urban services and facilities.
5) The proposed use is conveniently accessible by paved road, and will not, individually or in combination with other existing and proposed use patterns, overburden existing non-urban roadways.
6) The proposed use is served by water supplies and distribution facilities of sufficient capacity to meet anticipated domestic and fire protection needs.
7) The proposed use is compatible with the character of surrounding development patterns.

Density transfer from urban to non-urban areas is not permitted. Within non-urban areas, density transfer is generally encouraged

*In no event shall non-urban densities authorized by an adopted areawide or community plan exceed a maximum of one dwelling unit per acre.

**The performance criteria for non-urban hillside development articulate in greater detail the general conditions set forth. Where applicable, such performance criteria will augment general conditions for non-urban residential development.

as a means of reducing potential adverse impacts, preserving scenic areas and providing increased open space and other design amenities. Precluded, however, are density transfer proposals which result in the creation of new urban communities, noncontiguous to existing or planned urban areas and requiring an urban level of services and facilities not consistent with the intent of General Plan policy.

NON-URBAN HILLSIDE DEVELOPMENT

Hillside management areas are defined as mountainous and foothill terrain having a natural slope of 25% or more. Such lands are generally illustrated as Hillside Management Areas on the Special Management Areas Policy Map (see Conservation and Open Space Element). While the General Plan provides for limited urban hillside development, most hillside management areas fall within the non-urban land use classification.* In these areas, it is the intent of Plan policy to permit uses which are compatible with hillside character and suitability factors, which do not create a demand for public investment in urban services and facilities, and which do not cause significant adverse environmental impacts.

Uses compatible within non-urban hillside management areas include: recreation; non-urban residential uses subject to the density threshold set forth below; limited commercial and highway oriented uses serving local residents and travelers; and certain industrial, extractive, agricultural, and public uses, which by their nature can appropriately be located in remote hillside areas.

Residential development within non-urban hillside management areas is subject to the following density standards:

*See Appendix A for a more detailed discussion of urban hillside development standards.

COUNTYWIDE DENSITY THRESHOLD

Natural Slope	Low	High
25 to 50%	1 d.u./10 acres	1 d.u./2 acres
Greater than 50%	Not Applicable	1 d.u./20 acres

In areas of greater than 50% natural slope, a maximum density of one dwelling unit per 20 acres shall apply in all unincorporated areas. In areas with slopes ranging from 25% to 50%, development proposals exceeding the low density threshold are subject to the Hillside Management/Performance Review Procedure*. The density granted will reflect the extent to which performance criteria are met.

Adopted areawide, community and specific plans may establish the maximum permitted non-urban densities for lands ranging from 25% to 50% natural slope. However, in no case will such densities be greater than the one dwelling unit per acre maximum established for all non-urban areas.

Under the Performance Review Procedure, development proposals with densities above the low threshold shall be required to demonstrate the following:

1. Public Safety:
   The proposed project is located and designed so as to protect the safety of current and future community residents and will not create significant threats to life and/or property due to the presence of geologic, seismic, slope instability, fire, flood or erosion hazards.

*The Hillside Management/Performance Review Procedure, set forth in Appendix A, takes precedence over the Hillside Management Area procedures in the Santa Clarita Valley Areawide General Plan, adopted on July 12, 1977.

2. Resource Protection:

   The proposed project is compatible with the natural biotic, cultural, scenic and open space resources of the area.

3. Suitability for Development:

   The proposed project is conveniently served by (or provides) neighborhood shopping and commercial facilities, can be provided with essential public services without imposing undue costs on the total community, and is consistent with the objectives and policies of the General Plan.

4. Quality of Design:

   The proposed project demonstrates creative and imaginative design resulting in a visual quality that will complement community character and benefit current and future community residents.

Performance review criteria and the process for determining compliance are set forth in Appendix A of this Element.

SIGNIFICANT ECOLOGICAL AREAS/HABITAT MANAGEMENT (SEAs)

It is the intent of General Plan policy to preserve the County's significant ecological resources and habitat areas in as viable and natural condition as possible. Major factors influencing the realization of Plan objectives in this regard include the County's ability to accurately identify areas of significant resource value; the availability of financial and other resources necessary to support preservation, restoration and enhancement efforts; and, competing priorities between resource preservation and other critical public needs.

Recognizing the resource values at stake and the constraints imposed by competing priorities and objectives, the General

Plan seeks to provide a process for reconciling specific conflicts between proposed land use and the preservation of identified Significant Ecological Areas. The Plan does not, however, suggest that this can be accomplished by applying a single set of regulatory standards to all SEAs. Nor does it infer that reasonable use of privately held lands within such areas shall be precluded without just compensation. Instead, the Plan recognizes that measures necessary to preserve and enhance Significant Ecological Areas will vary depending on the nature of resource values present and the degree of threat implied by potentially incompatible development. Within this context, the following general conditions and standards are provided to guide specific land use decisions.

SEA Compatible Land Uses: Within Significant Ecological Areas the following activities are considered compatible by definition: regulated scientific study; passive recreation including wildlife observation and photography; and limited picnicking, riding and hiking, and overnight camping. In addition, the following uses may be compatible as determined by a detailed biotic survey and such conditions as may be necessary to ensure protection of identified ecological resources:

1) Residential uses at densities compatible with the resource values present, and consistent with community character in terms of both overall density and magnitude as defined in adopted community, areawide, or countywide plans;

2) Where provided for in an adopted community or areawide plan, commercial uses of a minor nature serving local residents and visitors;

3) Where no alternative site or alignment is feasible, public and semi-public uses essential to the maintenance of public health, safety and welfare;

4) Agricultural uses compatible with the resource values present; and,

5) Where compatible with identified biotic resources, extractive uses including oil and gas recovery, and rock, sand and gravel quarrying.

SEA Design Compatibility Criteria: Each development proposed within a designated SEA will be reviewed for compliance with the following design criteria:

1) The development is designed to be highly compatible with biotic resources present, including the setting aside of appropriate and sufficient undisturbed areas;

2) The development is designed to maintain waterbodies, watercourses, and their tributaries in a natural state;

3) The development is designed so that wildlife movement corridors (migratory paths) are left in a natural and undisturbed state;

4) The development retains sufficient natural vegetative cover and/or open spaces to buffer critical resource areas from the proposed use;

5) Where necessary, fences or walls are provided to buffer important habitat areas from development; and,

6) Roads and utilities serving the proposed development are located and designed so as not to conflict with critical resources, habitat areas or migratory paths.

