2.0 PROJECT DESCRIPTION

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

The County of Los Angeles' Santa Clarita Valley Area Plan (Area Plan) is the proposed project in this program environmental impact report (EIR). The Area Plan is a component of the Los Angeles County General Plan and is intended to provide focused goals, policies, and maps to guide the regulation of development within the unincorporated portions of the Santa Clarita Valley. This updated Santa Clarita Valley Area Plan replaces in its entirety the Santa Clarita Valley Area Plan adopted by the Los Angeles County Board of Supervisors on February 16, 1984, and subsequently updated on December 6, 1990, which had previously served as the basic planning tool for the unincorporated portions of the Santa Clarita Valley. This Area Plan, as it may be amended from time to time, is intended to serve as a long-term blueprint for development over the next approximately 20-year planning period, except where specific policies address other target dates as set forth in the plan.

According to the General Plan Guidelines, published by the State of California,[1] an "Area Plan" is a planning tool that focuses on a particular region or community within the overall General Plan area. An Area Plan is adopted by resolution as an amendment to the General Plan as set forth in Section 65350 et. seq., of the California Government Code. It refines the policies of the General Plan as they apply to a smaller geographic area and is implemented by ordinances and other discretionary actions, such as zoning and Community Standards Districts. The Area Plan must be internally consistent with the General Plan of which it is a part. An Area Plan need not address all of the required elements of the General Plan, when the overall General Plan satisfies these requirements.

This Area Plan has been prepared to ensure consistency with both the County's comprehensive General Plan and with the City of Santa Clarita's General Plan. The Area Plan does not include all of the mandatory general plan elements, such as housing, because the County's overall General Plan addresses all these mandatory issues on a County-wide basis. The Area Plan contains detailed background, maps, goals and policies regarding land use and circulation planning, and policy-level discussions of other issues relating to specific needs and characteristics of the Santa Clarita Valley such as open space preservation, trail planning, hillside development, and historic preservation.

The Area Plan serves as a foundation for making land use decisions based on policies related to land use, transportation, population growth and distribution, open space, resource preservation and utilization, air

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1 Governor's Office of Planning and Research, State of California General Plan Guidelines, 2003, 17.

and water quality, noise impacts, public safety, infrastructure, and other related physical, social, and economic factors. In addition to serving as a basis for local decision making, the Area Plan establishes a clear set of development guidelines for citizens, developers, neighboring jurisdictions and agencies, and provides the community with an opportunity to participate in the planning process. The purpose of this Area Plan is to comply with state requirements and to provide the County with a comprehensive, long-range policy guideline for future development.

In accordance with California Government Code Section 65302, the Area Plan contains the following six elements:

- Land Use
- Conservation and Open Space
- Safety
- Circulation
- Noise

For purposes of organizing the County's Area Plan more efficiently, the issues of conservation and open space have been combined into a single chapter. Each of the elements contains maps and text setting forth goals, policies, and programs for the long-range physical development within the County's Planning Area.

This project description provides the following:

- A discussion of location and regional setting of the One Valley One Vision (OVOV) Planning Area
- A discussion of environmental review and consultation requirements and how the Area Plan EIR is to be used by the County
- Purpose of the Area Plan EIR
- Approvals and Actions to Implement the Area Plan
- Purpose of the Area Plan and the 36 Guiding Principles, which guide the development of the Santa Clarita Valley
- An overview of the existing communities and approved Specific Plans
- A summary of the analysis assumptions and methodology used in preparing the Area Plan
- A discussion of Land Use Element and Map of the Area Plan

- Policies of each of the above mentioned elements

LOCATION AND REGIONAL SETTING

The OVOV Planning Area combines two geographical areas, the unincorporated area of the County within Santa Clarita Valley and the City of Santa Clarita (City) corporate limits. The OVOV Planning Area was defined mutually by the County and City and represents the area for which both jurisdictions have joint interest in planning. The OVOV Planning Area is located in Southern California in the northern portion of Los Angeles County **(Figure 2.0-1, Regional Location Map,** and **Figure 2.0-2, Vicinity Map).** It is situated at the convergence of Los Angeles and Ventura counties, approximately 35 miles northwest of downtown Los Angeles. The OVOV Planning Area includes the County communities of Stevenson Ranch, Castaic, Val Verde, Agua Dulce, and the future Newhall Ranch and the City communities of Canyon Country, Newhall, Saugus, and Valencia (**Figure 2.0-3, Community Locations**.)

Several mountain ranges frame the OVOV Planning Area, including the San Gabriel Mountains, Santa Susana Mountains, and the Sierra Pelona Mountains. At its western most edge, the OVOV Planning Area extends from a point south of Pyramid Lake on the Ventura County border southeast to Oat Mountain and extends into the Angeles National Forest to the east. The easternmost boundary includes the community of Agua Dulce. From this point, it continues to the northwest, parallel to the southern boundary of the City of Palmdale through the Angeles National Forest, and proceeds northward approximately 5 miles north of the uppermost portion of Castaic Lake. In addition to the major ridgelines forming the boundaries of the Valley, prominent scenic resources include the Santa Clara River Valley, creeks, canyons, and forestlands. The Angeles National Forest surrounds much of the OVOV Planning Area to the south and the north (**Figure 2.0-2**).

The County's OVOV Area Plan and the Area Plan EIR focus on the environment within the County's unincorporated limits and outside of the City's boundaries and adopted Sphere of Influence (SOI) but within the OVOV Planning Area (**Figure 2.0-3**). This is referred to throughout this EIR as the County's Planning Area. Development within the unincorporated portions of the County will be directly guided by the maps and policies contained in the Area Plan.

PURPOSE OF THE PROGRAMMATIC AREA PLAN EIR

The County of Los Angeles' objectives for the proposed Programmatic Area Plan EIR are as follows:

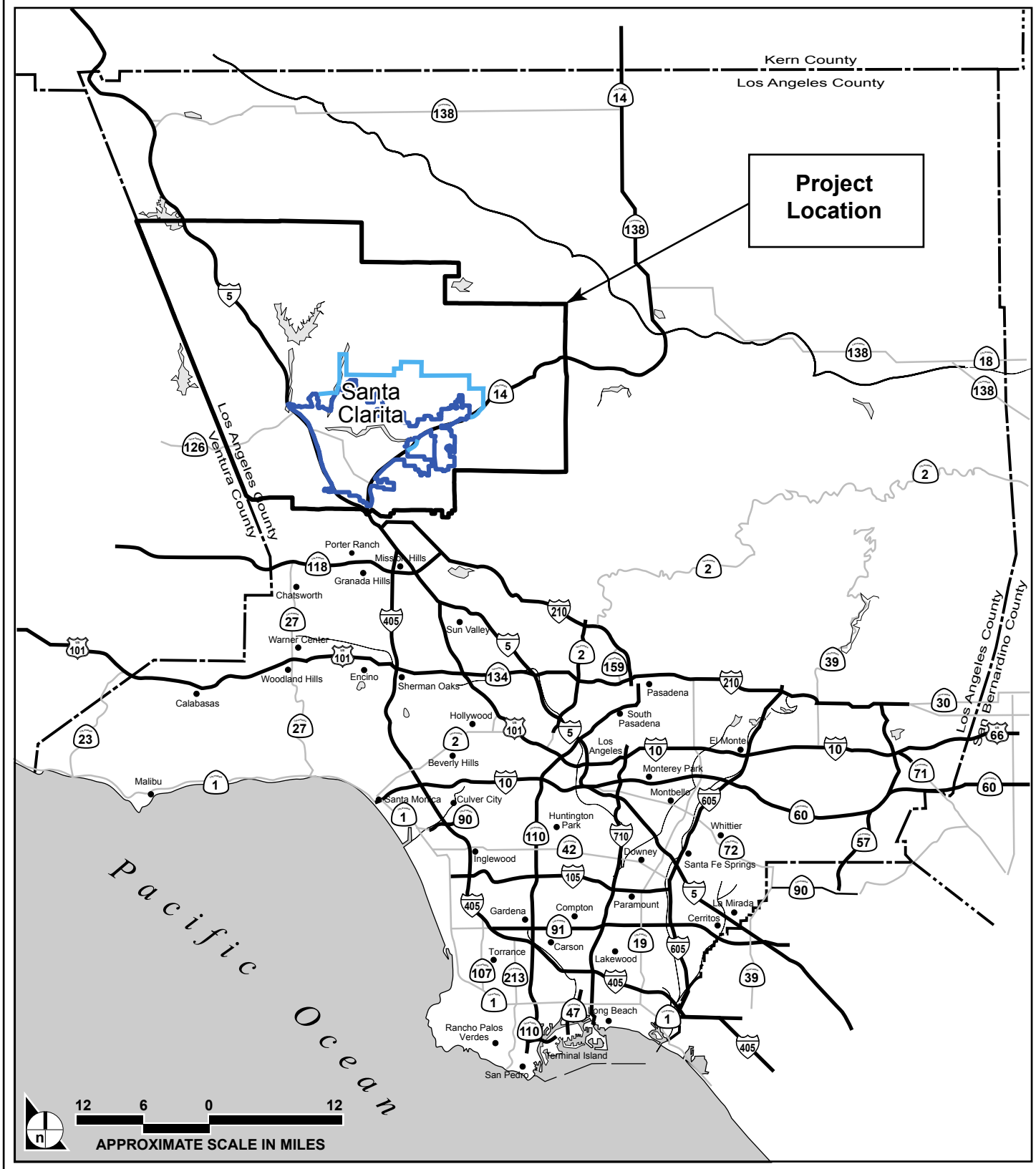
- Identify current and projected environmental conditions, which may affect or be affected by the Area Plan.

- Update the Area Plan development projections, including projections for dwelling units, non-residential square footage, population, and employment.
- Provide an environmental analysis of the proposed policies and disclose to the public the potential environmental impacts of the proposed Area Plan.
- Evaluate alternatives to the proposed Area Plan.
- Foster public participation in the planning process for the Area Plan.
- Conform with Section 21000 et. seq., of CEQA, which requires that environmental impacts be addressed and mitigated. Identify a mitigation framework, which could eliminate or reduce potentially significant environmental impacts of the Area Plan.
- Provide a legally defensible environmental foundation upon which decisions may be evaluated and justified.
- Prepare and certify a Programmatic Area Plan EIR that will serve as a first tier environmental document, consistent with the requirements of Section 15152 of the *State CEQA Guidelines*.
- Provide a basis for informative decisions when considering the development associated with implementation of the Area Plan.

APPROVALS AND ACTIONS TO IMPLEMENT THE AREA PLAN

Each of the Area Plan elements contains an outline of the steps necessary to implement each element. At the conclusion of the Area Plan EIR public hearing process, the Los Angeles County Regional Planning Commission will vote on whether to recommend certification of the adequacy of the Area Plan Programmatic EIR to the County of Los Angeles Board of Supervisors and to recommend approval of the proposed Area Plan Programmatic EIR. The Area Plan is a comprehensive policy-level document and future actions will be required for its implementation. These future actions include, but are not limited to the following:

- public facilities financing plan updates
- revisions to the County's Subdivision Ordinance and Zoning Ordinance, including Community Standards Districts, and other applicable ordinances
- revisions to the County Zoning Map to be consistent with the Land Use Map
- update of master plans for drainage, streets, trails, parks, and other County infrastructure and facilities in conformance with the Area Plan



SOURCE: Impact Sciences, Inc. – January 2008

FIGURE **2.0-1**

Regional Location Map

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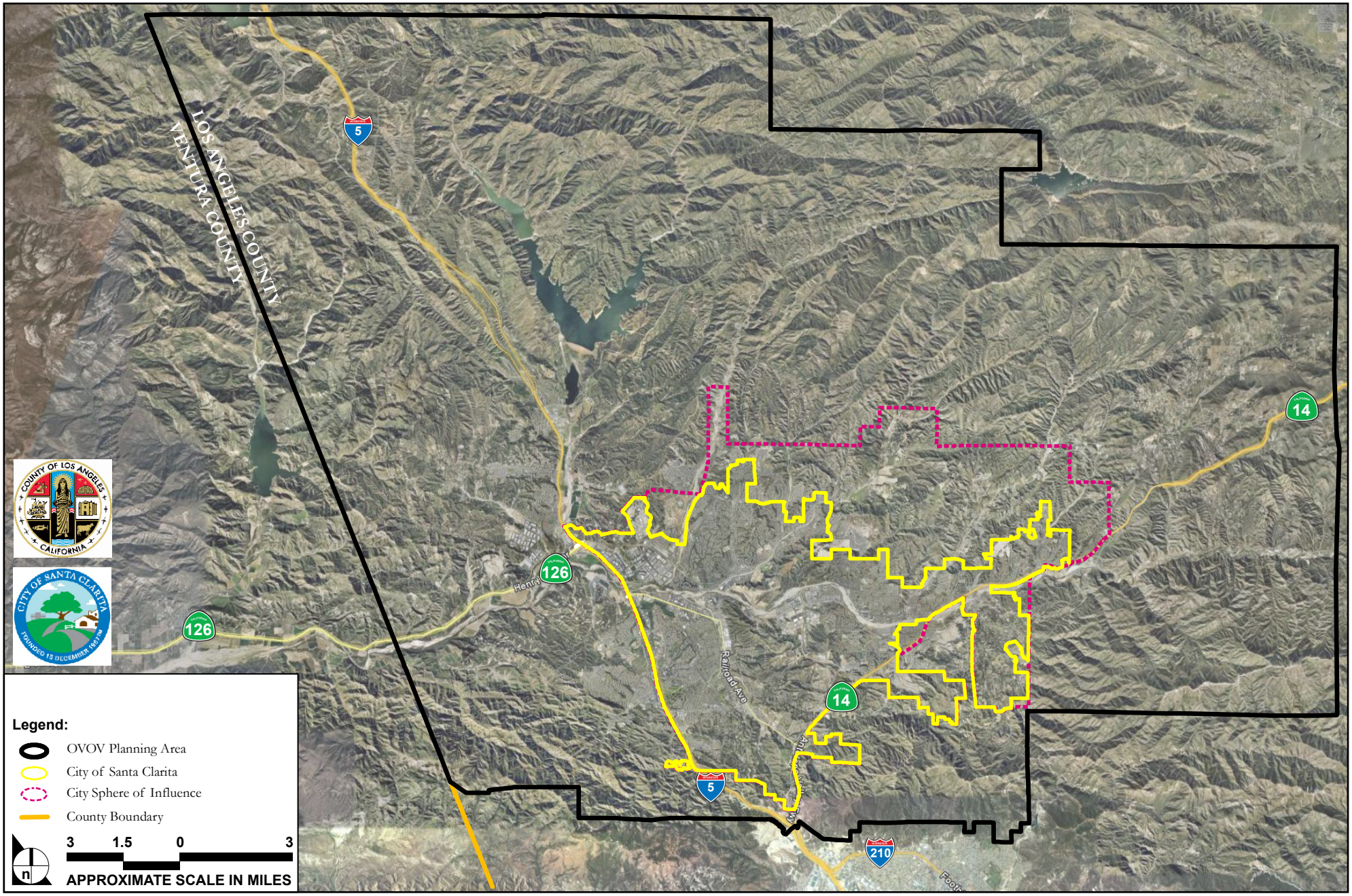

SOURCE: City of Santa Clarita - Planning City Boundary - 2008; Impact Sciences, Inc. - April 2009

FIGURE **2.0-2**

Vicinity Map

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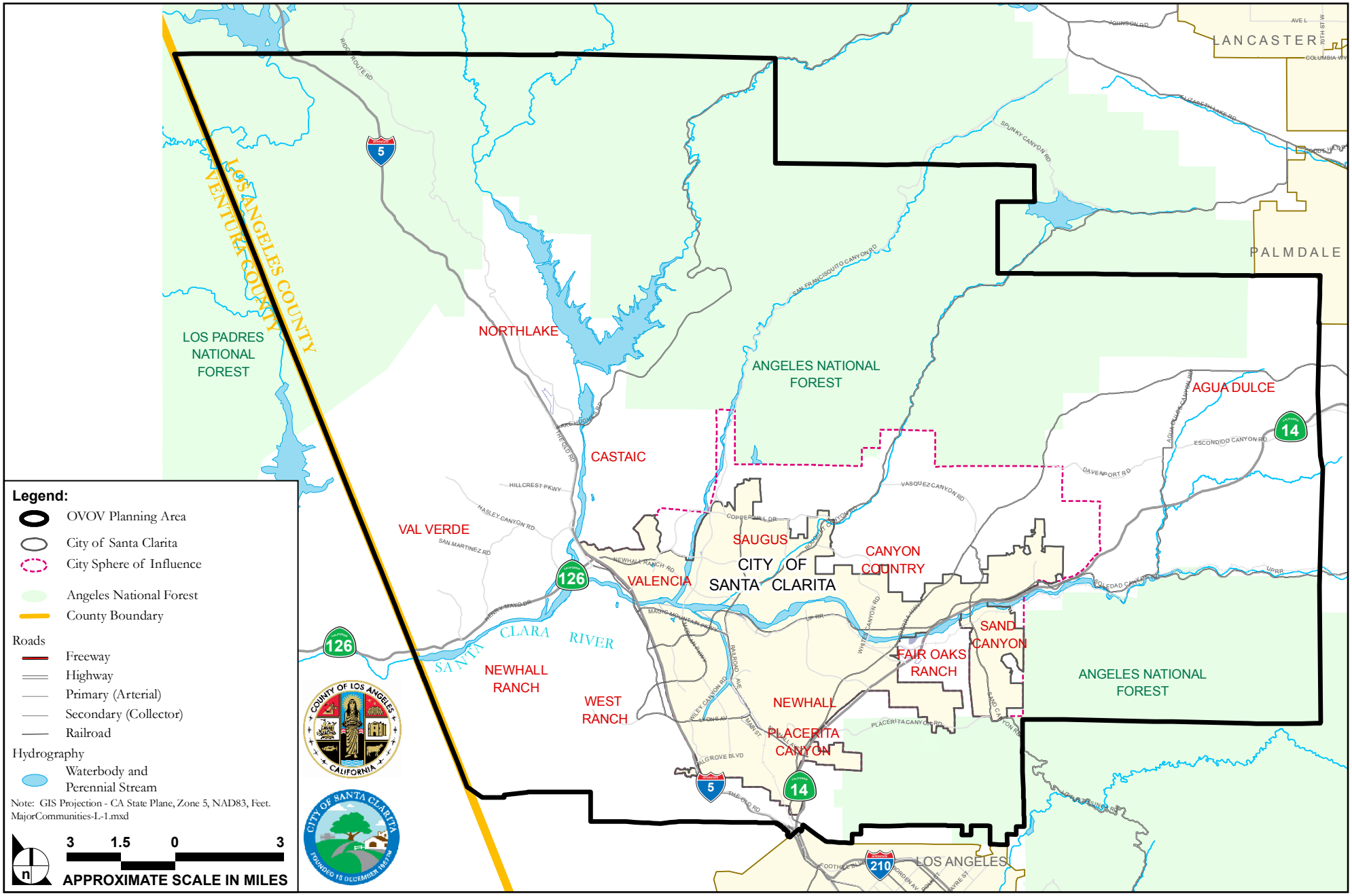


SOURCE: City of Santa Clarita - Planning City Boundary - 2008; Thomas Bros., Hydrology, Waterbodies, and Streets - 2007; LA County - Regional Planning, OVOV Boundary and Forest Boundaries - 2008.

FIGURE **2.0-3**

Community Locations

- amend the Highway Plan to reflect the OVOV Circulation Plan and to be consistent with the County's Highway Plan for the Santa Clarita Valley
- adopt the Valleywide Bikeway Plan in the Circulation Element
- revise the Capital Improvement Program (CIP) to incorporate needed capital projects identified in the Area Plan update

PURPOSE OF THE AREA PLAN

The purpose of the Area Plan is to provide policies incorporating the values and principles that will guide the County. The Area Plan outlines 36 Guiding Principles described below, which were agreed upon by the County and City. The principles will be carried out with the application of common standards for land use development, infrastructure, and resource management, as appropriate or applicable. The principles implement the vision for the Santa Clarita Valley, which is intended to sustain and enhance environmental resources, economic vitality, and the social well-being of its residents. The following is the vision for the Santa Clarita Valley from the Vision and Guiding Principles statement prepared for the OVOV Planning Area:

Vision

The Santa Clarita Valley is a wonderful place to live, work, play, and raise a family. The Valley is a mosaic of unique villages with growing ethnic diversity, each with individual identifies, surrounded by a greenbelt of forest lands and natural open spaces. These villages are unified by the Valley Center activity core, a beautiful environmental setting that includes the skyline and Santa Clara River, a vibrant growing economy, and a rich history of common social values. The Valley's network of roads, transit, and trails links these villages and provides access to a wide offering of quality education, cultural, recreation, and social services and facilities.

Life in the Santa Clarita Valley will continue to be exciting, enjoyable, and rewarding through a board range of housing types, an increase in quality jobs in close proximity to all neighborhoods, and transit-oriented villages complemented by excellent schools, attractive parks and other recreational amenities, expanded trail networks, and preserved natural resource areas. As the Valley moves forward, it is crucial that sound and sustainable planning principles shape new villages and enhance established neighborhoods. Implementing policies to increase mobility and accessibility, manage traffic congestion, improve air quality, and conserve water and energy resources throughout the Valley is essential to maintain the overall high quality of life.

Guiding Principles

Management of Growth

1. Growth in the Santa Clarita Valley shall account for the visions and objectives for each community and must be consistent with principles, as subsequently defined in this document, for the protection of the Valley's significant environmental resources. It must also be based on the availability of or ability to provide adequate infrastructure, schools, and public services, and must be carefully planned to benefit the community's economy, lifestyles, and needs.

2. Growth shall occur within and on the periphery of previously developed areas, rather than as "leapfrog" development or in areas of critical environmental habitat or natural hazards, and taking into consideration accessibility to infrastructure and public services.

3. Development shall be prioritized in areas for infill and redevelopment sites within currently developed areas consistent with community character objectives and those for which the City and County have approved entitlements. Commitments for new development outside of these areas shall be made in accordance with the other principles defined in this document.

4. Higher density development, including multi-family housing and mixed use projects that integrate housing with commercial uses, shall be targeted in areas adjacent to existing and planned transit corridors, stations, and key activity centers, such as the Valencia Town Center and portions of Newhall and Soledad Canyon Road.

Environmental Resources

5. The natural buffer area surrounding the entire Valley, which includes the Angeles National Forest, Santa Susana, San Gabriel, Sierra Pelona, and Del Sur mountains, shall be preserved as a regional recreational, ecological, and aesthetic resource.

6. The Santa Clara River corridor and its major tributaries shall be preserved as open space to accommodate storm water flows and protect critical plant and animal species (riparian vegetation, fish, etc.).

    a. Uses and improvements within the corridor shall be limited to those that benefit the community's use of the river in its natural state.

    b. Development on properties adjacent to, but outside of the defined primary river corridor, shall be located and designed to protect the river's water quality, plants, and animal habitats, controlling the type and density of uses, drainage runoff (water treatment), and other relevant elements; and designed to maximize the full range of river amenities, including views and recreational access, while minimizing adverse impacts to the River.