SEA Performance Review: The key components and participants in the Significant Ecological Area/Performance Review Procedure are

generally identified below. The countywide Land Use Element leaves for further definition the specific procedural steps and regulatory mechanisms to be employed.

1) Resource Identification - Development permit applications, including zoning, land division, building and grading permit requests, shall be accompanied by an adequate biotic analysis of the SEA or affected portion thereof. Necessary biotic data is to be prepared through a cooperative process involving both the project applicant and appropriate public agencies. The Department of Regional Planning shall be the lead agency in this regard.

2) Technical Review/Development Guidelines - The biotic analysis will be submitted with the preliminary project plan to an appointed Significant Ecological Area Technical Advisory Committee. This committee will function to review the biotic data submitted for its adequacy, and recommended conditions and guidelines for final project design.

3) Project Design Review - Planning staff in cooperation with the Technical Advisory Committee will review project plans submitted by the applicant for compliance with recommended conditions and guidelines.

4) Impact Analysis - Based on the biotic data previously generated and such other information as may be requested from the applicant, planning staff shall prepare a draft environmental impact report identifying potential project impacts and possible mitigation measures.

5) Regional Planning Commission Review and Action - Considering the recommendations of the Technical Advisory Committee,

potential impacts and mitigation measures identified in the Draft EIR, and such other provisions of countywide and local plans as may be applicable, the Regional Planning Commission shall consider and act upon the proposed development plan. Recommendations for approval shall be accompanied by a finding that the proposed project is sensitive to and compatible with the biotic resources of the area. In the event that such a finding cannot be made, the Commission may deny the project, request a revised development plan, or approve and forward the proposal together with a statement of overriding considerations to the Board of Supervisors for further review and action.

FLOOD PRONE AREAS

Areas subject to substantial flood hazard as determined by the County Engineer and Flood Control District are shown as Flood Prone Areas on the Special Management Areas Policy Map (see Conservation and Open Space Element). This classification includes both the watercourse itself and adjacent areas subject to overflow of flood waters during major storms. The County is in the process of mapping flood protection districts for major flood prone areas. These maps will precisely delineate the existing watercourse and additional areas necessary to provide reasonable protection from overflow, erosion and debris deposition.

At such time as a flood protection district is established by ordinance, no permanent structures shall be constructed, altered, modified, or enlarged within the boundaries of the district, except: a) those accessory structures that will not substantially impede the flow of water, and, b) flood control structures approved by the County Flood Control District.

Prior to the establishment of a flood protection district, any development proposed within a flood prone area shall be reviewed by the County Engineer or Flood Control District who will define the area within which no permanent structures or improvements shall be permitted. Within other portions of the flood prone area, development proposals shall be reviewed for compliance with the following criteria:

1) The scale, design and intensity of the proposed project will minimize exposure of current and future community residents to flood related property damage and loss.

2) The proposed project is consistent with density and use standards set forth in applicable countywide, areawide or community land use plans, and is compatible with the character of surrounding development.

3) The proposed project is situated and designed so as to avoid isolation from essential services and facilities in the event of flooding.

4) The costs associated with on and off-site hazard mitigation, including design, construction, and continued maintenance of necessary flood protection facilities will be assumed by the developer and/or future owners, occupants, or residents of the proposed development.

MAJOR FAULT ZONES

Major Fault Zones depicted on the Special Management Areas Policy Map (see Conservation and Open Space Element) reflect both the active and potentially active faults identified in the countywide Seismic Safety Element, and the more detailed fault mapping prepared by the California State Division of Mines and Geology under the provisions of the Alquist-Priolo Special Study

Zones Act.* Strategies and programs for minimizing risks to public health and safety within potential fault rupture zones are more specifically addressed in the adopted countywide Seismic Safety Element. In support of these strategies and programs, the following general standards and conditions for development will apply in all unincorporated areas, and may be expanded and elaborated upon by local community or areawide plans.

Special Study Zones: At such time as a major fault is identified and mapped in accordance with the Alquist-Priolo Act, new development shall comply with criteria established by the State Mining and Geology Board. Essentially, these criteria require the following:

1) A geology report, prepared by a registered geologist, shall be submitted to the appropriate local agency for review prior to approval of proposed development within a Special Study Zone; and,

2) No structure for human occupancy shall be constructed within 50 feet of an active fault trace (specific exceptions include individually constructed, wood frame, single family residences and mobile homes).

Other Major Fault Zones: In addition to the provisions of the County building codes**, the following general conditions for development will apply within major fault zones identified on the Special Management Areas Map:

1) Applications for zoning or tentative subdivision approval or renewal shall be submitted to the County Engineer for review. On the basis of this review, the County Engineer

*California Public Resources Code, Division 2, Chapter 7.5.

**See Los Angeles County Building Code, Sections 310 and 311.

shall determine the necessity for additional geologic data, and establish such conditions for development as may be appropriate.

2) The following uses shall be prohibited: emergency response facilities including sheriff and fire stations; vital facilities including hospitals and major utility and communications installations; and facilities for dependent populations, including but not limited to, schools, day care centers, convalescent homes, institutions for the physically and mentally handicapped, and high security correctional institutions.

POTENTIAL AGRICULTURAL PRESERVES

Potential Agricultural Preserves include large contiguous land areas either devoted to agricultural production or highly suitable for agricultural use due to the presence of favorable growing conditions such as climate, soils, and water (see Conservation and Open Space Element). The intent of General Plan policy is to preserve and protect such resource areas from the intrusion of incompatible uses which conflict with or preclude viable agricultural activity.

To this end, the Plan supports voluntary establishment of agricultural preserves such as those provided for by the California Land Conservation Act. The Act provides incentives for the preservation of prime agricultural lands, and sets forth specific criteria governing the creation and maintenance of recognized preserves.

The General Plan further recommends improved planning and tools to preserve agricultural resource areas. Efforts in this regard should involve the cooperative participation of farming interests, resource conservation districts, the County Agricultural Commissioner and other concerned State and federal agencies. More specifically, the Plan recommends the development and application

of exclusive agricultural zones designed to minimize conflicts between agricultural and other urban and non-urban land uses. Such zones define compatible use types and intensitites based upon the characteristics and needs of local agricultural activities.

The general standards and conditions provided below will guide land use decisions relative to Potential Agricultural Preserves in the absence of more refined resource management devices. New mechanisms, such as exclusive agricultural zoning and preserve programs, may supplement or replace these standards and conditions as they are developed and applied.

1) Use of lands within identified Potential Agricultural Preserves shall be subject to the use standards and conditions established by exclusive agricultural zoning. Uses may include but are not limited to the growing of field, tree, bush, berry and row crops including nursery stock. In addition, processing and sales of agricultural commodities, dairies, feed mills, livestock, poultry and horse keeping may be appropriate where compatible with surrounding uses.

In cases where residential development is proposed within Potential Agricultural Preserves, the following guidelines shall govern.

2) In addition to the zoning/use standards referenced above, legally created parcels within identified Potential Agricultural Preserves, less than five acres in size, may be developed for non-urban residential use subject to conditions and density standards established by adopted community, areawide, and countywide plans. Approval of such non-urban residential development shall be subject to a finding that the proposed use will not, individually or in combination with surrounding residential use patterns,

substantially impair or have a significantly adverse affect on adjacent agricultural activities.

3) In addition to the zoning/use standards referenced above, parcels within identified Potential Agricultural Preserves, five acres in size or larger, may be developed for non-urban residential use at densities not exceeding one dwelling unit per ten acres. Approval of such non-urban residential development shall be subject to compliance with applicable provisions of adopted community, areawide, and countywide plans, and shall be accompanied by a finding that the proposed use will not, individually or in combination with surrounding residential use patterns, substantially impair or have a significantly adverse affect on adjacent agricultural activities.

NATIONAL FORESTS

The Los Padres and Angeles National Forests encompass nearly 650,000 acres of land within Los Angeles County. While the Forest Service maintains comprehensive resource management programs for the majority of this area, there are nearly 40,000 acres of privately owned "inholdings" within the Forest boundaries. For these areas, the County retains primary responsibility in terms of land use regulation.

The following general conditions and standards provide guidance for land use decisions relative to private inholdings within the National Forests:

1) Privately owned lands within the National Forests will be assumed to be subject to a high degree of natural hazard. As a result, non-urban residential development shall be limited to a maximum residential density of one dwelling

unit per five acres, and will be subject to applicable hillside mangement and flood protection performance standards and criteria.

2) All proposed private and public development projects within the National Forests will be reviewed by both the Regional Planning Commission and U.S. Forestry Service for compliance with applicable land use and resource management plans.

OPEN SPACE EASEMENTS AND DEDICATIONS

The California Open Space Easement Act of 1969 sets forth general conditions governing the creation of recognized open space easements. Agreements or contracts establishing such easements specify the standards and conditions for uses and activities permitted within the area covered.

For purposes of the General Plan, open space dedications are defined as privately owned lands which have been set aside for permanent open space as part of a larger land development proposal. Commitment of such lands to long term open space use is typically assured through deed restrictions or dedication of construction rights, secured at the time of development permit approval. Within dedicated open space areas, standards and conditions for use are specifically set forth as conditions of the zoning permit or subdivision tract map.

COASTAL ZONE

In accordance with the 1976 California Coastal Act, Los Angeles County has undertaken the preparation of local coastal programs for the unincorporated Malibu coast, Marina Del Rey, Los Alamitos and the off-shore island of Santa Catalina. At such time as these programs are completed, they will be adopted as the Coastal Element of the countywide General Plan, and will

establish detailed land use policy within the coastal zone. Prior to the adoption of local coastal programs, specific development proposals will be subject to compliance with applicable policies of adopted countywide, areawide and community plans, as well as conformance with the provisions of the California Coastal Act.

SCENIC HIGHWAYS

Scenic highways are identified in the countywide Scenic Highway Element and include adopted State Scenic Highways. Proposed development within all adopted and proposed scenic corridors shall be reviewed for consistency with the following design criteria:

1) The proposed development should be designed to create a consistent visual relationship with surrounding development and with the natural terrain and vegetation.

2) Structures and landscaping should complement and enhance scenic views.

3) If possible, potential unsightly features should be located in areas not visible from the scenic highway. If this is not feasible, they should be screened by landscaping, fencing, or other appropriate means.

4) Grading should result in final contours which are compatible with the existing terrain.

5) The number of access roads to or from the scenic highway should be minimized wherever possible, consistent with safety and circulation needs.

6) Watercourses should be preserved in their present condition except where necessary to restore to a state more consistent with a natural appearance.

7) Commercial or industrial uses should be conducted entirely within closed buildings, except for restaurants, recreational uses and gasoline/service stations.

8) Outdoor advertising (billboards, subdivision directional signs, etc.) shall be prohibited.

At such time as a plan is adopted for a specific scenic corridor, additional criteria and standards may be applied.

MINERAL RESOURCE AREAS

Mineral resource areas include existing surface mining activities, areas identified or to be identified as containing significant mineral resources by the State Mining and Geology Board, and areas suitable for the production of energy resources, including crude oil and natural gas.

Compatibility of Proposed Development: Within identified mineral resource areas, proposed development other than open space, passive recreation, agriculture, extraction or surface mining shall be reviewed for compatibility with existing or potential mineral resource production. This review will consider the following factors:

1) The value of mineral resources located within the vicinity of the proposed development.

2) The feasibility of extracting the identified mineral resources within a reasonable time period prior to development of the proposed use.

3) The cost of restoring the site in accordance with acceptable reclamation standards.

In addition, the proposed development shall be designed so that it does not inhibit the future development of extractive, surface mining or energy production facilities and shall make provisions to buffer the proposed use from existing or future mineral resource activities.

Extractive Uses: All extractive surface mining facilities shall be subject to the following conditions:

1) Control of slope excavations;
2) Control of erosion and sedimentation;
3) Control of water quality, runoff and flooding;
4) Protection of fish and wildlife;
5) Provision of adequate setbacks from adjacent uses;
6) Control of noise, dust, vibration, smoke, dirt, odors and lighting; and,
7) Salvage of topsoil.

In addition to the above conditions, pursuant to the provisions of the California Surface Mining and Reclamation Act, all mining activities in operation as of January, 1976 and those placed in operation after that date shall be required to submit a reclamation plan which shall provide for appropriate measures to rehabilitate the site prior to its abandonment.

CULTURAL HERITAGE RESOURCES

Cultural heritage resources include known archaeological and paleontological areas, sites and structures, which have been identified in authoritative surveys of archaeological societies, historical societies and academic studies. These sites are too numerous and, in most cases, too small to permit adequate mapping at the General Plan scale.

Within the unincorporated area, the following guidelines shall apply to proposed development in areas identified in the above mentioned authoritative surveys and for sites found to have historical and scientific value:

Archaeological and Paleontological Resources:

1) A literature search for valid archaeological or paleontological surveys shall be conducted (for each initial study of a public or private project).

2) If the literature search indicates a strong likelihood that an archaeological or paleontological resource would be impacted by the proposed project, a study of the project site shall be made by a qualified archaeologist or paleontologist. This study shall determine the scientific value of finds, if any, and a recommendation as to their preservation or disposition.