7. The Santa Clarita Valley's prominent ridgelines shall be preserved and hillside development shall be limited to protect their valuable aesthetic and visual qualities intrinsic to the Valley landscape.

8. Development shall be located and designed to minimize the impact on the Valley topography, emphasizing the use of grading techniques for development pads that mimic the natural topography in lieu of repetitive flat pads to the extent feasible and consistent with a community's open space objectives.

9. Development shall be located and designed to protect oak, sycamore, and other significant indigenous woodlands.

10. Biological resources in the designated Significant Ecological Areas (SEAs) shall be protected through the siting and design of development to account for and be highly compatible with their resources. Specific development standards shall be identified to control the types of land use, density, building location and size, roadways and other infrastructure, landscape, drainage, and other elements to assure the protection of the critical and important plant and animal habitats of each SEA. In general, the principle shall be to minimize the intrusion and impacts of development in these areas with sufficient setbacks, or buffers, to adequately protect the resources.

11. New development shall be designed to improve energy efficiency, reducing energy and natural resource consumption by such techniques as the use of solar generators, recycling of treated wastewater, capture of storm runoff on site, and use of recycled materials in building construction, native and drought-tolerant landscape, and energy and water efficient appliances and systems.

Land Uses

12. The Santa Clarita Valley shall contain a diversity of land uses that support the needs of current and future residents including housing, schools, libraries, parks, retail, business and industry, civic institutions, medical and social services, cultural, entertainment, open spaces, and comparable uses.

13. The type and density of land uses in the Santa Clarita Valley shall be varied to reflect the special characteristics, life styles, and opportunities that differentiate its communities. A choice of urban, suburban, and rural environments will be provided.

14. Valley communities shall contain a mix of uses that support the basic needs of residents—places to live, shop, recreate, meet/socialize, and enjoy the environmental setting—that are appropriate and consistent with their community character. Regionally oriented uses that serve residents of the entire Valley or export goods and services may be concentrated in key business centers rather than uniformly dispersed throughout the Valley communities.

15. Development in the Valley shall be guided by a common set of land use designations and standards for comparable uses in comparable locations. These standards, however, may be varied to reflect the unique intentions for the quality and character of the distinct communities that comprise the Valley.

Residential Neighborhoods

16. The Valley shall contain a mix of housing types that meet the diverse needs of residents, and offer choices for the Valley's population and lifestyles (ages, education, income, etc.) that are appropriate and consistent with their community character. This shall include a combination of single- and multi-

family, owner occupied and rental units within *each* community, and mixed-use (i.e., integrated housing with commercial or office uses) development in key activity centers.

17. The Valley is committed to providing affordable work force housing to meet the needs of individuals employed in the Santa Clarita Valley.

18. Multi-family housing developments shall contain adequate recreational and open space amenities on-site and be designed to ensure a high quality living environment. Their architectural treatment and building massing shall complement the characteristics of surrounding single-family residential neighborhoods.

19. Neighborhood scale development shall be encouraged by promoting mixed density of housing units consistent with community character objectives and limiting the number and acreage of multi-family units that can be developed in any single location.

20. Housing developments located in the more urbanized communities of the Valley shall be designed to create a sense of neighborhood by

    a. promoting walkability and containing places that serve as centers of activity and identity (schools, multi-purpose facilities, parks, convenience services, neighborhood commercial centers, etc.);

    b. containing a mix of housing types, densities, and parcel sizes, avoiding large areas and an over-concentration of homogeneous density units;

    c. minimizing the dependence on, prominence, and area dedicated to the automobile;

    d. featuring architectural design treatments along all frontages of new housing to promote continuity of architectural scale and rhythm and avoid "blank walls;" and

    e. including pedestrian linkages, landscaped parkways and green corridors, and separated trails (pedestrian, bicycle or equestrian) where appropriate and feasible.

Vital Economy

21. Commercial and retail uses will be expanded and new centers developed to meet the needs of the Valley's residents, as supportable by the market, minimize the need to travel outside of the Valley, complement (and do not adversely compete with) existing uses, and contribute to a balanced Valley economy.

22. New "clean" industries and businesses that provide job opportunities for local residents and enhance the economy shall be encouraged within and adjacent to existing and planned business centers/parks, and adjacent to transportation corridors.

23. Older commercial areas and corridors that are economically and/or physically obsolete or deteriorated, such as portions of Castaic, Val Verde, Newhall, Lyons Avenue, Sierra Highway, Main Street, Newhall Avenue, and Soledad Canyon Road, shall be redeveloped for commercial, mixed use,

residential or other appropriate uses that complement and serve adjoining land uses and can be adequately supported by the market. Where appropriate, redeveloped uses and buildings shall reflect the area's important architectural and cultural history.

Mobility

24. A unified and well-maintained network of highways, streets, truck routes, bikeways, and pedestrian paths will provide access among Valley communities and to regional centers outside of the Valley.

25. Santa Clarita Valley's streets and highways shall be developed and maintained according to common standards for right-of-way, paving and other improvements, landscape, signage, lighting, and curb cuts for "like" street categories. These standards shall take into consideration of objectives for the character of the Valley's communities consistent with public health and safety.

26. A continuous bikeway network shall provide circulation within each community, connect the various Santa Clarita Valley communities, and provide access to surrounding open spaces.

27. An integrated transit system shall serve the Valley (rail, bus, shuttle, other) offering convenient alternatives to the automobile, minimizing congestion and providing access to regional transportation systems, such as Metrolink.

Infrastructure

28. The location and timing of development shall be coordinated with the provision of adequate water, wastewater treatment, storm drainage, telecommunications, energy, roads, and other infrastructure.

29. Public infrastructure shall be improved, maintained, and expanded as needed to meet the needs of projected population and employment growth and contribute to the Valley's quality of life.

30. Common standards for providing utility infrastructure (flood control channels, energy transmission, telecommunications, and so on) shall be developed and applied throughout the Valley, in consideration of the character of each community.

Schools and Public Services

31. The City and County shall work in partnership with the Santa Clarita Valley school districts and the State of California to ensure the development of adequate facilities and programs to serve the needs and achieve a high level of academic excellence for local students.

32. While the City and County do not have direct authority over the development of public schools, they shall continue to coordinate with the school districts on issues of mutual interest such as transportation services, shared facilities, and long range planning for Valley schools.

33. Public services (police, fire, health care, youth, seniors, homeless, and other) shall be expanded to support community needs and population growth.

Recreation

34. The City and County shall recognize that trails are an important recreational asset that, when integrated with transportation systems, contribute to mobility throughout the Santa Clarita Valley.

35. A continuous and unified hiking and equestrian trail network for a variety of users and developed according to common standards shall connect and unify Santa Clarita Valley communities and be interconnected with the regional and statewide system (e.g., Pacific Crest Trail).

36. New parklands will be developed throughout the Santa Clarita Valley, with priority on locations that are not now adequately served. These shall encompass a diversity of park types and functions, including passive and active areas, in consideration of the recreational needs of the residents to be served.

    a. Common park standards shall be developed and applied throughout the Valley, consistent with community character objectives.

    b. A range of parkland types, sizes and uses shall be provided to accommodate recreational and leisure activities.

EXISTING COMMUNITIES

The physical setting and history of the Santa Clarita Valley have combined to create several distinctive communities, each with its own special character, development patterns, and lifestyles (**Figure 2.0-3, Community Locations**). Topographically, many neighborhoods are separated from adjacent development by ridgelines or canyons. The location of the Santa Clara River and Interstate 5, both of which transect the planning area, also act as barriers that separate communities. In addition, the historical development of the Valley took place over a long period of time during which development occurred in different areas, at different times, and for different reasons. Old Town Newhall, Saugus, and Castaic developed along transportation routes, while Valencia and Stevenson Ranch developed according to master plans prepared by residential builders.

Outlying areas, such as Val Verde and Hasley Canyon, developed as low-density rural areas based on their residents' desire for retreat from high-intensity urban centers. The diversity of settlement patterns within the Santa Clarita Valley is viewed as a positive aspect of the community, an acknowledgement of the area's history and topography, in recognition that the Valley can accommodate and provide diverse areas suitable for different lifestyles. However, the benefits of a unified approach to good planning cannot be ignored in favor of diversity. It may appear that Valley residents desire two seemingly inconsistent goals: maintenance of diversity and community identity, and a coordinated approach to

orderly development. It is the aim of the Santa Clarita Valley Area Plan update process to bring these two goals together into a workable planning policy document.

West Ranch (Stevenson Ranch, Sunset Pointe, Westridge, and Pico Canyon)

West of Interstate 5 are various communities that have a common setting and shared interests, generally referred to as West Ranch. These various communities are all located within the County's Planning Area. One of these is Stevenson Ranch, located west of Interstate 5 and north of Pico Canyon Road, a master-planned community developed in phases under a plan approved by Los Angeles County. The project's 4,000 acres are largely developed except for the last phase, which proposes 3,467 residential units. Over 100 acres of commercial use were included, nearly all of which are developed with regional commercial, restaurant and office uses along the freeway corridor (Valencia Marketplace). The project also included 45 acres of parkland.

Adjacent to Stevenson Ranch is Westridge, a residential community that includes elementary, junior high, and high school sites. South of Stevenson Ranch lie the residential community of Sunset Pointe and the rural residential area of Pico Canyon, located west of the Old Road. Pico Canyon extends into both City and County areas, and includes the Santa Clarita Woodlands State Park, Towsley Canyon State Park, Ed Davis Park, and the historic oil town of Mentryville. Mentryville is the location of Pico #4, the first successful oil well in the western United States. Surrounding the developed areas are significant stands of oak trees and the Lyons Canyon Significant Ecological Area (SEA).

The primary planning issues for Pico Canyon include compatibility of proposed developments with the Lyons Canyon SEA, the Santa Clarita Woodlands, and other parks and natural areas in the area.

Castaic

The unincorporated community of Castaic (located within the County's Planning Area) developed from its role as a highway stop containing small cafes, hotels, and automotive services along the old Ridge Route, which opened in 1914. By-passed when Highway 99 (now Interstate 5 [I-5]) opened in 1933, portions of the Ridge Route can still be driven today; when the Ridge Route was first constructed, it cut 30 miles off the Los Angeles to Bakersfield route and allowed the journey to be completed by automobile in only four days. The eight lanes of I-5 now bisect Castaic, with new residential development on both sides of the freeway and the older portion of the community on the east side.

The 600-mile-long California Water Project has turned the community of Castaic into one of the planning area's major recreational centers. Man-made Castaic Lake, the water project's western terminus, is a popular spot for swimming, sailing, fishing, boating, and water skiing.

The Castaic Sports Complex is located just south of Castaic Lake and provides sports opportunities for all ages. These recreational attractions have increased Castaic's growth potential, but have also resulted in traffic impacts, especially on weekends. Land use in Castaic is mixed, with new residential development surrounding freeway-oriented commercial uses along Castaic, Parker, and Lake Hughes Roads. The community still provides important services and facilities to the trucking industry, and there is a need to ensure that long-term parking and servicing of big rigs does not adversely impact area residents. Castaic's commercial corridor is changing from a small highway oriented service center along I-5 to include more goods and services for residents. There is potential for additional commercial infill development. In addition, there is an opportunity to expand services to recreational users of the local lakes.

Also within Castaic is the Peter J. Pitchess Detention Center, a Los Angeles County incarceration facility. A portion of the property is unused and presents an opportunity for future planning. Hasley Canyon, located north of Val Verde and southwest of Castaic, may be considered an outlying subarea of the Castaic community. With the exception of an older existing mobile home park, the area is characterized by low-density estate homes on larger lots amid scattered oak trees, and supports a rural equestrian lifestyle. Major planning issues for Hasley Canyon include maintaining compatibility of proposed development with the area's rural character.

Los Angeles County developed a Community Standards District (CSD) for Castaic to address a wide range of planning issues for this evolving community. Regulations in the CSD include lot size requirements for new homes, hillside development restrictions, provisions for trail connections and protection of native vegetation, and buffering between incompatible uses. In addition, the CSD limited the expansion of trucking-related uses in the Castaic center and prohibited clustered subdivisions in the Hasley Canyon and Sloan Canyon areas.

Val Verde

The unincorporated community of Val Verde is located 3 miles west of Interstate 5 and is developed primarily with single-family homes in a rural setting, surrounded by chaparral-covered hillsides and scattered canyon oaks. The community is located near the intersection of San Martinez and Chiquita Canyon Roads in the hills north of State Route 126 (SR-126). The area was subdivided in the 1920s and

lots were sold for use as vacation homes by African-American residents of Los Angeles. Today the area is ethnically diverse. The County of Los Angeles operates Val Verde Park, a community park with a swimming pool, open space, equestrian stables, and recreational amenities that provides a focal point for area residents. Major planning issues for Val Verde include potential nuisance impacts from expansion of the County landfill in Chiquita Canyon, the compatibility of proposed developments with Val Verde's rural character, and providing residents with increased access to employment opportunities, social services, and adequate infrastructure.

Agua Dulce

The unincorporated community of Agua Dulce is located in the Sierra Pelona Valley northeast of Canyon Country. The Antelope Valley Freeway (State Route 14) is located to the south, providing access to the community via Agua Dulce Canyon Road and Escondido Canyon Road. The community's setting is distinctively rural and completely surrounded by hills, imparting a feeling of separation from nearby urban areas. Vasquez Rocks County Park, located just north of Agua Dulce off of State Route 14 (SR-14), is an area of unique geologic formations that has been the site of many movies and television shows.

Agua Dulce has been ranching country since the 1870s. Mining activity in nearby Soledad Canyon first brought attention to the area, bringing more ranchers into the community. The construction of Sierra Highway and the Antelope Valley Freeway have increased accessibility into the community, bringing additional residents; however, the land use character remains rural and equestrian, with a small commercial "town center," and a privately owned airport, which is the only one in the OVOV Planning Area.

Residents wish to maintain Agua Dulce as a rural community, but are generally open to additional low-density, large-lot, equestrian-oriented homes in the area in accordance with its Community Standards District (CSD). There is also an opportunity to enhance the rustic village center to provide residents with more goods and services and serve as a community focal point.

Canyon Country

Canyon Country is located in the eastern portion of the City's Planning Area, along Soledad Canyon Road east of Saugus and extending north of Sand Canyon along State Route 14 to Agua Dulce. Portions of Canyon Country lie within both the City and the County. This area has the largest population of any community in the Valley and contains a wide range of housing types, including large-lot single-family custom homes, single-family tract homes, multiple-family development, and mobile home parks. Commercial and manufacturing activities are concentrated along both sides of Soledad Canyon Road and

along the northerly portion of Sierra Highway within the planning area. A business park/industrial hub, Centre Pointe Business Park, is located on Golden Valley Road. The City's Sports Complex and Aquatics Center provide recreational facilities serving all Valley residents, and the Via Princessa Metrolink station serves the east Valley communities. A commercial development has been completed along Soledad Canyon Road between White's Canyon and Sierra Highway, which includes the Jo Anne Darcy Canyon Country Library. Newer townhomes and apartment are located along State Route 14 between Sand Canyon and Via Princessa. In addition, there are residential neighborhoods in Mint Canyon and Tick Canyon within unincorporated County territory but within the City's adopted SOI. The landscape and terrain in this area is arid and rugged. A variety of architectural styles exist along Soledad Canyon Road. Homes along the northern section of Sierra Highway are generally rural and of very low density, with the exception of multi-family development near the intersection of Sierra Highway and Soledad Canyon Road.

One issue for residents in Canyon Country has been access to jobs in the Valencia area to the west. However, with the planned completion of the Cross-Valley Connector, traffic movement between Canyon Country and employment centers along Interstate 5 is expected to improve significantly.

College of the Canyons has recently opened an east campus on Sierra Highway within Canyon Country. The site is approved to contain 70 acres and will accommodate 8,000 full-time students at buildout. The campus will operate as a full-service junior college to east Valley residents.

Planning issues for Canyon Country include an opportunity to upgrade land uses along Sierra Highway in the area of the new college campus, from Soledad Canyon Road north to Vasquez Canyon Road. In this area Sierra Highway will be widened to six lanes, and there is an opportunity to provide services to area residents and the college on vacant land fronting the highway. Canyon Country residents have expressed a desire for higher end retail and restaurant uses in their area. In addition, older non-conforming uses in the area can be gradually phased out to upgrade the character of development and encourage new users to Canyon Country. This area will be planned as a mixed-use corridor in order to provide new housing and commercial services for area residents, as well as for college students and faculty.

The mixed use corridor designation will encourage a mix of uses in a pedestrian-friendly environment, creating a focal point for Canyon Country. Another planning opportunity for Canyon Country lies in the land adjacent to State Route 14 access points. Four existing on- and off-ramp systems provide direct freeway access to the area, and represent opportunities to enhance entryways into the community.

Sand Canyon

The Sand Canyon area is located southeast of Canyon Country within the City's Planning Area. It is a subcommunity of Canyon Country and is comprised predominantly of low-density single-family residential uses. It has a Special Standards District. The area is rural with extensive stands of oak trees and is characterized by large estate homes and lots, many of which are equestrian and enjoy direct access to an equestrian trail system linking the community. The community is accessible via Sand Canyon Road and Placerita Canyon Road, and is bordered on the south and east by the Angeles National Forest.

A challenge for the Sand Canyon area will be ensuring land use compatibility between homes and adjacent natural areas in Angeles National Forest and along the Santa Clara River. Major planning issues include protecting the rural and equestrian character from development pressures to create more traditional subdivisions in this low-density area; increasing multiple purpose trail linkages; and providing an effective interface between residents and National Forest lands.

Newhall

Commercial land uses are concentrated in what has been called Old Town Newhall, along Lyons Avenue and Main Street within the City's Planning Area. Residential uses in Newhall include higher density multi-family and single-family uses, both north and south of Lyons Avenue. Some of the older single family and mobile home residences in east Newhall are in need of rehabilitation. The City recently completed a new 17,000-square-foot recreation and community center in Downtown Newhall, offering a variety of programs and containing a Sheriff's substation. The Metrolink train station, which provides commuter services and a parking lot adjacent to the community center, was built on the site of the original Newhall train station. The City's only redevelopment area is located within the Newhall community.

In December 2005 the City of Santa Clarita adopted the Downtown Newhall Specific Plan as a foundation for facilitating redevelopment and enhancement of the area. Based on extensive public input, economic analysis, and planning design, the specific plan encompasses 20 blocks (550 acres, including Hart Park) and provides opportunities for mixed use and transit oriented development. Approximately 700 new dwelling units and 250,000 square feet of new commercial space are projected by the specific plan, in addition to existing housing and business in the area. Because the Downtown Newhall Specific Plan was the first plan targeted by the City towards transit-oriented development, it will serve as a prototype for other districts in the Valley that will be clustered around transit centers. The design principles for Transit

Oriented Development as identified in the document will be considered in planning for similar districts near other transit centers. These principles included the following:

- Make great public places
- Make great streets (both commercial and residential)
- Live above stores
- Live near transit
- Build a variety of buildings
- Create a variety of housing choices
- Provide for the right mix of retail
- Provide the right amount of parking, in the right locations

Implementation strategies in the specific plan included street improvements, provision of additional on-street parking, and a future parking structure, rerouting of through-traffic to Railroad Avenue, bicycle baths, streetscape beautification, utility upgrades, affordable housing assistance, billboard abatement, historic preservation, and creation of a plaza for outdoor markets. The plan also contains detailed architectural guidelines designed to promote human-scale, pedestrian-oriented streets and buildings consistent with the old-town themes.

The primary planning issues for Newhall include implementation of the Downtown Newhall Specific Plan through redevelopment efforts and attracting private investment combined with public funds to create a mixed-use, transit-oriented, pedestrian-friendly, live-work-play environment that will provide dining, entertainment, retail, commercial, and housing choices to both residents and visitors. This will result in the Newhall Planning Area providing additional services including parking amenities and a new branch library to serve nearby residents. This also includes the future expansion of Dockweiler Drive to Lyons Avenue, the future expansion of The Master's College campus, development of the 4.2-million-square-foot Gate-King industrial park and providing any needed drainage infrastructure.

Placerita Canyon

Site of the first gold strike in California in 1842, Placerita Canyon, a sub-community of Newhall within the City's Planning Area, is now a rural residential area located northeast of downtown Newhall. It has a Special Standards District. Equestrian-oriented residential uses among oak woodlands typify development in this area, which still contains scattered ranches. Oil fields are located in the eastern

portion of the canyon, west of State Route 14. East of State Route 14, Placerita Canyon is predominantly undeveloped with much of the land contained in the Angeles National Forest. Placerita Canyon is home to The Master's College, a private four-year liberal arts institution, and the Placerita Canyon Nature Center. Two historic ranches in Placerita Canyon have been converted to other uses but retain the rural character of the area: The Melody Ranch is now used primarily for filming and to host the annual Cowboy Festival and other events; and the Golden Oak Ranch is owned by the Disney Company for filming and other corporate uses. A substantial number of newer estate homes on large lots have been constructed in the area in recent years. Planning issues in Placerita Canyon include accommodating expansion plans for The Master's College; upgrading non-compliant older structures; extending sewer lines to serve existing uses throughout the area to protect groundwater quality; providing flood control and drainage improvements; providing additional vehicular access (possibly through extension of Dockweiler Drive). There is an opportunity to link Placerita Canyon with Downtown Newhall through appropriate development of the 200-acre North Newhall area.

Saugus

Established in 1887, Saugus (within the City's Planning Area) was named for the Massachusetts birthplace of founder Henry Mayo Newhall and owes its existence to the Southern Pacific Railroad. Saugus has a colorful history. The Saugus Speedway, originally designed in 1924 as a rodeo arena, was the setting for the last great train robbery in California, which took place behind the speedway in 1928. A Metrolink station is now located near the speedway, which includes parking and provides a transfer point between commuter rail and buses. Residential areas of Saugus are located in Seco Canyon and Bouquet Canyon, and include townhouses located on the heights above the junction of these canyons. Residential development has also occurred in Haskell Canyon, Plum Canyon, and Dry Canyon. Commercial uses in the area primarily serve local residents. Saugus also contains older industrial development along Railroad Avenue, interspersed with newer commercial uses.

The northern portions of Saugus are hilly, with tree-lined streets adjacent to hills covered with natural vegetation. The natural areas remaining along Bouquet Canyon Creek present an opportunity to enhance the area by creating a greenbelt connecting the community with other parts of the Valley. The primary planning issues for Saugus include addressing traffic congestion, the need for beautification and public amenities such as roadway landscaping, and the need for enhanced commercial to serve a broader range of needs for Saugus residents.

Valencia

Located within the City's Planning Area, the community of Valencia is part of the original 37,500-acre Newhall Ranch, a Mexican land grant acquired by Henry Mayo Newhall and later owned by the Newhall Land and Farming Company. Named after a city in Spain, Valencia was initiated in 1965 as a master-planned community. Residential, commercial, and industrial developments form the basic community structure, supported by shopping centers, recreational facilities, schools, colleges, a hospital, golf courses, professional offices, and other support services connected by a system of walkways called paseos. The community is home to the local Los Angeles County Civic Center, College of the Canyons, California Institute of the Arts, Santa Clarita's City Hall, the Valencia Town Center Mall, and Six Flags Magic Mountain. Developments such as the Valencia Gateway (comprised of the Valencia Industrial Center and Valencia Commerce Center) have made Valencia the largest center for business and technology in the Valley. New industrial development continues west of Interstate 5 in North Valencia, including a postal distribution facility.

Both the City and the County have jurisdiction over portions of Valencia, although the majority of the land is within City limits. Since 1965 more than 20,000 residential units have been constructed and over 50,000 residents call Valencia home. The primary planning issues for Valencia will be promoting development that provides employment opportunities for Valley residents, and maintaining Valencia's role as an economic center for the Valley, as other regional commercial uses are constructed.

APPROVED SPECIFIC PLANS

Significant portions of the OVOV Planning Area are included in specific plans that have already received land use approval. As these areas build out pursuant to approved specific plans and subdivision maps, the resulting land uses will be integrated into the Valley's development pattern and circulation network. Therefore, the following previously approved projects were considered in drafting the Area Plan land use element and other related elements.

Newhall Ranch

The County of Los Angeles adopted the Newhall Ranch Specific Plan on May 27, 2003. The planning area encompasses 11,963 acres and extends approximately 5 miles from east to west, and 5.5 miles from north to south, from about 1 mile west of Interstate 5 to the Ventura County line, both north and south of State Route 126. The southerly portion of the site contains steep terrain and high plateaus of the Santa Susana Mountains; over 6,000 acres of the plan area will remain in open space, including two special resource management areas. The adopted plan will allow construction of 20,885 dwelling units, 629 acres of

mixed-use development, 67 acres of commercial, 249 acres of business park, and 37 acres of visitor commercial uses. Neighborhood parks, a 15-acre lake, public trails, an 18-hole golf course, fire stations, a branch library, and school sites are also planned, along with water and sewer infrastructure. The specific plan states the project's intent is to provide a high-quality, master planned environment, which offers homes, shopping, employment, and recreational opportunities. Development of the project is expected to occur over a 25-year time frame.

A key design feature of the Newhall Ranch Specific Plan is its emphasis on the creation of interrelated villages, separated by significant open space areas and natural landforms. The plan avoids "leap-frog" development into the Santa Susana foothills and instead accommodates projected growth in areas adjacent to existing and planned infrastructure, urban services, transportation routes, and employment centers. Villages proposed by the project include Landmark Village, Mission Village, Homestead Village, and Potrero Village.

Natural landmarks and topographical features define each village. According to the specific plan, dividing the large project into villages allows for the creation of convenient village centers and gives future residents optimal access to commercial, recreational, and public facilities. In addition, this design gives residents access to nature by providing undeveloped open space accessible by trails from each village. Land uses were located to accommodate and preserve major natural landforms and significant environmental features, such as the river corridor, ridgelines, hillsides, creeks, bluffs, and oak woodlands. Each village and its central activity area will be allowed to develop a unique sense of identity, inspired by the natural features of the site. The village concept was designed to provide residents with a greater sense of identity with their community. Through its design and planned development pattern, the Newhall Ranch Specific Plan reinforces the theme for the Santa Clarita Valley as a "Valley of Villages."

Northlake

The Northlake Specific Plan was approved for 3,623 residential units, both single family and multi-family, on 1,330 acres located 2 miles north of Castaic. The plan also calls for 450 acres of open space, school sites, and a golf course; however, the project proponents have requested revisions to the proposed project amenities that are under review by Los Angeles County. When developed, this project will be considered a part of the Castaic village community.

Fair Oaks Ranch

The Fair Oaks Ranch Specific Plan is a residential development located between Sierra Highway and SR-14, near Via Princessa. The project includes 4,763 multi-family units and 637 single-family units on

approximately 308 acres, and is nearly built out. The project is bisected by the Antelope Valley Freeway and contains no commercial uses. Therefore, there is an opportunity to create a service center for Fair Oaks Ranch in the vicinity of the project.

Whittaker-Bermite

The 989-acre Whittaker-Bermite site is situated in the center of the City and was used for over 80 years as a production site for military explosives and flares by various manufacturers. Manufacturing operations ceased in 1987. During these years, manufacturing and testing of various chemicals on the site involved use and improper disposal of hazardous materials, resulting in chemical contamination of both soil and groundwater. Directly beneath the site lies the Saugus Aquifer, a significant groundwater source for the Valley. Since manufacturing operations ended, remediation of soil and groundwater contamination (including perchlorate) has been ongoing; however, more progress must be made prior to redevelopment of the site.

The Porta Bella Specific Plan was approved for the property, which proposed cleanup of contaminants and reuse of the site for mixed uses, including 1,244 single-family units, 1,667 multi-family units, 96 acres of commercial and office uses, 407 acres of open space, and 42 acres of recreational use. Extension of major roadways designed to traverse the planning area include Via Princessa, Magic Mountain Parkway, and Santa Clarita Parkway. However, more work is needed to ensure site cleanup and the location of uses in an appropriate manner to avoid future health risks. The City has joined environmental agencies and the water district in promoting remediation of this brown-field site and reuse of the property for productive purposes.

Valencia Specific Plans

The North Valencia Specific Plan (Bridgeport) was adopted in 1998. The project encompassed 707 acres generally bordered by Newhall Ranch Road, Bouquet Canyon Road, Magic Mountain Parkway, east of San Francisquito Creek. The Specific Plan provided for a mix of residential and commercial uses, open space, and an industrial center. A significant segment of the Santa Clara River was preserved as open space as part of the specific plan.

The North Valencia Specific Plan No. 2 was adopted in 2000 for 596 acres in the northern portion of the City generally located north of Newhall Ranch Road west of McBean Parkway. The Specific Plan called for mixed-use development, including residential, industrial, and commercial uses. A major component of this project was preservation of open space in environmentally sensitive areas along San Francisquito Creek.

The residential portions of these specific plan areas have been fully built out, and the industrial areas are in the final phases of development.

Downtown Newhall Specific Plan

As noted above in the description of Newhall, the Downtown Newhall Specific Plan has been prepared by the City to encourage mixed use, transit-oriented development in the historic community of Newhall in order to promote new investment, spur economic development, and create new residential opportunities in this area. The Downtown Newhall Specific Plan was adopted in 2005.

ANALYSIS ASSUMPTIONS AND METHODOLOGY

Projections for Population and Households

Based on a detailed analysis of the OVOV Planning Area conducted by traffic analysis zones, staff from the County and City have determined that population of the Santa Clarita Valley at full buildout of the uses shown on the land use map of the Area Plan will be approximately 460,000 to 485,000 residents, comprising 150,000 to 160,000 households. The unincorporated County population would be 237,387. The methodology used by staff to develop these detailed demographic projections involved the following steps:

1. Staff prepared projections for each traffic analysis zone (TAZ) contained in the traffic model. For purposes of traffic modeling, a TAZ is a portion of land within the planning area in which certain land uses have been designated, the development of which is expected to generate new vehicle trips to serve future development. Only undeveloped or underutilized land will be expected to be used for new development that will generate new vehicle trips. Therefore, each TAZ was analyzed to determine the percentage of land that was already fully built out, and the amount of land available for new development or rebuilding. There are 455 TAZs in the traffic model for the planning area.

2. Staff compared each TAZ with a current aerial photograph and Planning Department records to determine the amount of developable land in each one. Land was considered to be developable if it was vacant or underutilized, privately owned, designated and zoned for future development, and free of major constraints such as ridgelines and floodways.

3. For land within each TAZ, staff estimated the projected actual buildout capacity under the draft Land Use Map, considering parcelization, existing and surrounding development, access, topography, drainage patterns, infrastructure capacity, and similar site constraints.

4. The result of this analysis was an estimated buildout capacity for each TAZ in terms of dwelling unit number and type; non-residential development potential (including commercial, business park, retail, and institutional space); public uses, including government and school facilities, parks and open space; and land devoted to infrastructure (such as streets and highways, transmission corridors, and flood control easements).

5. Portions of the Planning Area outside the TAZ had trips designated to the nearest TAZ.

The projections generated from the TAZ analysis represent staff's best efforts to achieve a realistic vision of actual buildout potential for the planning area. In preparing the OVOV land use projections, staff acknowledged that portions of the planning area are already largely developed, and that the Area Plan is not based on a "clean slate" of vacant, undeveloped land. Existing uses and development patterns must be recognized in planning for new uses.

For purposes of a theoretical comparison, the TAZ analysis could be compared to the "worst case" buildout projections of the Area Plan land use map. The worst-case scenario assumes that all existing uses are subject to demolition, reconstruction, or intensification to achieve the maximum density allowed by the land use map. For example, if an area is designated for single-family residential uses at five dwelling units per acre and the area is already developed at four dwellings per acre, the worst-case scenario assumes that the existing subdivisions would be replaced with new subdivisions at a higher density, or that existing units would be subdivided into multi-family structures to achieve the higher density. Because many areas of the Santa Clarita Valley have been developed within the last 20 years with structures that have useful lifespan of 50 years or longer, staff determined that it would be unreasonable to assume that all existing development would be replaced with new development at the highest possible density allowed by the land use map. For this reason, the worst-case scenario under the land use plan was not used as the basis for demographic projections. Instead, the TAZ analysis described above formed the basis for reasonable buildout projections of land use, dwelling units, population, and employment.

Projections for Commercial and Industrial Development

To project future commercial and industrial development, an ad-hoc task force of staff members from the City and County conducted a detailed analysis of the planning area according to traffic analysis zones. This task force reviewed data from multiple sources, including existing geographic information system (GIS) data layers, existing and proposed zoning, existing and proposed General and Area Plan land use designations, property subdivisions, existing development patterns, pending development applications, approved planning entitlements, topographic and environmental constraints, and other relevant

information. The methodology used by staff to develop these detailed development projections involved the following steps:

1. Staff prepared projections for each traffic analysis zone (TAZ) contained in the traffic model. For purposes of traffic modeling, a TAZ is a portion of land within the planning area in which certain land uses have been designated, the development of which is expected to generate new vehicle trips to serve future development. Only undeveloped or under-utilized land is expected to contain future development that will generate new vehicle trips. Therefore, each TAZ must be analyzed to determine the percentage of land that is already fully built-out, and the amount of land that is available for new development or rebuilding. There are 455 TAZs in the planning area's traffic model.

2. Staff compared each TAZ with a current aerial photograph and Planning Department records to determine the amount of developable land in each one. Land was considered to be developable if it was vacant or under-utilized, privately owned, appropriately designated and zoned, and free of major constraints such as ridgelines and floodways.

3. For land within each TAZ, staff estimated the projected actual buildout capacity under the draft Land Use Map, considering parcelization, existing and surrounding development, access, topography, drainage patterns, infrastructure capacity, and similar site constraints.

4. Portions of the Planning Area outside of the TAZ had trips designated to the nearest TAZ.

5. The result of this analysis was an estimated buildout capacity for each TAZ in terms of dwelling unit number and type; non-residential development potential (including commercial, business park, retail, and institutional space); public uses, including government and school facilities, parks and open space; and land devoted to infrastructure (such as streets and highways, transmission corridors, and flood control easements).

6. The projections generated from the TAZ analysis represent staff's best efforts to achieve a realistic vision of actual buildout potential for the planning area. In preparing the OVOV land use projections, staff acknowledged that portions of the planning area are already largely developed, and that the General Plan is not based on a "clean slate" of vacant, undeveloped land. Existing uses and development patterns must be recognized in planning for new uses.

For purposes of a theoretical comparison, the TAZ analysis could be compared to the "worst case" commercial and industrial buildout projections of the Area Plan land use map. The worst case scenario assumes that all existing uses are subject to demolition, reconstruction, or intensification to achieve the maximum density allowed by the land use map. For commercial and industrial uses, maximum density is established by the calculation of floor to area ratios (FARs). An FAR is the total floor area of a building to the area of land on which the building is located. The Area Plan specifies a maximum density of 1.0 FAR for the General Commercial (CG) and Light Industrial (IL) land use designations and a maximum density of 2.0 FAR for the Major Commercial (CM) and Industrial Office (IO) land use designations. Because many areas of the Santa Clarita Valley have been developed within the last 20 years that have useful

life-spans of 50 years of longer, staff determined that it would be unreasonable to assume that all existing development would be replaced with new development at the highest possible density allowed by the land use map. For this reason, the "worst case" scenario under the land use plan was not used as the basis for demographic projections. Instead, the TAZ analysis described above formed the basis for reasonable buildout projections of land use, dwelling units, population, and employment.

Employment Projections

To project future job growth, a variety of data sources were used to identify actual employment numbers for existing businesses in the Valley. Based on this data, an average number of jobs per square foot of non-residential uses were derived; this number projected an employment generation range of one employee per approximately 550 to 725 square feet of floor area. Staff then estimated the potential for future construction or expansion of non-residential development on vacant and underutilized land in the planning area that is developable and designated for employment-generating uses. Based on this analysis, staff estimated that over 59 million square feet of new commercial, industrial, and/or institutional space could be built within the Valley. (It should be noted that the actual number may fluctuate based upon floor areas of new construction). Using the employment generation factors and the estimated square footage of new employment-generating uses, staff developed a range of estimated employment at buildout of the Area Plan land use map. The estimated number of *new* jobs under the Area Plan buildout ranges from 98,322 to 128,850. Added to existing jobs (the estimated range of existing jobs within the Valley are 119,588 to 157,404) within the Valley, the total number of jobs in the OVOV Planning Area is estimated to range from 217,910 to 286,254 at Area Plan buildout.

Jobs/Housing Balance

The jobs/housing balance compares the available housing and available jobs within a community. Using projected estimates of employment and residential development allowed by the Area Plan land use map, it is estimated that the jobs-housing ratio within the Santa Clarita Valley will maintain a minimum of 1.5 jobs per household and could approach nearly 2:1 depending on development trends. The County and City have adopted a goal of achieving at least 1.5 jobs per household, as stated in the policy section of this element.

Summary of Population/Housing/Employment Assumptions

Table 2.0-1, Summary of Population, Housing, and Employment Projections for the OVOV Planning Area at Buildout, summarizes the projected population, households, and jobs for buildout of the OVOV

Planning Area as well as the County's Planning Area, projected new jobs, and the jobs to housing ratio desired by the County.

Table 2.0-1
Summary of Population, Housing, and Employment Projections for the OVOV Planning Area at Buildout

Population		Number of Households	Jobs		Jobs to Housing Ratio
OVOV Planning Area at Buildout	Unincorporated County	OVOV Planning Area at Buildout	OVOV Planning Area at Buildout	New Jobs at County Area Plan Buildout	County's Planning Area at Buildout
460,000-485,000	237,387	150,000-160,000	217,910–286,254	98,322–128,850	1.5 jobs per household

LAND USE ELEMENT AND MAP

Purpose

State law requires that the General Plan include a Land Use Element that designates land for housing, business, industry, and open space, as well as other uses deemed appropriate by the agency (Government Code Sections 65302-03). The Land Use Element is generally considered to be the most representative of and essential to the Area Plan, because it guides and directs the physical development of the community. This element constitutes the required Land Use Element for the County's Area Plan. It designates the general location of land uses including residential, commercial, mixed use, industrial, public, and institutional, transportation, utilities; open space and recreation, agriculture as well as other land uses. The Land Use Element addresses the permitted density and intensity of the various land use designation as reflected on the Land Use Map (**Figure 2.0-4, Proposed Land Use Policy Map**).

Relationship of the Land Use Element to Other Elements of the Area Plan

The Land Use Element addresses existing development patterns in the Santa Clarita Valley planning area and establishes a framework for focusing future growth in a logical and orderly manner. All of the principles of community and land use planning are applied to the preparation and adoption of a comprehensive, long-term land use plan for the physical development of the Valley. The process of developing the land use plan involved analysis of:

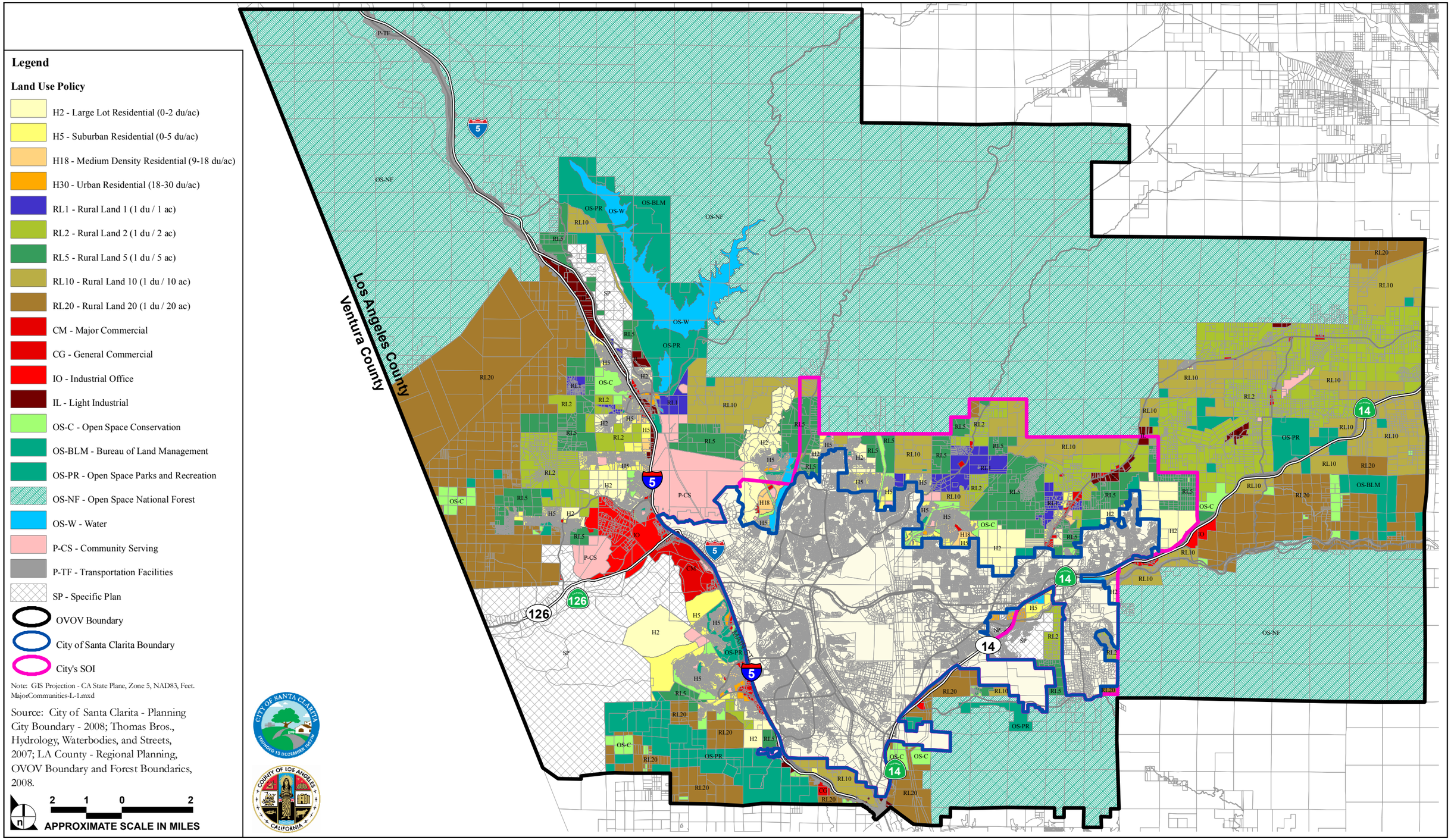
- Existing land use patterns and projected growth

- Current and future availability of public services and facilities
- Availability of water and other needed resources
- Protection of sensitive habitats and natural resources
- Protection of existing and future residents from natural and man-made hazards
- Analysis of social and economic conditions and needs
- Consideration of the constraints and opportunities inherent in the physical environment

Based on this analysis, the element establishes the distribution of land uses by type and intensity. Equally important in the Land Use Element is the goal to provide all residents with a well-rounded and healthy lifestyle including a variety of jobs, housing, goods, and services to meet the diverse needs of the Valley's growing population.

Circulation Element

Closely related to the Land Use Element is the Circulation Element, which is directly affected by and has a constraining effect upon the viability of the land use plan. The Circulation Element contains a map showing major transportation facilities within the Santa Clarita Valley, including highways, rail, and public transit routes, stations and terminals, and airport facilities. This Land Use Element was evaluated in conjunction with the system of highways set forth in the Circulation Element, through use of a computerized traffic model analysis. The objective of the traffic model analysis was to ensure that highways are designed to convey vehicles through the planning area at acceptable service levels when the land uses shown in the Land Use Element are developed. In addition, the map and policies of the Land Use Element were designed to encourage reduction of vehicle trips and use of other transportation modes, including public transit, cycling, and walking. This goal is promoted through inclusion of mixed-use districts, which allow supportive services to be located in proximity to residential neighborhoods; inclusion of a master plan for trails into the Circulation Element; and designation of higher residential densities in areas served by public transit.



SOURCE: City of Santa Clarita, County of Los Angeles, Valleywide General Plan - November 2010

FIGURE **2.0-4**

Proposed Land Use Policy Map

112-023•11/10

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Housing Element

This Land Use Element is consistent with the Housing Element prepared for the County because the location and density ranges shown for residential land use districts on the Land Use Map have been designated in consideration of the housing needs projected for all economic and demographic segments of the Valley's residents, including households with special needs and those with incomes of less than the County median. Adequate sites for attached and multi-family housing have been identified to ensure that the need for affordable housing has been met in the Valley. Further, the number of dwelling units that can be built in the OVOV Planning Area based on the land use plan will ensure that the regional housing needs allocated to the Valley by the Southern California Associated Governments (SCAG) will be met.

Conservation and Open Space Element

The Land Use Element was designed to ensure that irreplaceable natural resources and open spaces are preserved and protected from encroachment by future development. The Land Use Map designates a "green belt" of undeveloped land within and adjacent to the foothills surrounding the Santa Clarita Valley, with areas designated for rural development located between urban and suburban densities and the foothills. In addition, the Land Use Map was designed to protect Significant Ecological Areas (SEAs) and the riparian areas adjacent to the Santa Clara River and its tributaries, as well as ensuring provision of adequate open space for recreational purposes, water conservation and quality, and habitat preservation.

Noise Element

The Land Use Element is consistent with the map and policies of the Noise Element through its requirements for buffer areas between "sensitive receptor" uses and noise sources. Sensitive receptors include residences, schools, hospitals, preschools, and other uses for which intrusive noise is considered annoying and/or unsafe. Policies have also been included in the Land Use Element to ensure noise attenuation to safe levels within individual development projects.

Safety Element

The Land Use Element is consistent with the Safety Element because land uses were designated in consideration of the locations of hazard areas, including known earthquake fault zones, areas subject to flooding or wild fires, unstable soils, and other environmental hazards. In addition, the Land Use Element includes policies to ensure that new development plans in the County are evaluated for

conformance with accepted crime prevention measures, and that adequate law enforcement and fire protection services are provided to ensure the safety of County residents.