3) Prior to approving a project, the approving agency shall make a determination based on the above report as to what conditions would be necessary to preserve the archaeological or paleontological resources.

4) When a determination has been made to salvage the finds, a reasonable period of time shall be allowed prior to the start of grading to adequately salvage the site.

It is recommended that any materials collected during surface surveys or salvage operations be donated to an appropriate non-profit institution. In the event the property owner wishes to retain possession of the artifacts found, it is desirable that archaeologists or paleontologist be allowed to study and photograph the artifacts.

Historic Sites and Structures: Historic sites and structures include all places, structures or objects currently identified or to be identified in the National Register of Historic Places, the State Department of Parks and Recreation Inventory and the Los Angeles County Historical Landmarks Committee Inventory. These sites and structures are considered to be of countywide significance and to require preservation to the most feasible extent. It is recognized that there may be other sites and structures which are not on the above lists but which may have importance to local communities, and in such cases a community or areawide plan may designate these sites or structures for special land use regulation.

Whenever there is construction, alteration, demolition, grading or other use or activity proposed for a designated historic site or structure, the proposal should consider the following:

1) Insofar as is economically and physically feasible, the integrity of significant historical features of the structure and/or site should be maintained.

2) The proposal should preserve the integrity of sight-lines to the structure.

3) If it is not economically and physically possible to maintain the integrity of the structure or site, a reasonable period of time should be allowed prior to approval to explore other methods of preservation.

4) Development in the vicinity of a historical site or structure should be designed so that the uses permitted and the architectural design will protect the visual integrity of the site or structure, including the consideration of building heights, materials, textures, colors, setbacks and landscaping.

LAND USE ELEMENT

APPENDIX A

HILLSIDE MANAGEMENT/PERFORMANCE REVIEW PROCEDURE

I. INTRODUCTION

The Hillside Management/Performance Review Procedure is designed to protect the health and safety of the public from hazards typically associated with hillside areas and to preserve natural resources and scenic values commonly occuring in hillside environs. In this regard, a key policy of the Conservation and Open Space Element reads:

> "Manage development in hillside areas to protect their natural and scenic character and to reduce risks from fire, flood, mudslide, erosion and landslide."

Within this broad policy context, more definitive policy is set out below for two distinct categories: urban and non-urban hillside management areas.

In view of the wide variation in hillside conditions existing in various areas of the County, it is difficult to establish a single set of hillside standards for development that are appropriate countywide. Consequently, areawide and community plans (and specific plans) which regulate hillside standards for development shall establish the maximum permissible densities of development in hillside areas under 50% slope.

II. URBAN HILLSIDE MANAGEMENT AREAS

A. Intent

The intent of the Hillside Management/Performance Review Procedure is to ensure that development in an urban hillside management area is safe, functionally and attractively designed and compatible

with surrounding land uses. Approval of residential development proposals is contingent on the project's ability to mitigate problems of public safety and design, and to preserve distinct visual characteristics or community assets (such as oak trees).

It is further the intent to encourage the design of functional and innovative projects. In this regard, appropriate housing types may include single family detached, attached townhouse or, where zoning permits, multi-family structures. It is also the intent to promote, where feasible, a greater range of housing prices within urban hillside developments.

B. Urban Hillside Management Area Defined

Urban hillside management areas are defined as lands characterized by natural slopes of 25% or greater, included within the urban classifications of the countywide General Development Policy Map and designated for urban use on the countywide Land Use Policy Map. These areas are planned to receive an urban level of services such as roads, utilities, and commercial and public facilities.

C. General Conditions for Development

1. Slope/Density Relationship

Urban hillside management areas may be developed within the range of use types and intensities established by the applicable land use policy map. Residential development greater than the midpoint of the permitted density range will be reviewed for compliance with performance criteria set forth herein, and will require approval of a Development Management Permit.

Local Plan Options - Adopted areawide, community or specific plans may more specifically define permitted uses and densities

with the performance criteria set forth herein, and will require approval of a Development Management Permit.

2. Density Transfer

Density transfer from steeper to more gently rolling and level land is encouraged as a means of preserving the natural terrain, minimizing grading and reducing exposure to natural hazards. A cluster concept may be utilized to minimize adverse visual impacts on neighboring residential uses as long as it does not substantially alter the character of existing neighborhoods.

Local Plan Options - Adopted areawide, community or specific plans may set more specific standards to govern density transfer and clustering, or they may prohibit such practices altogether.

3. Natural or Open Area Standards

A minimum of fifty percent (50%) of a project site shall be retained in a natural or open condition. Open space may consist of open areas in public ownership, common private ownership or private yards. Subject to approval by the Regional Planning Commission, required open areas may include: common open space for passive recreation; areas graded for rounding of slopes to contour appearance; areas of scenic beauty; riding, hiking and bicycle trails; areas cleared for fire supression; and landscaped areas adjacent to streets and highways. Clearing and grading required by the County for such purposes as arterial highway access, and/or major utility rights-of-way, may be excluded from the open area calculation.

Local Plan Option - Adopted areawide, community or specific plans may set natural or open area standards in excess of the minimum countywide standards outlined above.

D. Performance Review Criteria

Development within urban hillside management areas, as contrasted with non-urban hillside management areas, will generally require increased grading, greater traffic capacity on streets, more extensive drainage facilities and greater pedestrian capacity. Within this framework, the following criteria shall apply:

Public Safety:

1. Urban hillside development must meet all applicable County and State subdivision requirements.

2. In most cases, engineering solutions will be given greater consideration in urban hillside management areas (as distinct from non-urban hillside management areas) as a means of mitigating hillside hazards (e.g., landslides, flooding, or erosion problems). However, where major landform changes would be detrimental to visual quality and community character, engineering solutions may be determined to be inappropriate. The appropriateness of proposed engineering solutions will be determined on the basis of compliance with site design criteria for urban hillside management areas.

3. All slopes must be developed in accordance with the County grading ordinance. Where a brush fire hazard exists on the perimeter of a project, a buffer zone of irrigated landscaping must be maintained on the site to diminish the hazard.

Quality of Design:

4. Site Design - The suitability of the location, type, separation, height and schematic design of buildings and landscaping in relation to the site and surrounding area, particularly the appearance of proposed development as viewed from existing developed areas and scenic highways, will be considered in reviewing all development proposals. Site planning, grading, landscaping, and construction techniques which preserve, protect and enhance the visual character of hillside land forms are encouraged. A development should be designed to:

   a) Preserve to the degree possible major natural features including major drainage courses, riparian vegetation, rock outcroppings and stands of oaks and other native trees.

   b) Preserve significant views from major existing residential areas.

   c) Ensure that graded slopes are landscaped and that such landscaping is maintained.

   d) Apply innovative approaches to house placement, using techniques such as stepped multilevel and cantilevered designs.