Land Use Map Policy Designations

The following descriptions identify the type, density, and/or intensity of land uses that conform to each of the land use designations shown on the Land Use Map. It is important to note, when reading the Land Use Map and the descriptions of each land use designation, that the maximum density or intensity is not guaranteed for any land use category. In determining the "highest and best use" for each property shown on the Land Use Plan, consideration was given to topography; availability of roads and infrastructure; existing development patterns; potential land use conflicts; public health, safety, and welfare; presence of environmental resources and hazards; and other site constraints. Therefore, the upper range of residential density and non-residential use intensity will be granted only when the reviewing authority determines that all other applicable Area Plan policies, codes, and requirements can be met on the site.

Because the Land Use Element, like the rest of the Area Plan, is a policy document rather than a regulatory tool, the density designations in the land use districts are considered to be gross density, rather than net density. In practice, this means that the number of dwelling units allowed within each development site shall be divided by the gross area of the property, regardless of any easements or other property restrictions. Area Plan density is an indicator of the maximum number of households per unit of area; it does not regulate minimum lot size, which is a requirement of the zoning ordinance.

The California Legislature has identified second dwellings on residential lots as a valuable form of housing.[2] State law requires that counties allow second dwelling units on residential lots without imposing onerous requirements that would unreasonably restrict these units, except where findings are made that second units would result in "specific adverse impacts on the public health, safety, and welfare."[3] The County has adopted an ordinance regarding second units in residential areas to implement the state law and procedures and standards for second units are set forth the County Zoning Ordinance.

RL20 - Rural Land 20 (NU1- Non-Urban 1)

The Rural Land 20 designation identifies lands in the planning area that are distinguished by significant environmental features and extreme development constraints. Lands in this designation are largely

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2 Government Code Section 65852.150.

3 Government Code Section 65852.2.

undeveloped and consist of rolling hillside areas, steep slopes, and remote mountain lands with limited access.

Allowable uses in this designation include single-family homes at a maximum density of one dwelling unit per 20 acres, agriculture, equestrian uses, private recreation, and public and institutional facilities serving the local area. Specific allowable uses and development standards shall be determined by the underlying zoning designation.

Density-controlled development (clustering) is permitted in this designation in accordance with the provisions of the Zoning Ordinance, provided that all residential lots meet the minimum lot size requirements of a Community Standards District, where applicable. Individual homes and other structures should be designed in consideration of topographic and environmental constraints.

RL10 – Rural Land 10 (NU2 – Non-Urban 2)

The Rural Land 10 designation identifies lands in the planning area that include environmental features and are not appropriate for intense development requiring urban services. Lands in this category are largely undeveloped and consist of rolling hillside areas, slopes, and mountain lands with limited access.

Allowable uses in this designation include single-family homes at a maximum density of 1 dwelling unit per 10 acres, agriculture, equestrian uses, private recreation, and public and institutional facilities serving the local area. Specific allowable uses and development standards shall be determined by the underlying zoning designation.

Density-controlled development (clustering) is permitted in this designation in accordance with the provisions of the Zoning Ordinance, provided that all residential lots meet the minimum lot size requirements of a Community Standards District, where applicable. Individual homes and other structures should be designed in consideration of topographic and environmental constraints.

RL5 – Rural Land 5 (NU3 – Non-Urban 3)

The Rural Land 5 designation identifies lands in the planning area that include environmental features and are not appropriate for intense development requiring urban services. Lands in this category are undeveloped or partially developed and consist of rolling hillside areas with limited access.

Allowable uses in this designation include single-family homes at a maximum density of 1 dwelling unit per 5 acres, agriculture, equestrian uses, private recreation, and public and institutional facilities serving

the local area. Specific allowable uses and development standards shall be determined by the underlying zoning designation.

Density-controlled development (clustering) is permitted in this designation in accordance with the provisions of the Zoning Ordinance, provided that all residential lots meet the minimum lot size requirements of a Community Standards District, where applicable. Individual homes and other structures should be designed in consideration of topographic and environmental constraints.

RL2 – Rural Land 2 (NU4 – Non-Urban 4)

The Rural Land 2 designation provides for the maintenance and expansion of rural communities in the planning area that are distinguished by large lot sizes (generally 2 acres or greater), agricultural and equestrian uses, and an absence of urban services.

Allowable uses in this designation include single-family homes at a maximum density of 1 dwelling unit per 2 acres, agriculture, equestrian uses, private recreation, and public and institutional facilities serving the local area. Specific allowable uses and development standards shall be determined by the underlying zoning designation.

Supportive commercial uses serving the local area, such as grocery stores, restaurants, personal services, and retail sale of specialty goods for rural residents, such as feed and tack stores, may be allowed in "activity areas" within this designation without a Plan Amendment, but may require a zone change and/or other approvals. Such "activity centers" must be at least 1 mile from any commercial land use designation and must not exceed 5 acres in size.

Density-controlled development (clustering) is permitted in this designation in accordance with the provisions of the Zoning Ordinance, provided that all residential lots meet the minimum lot size requirements of a Community Standards District, where applicable. Individual homes and other structures should be designed in consideration of topographic and environmental constraints.

RL1 – Rural Land 1 (NU5 – Non-Urban 5)

The Rural Land 1 designation provides for the maintenance and expansion of rural communities in the planning area that are distinguished by large lot sizes (generally 1 acre or greater), agricultural and equestrian uses, and the absence of urban services.

Allowable uses in this designation include single-family homes at a maximum density of 1 dwelling unit per 1 acre, agriculture, equestrian uses, private recreation, and public and institutional facilities serving

the local area. Specific allowable uses and development standards shall be determined by the underlying zoning designation.

Supportive commercial uses serving the local area, such as grocery stores, restaurants, personal services, and retail sale of specialty goods for rural residents, such as feed and tack stores, may be allowed in "activity areas" within this designation without a Plan Amendment, but may require a zone change and/or other approvals. Such "activity centers" must be at least 1 mile from any commercial land use designation and must not exceed 5 acres in size.

Density-controlled development (clustering) is permitted in this designation in accordance with the provisions of the Zoning Ordinance, provided that all residential lots meet the minimum lot size requirements of a Community Standards District, where applicable. Individual homes and other structures should be designed in consideration of topographic and environmental constraints.

H2 – Residential 2 (UR1 – Urban Residential 1)

The Residential 2 designation provides for residential neighborhoods at densities that require urban services. Many of these neighborhoods provide a transition between higher density, urban development, and rural communities throughout the planning area, and this designation is appropriate in such urban/rural interface areas.

Allowable uses in this designation include single-family homes and other residential uses at a maximum density of 2 dwelling units per 1 acre. Specific allowable uses and development standards shall be determined by the underlying zoning designation.

Supportive commercial and institutional uses serving the local area, such as stores, restaurants, personal services, limited medical services, and retail sale of specialty goods for neighborhood residents, may be allowed in a proposed development project within this designation without a Plan Amendment, but may require a zone change and/or other approvals.

Density-controlled development (clustering), in accordance with the provisions of the Zoning Ordinance, is encouraged on lands with significant environmental and/or topographical features or resources, in order to preserve open space for protection of these natural features or resources, to provide recreational amenities, or to act as a buffer to surrounding rural communities, provided that all residential lots meet the minimum lot size requirements of a Community Standards District, where applicable.

H5 – Residential 5 (UR2 – Urban Residential 2)

The Residential 5 designation provides for residential neighborhoods that typify much of the planning area. Allowable uses in this designation include single-family homes and other residential uses at a maximum density of 5 dwelling units per 1 acre. Specific allowable uses and development standards shall be determined by the underlying zoning designation.

Supportive commercial and institutional uses serving the local area, such as stores, restaurants, personal services, limited medical services, and retail sale of specialty goods for neighborhood residents, may be allowed in a proposed development project within this designation without a Plan Amendment, but may require a zone change and/or other approvals.

Density-controlled development (clustering), in accordance with the provisions of the Zoning Ordinance, is encouraged on lands with significant environmental and/or topographical features or resources, in order to preserve open space for protection of these natural features or resources, or to provide recreational amenities, provided that all residential lots meet the minimum lot size requirements of a Community Standards District, where applicable.

The Residential 5 designation has been applied to residential areas that existed prior to the effective date of the Area Plan and are surrounded by Rural Land designations, in order to recognize these existing areas as conforming to the Area Plan. However, the Residential 5 designation in these areas should not be interpreted as setting a precedent for expanding urban development into adjacent Rural Land designations, because these areas are not served with adequate levels of urban infrastructure to accommodate greater densities or intensities of use. These areas are described below and shown on Figure L-2 of the Area Plan.

Sleepy Valley, a neighborhood in the northeastern portion of the planning area adjacent to the Angeles National Forest, generally located along Sierra Highway between Oak Street and Steele Avenue;

Val Verde, a community in the western portion of the planning area adjacent to Newhall Ranch and the Valencia Commerce Center, generally located along San Martinez Road and Chiquito Canyon Road; and

Tract 25965, a subdivision in the southern portion of the planning area adjacent to the Angeles National Forest, generally located at the intersection of Placerita Canyon Road and Running Horse Road.

H18 – Residential 18 (UR4 – Urban Residential 4)

The Residential 18 designation provides for mixed residential neighborhoods of detached and attached dwellings. Allowable uses in this designation include detached and attached single-family homes, duplexes, multiple family dwellings, and other residential uses at a maximum density of 18 dwelling units per 1 acre. Specific allowable uses and development standards shall be determined by the underlying zoning designation.

Supportive commercial and institutional uses serving the local area, such as stores, restaurants, personal services, limited medical services, and retail sale of specialty goods for neighborhood residents, may be allowed in a proposed development project within this designation without a Plan Amendment, but may require a zone change and/or other approvals. Live-work units may also be allowed, subject to the requirements of the underlying zoning designation.

H30 – Residential 30 (UR5 – Urban Residential 5)

The Residential 30 designation provides for medium to high density apartment and condominium complexes in areas easily accessible to transportation, employment, retail, and other urban services. Allowable uses in this designation include multiple family dwellings at a minimum density of 18 dwelling units per 1 acre and a maximum density of 30 dwelling units per 1 acre. Specific allowable uses and development standards shall be determined by the underlying zoning designation.

Supportive commercial and institutional uses serving the local area, such as stores, restaurants, personal services, limited medical services, and retail sale of specialty goods for neighborhood residents, may be allowed in a proposed development project within this designation without a Plan Amendment, but may require a zone change and/or other approvals. Live-work units may also be allowed, subject to the requirements of the underlying zoning designation.

CG – General Commercial (CN – Neighborhood Commercial)

The General Commercial designation provides for small neighborhood commercial districts that serve the short-term needs of residents in the immediate area. Allowable uses in this designation include supermarkets; drug stores; restaurants; personal services; repair services; light automotive services; day care centers; and other shops and services for neighborhood residents. Allowable uses shall have a maximum Floor Area Ratio (FAR) of 1.0. Specific allowable uses and development standards shall be determined by the underlying zoning designation.

Multiple family dwellings (including live-work units) may be permitted in this designation, subject to the requirements of the underlying zoning designation, provided that the approval of multiple family dwellings in this designation does not adversely impact job creation or economic development in the planning area. Multiple family dwellings shall have a minimum density of 6 dwelling units per 1 acre and a maximum density of 18 dwelling units per 1 acre.

Mixed use developments, incorporating multiple family dwellings (including live-work units) and commercial uses, may also be permitted in this designation, subject to the requirements of the underlying zoning designation. Multiple family dwellings in mixed use developments shall have a minimum density of 6 dwelling units per 1 acre and a maximum density of 18 dwelling units per 1 acre, and commercial uses in mixed use developments shall have a maximum Floor Area Ratio (FAR) of 1.0.

CM – Major Commercial (CR – Regional Commercial)

The Major Commercial designation identifies major commercial districts in the planning area and is intended to promote the development of regional focal points for commercial, entertainment, and cultural uses serving the general public and drawing from a large market area. Allowable uses in this designation include regional shopping centers; retail sale of automobiles and recreational vehicles, furniture, and home improvement goods; theatres and other large-scale entertainment uses; corporate offices and financial institutions; day care centers; and hotels, restaurants, and other hospitality services. Allowable uses shall have a maximum Floor Area Ratio (FAR) of 2.0. Specific allowable uses and development standards shall be determined by the underlying zoning designation.

Multiple family dwellings (including live-work units) may be permitted in this designation, subject to the requirements of the underlying zoning designation, provided that the approval of multiple family dwellings in this designation does not adversely impact job creation or economic development in the planning area. Multiple family dwellings shall have a minimum density of 18 dwelling units per 1 acre and a maximum density of 50 dwelling units per 1 acre.

Mixed use developments, incorporating multiple family dwellings (including live-work units) and commercial uses, may also be permitted in this designation, subject to the requirements of the underlying zoning designation. Multiple family dwellings in mixed use developments shall have a minimum density of 18 dwelling units per 1 acre and a maximum density of 50 dwelling units per 1 acre, and commercial uses in mixed use developments shall have a maximum Floor Area Ratio (FAR) of 2.0.

IL – Light Industrial (I – Industrial)

The Light Industrial designation provides for industrial districts in areas with adequate access, infrastructure, and services and is intended to accommodate the most intensive types of industrial uses allowed in the planning area. Allowable uses in this designation include storage and distribution of goods; vehicle storage; contractor's storage facilities; batch plants; heavy equipment repair and sales; wholesale sales; heavy vehicle repair; and supportive commercial uses. Allowable uses shall have a maximum Floor Area Ratio (FAR) of 1.0. Specific allowable uses and development standards shall be determined by the underlying zoning designation.

IO – Industrial Office (BP – Business Park)

The Industrial Office designation provides for mixed employment districts in areas accessible to transportation and visible from freeways and major arterials and is intended to promote the development of master-planned environments with a high quality of design and construction. Allowable uses in this designation include offices; medical services; research and development; light assembly and fabrication; warehousing and distribution; and supportive commercial uses. Allowable uses shall have a maximum Floor Area Ratio (FAR) of 2.0. Specific allowable uses and development standards shall be determined by the underlying zoning designation.

P-CS –Community Serving (PI – Public/Institutional)

The Community Serving designation identifies lands in the planning area that are used for various types of public and community serving facilities owned and operated by public agencies, special districts, non-profit organizations, and other entities. Allowable uses include civic and governmental offices; public works yards; public or private schools; libraries; day care centers; hospitals and supporting medical facilities; museums; fire stations; police stations; landfills; prisons; and airports. Allowable uses shall have a maximum Floor Area Ratio (FAR) of 0.5. Specific allowable uses, maximum intensity standards, and development standards shall be determined by the underlying zoning designation.

P-TF – Transportation Facilities (TC – Transportation Corridor)

The Transportation Facilities designation identifies major transportation facilities in the planning area, including freeways and railroad lines.

OS-PR –Parks and Recreation (OS – Open Space)

The Parks and Recreation designation identifies open space lands in the planning area that are used for public and private parks and golf courses. Specific allowable uses, maximum intensity standards, and development standards shall be determined by the underlying zoning designation.

OS-C –Conservation (OS – Open Space)

The Conservation designation identifies open space lands in the planning area that are preserved as open space or used for passive recreation. Allowable uses in this designation include conservancy lands; nature preserves; wildlife habitats; limited agriculture; drainage or slope easements; and utility right-of-ways. Specific allowable uses, maximum intensity standards, and development standards shall be determined by the underlying zoning designation.

OS-W – Water (OS – Open Space)

The Water designation identifies open space lands in the planning area that are water courses, including lakes, rivers, and creeks.

OS-BLM – Bureau of Land Management (OS-BLM – Bureau of Land Management)

The Bureau of Land Management designation identifies lands in the planning area owned by the United States Bureau of Land Management. Specific allowable uses, maximum intensity standards, and development standards shall be determined by the underlying zoning designation.

OS-NF – National Forest (OS-NF – National Forest)

The National Forest designation identifies lands in the planning area within the Angeles and Los Padres National Forests. For lands owned by the United States Forest Service, specific allowable uses, maximum intensity standards, and development standards shall be determined by the underlying zoning designation.

For privately owned lands within the National Forest (in-holdings), allowable uses in this designation include single-family homes at a maximum density of 1 dwelling unit per 5 acres, agriculture, equestrian uses, private recreation, and public and institutional facilities serving the local area. Specific allowable uses and development standards are determined by the underlying zoning designation. Density-controlled development (clustering) is permitted in this designation in accordance with the provisions of the Zoning Ordinance, provided that all residential lots meet the minimum lot size

requirements of a Community Standards District, where applicable. Individual homes and other structures should be designed in consideration of topographic and environmental constraints.

SP – Specific Plan (SP – Specific Plan)

The Specific Plan designation identifies lands in the planning area that are governed by an adopted Specific Plan. Specific allowable uses, maximum intensity standards, and development standards shall be determined by the adopted Specific Plan.

Table 2.0-2, Acres of Land Use Designations, summarizes the acreages for each land use designation for the County's Planning Area (without incorporation of the SOI acreage) and the City's Planning Area (City incorporated boundaries and SOI).

Table 2.0-2
Acres of Land Use Designations

Land Use Designation for the County (City)	City Boundary (acres)	City SOI (Unincorporated County Area)	County Area (without the SOI acreage)	Total OVOV Area (acres)	Percent of OVOV Area
Rural Land 20 (Rural Residential/Non-Urban 1)	0	137.99	25,493.02	25,631.01	8.25
Rural Land 10 (Rural Residential/Non-Urban 2)	0	2,606.38	11,243.23	13,849.61	4.46
Rural Land 5 (Rural Residential/Non-Urban 3)	0	5,182.17	5,177.11	10,359.28	3.33
Rural Land 2 (Rural Residential/Non-Urban 4)	1,680.39	2,280.12	13,934.06	17,894.57	5.76
Rural Land 1 (Rural Residential/Non-Urban 5)	2,236.78	1,322.25	549.70	4,108.73	1.32
Residential 2 (Urban Residential 1)	2,873.23	3,073.91	3,543.89	9,491.02	3.06
Residential 5 (Urban Residential 2)	8,163.53	1,751.04	4,488.92	14,403.84	4.64
(Urban Residential 3)	2,103.38	0	0	2,103.38	0.68
Residential 18 (Urban Residential 4)	235.78	333.81	340.75	910.34	0.29
Residential 30 (Urban Residential 5)	559.58	92.40	252.85	904.83	0.29
(Mixed Use – Corridor)	324.97	0	0	324.964	0.10
(Mixed Use – Neighborhood)	236.19	0	0	236.19	0.08
Major Commercial (Regional Commercial)	510.01	0	1,140.57	1,650.59	0.53
(Community Commercial)	935.23	0	0	935.23	0.30
General Commercial (Neighborhood Commercial)	188.17	320.72	219.91	725.80	0.23
Industrial Office (Business Park)	3,300.75	0	1,900.42	5,201.17	1.67
Light Industrial (Industrial)	226.05	220.47	1,030.39	1,476.91	0.48
Parks and Recreation, Conservation, and Water (Open Space)	5,412.73	883.71	14,712.61	21,009.04	6.76
National Forest	162.26	29.41	149,717.94	149,909.61	48.25
Bureau of Land Management	0	239.33	3,187.86	3,427.19	1.10

Land Use Designation for the County (City)	City Boundary (acres)	City SOI (Unincorporated County Area)	County Area (without the SOI acreage)	Total OVOV Area (acres)	Percent of OVOV Area
Specific Plan	2,527.27	103.19	14,237.81	16,868.27	5.43
Community Serving (Public Institutional)	1,330.95	172.05	3,681.06	5,184.06	1.67
Transportation Facilities (Transportation Corridor)	706.31	157.84	3,197.82	4,061.97	1.31
Total	**33,713**	**18,907**	**258,047**	**310,668**	**100.0**

Policies

Based on the discussion of issues as set forth in the background sections of the Land Use Element, and on the projected population growth in the Santa Clarita Valley, the following policies have been created to address planning needs for land use. A full listing of the identified needs is included in the Land Use Element.

Urban Form

Policy LU 1.1.1: Where appropriate, protect mountains and foothills surrounding the Valley floor from urban development by designating these areas as Open Space or Rural Land on the Land Use Map.

Policy LU 1.1.2: On the Land Use Map, concentrate urban development within flatter portions of the Santa Clarita Valley floor in areas with limited environmental constraints and served with infrastructure.

Policy LU 1.1.3: Discourage urban sprawl into rural areas by limiting non-contiguous, "leap-frog" development outside of areas designated for urban use.

Policy LU 1.1.4: Preserve community character by maintaining natural features that act as natural boundaries between developed areas, including significant ridgelines, canyons, rivers and drainage courses, riparian areas, topographical features, habitat preserves, or other similar features, where appropriate.

Policy LU 1.1.5: Increase infill development and re-use of underutilized sites within and adjacent to developed urban areas to achieve maximum benefit from existing infrastructure and minimize loss of open space, through redesignation of vacant sites for higher density and mixed use, where appropriate.

Policy LU 1.1.6: Preserve the rural lifestyle in canyons and low-density, outlying areas of the Santa Clarita Valley, through designating these areas as Rural Land on the Land Use Map where appropriate.

Policy LU 1.1.7: Preserve and protect important agricultural resources, including farmland and grazing land, through designating these areas as Open Space or Rural Land on the Land Use Map where appropriate.

Policy LU 1.2.1: In Newhall, provide opportunities for new business and housing by implementing the Downtown Newhall Specific Plan, provide incentives to promote infill development and re-use of underutilized sites, and continue to plan for the future development of North Newhall.

Policy LU 1.2.2: In Valencia, promote business development, job creation, and expansion of regional commercial, civic, cultural, and entertainment uses, to create a vibrant Town Center serving as a community focal point for the entire Santa Clarita Valley.

Policy LU 1.2.3: In Saugus, promote revitalization of older commercial areas; relieve traffic congestion; look for opportunities to minimize cut-through traffic; and enhance streetscapes with landscaping, lighting, benches and other fixtures.

Policy LU 1.2.4: In Canyon Country, promote revitalization along Sierra Highway from Soledad Canyon Road to Vasquez Canyon Road by encouraging retail and service uses, and enhance on and off ramps along the Antelope Valley Freeway with landscape amenities and appropriate uses.

Policy LU 1.2.5: In Sand Canyon, ensure compatibility of development with existing rural, equestrian lots and the adjacent National Forest land; provide additional recreational trail links; minimize impacts to the Santa Clara River from incompatible development; and maintain community character in accordance with the City's Sand Canyon Special Standards District.

Policy LU 1.2.6: In Placerita Canyon, ensure compatibility of development with existing rural, equestrian lots and the adjacent National Forest land; maintain community character in accordance with the City's Placerita Canyon Special Standards District; provide an orderly transition between existing rural and low-density residential uses and proposed new development; and encourage provision of needed infrastructure.

Policy LU 1.2.7: On the Whittaker-Bermite site, continue to work with the property owner to facilitate master planning, remediation, and the economic re-use of the property to include roadway infrastructure and transit-oriented development around the Metrolink station.

Policy LU 1.2.8: In Castaic, promote expansion of neighborhood commercial uses to serve local residents; address traffic congestion; and ensure compatibility between highway-oriented commercial uses and nearby residential uses; and maintain community character in accordance with the County's Castaic Area Community Standards District.

Policy LU 1.2.9: In Val Verde, protect the existing rural lifestyle and small town community character while providing residents with additional access to needed services; and ensure compatibility between existing residential areas and the nearby landfill; and maintain community character in accordance with the County's Castaic Area Community Standards District.

Policy LU 1.2.10: In Agua Dulce, recognize the scenic and environmental qualities of Vasquez Rocks in future planning; protect the existing rural lifestyle while providing opportunities to enhance the village center; and provide additional services to residents; and maintain community character in accordance with the County's Agua Dulce Community Standards District.

Policy LU 1.2.11: In Pico Canyon, recognize the historic significance of Mentryville in future planning; preserve the existing rural development pattern; and ensure compatibility of new development with the adjacent Significant Ecological Area and habitat.

Policy LU 1.2.12: In the Fair Oaks community, facilitate location of commercial and community services in proximity to residences to serve local needs.

Policy LU 1.2.13: Encourage use of the Specific Plan process to plan for cohesive, vibrant, pedestrian-oriented communities with mixed uses, access to public transit, and opportunities for living and working within the same community.

Policy LU 1.2.14: Evaluate development fee schedules on an ongoing basis to determine fee incentives to attract development.

Policy LU 1.3.1: Encourage subdivision design techniques that reflect underlying physical topography or other unique physical features of the natural terrain.

Policy LU 1.3.2: Substantially retain the integrity and natural grade elevations of significant natural ridgelines and prominent landforms that form the Valley's skyline backdrop.

Policy LU 1.3.3: Discourage development on ridgelines and lands containing 50% slopes so that these areas are maintained as natural open space.

Policy LU 1.3.4: Encourage density transfers where appropriate to facilitate development in more suitable locations while retaining significant natural slopes and areas of environmental sensitivity, provided that urban densities (exceeding one dwelling unit per acre) are not permitted in rural areas.

Policy LU 1.3.5: Encourage flexible siting and design techniques within hillside areas in order to preserve steep slopes or other unique physical features, including density-controlled development (clustering) in accordance with the provisions of the Zoning Ordinance, provided that all residential lots meet the minimum lot size requirements of a Community Standards District, where applicable.

Policy LU 1.3.6: Encourage retention of natural drainage patterns and the preservation of significant riparian areas, both of which are commonly located in hillside areas.

Mixed Land Uses

Policy LU 2.1.1: On the Land Use Map, designate a balance of land uses in appropriate amounts to meet future community needs while ensuring that no use designation is over-represented in a manner that is not economically viable.

Policy LU 2.1.2: On the Land Use Map, integrate land use designations in a manner that promotes healthy, walkable communities, by providing an appropriate mix of residential and service uses in proximity to one another.

Policy LU 2.1.3: Provide a range of land use types and densities to reflect the special characteristics, lifestyles, and opportunities that differentiate various communities and villages in the Santa Clarita Valley, including urban, suburban, and rural living environments.

Policy LU 2.1.4: Adopt a compatible set of land use designations between the County and City of Santa Clarita for land in the Santa Clarita Valley, to be implemented through

standards and zones applied by each agency to ensure compatibility with the character of each area and with the goals of the County's Area Plan and the City's General Plan.

Policy LU 2.1.5: Identify areas with hazardous conditions and ensure that uses in or adjacent to these areas pose minimal risk to public health or safety.

Policy LU 2.2.1: Identify areas of scenic or aesthetic value to the community, and minimize the designation of uses in these areas that would diminish their aesthetic quality.

Policy LU 2.2.2: Identify sites and areas with historical or cultural value to the community, and ensure that uses in or adjacent to these areas will not impact their historical integrity.

Policy LU 2.2.3: Consistent with adopted plans, ensure that adequate open space is set aside and protected from development throughout the planning area in order to provide the benefits of watershed management, habitat preservation and connectivity, and recreational opportunities.

Policy LU 2.3.1: In a mixed-use development, residential densities at the higher end of the allowed range should be allowed only if the development incorporates a robust mix of non-residential uses.

Policy LU 2.3.2: Either vertical or horizontal integration of uses shall be allowed in a mixed use development, with an emphasis on tying together the uses with appropriate pedestrian linkages.

Policy LU 2.3.3: Manufacturing, processing of goods and materials, and warehousing shall not be allowable uses in a mixed-use development although some light manufacturing and warehousing may be appropriate in second story units.

Policy LU 2.3.4: Adequate public spaces and amenities shall be provided in a mixed use development to support both commercial and residential uses, including but not limited to plazas, landscaped walkways, village greens, and greenbelts.

Policy LU 2.3.5: Mixed use developments shall be designed to create a pedestrian-scale environment through appropriate street and sidewalk widths, block lengths, relationship of buildings to streets, and use of public spaces.

Policy LU 2.3.6: Provide parking alternatives in mixed-use developments, including subterranean parking and structured parking to limit the amount of surface area devoted to vehicle storage.

Healthy Neighborhoods

Policy LU 3.1.1: On the Land Use Map, designate adequate land for residential use at various densities to provide a mix of housing opportunities for all segments of the population, including attached, detached, senior, and mixed use housing types, which are consistent with community character and meet the region's housing goals.

Policy LU 3.1.2: Provide a mix of housing types within neighborhoods that accommodate households with varied income levels.

Policy LU 3.1.3: Promote opportunities for live-work units to accommodate residents with home-based businesses.

Policy LU 3.1.4: Promote development of workforce housing to meet the needs of those employed in the Santa Clarita Valley.

Policy LU 3.1.5: Promote development of housing that is affordable to residents, including households with incomes in the very low, low, and moderate income classifications, through provision of adequate sites on the Land Use Map, allowance for density bonuses and other development incentives.

Policy LU 3.1.6: Promote development of housing suitable to residents with special needs, including but not limited to senior citizens and persons with disabilities.

Policy LU 3.1.7: Promote development of housing for students attending local colleges, in consideration of access to campuses to the extent practicable.

Policy LU 3.2.1: Require provision of adequate walkways in urban residential neighborhoods that provide safe and accessible connections to destinations such as schools, parks, and neighborhood commercial centers.

Policy LU 3.2.2: In planning residential neighborhoods, include pedestrian linkages, landscaped parkways with sidewalks, and separated trails for pedestrians and bicycles, where appropriate and feasible.

Policy LU 3.3.1: Identify areas subject to hazards from seismic activity, unstable soils, excessive noise, unhealthful air quality, or flooding, and avoid designating residential uses in these areas unless adequately mitigated.

Policy LU 3.3.2: In areas subject to wildland fire danger, ensure that land uses have adequate setbacks, fuel modification areas, and emergency access routes.

Policy LU 3.3.3: Identify neighborhoods in which uses that pose a potential hazard to human health and safety may be over-concentrated, and address public safety through use of buffer areas, policies on siting decisions for such uses, changing land use designations, or other means as deemed appropriate.

Policy LU 3.3.4: Evaluate service levels for law enforcement and fire protection as needed to ensure that adequate response times are maintained as new residential development is occupied.

Policy LU 3.3.5: Through the development review process, ensure that all new residential development is provided with adequate emergency access and that subdivision and site designs permit ready access by public safety personnel.

Policy LU 3.3.6: Ensure adequate street-lighting in all urban residential neighborhoods, as appropriate for each community.

Policy LU 3.3.7: Ensure adequate addressing in all residential neighborhoods for emergency response personnel.

Policy LU 3.3.8: Within multiple family residential projects comprised of multiple buildings, ensure that project designs include crime prevention measures such as delineating public and private open space, designs for defensible space, easy surveillance by residents of all outdoor and indoor common areas, lack of dead end aisles or paths, and similar measures.

Policy LU 3.4.1: Promote the inclusion of green spaces, neighborhood parks, and other gathering places that allow neighbors to meet one another and encourage "eyes on the street" for safety purposes

Policy LU 3.4.2: Ensure provision of street trees in urban residential areas where appropriate, to provide shade, comfort, and aesthetic enhancement.

Policy LU 3.4.3: Provide appropriate levels of code enforcement to ensure maintenance of neighborhoods in a clean, healthy, and safe condition.

Policy LU 3.4.4: Within higher density housing developments, ensure provision of adequate recreational and open space amenities to ensure a high quality living environment.

Policy LU 3.4.5: Ensure compatibility between single family and multiple family residential developments through consideration of building height and massing, architectural treatment, connectivity, privacy, and other design considerations.

Policy LU 3.4.6: Promote mixed-density residential neighborhoods that are consistent with community character, and avoid over-development of high density multiple family units in any particular location.

Policy LU 3.4.7: Minimize the prominence of areas devoted to automobile parking and access in the design of residential neighborhoods.

Policy LU 3.4.8: Require architectural design treatment along all sides of new housing to promote continuity of architectural scale and rhythm and avoid the appearance of blank walls (360 degree enhancement).

Policy LU 3.4.9: Encourage street cross-sections that locate landscaped parkways between the curb and the sidewalk to create a visually pleasing streetscape and provide pedestrian protection.

Economic Vitality

Policy LU 4.1.1: Promote expansion and enhancement of the Valencia Town Center to provide a focal point for cultural, civic, educational, and shopping activities serving the entire Santa Clarita Valley

Policy LU 4.1.2: Promote creation of village commercial centers throughout the Santa Clarita Valley to meet the local and convenience needs of residents.

Policy LU 4.1.3: Direct business creation and expansion for larger companies within and adjacent to existing and planned business centers and major transportation corridors.

Policy LU 4.1.4: Promote economic opportunity for all segments of the community, including small businesses and new businesses.

Policy LU 4.1.5: Provide a clear and consistent planning and permitting process to encourage new development that conforms to the Area Plan.

Policy LU 4.1.6: Encourage the development of a range of child care services and facilities to serve the needs of working families, including public and private child care centers, infant care, and after-school care, through supportive zoning regulations and permitting procedures.

Policy LU 4.2.1: Pursue business attraction and expansion programs for clean industries that provide job opportunities for local residents, particularly in the areas of film/entertainment, biotechnology, aerospace, and technology.

Policy LU 4.2.2: Achieve a balanced ratio of jobs to housing through business expansion and economic development programs, with a goal of at least 1.5 jobs per household.

Policy LU 4.2.3: Encourage businesses to locate in all appropriate areas of the community to encourage job creation in closer proximity to workforce housing.

Policy LU 4.2.4: Coordinate with local colleges to promote job training programs for Santa Clarita Valley residents.

Policy LU 4.2.5: Promote development of uses that create job opportunities for residents through the Santa Clarita Enterprise Zone and other business assistance programs as appropriate.

Policy LU 4.3.1: Promote redevelopment in Old Town Newhall through construction of public improvements pursuant to the Downtown Newhall Specific Plan and future area planning efforts.

Policy LU 4.3.2: Promote business development in Castaic and Val Verde to provide a greater range of goods and services to area residents.

Policy LU 4.3.3: Promote revitalization of commercial uses along Sierra Highway between Soledad Canyon Road and Vasquez Canyon Road, to encourage businesses serving the Canyon Country neighborhoods and support services for the College of the Canyons east campus.

Policy LU 4.3.4: Promote business development that upgrades and revitalizes older commercial corridors, including Lyons Avenue, Railroad Avenue, Newhall Avenue, Main Street, and Soledad Canyon Road, in a manner that reflects each area's character, architecture, and history.

Policy LU 4.3.5: Support efforts by the City of Santa Clarita to coordinate with property owners and environmental agencies, and provide assistance as appropriate, to promote clean-up and redevelopment of the Whittaker Bermite property as a business and employment center.

Policy LU 4.3.6: Support efforts by the City of Santa Clarita to coordinate with property owners and environmental agencies, and provide assistance as appropriate, to promote clean-up and remediation of oil fields west of State Route 14.

Policy LU 4.3.7: Promote revitalization and reuse of the older industrial areas east of the railroad, adjacent to the intersection of Springbrook and Drayton Avenues and in the Honby area adjacent to the Santa Clara River.

Policy LU 4.4.1: Promote extension of state of the art communication facilities to serve commercial and industrial areas, including fiber optic cable, telecommunication facilities, and other technology as deemed appropriate.

Policy LU 4.4.2: Improve flood control facilities along Sierra Highway north of Soledad Canyon Road to allow increased use of this corridor for business and employment uses.

Policy LU 4.4.3: Evaluate the feasibility of connecting business activity centers throughout the Santa Clarita Valley with light rail, to provide increased mobility and access for customers and employees between the Valencia Town Center, Whittaker Bermite

property, Newhall, Valencia Industrial Center, Magic Mountain and Entrada, Newhall Ranch, and other areas as deemed appropriate.

Policy LU 4.4.4: Protect and enhance public utility facilities as necessary to maintain the safety, reliability, integrity, and security of essential public service systems for all Valley residents.

Policy LU 4.5.1: Promote inclusion of employee amenities in the workplace, including but not limited to outdoor seating and break areas, child care services, wellness facilities, and facilities for bicycle commuters, including bike lockers and showers, where appropriate.

Policy LU 4.5.2: Encourage the provision of usable open space that is accessible to employees and visitors, and discourage the provision of large areas of water-consuming landscaping that are not usable or accessible.

Policy LU 4.5.3: Promote the inclusion of state-of-the-art technology within business complexes for telecommunications, heating and cooling, water and energy conservation, and other similar design features.

Policy LU 4.5.4: Encourage the provision of support services for employees within business park areas, such as dining and personal services where appropriate, to reduce vehicle trips and promote pedestrian-friendly work environments.

Mobility

Policy LU 5.1.1: Require safe, secure, clearly-delineated, adequately-illuminated walkways and bicycle facilities in all commercial and business centers.

Policy LU 5.1.2: Require connectivity between walkways and bikeways serving neighborhoods and nearby commercial areas, schools, parks, and other supporting services and facilities.

Policy LU 5.1.3: Ensure that adequate bus turnouts, served by walkways and comfortable, safe, and convenient waiting facilities, are provided for transit users within residential, shopping, and business developments.

Policy LU 5.2.1: Designate higher-density residential uses in areas served by public transit and a full range of support services.

Policy LU 5.2.2: Provide for location of neighborhood commercial uses in proximity to the neighborhoods they serve, to encourage cycling and walking to local stores.

Policy LU 5.2.3: Promote location of non-polluting businesses providing employment opportunities in proximity to neighborhoods, to encourage walking to work.

Policy LU 5.2.4: Encourage transit-oriented development (TOD) through designation of land uses that allow compact, mixed-use development in proximity to rail stations and multi-modal transit facilities, in conformance with applicable policies.

Policy LU 5.2.5: Encourage the mix of compatible uses in areas where, though not served by rail or transit, mixed uses will achieve more walkable neighborhoods and trip reduction, in conformance with applicable policies.

Community Appearance

Policy LU 6.1.1: Designate ridgelines throughout the planning area, and preserve these ridgelines from development by encouraging a minimum distance for grading and development from these ridgelines of 50 feet, or more if determined preferable by the reviewing authority based on site conditions.

Policy LU 6.1.2: On the Land Use Map, designate publicly owned portions of the Santa Clara River corridor and its major tributaries, as Open Space.

Policy LU 6.1.3: Ensure that new development in hillside areas is designed to protect the scenic backdrop of foothills and canyons enjoyed by Santa Clarita Valley communities, through requiring compatible hillside management techniques that may include but are not limited to density-controlled development (clustering) subject to the limitations in Policy LU 1.3.5; contouring and landform grading; revegetation with native plants; limited site disturbance; avoidance of tall retaining and build-up walls; use of stepped pads; and other techniques as deemed appropriate.

Policy LU 6.2.1: Promote the inclusion of plazas, courtyards, seating areas, public art, and similar features within commercial centers, business parks, and civic facilities visited by the general public.

Policy LU 6.2.2: Provide and enhance trail heads where appropriate with landscaping, seating, trash receptacles and information kiosks.

Policy LU 6.3.1: Promote planting of street trees throughout urban areas in the Santa Clarita Valley.

Policy LU 6.3.2: Develop compatible landscape plans for major arterials traversing the Santa Clarita Valley, including landscaped medians and parkways, and implement these plans in both County and City of Santa Clarita areas, where feasible and appropriate based on right of way and other conditions.

Policy LU 6.3.3: Enhance major entrance points to the community, including on and off ramps from Interstate 5 and State Route 14; entrances along State Route 126; and at the northern and southern entrance points on Sierra Highway, where feasible and appropriate.

Policy LU 6.3.4: Require undergrounding of utility lines for new development where feasible, and plan for undergrounding of existing utility lines in conjunction with street improvement projects where economically feasible.

Policy LU 6.3.5: Restrict the establishment of billboards within the planning area.

Policy LU 6.4.1: Maintain the historic buildings in Newhall, including the William Hart Regional Park buildings, the Tom Mix cottages at Heritage Junction, the American Theater, the Melody Ranch, and various other commercial and residential structures designated as local historic resources, through implementation of preservation measures in the Downtown Newhall Specific Plan.

Policy LU 6.4.2: Enhance the area around historic Lang Station by requiring a Specific Plan for redevelopment of this area.

Policy LU 6.4.3: Maintain cultural resources from pre-historical Native American habitation and historical settlement in the areas around Vasquez Rocks, Elsmere Canyon, and

along the Santa Clara River, through designation of these areas as Open Space on the Land Use Map.

Policy LU 6.4.4: Maintain the historic site of Mentryville by designating the site as Open Space on the Land Use Map.

Policy LU 6.4.5: Maintain the historic area of the Rancho San Francisco Estancia through implementation of preservation measures in the Newhall Ranch Specific Plan.

Policy LU 6.4.6: Through the environmental review and development review processes, evaluate impacts on historic and cultural sites from proposed development and require appropriate mitigation.

Policy LU 6.5.1: Require use of high quality, durable, and natural-appearing building materials pursuant to the ordinances developed through the County's Green Building Program.

Policy LU 6.5.2: Encourage the use of designs and architectural styles that incorporate classic and timeless architectural features.

Policy LU 6.5.3: Require architectural enhancement and articulation on all sides of buildings (360 degree architecture), with special consideration at building entrances and corners, and along facades adjacent to major arterial streets.

Policy LU 6.5.4: Evaluate new development in consideration of its context, to ensure that buildings create a coherent living environment, a cohesive urban fabric, and contribute to a sense of place consistent with the surrounding neighborhoods.

Environmentally Responsible Development

Policy LU 7.1.1: Require shade trees within parking lots and adjacent to buildings to reduce the heat island effect, in consideration of Fire Department fuel modification restrictions.

Policy LU 7.1.2: Promote the use of solar panels and renewable energy sources in all projects.

Policy LU 7.1.3: Encourage development of energy-efficient buildings, and discourage construction of new buildings for which energy efficiency cannot be demonstrated.

Policy LU 7.1.4: Support the establishment of energy-efficient industries in the Santa Clarita Valley.

Policy LU 7.2.1: Monitor growth, and coordinate with water districts as needed to ensure that long-range needs for potable and reclaimed water will be met.

Policy LU 7.2.2: If water supplies are reduced from projected levels due to drought, emergency, or other unanticipated events, take appropriate steps to limit, reduce, or otherwise modify growth permitted by the Area Plan in consultation with water districts to ensure adequate long-term supply for existing businesses and residents.

Policy LU 7.2.3: Require that all new development proposals demonstrate a sufficient and sustainable water supply prior to approval.

Policy LU 7.3.1: Promote the use of permeable paving materials to allow infiltration of surface water into the water table.

Policy LU 7.3.2: Maintain stormwater runoff on site by directing drainage into rain gardens, natural landscaped swales, rain barrels, permeable areas, and use of drainage areas as design elements, where feasible and reasonable.

Policy LU 7.3.3: Seek methods to decrease impermeable site area where reasonable and feasible, in order to reduce stormwater runoff and increase groundwater infiltration, including use of shared parking and other means as appropriate.

Policy LU 7.3.4: Implement best management practices for erosion control throughout the construction and development process.

Policy LU 7.3.5: Limit development within flood-prone areas to minimize down-stream impacts.

Policy LU 7.4.1: Require the use of drought tolerant landscaping, native California plant materials, and evapotranspiration (smart) irrigation systems.

Policy LU 7.4.2: Require the use of low-flow fixtures in all non-residential development and residential development with five or more dwelling units, which may include but are not limited to water conserving shower heads, toilets, waterless urinals and motion-sensor faucets, and encourage use of such fixtures in building retrofits as appropriate.

Policy LU 7.5.1: Ensure that all new development provides adequate space for recycling receptacles and bins on site.

Policy LU 7.5.2: Promote the use of recycled building materials.

Policy LU 7.6.1: Limit outdoor lighting levels to the minimum needed for safety and security, and encourage lower lighting levels when businesses are closed.

Policy LU 7.6.2: Preserve habitat connectivity in site planning where feasible, and discourage the creation of open space islands surrounded by paving.

Policy LU 7.6.3: Protect wildlife corridors through site design and appropriate land use designations, including mapped corridors and other corridors that may be identified through biological surveys.

Policy LU 7.6.4: Encourage site designs that protect oak trees, hillsides, and biological resources through creative solutions.

Policy LU 7.7.1: Maintain a suitable distance and/or provide buffering to separate aggregate mining and processing activities from nearby residential uses and other uses with sensitive receptors to noise and airborne emissions.

Policy LU 7.7.2: Avoid designating land uses in areas with significant mineral resources or utility facilities that would preclude the future extraction and use of those resources and facilities.

Policy LU 7.8.1: Adopt and implement policies for protection of oak woodlands and oak trees throughout the planning area that are compatible with City of Santa Clarita policies.

Policy LU 7.8.2: Protect all designated Significant Ecological Areas (SEA's) from incompatible development.

Environmental Justice

Policy LU 8.1.1: Coordinate plans for new residential development with affected school districts to ensure adequate mitigation of impacts on school facilities; provision of facilities and programs to promote academic excellence for Santa Clarita Valley students; coordination on joint use of facilities and transportation; and long-range planning.

Policy LU 8.1.2: Implement a master plan for trails throughout the Santa Clarita Valley to serve all residents.

Policy LU 8.1.3: Implement a master plan for parks, with special focus on provision of additional playfields for youth sports in locations accessible to underserved neighborhoods.

Policy LU 8.1.4: Ensure that an adequate and diverse supply of child care facilities and services is available to parents who live and/or work in the Santa Clarita Valley, by promoting child care facilities in commercial and residential areas subject to the provisions of the County Zoning Ordinance.

Policy LU 8.1.5: Coordinate with the Los Angeles County Library System to assist in expanding library services as needed to meet the needs of the community.

Policy LU 8.1.6: Coordinate with the Arts Alliance and other similar entities to promote access to cultural events and facilities for all residents.

Policy LU 8.1.7: Work with medical service providers to facilitate preservation and enhancement of health services, including the Santa Clarita Valley's trauma center, provided applications are in conformance with applicable Area Plan policies and environmental requirements.