In addition to the above, the following performance criteria for non-urban hillside management areas shall also apply: Road Design, Building Placement and Design, Landscaping, Utility Lines, and Signs.

III. NON-URBAN HILLSIDE MANAGEMENT AREAS

A. Intent

The intent of the Hillside Management/Performance Review Procedure is to ensure that development in a non-urban hillside management area, where it occurs, will be located in the most suitable and least environmentally sensitive areas, and will be designed in terms of scale and intensity in a manner compatible with the natural resource values and general character of the surrounding community. Approval of residential development proposals that exceed the low density threshold will be based on the ability to mitigate natural hazards and provide for compatible hillside design.

The application of specific performance criteria may vary depending on the particular topographic, geologic and biotic characteristics of a proposed project site. However, the overall objective remains that of ensuring that future hillside development provides for the safety and convenience of community residents, and achieves an overall visual quality harmonious with the non-urban hillside setting.

B. Non-Urban Hillside Management Area Defined

Non-urban hillside management areas are defined as lands characterized by natural slopes of 25% or greater, not designated for future urban use nor scheduled to receive an urban level of services. Such areas are included within the non-urban classifications of the General Development Policy Map and Land Use Policy Map. These lands are generally illustrated as Hillside Management Area on the Special Management Areas Policy Map. (See the Conservation and Open Space Element).

C. General Conditions for Development

The General Plan recognizes non-urban hillside development to be an issue of regional significance. The Plan also embodies community and areawide plans which consider the effects of hillside development at the local level. The following conditions for non-urban hillside development respond to these two levels of concern by providing for the specific determination of residential densities at the local level while at the same time preserving non-urban hillside amenities as regional assets.

Residential Uses

1. Slope Density Relationship*

Residential development shall be subject to the following density standards:

% Slope	Low Density Threshold	Maximum Density
25 to 50	1 dwelling unit/10 ac.	1 d.u./2 acres
Greater than 50	Not Applicable	1 d.u./20 acres

All residential development proposals at densities exceeding the low density threshold (as calculated utilizing the methodology appearing on page III-82) will be reviewed for compliance with the performance criteria set forth herein, and will require a Development Management Permit. The density granted by the Permit will reflect the extent to which performance criteria are met.

*The Hillside Management/Performance Review Procedure does not apply to development on lands of less than 25% natural slope. See Land Use Element, page III-39, for General Conditions and Standards applicable to non-urban residential development.

Local Plan Options - Where adopted areawide, community or specific plans apply, they establish the maximum non-urban densities for lands ranging from 25 to 50% slope. These plans may reflect the countywide standards set forth above, or may set standards more appropriate to protection of identified local hillside resources. Notwithstanding these locally adopted standards, all residential development proposals exceeding the low density threshold established countywide will require approval of a Hillside Development Management Permit. The density granted will reflect the extent to which hillside performance criteria are met. In no case will overall densities be higher than the maximum of one dwelling unit per acre established for all non-urban areas.

2. Areas of 50% Natural Slope and Above

Due to the higher probability of exposure to fire, erosion, and landslide hazards in extreme slopes, a standard of 1 dwelling unit per 20 acres for slopes of 50% (2:1) and above shall constitute the maximum permitted density in all non-urban unincorporated places.

3. Density Transfer

Density transfer from steeper slopes to more gently rolling level land is encouraged as a means of preserving the natural terrain, minimizing grading and reducing exposure to natural hazards. Where a cluster concept is employed, development should minimize adverse visual impacts on neighboring residential uses, and not substantially alter the character of existing communities. In no event is density transfer permitted to areas of a project site predominantly in excess of 50% natural slope.

Local Plan Options - Specific transfer provisions may be established on the basis of an adopted community, areawide or specific plan. Such plans may establish regulations on clustering and lot arrangement to meet local community preferences and characteristics.

4. Natural or Open Area Standards

Within non-urban residential hillside developments, a minimum of seventy percent (70%) of a project site shall be retained in a natural or open condition. Subject to approval by the Regional Planning Commission, required open areas may include: common open space for passive recreation; areas graded for rounding of slopes to contour appearance; areas of scenic beauty; hiking, riding and bicycling trails; areas cleared for fire supression, and landscaped areas adjacent to streets and highways. Clearing and grading required by the County for such purposes as arterial highway access, and/or major utility rights-of-way, may be excluded from the calculation. The designated natural or open area may consist of open space lands in public ownership, common private ownership, or private yards.

Local Plan Options - An adopted area, community or specific plan may set natural or open area standards in excess of the minimum countywide standards outline above.

Non-Residential Uses

Many non-residential uses may be appropriately located in non-urban hillside management areas. Certain uses, by their nature, may require remote hillside locations. Nevertheless, for reasons of public safety, resource protection and general land suitability, safeguards are necessary to discourage intensive development and to minimize environmental disruption and the loss of scenic and open lands. Where it is determined that specific uses may

appropriately be located in hillside environs, they shall be reviewed for compliance with applicable performance criteria. Additional factors, such as the presence of significant ecological resources, may also impose special review requirements. Subject to the above conditions, the following uses may be found appropriate:

1. Industrial uses involving explosives manufacturing, storage of volatile substances, and certain research, development and product testing facilities requiring the seclusion afforded by hillside terrain. Such uses are encouraged to locate in the least environmentally sensitive areas of the County;

2. Agricultural activities including livestock grazing, bee-keeping, orchards and vineyards;

3. Limited commercial and highway oriented uses necessary to serve local residents and travelers;

4. Waste disposal facilities that require canyon locations as a buffer to urban uses. Effectuation of approved site restoration plans shall be required at the termination of such uses;

5. Commercial resort and recreational uses including visitor accommodations, services and facilities, when designed in a manner compatible with and sensitive to surrounding natural resources and scenic amenities;

6. Mineral extraction uses such as quarries and oil and gas fields. Effectuation of approved site restoration plans shall be required at the termination of such uses; and,

7. Utility installations, including communication, water and power facilites.

D. Performance Review Criteria

The performance review criteria outlined below for non-urban hillside management areas are grouped under four major headings: Public Safety, Resource Protection, Suitability for Development, and Quality of Design.