Policy LU 8.1.8: Work with social service agencies providing assistance to homeless persons to develop and maintain a suitable shelter in the Santa Clarita Valley.

Policy LU 8.1.9: Assist persons and households with temporary housing needs by promoting transitional housing facilities for victims of domestic violence in multiple family residential land use designations, subject to the provisions of the County Zoning Ordinance.

Policy LU 8.1.10: Coordinate with agencies that provide services to seniors and the elderly to expand senior facilities, which may include a new senior center.

Policy LU 8.1.11: Work with existing utilities, agencies, and renewable energy companies to remove barriers to renewable energy production.

Policy LU 8.2.1: In making locational decisions for siting new community facilities, consider ease of access for all users (vehicular, pedestrian, and transit).

Policy LU 8.2.2: Identify neighborhoods that are underserved by public facilities and community services, and plan for equitable distribution of these facilities.

Policy LU 8.3.1: Require fair and equitable treatment in considering, adopting, implementing, and enforcing development regulations and policies, including but not limited to providing equal opportunity for public input and considering impacts from development approvals on all segments of the population.

Public Facilities

Policy LU 9.1.1: Ensure construction of adequate infrastructure to meet the needs of new development prior to occupancy.

Policy LU 9.1.2: Coordinate review of development projects with other agencies and special districts providing utilities and other services.

Policy LU 9.1.3: Protect major utility transmission corridors, pumping stations, reservoirs, booster stations, and other similar facilities from encroachment by incompatible uses, while allowing non-intrusive uses such as plant nurseries, greenbelts, and recreational trails.

Policy LU 9.1.4: Develop and apply compatible standards within County and City of Santa Clarita areas for design and maintenance of utility infrastructure, in consideration of the character of each community.

Policy LU 9.1.5: Work with the Los Angeles County Sheriff's Department to expand law enforcement facilities to meet the needs of the Santa Clarita Valley's growing population.

Policy LU 9.1.6: Coordinate with appropriate agencies and organizations to ensure that landfill expansion needs are met while minimizing adverse impacts to Valley residents.

Policy LU 9.1.7: Provide for location of additional waste transfer stations and other facilities to promote recycling and reuse of materials within Industrial designations on the Land Use Map, subject to the provisions of the County Zoning Ordinance.

Policy LU 9.2.1: Ensure that the cost of extending new sewer infrastructure is fully borne by the development that is serves, and is not passed on to the existing community.

Policy LU 9.2.2: Require that all new development mitigates its impact on existing sewer capacity by upgrading facilities when warranted or payment of a fee to allow construction of new facilities when needed.

Policy LU 9.2.3: Develop a common County/City of Santa Clarita capacity-based threshold to determine when new development will be required to construct upsized downstream sewer facilities.

Policy LU 9.2.4: Facilitate the efficient construction of sewer infrastructure by sizing facilities to accommodate anticipated future sewer flows within the sewershed.

Policy LU 9.2.5: Cooperate with the development community to allow reimbursement for the cost of constructed sewer facilities with a capacity that exceeds what would be required to mitigate a project's own sewer impact.

Policy LU 9.2.6: Coordinate to ensure that new development projects have agreed to mitigate both County and City of Santa Clarita sewer impacts prior to project approval.

CIRCULATION ELEMENT AND MAP

Purpose

The Circulation Element plans for the continued development of efficient, cost-effective, and comprehensive transportation systems that are consistent with regional plans, local needs, and the Valley's community character. The Santa Clarita Valley's circulation system provides vital connections linking neighborhoods, services, and employment centers throughout the community and the region. A comprehensive transportation network of roadways, multi-use trails and bike paths, bus transit and commuter rail provides mobility options to Valley residents and businesses. Planning for the ultimate

location and capacity of circulation improvements will also enhance economic strength and quality of life in the Valley. The Circulation Element identifies and promotes a variety of techniques for improving mobility that go beyond planning for construction of new streets and highways. These techniques include development of alternative travel modes and support facilities; increased efficiency and capacity of existing systems through management strategies; and coordination of land use planning with transportation planning by promoting concentrated, mixed-use development near transit facilities.

Relationship of Circulation Element to Other Elements of the Area Plan

The Circulation Element complements and supports the Land Use Element, insofar as a cohesive land use pattern cannot be achieved without adequate circulation. The proposed highway network is based on projected development permitted by the Land Use Element. Goals and policies have been included requiring coordination of land use and circulation planning in order to reduce vehicle trips by mixing land uses, locating higher densities within proximity of public transit, and providing greater access and connectivity for non-motorized travel modes. In addition, implementation of the Circulation Element will assist the County and City in achieving their land use goals for job creation, because the economic viability of new commercial and industrial development throughout the Valley will be improved with better access.

The Circulation Element is also consistent with other elements of the Area Plan. Projected noise levels as contained in the Noise Element were based upon traffic volumes estimated for the Circulation Element. By planning for a smooth-flowing transportation system and alternative travel modes, the Circulation Element encourages reduction of vehicle emissions as envisioned by the Conservation and Open Space Element. Trails and bikeways are addressed in the Circulation Element as well as in the Open Space and Conservation Element. Policies to ensure that the circulation system is safe, such as provision of emergency access and maintenance of evacuation routes, are consistent with provisions of the Safety Element. Finally, the provision of an adequate circulation system to support residential development is consistent with the Housing Element.

Traffic Analysis

Methodology

The following steps were followed in developing the roadway component of the Circulation Element:

- Documentation of existing conditions and assembling the database

- Update of the County/City traffic model for the Santa Clarita Valley used to forecast future usage of existing and planned circulation routes
- Identification of problems, opportunities and issues on the roadway network
- Testing and evaluation of alternative improvement plans
- Selection and refinement of the recommended circulation plan

Annual daily traffic volumes for arterials within the Valley were obtained through traffic counts, to assess existing levels of service. Both capacity and connectivity of the network were evaluated.

The traffic engineers utilized a computerized traffic demand model, the Santa Clarita Valley Consolidated Traffic Model (SCVCTM), which is jointly maintained by the County of Los Angeles and City of Santa Clarita, to analyze the roadway system and develop a circulation plan. For modeling purposes, the planning area is divided into 455 traffic analysis zones (TAZs). The model used a software program comparable to the regional modeling done by the Southern California Association of Governments (SCAG) and the County's Congestion Management Program, in order to assure consistency with regional plans. Traffic analysis with a traffic demand model involves four general steps:

- Specification of the roadway network
- Calculation of vehicle trip generation amounts for uses within each traffic analysis zone
- Distribution of these vehicle trips to destination points
- Assignment of vehicle trips to specific roadway segments

Based on this analysis, the model indicates whether planned roadway widths will be adequate to handle projected traffic volumes, and where capacity problems will occur. The process requires a model that has been calibrated to existing conditions, and the SCVCTM underwent a comprehensive update and recalibration in 2004. With this calibrated model, the traffic engineers performed several different model runs based on various assumptions. The model was run to predict traffic volumes at buildout of the land uses permitted by the Land Use Element. The model was also run assuming that various trip reduction measures were adopted, such as promoting public transit, ride-sharing, flexible work hours, and land use strategies.

Based on the traffic model analysis, the traffic engineers identified several needed improvements to the street and highway system. Traffic issues identified through the public input process were also

considered and evaluated. These traffic issues and needs have been addressed in the Circulation Plan and the goals and policies section of the element.

Once the traffic model was complete and run, it became necessary to make certain adjustments to the Land Use Plan and the road network to achieve acceptable levels of service at Area Plan buildout for most roadways. In some cases, adjustments were made to the ultimate right-of-way for specific roadway links.

Results

Results of the traffic analysis are provided in detail in the Circulation Element and discussed in the Transportation and Circulation section of this EIR. Based on the traffic model analysis undertaken for the Area Plan, which evaluated 23 key intersections within the Santa Clarita Valley, the following locations within the County require intersection improvements:

- The Old Road at Rye Canyon Road
- The Old Road at Magic Mountain Parkway
- The Old Road at McBean Parkway
- The Old Road at Pico Canyon Road

These improvements may include but are not limited to additional turn lanes, installation of traffic signals, synchronization of signals, and other traffic control devices.

The traffic model analysis also recommended changes to County roadway segments and alignments, which are presented in detail in the Circulation Element and discussed further in the Transportation and Circulation section of this EIR. Proposed roadway improvements are summarized in Table C-3 of the Circulation Element. Some of these roadway improvements include road widenings for Agua Dulce Canyon Road, Davenport Road, Escondido Canyon Road, Henry Mayo Drive, The Old Road, Placerita Canyon Road, and Sand Canyon Road.

Resource Maps

The Circulation Element contains a map showing major transportation facilities within the Santa Clarita Valley, including streets and highways, rail and public transit routes, stations and terminals, and airport facilities. The following is a list of the resource maps in the Circulation Element:

- Network of Existing Streets and Highways, 2007

- Circulation Plan of Streets and Highways
- Standard Roadway Cross Sections
- Helipads
- Valleywide Bikeway Master Plan

Policies

Based on the existing conditions and issues outlined in the background sections of the Circulation Element, policies have been created to address the Valley's circulation planning needs. A full representation of the identified needs relating to circulation is identified in the element.

Multi-Modal Circulation Network

Policy C 1.1.1: Reduce dependence on the automobile, particularly single-occupancy vehicle use, by providing safe and convenient access to transit, bikeways, and walkways.

Policy C 1.1.2: Promote expansion of alternative transportation options to increase accessibility to all demographic and economic groups throughout the community, including mobility-impaired persons, senior citizens, low-income persons, and youth.

Policy C 1.1.3: Work with local and regional agencies and employers to promote an integrated, seamless transportation system that meets access needs, including local and regional bus service, dial-a-ride, taxis, rail, van pools, car pools, bus pools, bicycling, walking, and automobiles.

Policy C 1.1.4: Promote public health through provision of safe, pleasant, and accessible walkways, bikeways, and multi-purpose trail systems for residents.

Policy C 1.1.5: Plan for efficient links between circulation systems at appropriate locations, including but not limited to bus-rail connections and pedestrian-bus connections.

Policy C 1.1.6: Provide adequate facilities for multi-modal travel, including but not limited to bicycle parking and storage, expanded park-and-ride lots, and adequate station and transfer facilities in appropriate locations.

Policy C 1.1.7: Consider the safety and convenience of the traveling public, including pedestrians and cyclists, in design and development of all transportation systems.

Policy C 1.1.8: Acquire and/or reserve adequate right-of-way in transportation corridors to accommodate multiple travel modes, including bus turnouts, bus rapid transit (BRT), bikeways, walkways, and linkages to trail systems.

Policy C 1.1.9: Incorporate funding for all modes of transportation in the capital improvement program, and seek funding from all available sources for multi-modal system development.

Policy C 1.1.10: Provide for flexibility in the transportation system to accommodate new technology as it becomes available, in order to reduce trips by vehicles using fossil fuels where feasible and appropriate.

Policy C 1.1.11: Promote use of multi-modal facilities by providing adequate and attractive way-finding programs directing users to transit stations, park-and-ride lots, bicycle storage, and other facilities.

Policy C 1.1.12: Encourage the City of Santa Clarita to implement recommendations of its Non-Motorized Transportation Plan to expand opportunities for alternative travel modes.

Policy C 1.1.13: Design new activity centers and improve existing activity centers to prioritize walking, bicycling and circulator transit for internal circulation of person-travel.

Policy C 1.2.1: Develop coordinated plans for land use, circulation, and transit to promote transit-oriented development that concentrates higher density housing, employment, and commercial areas in proximity to transit corridors.

Policy C 1.2.2: Create walkable communities, with paseos and walkways connecting residential neighborhoods to multi-modal transportation services such as bus stops and rail stations.

Policy C 1.2.3: Require that new commercial and industrial development provide walkway connections to public sidewalks and transit stops, where available.

Policy C 1.2.4: Consider location, availability, and accessibility of transit in evaluating new development plans.

Policy C 1.2.5: In mixed use projects, require compact development and a mix of land uses to locate housing, workplaces, and services within walking or bicycling distance of each other.

Policy C 1.2.6: Provide flexible standards for parking and roadway design in transit-oriented development areas to promote transit use, where appropriate.

Policy C 1.2.7: In pedestrian-oriented areas, provide a highly connected circulation grid with relatively small blocks to encourage walking.

Policy C 1.2.8: Provide safe pedestrian connections across barriers, which may include but are not limited to major traffic corridors, drainage and flood control facilities, utility easements, grade separations, and walls.

Policy C 1.2.9: Emphasize providing right-of-way for non-vehicular transportation modes so that walking and bicycling are the easiest, most convenient modes of transportation available for short trips.

Policy C 1.2.10: Protect communities by discouraging the construction of facilities that sever residential neighborhoods.

Policy C 1.2.11: Reduce vehicle miles traveled (VMT) through the use of smart growth concepts.

Policy C 1.2.12: Balance the anticipated volume of people and goods movement with the need to maintain a walkable and bicycle friendly environment.

Policy C 1.3.1: Continue coordinating with the Metropolitan Transportation Authority (MTA or Metro) to implement the County's Congestion Management Program (CMP) for designated CMP roadways.

Policy C 1.3.2: Through trip reduction strategies and emphasis on multi-modal transportation options, contribute to achieving the air quality goals of the South Coast Air Quality Management District Air Quality Management Plan.

Policy C 1.3.3: Coordinate circulation planning with the Regional Transportation Plan prepared by the Southern California Association of Governments (SCAG), to ensure consistency of planned improvements with regional needs.

Policy C 1.3.4: Continue coordination with Caltrans on circulation and land use decisions that may affect Interstate 5, State Route 14, and State Route 126, and support programs to increase capacity and improve operations on these highways.

Policy C 1.3.5: Ensure consistency with the County's adopted Airport Land Use Plan as it pertains to the Agua Dulce Airport, in order to mitigate aviation-related hazards and protect airport operations from encroachment by incompatible uses.

Policy C 1.3.6: Support the expansion of Palmdale Regional Airport and the extension of multi-modal travel choices between the airport and the Santa Clarita Valley, in conformance with regional planning efforts.

Policy C 1.3.7: Apply for regional, State, and Federal grants for bicycle and pedestrian infrastructure projects.

Street and Highway System

Policy C 2.1.1: Protect mobility on arterial highways by limiting excessive cross traffic, access points, and turning movements; traffic signals on arterial highways should be spaced at least 0.5 mile apart, and the minimum allowable separation should be at least 0.25 mile.

Policy C 2.1.2: Enhance connectivity of the roadway network to the extent feasible given the constraints of topography, existing development patterns, and environmental resources, by constructing grade separations and bridges; connecting discontinuous streets; extending secondary access into areas where needed; prohibiting gates on public streets; and other improvements as deemed appropriate based on traffic analysis.

Policy C 2.1.3: Protect and enhance the capacity of the roadway system by upgrading intersections to meet level of service standards, widening and/or restriping for additional lanes, synchronizing traffic signals, and other means as appropriate.

Policy C 2.1.4: Ensure that future dedication and acquisition of right-of-way is based on the adopted Circulation Plan, proposed land uses, and projected demand.

Policy C 2.1.5: Periodically monitor levels of service, traffic accident patterns, and physical conditions of the existing street system, and upgrade roadways as needed through the Capital Improvement Program.

Policy C 2.2.1: Designate roadways within the planning area based on their functional classification as shown on Exhibit C 2.

Policy C 2.2.2: Adopt consistent standard street cross sections for City and County roadways in the planning area, as shown on Exhibit C 3.

Policy C 2.2.3: Coordinate circulation plans of new development projects with each other and the surrounding street network, within both City and County areas.

Policy C 2.2.4: Strive to maintain a Level of Service (LOS) D or better on most roadway segments and intersections to the extent practical; in some locations, a LOS E may be acceptable, or a LOS F may be necessary, for limited durations during peak traffic periods.

Policy C 2.2.5: Adopt common standards for pavement width in consideration of capacity needs to serve projected travel demand, provided that a reduction in pavement width may be allowed in order to reduce traffic speeds, protect resources, enhance pedestrian mobility, or as otherwise deemed appropriate by the reviewing authority.

Policy C 2.2.6: Within residential neighborhoods, promote the design of "healthy streets" which may include reduced pavement width, shorter block length, provision of on-street parking, traffic-calming devices, bike routes and pedestrian connectivity, landscaped parkways, and canopy street trees.

Policy C 2.2.7: Where practical, encourage the use of grid or modified grid street systems to increase connectivity and walkability; where cul-de-sacs are provided, promote the use of walkways connecting cul-de-sac bulbs to adjacent streets and/or facilities to facilitate pedestrian access; where street connectivity is limited and

pedestrian routes are spaced over 500 feet apart, promote the use of intermediate pedestrian connections through or between blocks.

Policy C 2.2.8: Local street patterns should be designed to create logical and understandable travel paths for users and to provide access between neighborhoods for local residents while discouraging cut-through traffic; cul-de-sac length should not exceed 600 feet, and "dog-leg" cul-de-sacs with one or more turns between the bulb and the outlet should be avoided where possible.

Policy C 2.2.9: Medians constructed in arterial streets should be provided with paved crossover points for emergency vehicles, where deemed necessary by the Fire Department.

Policy C 2.2.10: The street system design, including block length, width, horizontal and vertical alignments, curves, and other design characteristics, should function safely and effectively without the subsequent need for excessive traffic control devices to slow or deflect traffic.

Policy C 2.2.11: For intersections of collector or larger streets, four-way intersections are preferred over offset intersections.

Policy C 2.2.12: Private streets, other than driveways and alleyways typically associated with multi-family development, should be constructed to standards for public rights-of-way, except as otherwise approved by the reviewing agency.

Policy C 2.2.13: Protect the community character of rural areas by requiring use of rural street standards, which may include reduced pavement width, reduced street lighting to protect night skies, rolled curbs or no curbs and no sidewalks.

Policy C 2.2.14: Streets should be designed in context with the terrain and the natural and built features of the area, but excessively circuitous streets should be avoided to minimize unnecessary vehicle, bicycle, and pedestrian mileage.

Policy C 2.2.15: Adopt consistent standards for implementation of Americans with Disabilities Act requirements such as curb ramp design and accessible pedestrian signals.

Policy C 2.3.1: Enhance community appearance through landscaping, street lighting, street furniture, bus shelters and benches, and other aspects of streetscape design within the right-of-way, where appropriate.

Policy C 2.3.2: Encourage unified treatment of arterial streets within both City and County areas, while permitting flexibility of streetscape design between neighborhoods and districts to preserve village character.

Policy C 2.3.3: When evaluating road widening projects, consider the impacts of additional traffic, noise, and fumes on adjacent land uses and use context-sensitive design techniques where appropriate.

Policy C 2.3.4: Protect residential neighborhoods from cut-through traffic using local streets to avoid congested arterials, through use of street design and traffic control devices.

Policy C 2.4.1: Require design of pavement sections on major and secondary highways to account for truck traffic, to prevent excessive pavement deterioration from truck use.

Policy C 2.4.2: Establish adequate setbacks from major and secondary highways for sensitive receptors and sensitive uses, so as to minimize impacts on these individuals and uses from noise and air pollution caused by truck traffic.

Policy C 2.4.3: Prohibit through truck traffic on designated scenic routes.

Policy C 2.4.4: Adopt regulations for truck parking on public streets, to avoid impacts to residential neighborhoods.

Policy C 2.5.1: Maintain a current evacuation plan as part of emergency response planning.

Policy C 2.5.2: Ensure that new development is provided with adequate emergency and/or secondary access for purposes of evacuation and emergency response; require two points of ingress and egress for every subdivision or phase thereof, except as otherwise approved for small subdivisions where physical constraints preclude a second access point.

Policy C 2.5.3: Require provision of visible street name signs and addresses on all development to aid in emergency response.

Policy C 2.5.4: Provide directional signage to Interstate 5 and State Route 14 at key intersections in the Valley, to assist emergency evacuation operations.

Policy C 2.6.1: Require that new development construct or provide its fair share of the cost of transportation improvements, and that required improvements or in-lieu contributions are in place to support the development prior to occupancy.

Policy C 2.6.2: Evaluate the feasibility of establishing a joint City/County Intelligent Transportation Management System (ITMS) impact fee for new development that is unable to otherwise mitigate its impacts to the roadway system through implementation of the adopted Highway Plan.

Policy C 2.6.3: Support local, regional, state, and federal agencies in identifying and implementing funding alternatives for the Valley's transportation systems.

Policy C 2.6.4: Coordinate road construction with improvements to other utility systems in the right-of-way.

Vehicle Trip Reduction

Policy C 3.1.1: In evaluating new development projects, require trip reduction measures as feasible to relieve congestion and reduce air pollution from vehicle emissions.

Policy C 3.1.2: Promote home-based businesses and live-work units as a means of reducing home-to-work trips.

Policy C 3.1.3: Promote the use of flexible work schedules and telecommuting to reduce home to work trips.

Policy C 3.1.4: Promote the use of employee incentives to encourage alternative travel modes to work.

Policy C 3.1.5: Promote the use of van pools, car pools, and shuttles to encourage trip reduction.

Policy C 3.1.6: Promote the provision of showers and lockers within businesses and employment centers, in order to encourage opportunities for employees to bicycle to work.

Policy C 3.1.7: Encourage special event center operators to advertise and offer discounted transit passes with event tickets.

Policy C 3.1.8: Encourage special event center operators to advertise and offer discount on-site parking incentives to carpooling patrons with four or more persons per vehicle.

Policy C 3.2.1: Adopt clean vehicle purchase policies for City and County fleets.

Policy C 3.2.2: Continue to enhance signal timing and synchronization to allow for free traffic flow, minimizing idling and vehicle emissions.

Policy C 3.2.3: When available and feasible, provide opportunities and infrastructure to support use of alternative fuel vehicles and travel devices.

Policy C 3.2.4: The City and County will encourage new commercial and retail developments to provide prioritized parking for electric vehicles and vehicles using alternative fuels.

Policy C 3.3.1: Evaluate parking standards and reduce requirements where appropriate, based on data showing that requirements are in excess of demand.

Policy C 3.3.2: In pedestrian-oriented, high density mixed use districts, provide for common parking facilities to serve the district, where appropriate.

Policy C 3.3.3: Promote shared use of parking facilities between businesses with complementary uses and hours, where feasible.

Policy C 3.3.4: Within transit-oriented development projects, provide incentives such as higher floor area ratio and/or lower parking requirements for commercial development that provides transit and ride-share programs.

Policy C 3.3.5: Encourage convenient short-term parking in high-activity areas, and all day parking at the periphery of the development areas.

Policy C 3.3.6: In the development review process, prioritize direct pedestrian access between building entrances, sidewalks, and transit stops, by placing parking behind buildings where possible, to the sides of buildings when necessary, and always away from street intersections.

Policy C 3.3.7: Create parking benefit districts which invest meter revenues in pedestrian infrastructure and other public amenities wherever feasible.

Policy C 3.3.8: Establish performance pricing of street parking so that the costs are enough to promote frequent turnover, with a goal to keep 15 percent of spaces empty at all times, wherever feasible.