Public Safety:

1. Geologic, Seismic and Slope Stability Conditions

If geologic and soil reports indicate that the project site is affected by potentially hazardous geologic, seismic, or slope stability conditions, the County Engineer shall require, in compliance with the County Building Code, mitigation measures to safeguard life, health and property.*

Mitigation measures may include either avoidance of the potential hazard area or the identification and application of adequate engineering solutions.

All excavations, roads, utilities, structures and other facilites shall be designed to compensate for problem soils and other subsurface conditions. Except for linear systems for which there is no alternative alignment, landslide hazard areas shall be avoided.

Where a hillside development is proposed in an area indicated as a major fault zone, it shall be demonstrated

*Potential geologic and soils problems include, but are not limited to, the presence of active or inactive slide areas, active and potentially active fault rifts, corrosive soils, shrink-swell conditions, or unstable foundation materials such as alluvium, shale, terrace deposits and schist.

through a geologic report that structures will be located in such a manner as to minimize the risk to life and property in case of a major seismic event. No structures for human occupancy are permitted across or within 50 feet of the trace of an active or potentially active fault.

2. Fire, Flood and Erosion

a. Fire: For development occuring on brush-covered slopes, the County Forester and Fire Warden will require adequate fire protection capabilities based on fuel load, topography, weather conditions, access, exposure/occupancy and water supply.

To assist in efficient emergency response and fire protection in designated fire hazard areas, the project should include: 1) the use of fire retardant construction techniques and materials, especially prohibiting untreated wood shake/shingle roofs and siding; 2) clearance of brush for a minimum of 100 feet surrounding individual structures; 3) protective irrigated planting areas surrounding residential structures with provisions for maintenance; 4) a development pattern which provides a defensible fire perimeter (fuel breaks, concentrated pattern, or other measures); 5) provision for adequate identification of dwelling units by prominent signs indicating street names and house numbers; and 6) location of entrances to structures within a distance of street access acceptable to the County Forester and Fire Warden.

b. Flood and Erosion: Development should be located at such distances from floodways (water courses) as determined by the County so as not to interfere with natural drainage during severe storms nor become endangered by such runoff.

During the early phases of project planning, an identification should be made of any flood prone area or areas with high mudflow potential, taking into consideration areas of high fire hazard and erosion potential located uphill or upstream from flood prone areas. The interrelationship of these potential hazards, and satisfactory measures to protect against them, should be demonstrated. Engineering criteria for development in hillside areas are as follows:

1) Account for runoff and debris from tributary areas, considering each lot;

2) Compute runoff debris amounts using Flood Control District criteria;

3) Design lot and locate improvements so debris can be accommodated without damage to improvements and with access to street for cleanup;

4) Provide for passage of flood water and debris to a safe point to discharge (street, channel, debris basin, etc.) without damange to improvements or slopes. Natural stream gradients shall not be altered (i.e. flattened) unless approved by Los Angeles County as consistent with public health, safety and welfare; and,

5) Where the runoff flow rates and debris quantities are too great to be accommodated, as described above, an adequate debris basin and open channel with access for maintenance should be provided.

Resource Protection:

3. Drainage Networks

All water courses should be maintained in as natural a state as possible, minimizing modification of the natural carrying capacity or production of excessive siltation.

4. Biotic Resources

The project design should recognize the value of biotic resources and demonstrate a minimal adverse impact on wildlife habitat areas. Removal of natural vegetation should be minimized by focusing development on land with less natural cover. The presence of significant ecological resources may require special use, intensity and design considerations beyond those mentioned in this Hillside Management/Performance Review Procedure.

5. Cultural Resources

Whenever there is a substantial indication that significant historical, archaeological, or paleontological resources may be located on the project site, a survey by qualified professionals shall be required and, where appropriate, a program for resource preservation or salvage shall be implemented. Whenever possible, the affected portions of the site should be avoided for building purposes.

6. Scenic Resources

The project should protect the visual quality of highly scenic areas and views from scenic highways, roads, trails and key vantage points.

Suitability for Development:

7. Proximity to Services

The practicality of providing adequate public services without incurring unusual public costs should be demonstrated. Public service extensions into hillside areas should address existing and projected service problems and deficiencies. Those improvement costs which benefit only a particular development should be borne by that development, while costs of improvements beneficial to a greater segment of the overall community should be shared by the community.

Development within hillside areas should be reasonably accessible to shopping and other service facilities.

8. Water Supply and Waste Disposal

Adequate water for domestic consumption and fire protection must be available. Connection to public sewers or provision of a central sewage treatment and disposal facility capable of adequately serving all lots within the development shall be required unless engineering studies clearly demonstrate the acceptability of private disposal systems from the standpoint of geology, sanitation and water quality.

9. Road Capacity

Adequate road capacity should be demonstrated to accommodate the anticipated traffic of the proposed development. Capacity to allow for ingress and egress must be based on the assumption that at least one lane of access road may be temporarily closed due to slope failures or parking of emergency vehicles. Road widths should be designed for

these contingencies but, wherever possible, kept to a minimum to avoid excessive grading. The ability of major and secondary highways to serve as escape routes and to accommodate seasonal recreation traffic (including weekend peak loads) from outside the area shall be considered in reviewing the development proposal.

Quality of Design:

10. Road Design

All roads shall be designed for vehicular and pedestrian circulation capable of providing adequate means of ingress and egress for both residents and emergency or other service vehicles. In hillside areas, the analysis of site characteristics may allow for innovative design of roadways to take advantage of topography and views. Such roadway design, where appropriate in terms of safety and maintenance costs, may minimize grading and improve overall project design. Travelway width requirements shall be a minimum of 28 feet in the steepest, lowest density areas, where no guest and utility parking is required. However, any modifications of current standards or design criteria should be discussed with the Los Angeles County Road Department and other interested departments prior to proposing a tentative project design.

Special approval will be required under the Subdivision Ordinance for gradients over 6% for any road identified on the Los Angeles County Highway Plan (commonly known as the Master Plan of Highways) and over 15% for minor residential streets. Gradients of over 12% for collector streets are acceptable only for short, intermittent stretches.

11. Site Design and Grading

The suitability of the location, type, separation, height and schematic design of buildings and landscaping in relation to the site and surrounding area, particularly the appearance of proposed development from existing developed areas and scenic highways, will be considered in reviewing all development proposals. Site planning, grading, landscaping, and construction techniques which preserve, protect and enhance the visual character of the hillside land forms are encouraged. A development should be designed to:

a) Minimize grading on the site and maximize retention of natural topography.
b) Utilize contour grading to present a rounded or undulating appearance blending with the natural terrain.
c) Protect the character of drainage courses, riparian vegetation, rock outcroppings, and existing stands of oaks and other native trees.
d) Preserve significant views from major existing residential areas.
e) Minimize grading for roads, streets, and storm drains consistent with public health and safety.
f) Protect against excessive sedimentation and erosion caused by water, burrowing rodents, etc.
g) Limit grading to that necessary for the primary use of each lot. (Curb parkways may be eliminated, and front yard requirements may be reduced if this will facilitate less grading and alteration of the site.)
h) Apply innovative approaches to house placement using techniques such as stepped multi-level and cantilevered designs.

12. Building Placement and Design

Placement of residential structures shall be designed to preserve scenic values. Where feasible, structures should be placed so that roof lines do not protrude above road grade, on the down slope side. The imaginative use of multi-level residential development is encouraged to reduce grading, enhance view potential, and maximize usable outdoor space. Major ridgelines should be preserved wherever possible. Where practical, structures should be limited to one story on major ridgelines. In addition, clustered development projects should be designed to minimize adverse visual impacts on neighboring residential uses, and to achieve compatibility with established community character.

13. Landscaping

Subject to the fire protection criteria set forth earlier, existing healthy and attractive vegetation, especially specimen trees, should be preserved wherever possible. New plant materials should be selected which will effectively screen or soften the visual impact of new developments. All cut-and-fill slopes over five feet in vertical height should be planted with adequate plant materials to protect against erosion. Trees, shrubs and ground covers shall completely cover exposed graded area.

14. Utility Lines

Undergrounding of all local utilities is desirable. New overhead major utility lines (e.g. power, telephone or transmission lines) should follow the least visible route and cross ridgelines at the most visually unobtrusive locations.

15. Signs

Signs are not to block significant views, cause visual clutter, or disrupt the sight line to the horizon. Where

permitted, signs, including off-premise outdoor advertising signs, are to be carefully designed to have a minimum impact on scenic features.

III. PERFORMANCE REVIEW PROCEDURE

All hillside development proposals on lands of 25% or greater natural slope are subject to, and shall be reviewed for, compliance with applicable performance criteria.* For projects not exceeding low-density thresholds (or density range midpoints in urban areas), compliance with applicable performance criteria will be reviewed as part of normal case processing procedures. Proposed developments exceeding established low density thresholds (or density range mid-points in urban areas) will require the additional review and approval of a Development Management Permit. During the course of permit processing, impact analysis procedures provide an opportunity for the early identification of potential adverse effects in terms of hazards or resource loss, as well as providing the overall framework for impact mitigation.

A. Required Findings

In order to ensure that future hillside development is consistent with General Plan goals and objectives and in compliance with established performance criteria, the approval of all hillside development proposals within the purview of the Hillside Management/Performance

*Development proposals are defined as any application for approval or renewed approval of land division, zone designation, use permit, or other similar applications provided for in present or future ordinances.

Review Procedure shall be supported by the following findings:

1. Public Safety

   The proposed project is located and designed so as to protect the safety of current and future community residents, and will not create significant threats to life and/or property due to the presence of geologic, seismic, slope instability, fire, flood, or erosion hazards.

2. Resource Protection

   The proposed project is compatible with the natural biotic, cultural, scenic and open space resources of the area.

3. Suitability for Development

   The proposed project is conveniently served by (or provides) neighborhood shopping and commercial facilities, can be provided with essential public services without imposing undue costs on the total community, and is consistent with the objectives and policies of the General Plan.

4. Quality of Design

   The proposed project demonstrates creative and imaginative design resulting in a visual quality that will complement community character and benefit current and future community residents.

B. Performance Review Procedure

The process outlined below (and diagrammed in Figure 3.1) is designed to reduce the time, costs and uncertainty involved in securing permit approval for well-designed hillside

development, while ensuring that such development will not result in increased exposure to natural hazards or result in the loss of significant natural resources. Wherever possible, concurrent processing of required development permits is desirable. The general steps involved in the performance review procedure are as follows:

Step #1 - Pre-Application Counseling

Applicants proposing to develop in hillside areas are encouraged to submit information regarding project site location, topographic characteristics, slope analysis, and preliminary development concept to planning staff for review. Staff will review the submitted slope analysis and advise the applicant as to general development parameters and options (i.e., performance review criteria and permitted density ranges), and required permit approvals (i.e., zone change, Development Management Permit, parcel map, tract map, etc.).

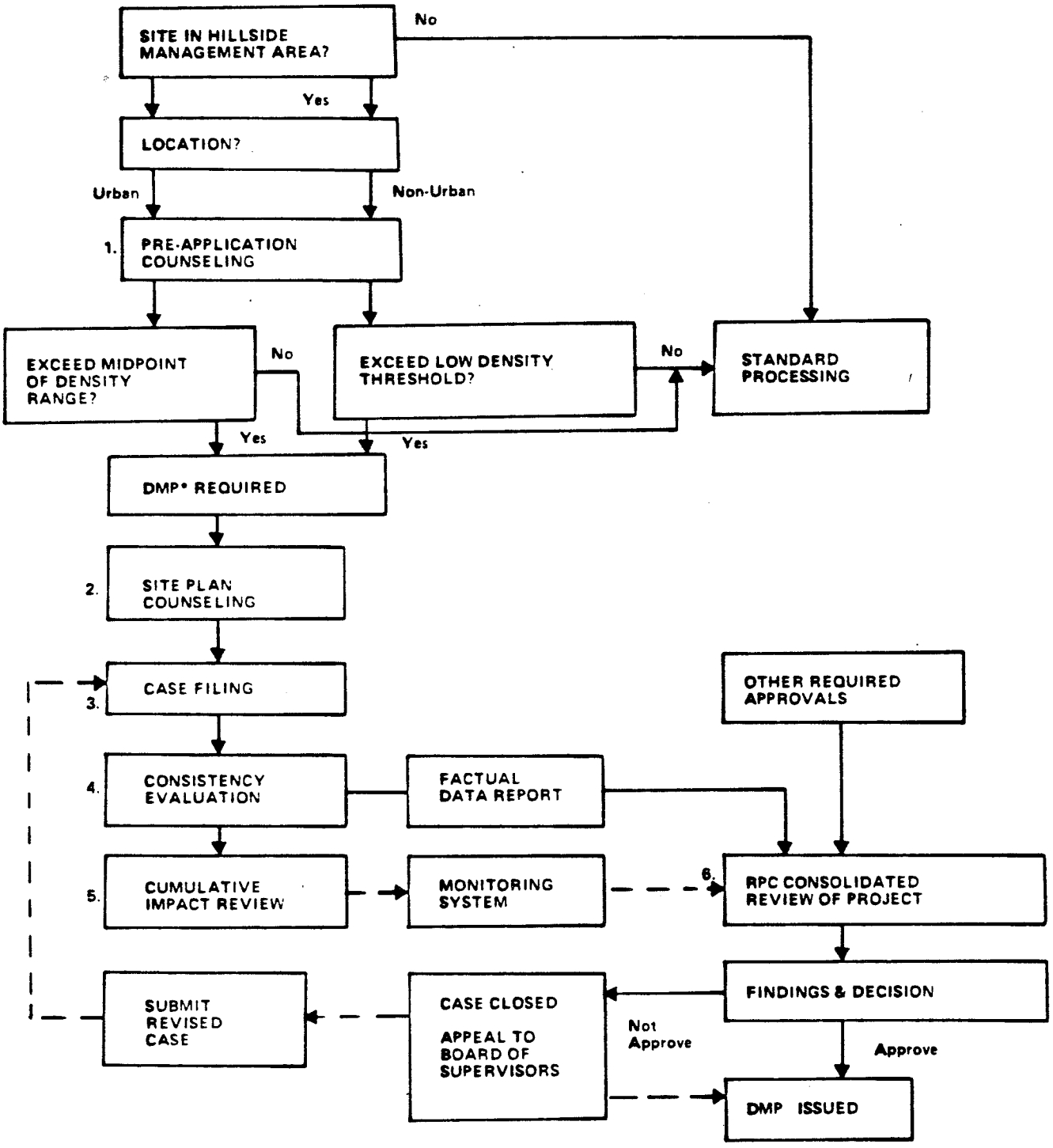
If the proposed project involves non-urban residential development at a density at or less than the countywide low density threshold, approval of a Development Management Permit will not be required. The same exception will be applicable to urban hillside development proposals that do not exceed the midpoint of the permitted density range.