Rail Service

Policy C 4.1.1: Develop permanent Metrolink facilities with an expanded bus transfer station and additional park-and-ride spaces at the Via Princessa station, or other alternative location as deemed appropriate to meet the travel needs of residents on the Valley's east side.

Policy C 4.1.2: Coordinate with other agencies to facilitate extension of a passenger rail line from the Santa Clarita Station to Ventura County, which may be used for Metrolink service.

Policy C 4.1.3: Continue to expand and improve commuter services, including park-and-ride lots, bicycle parking and storage, and waiting facilities, at all Metrolink stations.

Policy C 4.1.4: Encourage the preservation of abandoned railroad right-of-way for future transportation facilities, where appropriate.

Policy C 4.1.5: Work with other agencies to increase rail efficiency and public safety through street and track improvements and grade separations, where needs are identified.

Policy C 4.1.6: Provide incentives to promote transit-oriented development near rail stations.

Policy C 4.1.7: Facilitate coordination of planning for any future high speed regional rail systems in the Valley with Metrolink services.

Policy C 4.1.8: Minimize impacts to passenger rail service and the community from any proposed increase to freight rail service through the Valley.

Policy C 4.2.1: Continue to work with the Orange Line Development Authority (OLDA) to plan for development of an environmentally sensitive, high speed transportation system with a route through the Santa Clarita Valley, including a regional transit hub with associated infrastructure that would provide connections to the Los Angeles Basin, Palmdale Regional Airport, and other destinations.

Policy C 4.2.2: Coordinate with other agencies as needed to facilitate planning for other high-speed rail alternatives in the Santa Clarita Valley.

Policy C 4.2.3: Promote and encourage the expansion of Amtrak Rail Service to the Santa Clarita Valley.

Bus Transit

Policy C 5.1.1: Require that new subdivisions provide for two means of access into and out of the development, in order to provide for transit access, where feasible.

Policy C 5.1.2: For private gated communities, require the developer to accommodate bus access through the entry gate, or provide bus waiting facilities at the project entry with pedestrian connections to residential streets, where appropriate.

Policy C 5.1.3: Consider the operational characteristics of buses when determining acceptable street designs, including grades and turning radii.

Policy C 5.1.4: Provide for location of bus stops within ¼-mile of residential neighborhoods, and include paved bus waiting areas in street improvement plans wherever appropriate and feasible.

Policy C 5.1.5: Locate and design of bus turnouts to limit traffic obstruction and to provide sufficient merging length for the bus to re-enter the traffic flow.

Policy C 5.1.6: Evaluate the feasibility of giving buses priority at signalized intersections to maintain transit service level standards, where appropriate.

Policy C 5.2.1: Require paved waiting areas, accessible by paved walkways and reasonably direct pedestrian routes, for bus stops in new development; and provide for retrofitting of existing bus stops, where feasible and practicable.

Policy C 5.2.2: Adopt and implement consistent design standards for use in both City and County areas for bus shelters, bus benches, trash receptacles, lighting, and other improvements for transit stops that are aesthetically pleasing and consistent with community character.

Policy C 5.2.3: Adopt and implement common design standards for bus turnouts and merging lanes along arterial streets, in convenient, accessible locations.

Policy C 5.2.4: Enhance way-finding signage along walkways and paseos to direct pedestrians to transit stops.

Policy C 5.2.5: Complementary transportation modes should be interconnected at intermodal transit centers, including provisions for bicycles on buses, bicycle parking at transit centers, and park-and-ride at transit stops.

Policy C 5.3.1: Continue to provide fixed route service to significant activity areas and neighborhoods with moderate to high density, and serve low-density and rural areas with dial-a-ride, flexible fixed routes, or other transit services as deemed appropriate.

Policy C 5.3.2: Promote concentrated development patterns in coordination with transit planning to maximize service efficiency and ridership.

Policy C 5.3.3: Evaluate the feasibility of providing "fly-away" bus transit service to airports located at Burbank, Palmdale, and Los Angeles, and implement this program when warranted by demand.

Policy C 5.3.4: Evaluate the feasibility of providing bus rapid transit (BRT) for key transit corridors when light-rail is not feasible or cost effective.

Policy C 5.4.1: Establish transit impact fee rates that are based on the actual impacts of new development on the transit system, and regularly monitor and adjust these fees as needed to ensure adequate mitigation.

Policy C 5.4.2: Evaluate the feasibility of establishing a joint City/County transit impact fee to equitably distribute the capital costs of transit system expansion to meet the needs of new development in both County and City areas of the Valley.

Policy C 5.4.3: Seek funding for transit system expansion and improvement from all available sources, including local, state, and federal programs and grants.

Bikeways

Policy C 6.1.1: For recreational riders, continue to develop Class 1 bike paths, separated from the right-of-way, linking neighborhoods to open space and activity areas.

Policy C 6.1.2: For long-distance riders and those who bicycle to work or services, provide striped Class 2 bike lanes within the right-of-way, with adequate delineation and signage, where feasible and appropriate.

Policy C 6.1.3: Continue to acquire or reserve right-of-way and/or easements needed to complete the bicycle circulation system as development occurs.

Policy C 6.1.4: Where inadequate right-of-way exists for Class 1 or 2 bikeways, provide signage for Class 3 bike routes or designate alternative routes as appropriate.

Policy C 6.1.5: Plan for continuous bikeways to serve major destinations, including but not limited to regional shopping areas, college campuses, public buildings, parks, and employment centers.

Policy C 6.2.1: Require bicycle parking, which can include bicycle lockers and sheltered areas at commercial sites and multi-family housing complexes for use by employees and residents, as well as customers and visitors.

Policy C 6.2.2: Provide bicycle racks on transit vehicles to give bike-and-ride commuters the ability to transport their bicycles.

Policy C 6.2.3: Promote the inclusion of services for bicycle commuters, such as showers and changing rooms, as part of the review process for new development or substantial alterations of existing commercial or industrial uses, where appropriate.

Pedestrian Circulation

Policy C 7.1.1: In reviewing new development proposals, consider pedestrian connections within and between developments as an integral component of the site design, which may include seating, shading, lighting, directional signage, accessibility, and convenience.

Policy C 7.1.2: For existing walled subdivisions, extend pedestrian access to connect these neighborhoods to transit and services through public education and by facilitating retrofitted improvements where feasible.

Policy C 7.1.3: Where feasible and practical, consider grade separated facilities to provide pedestrian connections across arterial streets, flood control channels, utility easements, and other barriers.

Policy C 7.1.4: Identify and develop an improvement program to connect existing walkways and paseos to transit and services, where needed and appropriate.

Policy C 7.1.5: In new commercial development, provide for direct, clearly delineated, and preferably landscaped pedestrian walkways from transit stops and parking areas to building entries, and avoid placement of uses (such as drive-through facilities) in locations that would obstruct pedestrian pathways.

Policy C 7.1.6: Encourage placement of building entries in locations accessible to public sidewalks and transit.

Policy C 7.1.7: Utilize pedestrian-oriented scale and design features in areas intended for pedestrian use.

Policy C 7.1.8: Upgrade streets that are not pedestrian-friendly due to lack of sidewalk connections, safe street crossing points, vehicle sight distance, or other design deficiencies.

Policy C 7.1.9: Promote pedestrian-oriented street design through traffic-calming measures where appropriate, which may include but are not limited to bulb-outs or chokers at intersections, raised crosswalks, refuge islands, striping, and landscaping.

Policy C 7.1.10: Continue to expand and improve the Valley's multi-use trail system to provide additional routes for pedestrian travel.

CONSERVATION AND OPEN SPACE

Purpose

The Conservation and Open Space Element combines two of the mandatory Area Plan elements into a single element and contains maps and policies to ensure preservation of an open space greenbelt around most portions of the Santa Clarita Valley. The combined element establishes a policy framework for the designation and long-term preservation of open space within the County's Planning Area, and addresses the wide range of community benefits derived from open space. The Conservation and Open Space Element addresses scenic resources, water resources, including water supply, quality and conservation; mineral resources, biological resources, cultural and historical resources, environmental sustainability, soils and geological resources, air quality, climate change and energy conservation, parks, recreational facilities, and open space conservation.

Relationship of the Conservation and Open Space Element to Other Elements of the Area Plan

The Conservation and Open Space Element of the Area Plan is consistent with the Land Use Element, because those areas having value for resource conservation purposes have been designated for open space, agriculture, or rural, low-density development on the Land Use Plan. In addition, policies in the Conservation and Open Space Element that protect air and water quality are consistent with Land Use Element policies promoting mixed-use development and walkable communities. The Conservation and Open Space Element is consistent with the Circulation Element, because both elements promote air quality goals through multi-modal strategies to reduce vehicle trips. The Element is consistent with the Safety Element, because many of the areas prone to natural hazards, such as flooding and seismic shaking, are also subject to conservation issues such as water quality, groundwater recharge, slope stability, and soil erosion. Consequently, the maps, policies, and programs of both elements have been coordinated to preserve such areas as open space. The Element is consistent with the Housing Element, because adequate residential uses have been designated within the planning area to meet the need for new housing without impacting natural resources areas; and because parks, recreational, and open space amenities have been planned to serve Valley residents. The Element is consistent with the Noise Element, because policies have been included to ensure that noise from aggregate resource extraction will not be detrimental to residents and other sensitive uses, and that noise from human activities will not be detrimental to natural communities.

Resource Maps

The background, goals, and policies of the element are supplemented with exhibits that show the locations and extent of the following resources within the County's Planning Area:

- Significant ridgelines and hillsides subject to development restrictions
- Mineral resources, including areas with significant aggregate resources as designated by the state
- Water resources, including surface waters such as rivers, lakes and underground basins
- Biological resources and SEAs as designated by the County. SEAs are ecologically important fragile land and water areas that are valuable as plant and animal communities and are often important to the preservation of threatened or endangered species.
- Cultural and historic resources, including areas of local significance as well as sites having state or national historical designations
- Scenic resources, including canyons, geological features, and significant ridgelines
- Open space resources, including passive and active parks and natural open areas protected for resource conservation
- Master plan for trails, including regional, County and City trails and bikeways

Policies

Based on the existing conditions and issues outlined in the background sections of the Conservation and Open Space Element, goals, objectives, and policies have been created to address the Valley's planning needs for conservation and open space. A full representation of the identified needs relating to Conservation and Open Space is identified the element. Development and conservation policies have been established for each of the resource types mentioned above and are provided below.

Responsible Management of Environmental Systems

Policy CO 1.1.1: In making land use decisions, consider the complex, dynamic, and interrelated ways that natural and human systems interact, such as the interactions between energy demand, water demand, air and water quality, and waste management.

Policy CO 1.1.2: In making land use decisions, consider the impacts of human activity within watersheds and ecosystems, to maintain the functional viability of these systems.

Policy CO 1.1.3: In making land use decisions, encourage development proposals that preserve natural ecosystem functions and enhance the health of the surrounding community.

Policy CO 1.2.1: Improve the community's understanding of renewable resource systems that occur naturally in the Santa Clarita Valley, including systems related to hydrology, energy, ecosystems, and habitats, and the interrelationships between these systems, through the following measures:

a. Through the environmental and development review processes, consider development proposals within the context of renewable resource systems and evaluate potential impacts on a system-wide basis (rather than a project-specific basis), to the extent feasible;

b. In planning for new regional infrastructure projects, consider impacts on renewable resources within the context of interrelationships between these systems;

c. Provide information to decision-makers about the interrelationship between traffic and air quality, ecosystems and water quality, land use patterns and public health, and other similar interrelationships between renewable resource systems in order to ensure that decisions are based on an understanding of these concepts.

Policy CO 1.2.2: Working with other agencies as appropriate, develop and apply models and other tools for decision-making to support the sustainability of renewable systems.

Policy CO 1.3.1: Explore, evaluate, and implement methods to shift from using non-renewable resources to use of renewable resources in all aspects of land use planning and development.

Policy CO 1.3.2: Promote reducing, reusing, and recycling in all Land Use designations and cycles of development.

Policy CO 1.3.3: Provide informational material to the public about programs to conserve non-renewable resources and recover materials from the waste stream.

Policy CO 1.3.4: Promote and encourage cogeneration projects for commercial and industrial facilities, provided they meet all applicable environmental quality standards,

including those related to air and noise, and provide a net reduction in greenhouse gas (GHG) emissions associated with energy production.

Policy CO 1.4.1: In cooperation with other appropriate agencies, identify pollution sources and adopt strategies to reduce emissions into air and water bodies.

Policy CO 1.4.2: In cooperation with other appropriate agencies, abate or remediate known areas of contamination, and limit the effects of any such areas on public health.

Policy CO 1.4.3: Encourage use of non-hazardous building materials, and non-polluting materials and industrial processes, to the extent feasible.

Policy CO 1.4.4: In cooperation with other appropriate agencies, continue to develop and implement effective methods of handling and disposing of hazardous materials and waste.

Policy CO 1.5.1: Promote the use of environmentally responsible building design and efficiency standards in new development, and provide examples of these standards in public facilities, pursuant to the County's Green Building Program.

Policy CO 1.5.2: Design and manage public urban infrastructure systems to reduce impacts to natural systems.

Policy CO 1.5.3: Consider life-cycles for buildings, development patterns, and uses, and their long-term effects on natural systems, through the following measures:

a. Through the environmental review and development review processes, consider the impacts of new development on renewable systems through various phases including construction, use and operation, potential reuse, cessation of use, demolition, and reuse or restoration of the development site.

b. Ensure that mitigation measures and conditions of approval intended to protect natural systems are adequately funded and monitored for the required timeframe.

Policy CO 1.5.4: Seek ways to discourage human behavior that may be detrimental to natural systems and to encourage environmental responsibility, through education, incentives, removing barriers, enforcement, and other means as practicable and feasible.

Policy CO 1.5.5: Promote concentration of urban uses within the center of the Santa Clarita Valley through incentives for infill development and rebuilding, in order to limit impacts to open space, habitats, watersheds, hillsides, and other components of the Valley's natural ecosystems.

Policy CO 1.5.6: Through the development review process, consider the impacts of development on the entire watershed of the Santa Clara River and its tributaries, including hydromodification.

Policy CO 1.5.7: Consider the principles of environmental sustainability, trip reduction, walkability, stormwater management, and energy conservation at the site, neighborhood, district, city, and regional level, in land use decisions.

Policy CO 1.5.8: Consider environmental responsibility in all procurement decisions, including purchasing policies and capital projects.

Policy CO 1.6.1: Identify environmental conditions that represent a healthy, sustainable community.

Policy CO 1.6.2: Use Geographic Information Systems, modeling, and other tools to indicate the locations of natural systems such as floodplain and floodway areas, oak tree woodlands, Significant Ecological Areas, and plant and animal species habitat.

Policy CO 1.6.3: Provide information on the condition of natural systems to decision makers as part of the decision-making process regarding land use and development.

Geological Resources

Policy CO 2.1.1: Review soil erosion and sedimentation control plans for grading activities related to development, where appropriate to ensure mitigation of potential erosion by water and air.

Policy CO 2.1.2: Promote conservation of topsoil on development sites by stockpiling for later reuse, where feasible.

Policy CO 2.1.3: Promote soil enhancement and waste reduction through composting, where appropriate.

Policy CO 2.2.1: Locate development and designate land uses to minimize the impact on the Santa Clarita Valley's topography, minimizing grading and emphasizing the use of development pads that mimic the natural topography in lieu of repetitive flat pads, to the extent feasible. (Guiding Principle #8)

Policy CO 2.2.2: Ensure that graded slopes in hillside areas are revegetated with native drought tolerant plants or other approved vegetation to blend manufactured slopes with adjacent natural hillsides, in consideration of fire safety and slope stability requirements.

Policy CO 2.2.3: Preserve designated natural ridgelines from development by ensuring a minimum distance for grading and development from these ridgelines of 50 feet or more if determined appropriate by the reviewing authority based on site conditions, to maintain the Santa Clarita Valley's distinctive community character and preserve the scenic setting.

Policy CO 2.2.4: Identify and preserve significant geological and topographic features through designating these areas as open space or by other means as appropriate.

Policy CO 2.2.5: Promote the use of adequate erosion control measures for all development in hillside areas, including single family homes and infrastructure improvements, both during and after construction.

Policy CO 2.2.6: Encourage building and grading designs that conform to the natural grade, avoiding the use of large retaining walls and build-up walls that are visible from off site, to the extent feasible and practicable.

Policy CO 2.3.1: Identify areas with significant mineral resources that are available for extraction pursuant to Zoning Ordinance requirements.

Policy CO 2.3.2: Consider appropriate buffers near mineral resource areas that are planned for extraction, to provide for land use compatibility and prevent the encroachment of incompatible land uses.

Policy CO 2.3.3: Through the review process for any mining or mineral extraction proposal, ensure mitigation of impacts from mining and processing of materials on

adjacent uses or on the community, including but not limited to air and water pollution, traffic and circulation, noise, and land use incompatibility.

Policy CO 2.3.4: Ensure that mineral extraction sites are maintained in a safe and secure manner after cessation of extraction activities, which may include the regulated decommissioning of wells, clean-up of any contaminated soils or materials, closing of mine openings, or other measures as deemed appropriate by the agencies having jurisdiction.

Policy CO 2.3.5: Promote remediation and restoration of mined land to a condition that supports beneficial uses, which may include but are not limited to recreational open space, habitat enhancement, groundwater recharge, or urban development.

Biological Resources

Policy CO 3.1.1: On the Land Use Map and through the development review process, concentrate development into previously developed or urban areas to promote infill development and prevent sprawl and habitat loss, to the extent feasible.

Policy CO 3.1.2: Avoid designating or approving new development that will adversely impact wetlands, floodplains, threatened or endangered species and habitat, and water bodies supporting fish or recreational uses, and establish an adequate buffer area as deemed appropriate through site specific review.

Policy CO 3.1.3: On previously undeveloped sites (greenfields), identify biological resources and incorporate habitat preservation measures into the site plan, where appropriate. (This policy will generally not apply to urban infill sites, except as otherwise determined by the reviewing agency).

Policy CO 3.1.4: For new development on sites with degraded habitat, include habitat restoration measures as part of the project development plan, where appropriate.

Policy CO 3.1.5: Promote the use of site-appropriate native or adapted plant materials, and prohibit use of invasive or noxious plant species in landscape designs.

Policy CO 3.1.6: On development sites, preserve and enhance natural site elements including existing water bodies, soil conditions, ecosystems, trees, vegetation, and habitat, to the extent feasible.

Policy CO 3.1.7: Limit the use of turf-grass on development sites and promote the use of native or adapted plantings to promote biodiversity and natural habitat.

Policy CO 3.1.8: On development sites, require tree planting to provide habitat and shade to reduce the heat island effect caused by pavement and buildings.

Policy CO 3.1.9: During construction, ensure preservation of habitat and trees designated to be protected through use of fencing and other means as appropriate, so as to prevent damage by grading, soil compaction, pollution, erosion, or other adverse construction impacts.

Policy CO 3.1.10: To the extent feasible, encourage the use of open space to promote biodiversity.

Policy CO 3.1.11: Promote use of pervious materials or porous concrete on sidewalks to allow for planted area infiltration, allow oxygen to reach tree roots (preventing sidewalk lift-up from roots seeking oxygen), and mitigate tree-sidewalk conflicts, in order to maintain a healthy mature urban forest.

Policy CO 3.2.1: Protect wetlands from development impacts, with the goal of achieving no net loss (or functional reduction) of jurisdictional wetlands within the planning area.

Policy CO 3.2.2: Ensure that development is located and designed to protect oak and other significant indigenous woodlands. (Guiding Principle #9)

Policy CO 3.2.3: Ensure protection of any endangered or threatened species or habitat, in conformance with State and federal laws.

Policy CO 3.2.4: Protect biological resources in the designated Significant Ecological Areas (SEAs) through the siting and design of development which is highly compatible with the SEA resources. Specific development standards shall be identified to control the types of land use, density, building location and size, roadways and other infrastructure, landscape, drainage, and other elements to assure the protection of the critical and important plant and animal habitats of each SEA. In general, the principle shall be to minimize the intrusion and impacts of development in these areas with sufficient controls to adequately protect the resources.

Policy CO 3.3.1: Protect the banks and adjacent riparian habitat along the Santa Clara River and its tributaries, to provide wildlife corridors.

Policy CO 3.3.2: Cooperate with other responsible agencies to protect, enhance, and extend the Rim of the Valley trail system through Elsmere and Whitney Canyons, and other areas as appropriate, to provide both recreational trails and wildlife corridors linking the Santa Susana and San Gabriel Mountains.

Policy CO 3.3.3: Identify and protect one or more designated wildlife corridors linking the Los Padres and Angeles National Forests through the Santa Clarita Valley (the San Gabriel-Castaic connection).

Policy CO 3.3.4: Support the maintenance of Santa Clarita Woodlands Park, a critical component of a cross-mountain range wildlife habitat corridor linking the Santa Monica Mountains to the Angeles and Los Padres National Forests.

Policy CO 3.3.5: Encourage connection of natural open space areas in site design, to allow for wildlife movement.

Policy CO 3.4.1: Coordinate with the United States Forest Service on discretionary development projects that may have impacts on the National Forest.

Policy CO 3.4.2: Consider principles of forest management in land use decisions for projects adjacent to the National Forest, including limiting the use of invasive species, discouraging off-road vehicle use, maintaining fuel modification zones and fire access roads, and other measures as appropriate, in accordance with the goals set forth in the Angeles National Forest Land Management Plan.

Policy CO 3.4.3: On the Land Use Map, maintain low density rural residential and open space uses adjacent to forest land, and protect the urban-forest interface area from overdevelopment.

Policy CO 3.4.4: Participate as a stakeholder in planning efforts by the United States Forest Service for land uses within the National Forest, providing input as appropriate.

Policy CO 3.5.1: Continue to plant and maintain trees on public lands and within the public right-of-way to provide shade and walkable streets, incorporating measures to ensure that roots have access to oxygen at tree maturity, such as use of porous concrete.

Policy CO 3.5.2: Where appropriate, promote planting of trees that are native or climactically appropriate to the surrounding environment, emphasizing oaks, sycamores, maple, walnut, and other native species in order to enhance habitat, and discouraging the use of introduced species such as eucalyptus, pepper trees, and palms except as ornamental landscape features.

Policy CO 3.5.3: Pursuant to the requirements of the zoning ordinance, protect heritage oak trees that, due to their size and condition, are deemed to have exceptional value to the community.

Policy CO 3.6.1: Minimize light trespass, sky-glow, glare, and other adverse impacts on the nocturnal ecosystem by limiting exterior lighting to the level needed for safety and comfort; reduce unnecessary lighting for landscaping and architectural purposes, and encourage reduction of lighting levels during non-business nighttime hours.

Policy CO 3.6.2: Reduce impervious surfaces and provide more natural vegetation to enhance microclimates and provide habitat. In implementing this policy, consider the following design concepts:

- Consideration of reduced parking requirements, where supported by a parking study and/or through shared use of parking areas;
- Increased use of vegetated areas around parking lot perimeters; such areas should be designed as bioswales or as otherwise determined appropriate to allow surface water infiltration;
- Use of connected open space areas as drainage infiltration areas in lieu of curbed landscape islands, minimizing the separation of natural and landscaped areas into isolated "islands";
- Breaking up large expanses of paving with natural landscaped areas planted with shade trees to reduce the heat island effect, along with shrubs and groundcover to provide diverse vegetation for habitat.