However, where non-urban and urban hillside development proposals exceed applicable low density thresholds, compliance with performance review criteria will be assured through the review and approval of a Development Management Permit.

Step #2 - Preliminary Development Plan Review

For projects requiring approval of a Development Management Permit, the applicant will be invited to meet and discuss the preliminary project design with involved planning staff. This step will be integrated with present impact analysis procedures and will precede case filing.

FIGURE 3.1
DEVELOPMENT MANAGEMENT PERMIT PROCESS



Preliminary plan review will be directed toward developing a project which is both acceptable to the applicant and in conformance with hillside performance criteria. In addition, this pre-submittal review will clarify potential issues and establish a tentative case processing schedule.

Step #3 - Formal Case Filing

Based upon the information generated in the preliminary plan review cycle, the applicant may choose to file the proposed development plan, or a modified version thereof, paying all required processing fees. In addition, further data needs identified in the preliminary plan review should be submitted at this time.

Step #4 - Consistency Evaluation

Following case filing, planning staff will reevaluate the project plan and include in the factual data report information pertinent to project compliance with specific performance criteria. This report will provide a basis for subsequent Commission findings and recommendations relative to the project's consistency with General Plan policy and Hillside Management objectives. Once prepared, this report will be included in all applicable case files and will be presented to the Regional Planning Commission for consideration at the public hearing on the proposed development.

Step #5 - Cumulative Impact Review

As part of the General Plan monitoring system, the planning staff will concurrently evaluate proposed hillside developments for their cumulative impact.*

*When development approaches the growth projections for a planning area, staff will advise the Commission so that timely and orderly review of the General Plan may commence.

This analysis will focus on the potential impact of projects on nearby areas (including natural resources, hazards and visual character), and on the relationship of developments to the Planning Area's growth projections indicated in the General Plan.

Step #6 - Project Review and Action

Based upon testimony presented at the public hearing, and the analysis presented in the factual data report, the Regional Planning Commission may (1) act to approve the proposed project as being consistent with County planning policy; (2) request the applicant to revise the project in terms of scale, intensity, or design to more accurately reflect Plan policies and objectives; or (3) deny the proposed development due to inconsistencies with applicable countywide, community or area-wide planning policy.

IV. DENSITY CALCULATION METHOD

The slope map to be used with the Hillside Management/Performance Review Procedure will show three categories of slope: under 25, 25 to 50% and greater than 50%. The map will be used to determine the permitted density range for a given parcel, and identify the most suitable areas for development. The steps outlined below should be followed to determine applicable density ranges and thresholds:

Step #1

Use a contour map to show parcel boundaries. Segment out and identify portions of the property characterized by natural slopes of under 25%, 25 to 50% and greater than 50%. For larger parcels (500 acres or more), identified contour intervals should not exceed 20 feet. Intervals of 10 feet or less are required for parcels of less than 500 acres.

Step #2

Calculate the total acreage within each slope category.

Step #3

Determine the Low Density Threshold for the subject property, and calculate and total the number of permitted dwelling units per acre for each slope category utilizing the low end of the applicable urban or non-urban density range.

Step #4

Determine the maximum density yield, and calculate and total the number of permitted dwelling units per acre for each slope category utilizing the high end of the applicable urban or non-urban density range. If the property in question is located within an area covered by a community, areawide or specific plan, maximum permitted densities shall be governed by the adopted local plan.

Having prepared the required slope map and identified the permitted density range, specific project proposals will be reviewed relative to the provisions of the Hillside Management/Performance Review Procedure set forth herein.

LAND USE
GLOSSARY

BY-PASSED LAND
Land which remains undeveloped within generally urbanized areas.

CENTRALIZATION
As used in discussion of land use trends, the term refers to an intensification or concentration of urban development within established urban areas.

DECENTRALIZATION
As used in discussion of land use trends, this term refers to an extension or dispersion of urban development into areas previously undeveloped or in essentially non-urban use.

INFILL
The conversion of vacant or agricultural land within the urban area to an urban use.

INFRASTRUCTURE
Basic utilities and facilities necessary for development, such as water, electricity, sewers, streets and highways.

PRIME BUILDABLE LAND
Undeveloped land which presents few or no physical constraints to development, is served by appropriate levels of infrastructure and public services, and is reasonably near existing urbanization.

SCENIC CORRIDORS
The visible land area outside of the highway right-of-way (to be defined through scenic corridor studies of proposed routes in the Scenic Highway Element).

SHADOWING
Refers to shadows cast by structures onto surrounding land uses.

SPHERES OF INFLUENCE
Unincorporated areas currently beyond the boundary of a city, but likely to be included in the city's ultimate physical boundary, due to its ability to provide services, and its social and economic interdependence with the area. These areas are formally designated and adopted by the Local Agency Formation Commission.

URBAN EXPANSION
Geographic extension of urban levels of development and service into previously undeveloped or non-urban areas.