Policy CO 3.6.3: Restrict use of unauthorized off-road vehicles within sensitive habitat areas through signage, fencing, or other means as appropriate.

Policy CO 3.6.4: Provide public information and support with demonstration sites at County facilities on gardening and landscaping techniques to reduce spread of invasive

species and pollution from pesticides and fertilizers that threaten natural ecosystems.

Policy CO 3.6.5: Ensure revegetation of graded areas and slopes adjacent to natural open space areas with native plants (consistent with fire prevention requirements).

Policy CO 3.7.1: Support the public education programs offered at the Placerita Canyon Nature Center and Ed Davis Park (Sonia Thompson Nature Center).

Policy CO 3.7.2: Seek opportunities for partnerships with schools, non-profit organizations, and volunteers, to increase public access to and information about natural areas.

Water Resources

Policy CO 4.1.1: In coordination with applicable water suppliers, adopt and implement a water conservation strategy for public and private development.

Policy CO 4.1.2: Provide examples of water conservation in landscaping through use of low water use landscaping in public spaces such as parks, landscaped medians and parkways, plazas, and around public buildings.

Policy CO 4.1.3: Require low water use landscaping in new residential subdivisions and other private development projects, including a reduction in the amount of turf-grass.

Policy CO 4.1.4: Provide informational materials to applicants and contractors on the Castaic Lake Water Agency's Landscape Education Program, and/or other information on xeriscape, native California plants, and water-conserving irrigation techniques as materials become available.

Policy CO 4.1.5: Promote the use of low-flow and/or waterless plumbing fixtures and appliances in all new residential and non-residential development and residential development of five or more dwelling units.

Policy CO 4.1.6: Support amendments to the County Building Code that would promote upgrades to water and energy efficiency when issuing permits for renovations or additions to existing buildings.

Policy CO 4.1.7: Apply water conservation policies to all pending development projects, including approved tentative subdivision maps, to the extent permitted by law; where precluded from adding requirements by vested entitlements, encourage water conservation in construction and landscape design.

Policy CO 4.1.8: Upon the availability of non-potable water services, discourage and consider restrictions on the use of potable water for washing outdoor surfaces.

Policy CO 4.2.1: In cooperation with the Sanitation District and other affected agencies, expand opportunities for use of recycled water for the purposes of landscape maintenance, construction, water recharge, and other uses as appropriate.

Policy CO 4.2.2: Require new development to provide the infrastructure needed for delivery of recycled water to the property for use in irrigation, even if the recycled water main delivery lines have not yet reached the site, where deemed appropriate by the reviewing authority.

Policy CO 4.2.3: Promote the installation of rainwater capture and gray water systems in new development for irrigation, where feasible and practicable.

Policy CO 4.2.4: Identify and protect areas with substantial potential for groundwater recharge, and promote recharge of groundwater basins throughout the watershed (excluding the river bed).

Policy CO 4.2.5: Participate and cooperate with other agencies to complete, adopt, and implement an Integrated Regional Water Management Plan to build a diversified portfolio of water supply, water quality, and resource stewardship priorities for the Santa Clarita Valley.

Policy CO 4.2.6: Require that all new development proposals demonstrate a sufficient and sustainable water supply prior to approval.

Policy CO 4.3.1: On undeveloped sites proposed for development, promote on-site stormwater infiltration through design techniques such as pervious paving, draining runoff into bioswales or properly designed landscaped areas, preservation of natural soils and vegetation, and limiting impervious surfaces.

Policy CO 4.3.2: On previously developed sites proposed for major alteration, provide stormwater management improvements to restore natural infiltration, as required by the reviewing authority.

Policy CO 4.3.3: Provide flexibility for design standards for street width, sidewalk width, parking, and other impervious surfaces when it can be shown that such reductions will not have negative impacts and will provide the benefits of stormwater retention, groundwater infiltration, reduction of heat islands, enhancement of habitat and biodiversity, saving of significant trees or planting of new trees, or other environmental benefit.

Policy CO 4.3.4: Encourage and promote the use of new materials and technology for improved stormwater management, such as pervious paving, green roofs, rain gardens, and vegetated swales.

Policy CO 4.3.5: Where detention and retention basins or ponds are required, seek methods to integrate these areas into the landscaping design of the site as amenity areas, such as a network of small ephemeral swales treated with attractive planting.

Policy CO 4.3.6: Discourage the use of mounded turf and lawn areas which drain onto adjacent sidewalks and parking lots, replacing these areas with landscape designs that retain runoff and allow infiltration.

Policy CO 4.3.7: Reduce the amount of pollutants entering the Santa Clara River and its tributaries by capturing and treating stormwater runoff at the source, to the extent possible.

Policy CO 4.4.1: Cooperate with the Los Angeles County Sanitation District and Regional Water Quality Control Board as appropriate to achieve Total Maximum Daily Load (TMDL) standards for chlorides in the Santa Clara River.

Policy CO 4.4.2: Support the cooperative efforts of property owners and appropriate agencies to eliminate perchlorate contamination on the Whittaker-Bermite property, and eliminate the use of any industrial chemicals or wastes in a manner that threatens groundwater quality.

Policy CO 4.4.3: Discourage the use of chemical fertilizers, herbicides, and pesticides in landscaping to reduce water pollution by substances hazardous to human health and natural ecosystems.

Policy CO 4.4.4: Promote the extension of sanitary sewers for all urban uses and densities, to protect groundwater quality, where feasible.

Cultural and Historical Resources

Policy CO 5.1.1: For sites identified on the Cultural and Historical Resources Map (Figure CO 6), review appropriate documentation prior to issuance of any permits for grading, demolition, alteration, or new development, to avoid significant adverse impacts. Such documentation may include cultural resource reports, environmental impact reports, or other information as determined to be adequate by the reviewing authority.

Policy CO 5.1.2: Review any proposed alterations to cultural and historic sites identified in Table CO 1 or other sites which are so designated, based on the guidelines contained in the Secretary of the Interior's Standards for the Treatment of Properties (Title 36, Code of Federal Regulations, Chapter 1, Part 68, also known as 36 CFR 68), or other adopted County guidelines.

Policy CO 5.1.3: As new information about other potentially significant historic and cultural sites becomes available, update the Cultural and Historical Resources Inventory and apply appropriate measures to all identified sites to protect their historical and cultural integrity.

Policy CO 5.2.1: Support efforts by the City of Santa Clarita, in keeping with the Downtown Newhall Specific Plan policies, to ensure that the scale and character of new development is compatible with and does not detract from the context of historic buildings and block patterns.

Policy CO 5.2.2: Support expansion and enhancement of a City of Santa Clarita historical park adjacent to the Pioneer Oil Refinery to illustrate historic oil operations in the Santa Clarita Valley.

Policy CO 5.2.3: Support efforts by the City of Santa Clarita to ensure that all aspects of community design in Newhall, including street furniture, lighting, trash collection and storage areas, seating, and other accessory structures, are of a design and scale appropriate for the historic character of the district, while maintaining a sense of authenticity.

Policy CO 5.2.4: Continue to support "Heritage Junction" and the historical museum within William S. Hart Park as historical resources that illustrate the various phases of settlement within the Santa Clarita Valley.

Policy CO 5.3.1: For any proposed Area Plan Amendment, Specific Plan, or Specific Plan Amendment, notify and consult with any California Native American tribes on the contact list maintained by the California Native American Heritage Commission that have traditional lands within the County's jurisdiction, regarding any potential impacts to Native American resources from the proposed action, pursuant to State guidelines.

Policy CO 5.3.2: For any proposed development project that may have a potential impact on Native American cultural resources, provide notification to California Native American tribes on the contact list maintained by the Native American Heritage Commission that have traditional lands within the County's jurisdiction, and consider the input received prior to a discretionary decision.

Policy CO 5.3.3: Review and consider a cultural resources study for any new grading or development in areas identified as having a high potential for Native American resources, and incorporate recommendations into the project approval as appropriate to mitigate impacts to cultural resources.

Scenic Resources

Policy CO 6.1.1: Protect scenic canyons, as described in Part I of this element, from overdevelopment and environmental degradation.

Policy CO 6.1.2: Preserve significant ridgelines, as shown on Figure CO 7, as a scenic backdrop throughout the community by maintaining natural grades and vegetation.

Policy CO 6.1.3: Protect the scenic quality of unique geologic features throughout the planning area, such as Vasquez Rocks, by including these features within park and open space land where possible.

Policy CO 6.2.1: Where feasible, encourage development proposals to have varied building heights to maintain view corridor sight lines.

Policy CO 6.3.1: Protect the shores of Castaic Lake to preserve its scenic quality from development.

Policy CO 6.3.2: Protect the banks of the Santa Clara River and its major tributaries through open space designations and property acquisitions, where feasible, to protect and enhance the scenic character of the river valley.

Policy CO 6.4.1: Preserve scenic habitat areas within designated open space or parkland, wherever possible.

Policy CO 6.4.2: Through the development review process, ensure that new development preserves scenic habitat areas to the extent feasible.

Policy CO 6.5.1: In approving new development projects, consider scenic views at major entry points to the Santa Clarita Valley, including gateways located at Newhall Pass and along Lake Hughes Road, Route 126, Bouquet Canyon Road, Sierra Highway, State Route 14, and other locations as deemed appropriate by the reviewing authority.

Policy CO 6.5.2: Establish scenic routes in appropriate locations as determined by the reviewing agency, and adopt guidelines for these routes to maintain their scenic character.

Policy CO 6.6.1: Enhance views of the night sky by reducing light pollution through use of light screens, downward directed lights, minimized reflective paving surfaces, and reduced lighting levels, as deemed appropriate by the reviewing authority.

Policy CO 6.6.2: Improve views of the Santa Clarita Valley through various policies to minimize air pollution and smog, as contained throughout the Area Plan.

Policy CO 6.6.3: Restrict establishment of billboards throughout the planning area, and continue abatement efforts to remove existing billboards that impact scenic views.

Policy CO 6.6.4: Where appropriate, require new development to be sensitive to scenic viewpoints or viewsheds through building design, site layout, and building heights.

Policy CO 6.4.5: Encourage undergrounding of all new utility lines, and promote undergrounding of existing lines where feasible and practicable.

Air Quality

Policy CO 7.1.1: Through the mixed land use patterns and multi-modal circulation policies set forth in the Land Use and Circulation Elements, limit air pollution from transportation sources.

Policy CO 7.1.2: Support the use of alternative fuel vehicles.

Policy CO 7.1.3: Support alternative travel modes and new technologies, including infrastructure to support alternative fuel vehicles, as they become commercially available.

Policy CO 7.2.1: Ensure adequate spacing of sensitive land uses from the following sources of air pollution: high traffic freeways and roads; distribution centers; truck stops; chrome plating facilities; dry cleaners using perchloroethylene; and large gas stations, as recommended by CARB.

Policy CO 7.3.1: Coordinate with local, regional, state, and federal agencies to develop and implement regional air quality policies and programs.

Greenhouse Gas Reduction

Policy CO 8.1.1: Create and adopt a Climate Action Plan within 18 months of the adoption date of the Countywide General Plan Update that meets State requirements and includes the following components:

a. Plans and programs to reduce GHG emissions to State-mandated targets, including enforceable reduction measures;

b. Mechanisms to ensure regular review of progress towards the emission reduction targets established by the Climate Action Plan;

c. Procedures for reporting on progress to officials and the public;

d. Procedures for revising the plan as needed to meet GHG emissions reduction targets; and

e. Allocation of funding and staffing for Plan implementation.

After adoption of the Climate Action Plan, amend this Area Plan if necessary to ensure consistency with the adopted Climate Action Plan.

Policy CO 8.1.2: Participate in the preparation of a regional Sustainable Communities Strategy (SCS) Plan to meet regional targets for greenhouse gas emission reductions, as required by SB 375.

Policy CO 8.1.3: Implement the ordinances developed through the County's Green Building Program.

Policy CO 8.1.4: Provide information and education to the public about energy conservation and local strategies to address climate change.

Policy CO 8.1.5: Coordinate various activities within the community and appropriate agencies related to GHG emissions reduction activities.

Policy CO 8.2.1: Ensure that all new County buildings, and all major renovations and additions, meet adopted green building standards, with a goal of achieving the LEED (Leadership in Energy and Environmental Design) Silver rating or above, or equivalent, where appropriate.

Policy CO 8.2.2: Ensure energy efficiency of existing public buildings through energy audits and repairs, and retrofit buildings with energy efficient heating and air conditioning systems and lighting fixtures.

Policy CO 8.2.3: Support purchase of renewable energy for public buildings, which may include installing solar photovoltaic systems to generate electricity for County buildings and operations and other methods as deemed appropriate and feasible, in concert with other significant energy conservation efforts.

Policy CO 8.2.4: Establish maximum lighting levels for public facilities, and encourage reduction of lighting levels to the level needed for security purposes after business hours, in addition to use of downward-directed lighting and use of low-reflective paving surfaces.

Policy CO 8.2.5: Support installation of photovoltaic and other renewable energy equipment on public facilities, in concert with significant energy conservation efforts.

Policy CO 8.2.6: Promote use of solar lighting in parks and along paseos and trails, where practical.

Policy CO 8.2.7: Support the use of sustainable alternative fuel vehicles for machinery and fleets, where practical, by evaluating fuel sources, manufacturing processes, maintenance costs, and vehicle lifetime use.

Policy CO 8.2.8: Promote the purchase of energy-efficient and recycled products, and vendors and contractors who use energy-efficient vehicles and products, consistent with adopted purchasing policies.

Policy CO 8.2.9: Reduce heat islands through installation of trees to shade parking lots and hardscapes, and use of light-colored reflective paving and roofing surfaces.

Policy CO 8.2.10: Support installation of energy-efficient traffic control devices, street lights, and parking lot lights.

Policy CO 8.2.11: Implement recycling in all public buildings, parks, and public facilities, including for special events.

Policy CO 8.2.12: Provide ongoing training to appropriate County employees on sustainable planning, building, and engineering practices.

Policy CO 8.2.13: Support trip reduction strategies for employees as described in the Circulation Element.

Policy CO 8.2.14: Reduce extensive heat gain from paved surfaces through development standards wherever feasible.

Policy CO 8.3.1: Evaluate development proposals for consistency with the ordinances developed through the County's Green Building Program.

Policy CO 8.3.2: Promote construction of energy efficient buildings through the certification requirements of the ordinances developed through the County's Green Building Program.

Policy CO 8.3.3: Promote energy efficiency and water conservation upgrades to existing non-residential buildings at the time of major remodel or additions.

Policy CO 8.3.4: Encourage new residential development to include on-site solar photovoltaic systems, or pre-wiring, in at least 50% of the residential units, in concert with other significant energy conservation efforts.

Policy CO 8.3.5: Encourage on-site solar generation of electricity in new retail and office commercial buildings and associated parking lots, carports, and garages, in concert with other significant energy conservation efforts.

Policy CO 8.3.6: Require new development to use passive solar heating and cooling techniques in building design and construction, which may include but are not be limited to building orientation, clerestory windows, skylights, placement and type of windows, overhangs to shade doors and windows, and use of light colored roofs, shade trees, and paving materials.

Policy CO 8.3.7: Encourage the use of trees and landscaping to reduce heating and cooling energy loads, through shading of buildings and parking lots.

Policy CO 8.3.8: Encourage energy-conserving heating and cooling systems and appliances, and energy-efficiency in windows and insulation, in all new construction.

Policy CO 8.3.9: Limit excessive lighting levels, and encourage a reduction of lighting when businesses are closed to a level required for security.

Policy CO 8.3.10: Provide incentives and technical assistance for installation of energy-efficient improvements in existing and new buildings.

Policy CO 8.3.11: Consider allowing carbon off-sets for large development projects, if appropriate, which may include funding off-site projects or purchase of credits for other forms of mitigation, provided that any such mitigation shall be measurable and enforceable.

Policy CO 8.3.12: Reduce extensive heat gain from paved surfaces through development standards wherever feasible.

Policy CO 8.4.1: Encourage and promote the location of enclosed materials recovery facilities (MRF) within the Santa Clarita Valley.

Policy CO 8.4.2: Adopt mandatory residential recycling programs for all residential units, including single-family and multi-family dwellings.

Policy CO 8.4.3: Allow and encourage composting of greenwaste, where appropriate.

Policy CO 8.4.4: Promote commercial and industrial recycling, including recycling of construction and demolition debris.

Policy CO 8.4.5: Develop and implement standards for refuse and recycling receptacles and enclosures to accommodate recycling in all development.

Policy CO 8.4.6: Introduce and assist with the placement of receptacles for recyclable products in public places, including at special events.

Policy CO 8.4.7: Provide information to the public on recycling opportunities and facilities, and support various locations and events to promote public participation in recycling.

Policy CO 8.4.8: Take an active role in promoting, incubating, and encouraging businesses that would qualify under the Recycling Market Development Zone program or equivalent, including those that manufacture products made from recycled products, salvage, and resource recovery business parks.

Park, Recreation, and Trail Facilities

Policy CO 9.1.1: Common park standards shall be developed and applied throughout the Santa Clarita Valley, consistent with community character objectives, with a goal of five acres of parkland per 1,000 population.

Policy CO 9.1.2: A range of parkland types, sizes, and uses shall be provided to accommodate recreational and leisure activities. (Guiding Principle #36.b)

Policy CO 9.1.3: Provide local and community parks within a reasonable distance of residential neighborhoods.

Policy CO 9.1.4: Explore and implement opportunities to share facilities with school districts, utility easements, flood control facilities, and other land uses, where feasible.

Policy CO 9.1.5: Promote development of more playfields for youth and adult sports activities, in conjunction with tournament facilities, where needed.

Policy CO 9.1.6: Continue to upgrade and expand existing facilities to enhance service to residents, including extension of hours through lighted facilities, where appropriate.

Policy CO 9.1.7: Establish appropriate segments of the Santa Clara River as a recreational focal point, encouraging a beneficial mix of passive and active recreational uses with natural ecosystems by providing buffers for sensitive habitat.

Policy CO 9.1.8: Make available easily accessible park and recreation facilities throughout the Santa Clarita Valley.

Policy CO 9.1.9: Ensure that new development projects provide a fair share towards park and recreational facilities, phased to meet needs of residents as dwelling units become occupied, pursuant to the Quimby Act (California Government Code Section 66477) and local ordinances as applicable.

Policy CO 9.1.10: Where appropriate, use flexible planning and zoning tools to obtain adequate park and open space land, including but not limited to specific plans, development agreements, density-controlled development (clustering) in accordance with the provisions of the Zoning Ordinance and subject to the limitations in Policy CO-10.2.5, and transfer of development rights.

Policy CO 9.1.11: Locate and design parks to address potential adverse impacts on adjacent development from noise, lights, flying balls, traffic, special events, and other operational activities and uses.

Policy CO 9.1.12: Establish minimum design standards for both public and private parks to provide for public safety and welfare through lighting, access, crime prevention through design, equipment, visibility, and other aspects of design.

Policy CO 9.1.13: Provide passive areas for natural habitat, meditation, bird-watching, and similar activities in parks, where feasible and appropriate, including meditation gardens, wildflower and butterfly gardens, botanic gardens, and similar features.

Policy CO 9.1.14: Ensure adequate park maintenance, and encourage programs for volunteers to assist in maintaining local parks, where feasible and appropriate.

Policy CO 9.1.15: Provide a wide variety of recreational programs geared to all ages and abilities, including passive, active, educational, and cultural programs.

Policy CO 9.2.1: Plan for a continuous and unified multi-use trail network for a variety of users, to be developed with common standards, in order to unify Santa Clarita Valley communities and connect with regional and state trails such as the Pacific Crest Trail. (Guiding Principle #35)

Policy CO 9.2.2: Provide trail connections between paseos, bike routes, schools, parks, community services, streets and neighborhoods.

Policy CO 9.2.3: Use the Santa Clara River as a major recreational focal point for development of an integrated system of bikeways and trails, while protecting sensitive ecological areas.

Policy CO 9.2.4: Ensure that new development projects provide trail connections to local and regional trail systems, where appropriate.

Policy CO 9.2.5: Promote the expansion of multi-use trails within rural areas of the Santa Clarita Valley.

Policy CO 9.2.6: Provide trails to scenic vistas and viewpoints.

Policy CO 9.2.7: Explore joint use opportunities to combine trail systems with utility easements, flood control facilities, open spaces, or other uses, where feasible.

Policy CO 9.2.8: Ensure that trails are designed to protect habitat, ecosystems, and water quality.

Policy CO 9.2.9: Pursue funding for trail maintenance and encourage volunteer participation in trail maintenance programs, where appropriate.

Open Space

Policy CO 10.1.1: Provide and protect a natural greenbelt buffer area surrounding the entire Santa Clarita Valley, which includes the Angeles National Forest, Santa Susana, San Gabriel, and Sierra Pelona Mountains, as a regional recreational, ecological, and aesthetic resource. (Guiding Principle #5)

Policy CO 10.1.2: The Santa Clara River corridor and its major tributaries shall be preserved as open space to accommodate storm water flows and protect critical plant and animal species, as follows:

a. Uses and improvements within the corridor shall be limited to those that benefit the community's use of the river in its natural state.

b. Development on properties adjacent to, but outside of the defined primary river corridor shall be:

   i. Located and designed to protect the river's water quality, plants, and animal habitats by controlling the type and density of uses, drainage runoff (water treatment) and other relevant elements; and

   ii. Designed to maximize the full range of river amenities, including views and recreational access, while minimizing adverse impacts to the river.

Policy CO 10.1.3: Through dedications and acquisitions, obtain open space needed to preserve and protect wildlife corridors and habitat, which may include land within SEA's, wetlands, woodlands, water bodies, and areas with threatened or endangered flora and fauna.

Policy CO 10.1.4: Maintain and acquire, where appropriate, open space to preserve cultural and historical resources.

Policy CO 10.1.5: Maintain open space corridors along canyons and ridgelines as a way of delineating and defining communities and neighborhoods, providing residents with access to natural areas, and preserving scenic beauty.

Policy CO 10.1.6: Delineate open space uses within hazardous areas to protect public health and safety, which may include areas subject to seismic rupture, flooding, wildfires, or unsafe levels of noise or air pollution.

Policy CO 10.1.7: Acquire adequate open space for recreational uses, coordinating location and type of open space with master plans for trails and parks.

Policy CO 10.1.8: Encourage the use of vacant lots as community gardens, where appropriate.

Policy CO 10.1.9: Preserve forested areas, agricultural lands, wildlife habitat and corridors, wetlands, watersheds, groundwater recharge areas, and other open space that provides natural carbon sequestration benefits.

Policy CO 10.1.10: Support efforts by the City of Santa Clarita to ensure that the open space acquisition plan developed pursuant to the 2007 Open Space District formation conforms to the goals and objectives of the City's General Plan.

Policy CO 10.1.11: Partner with conservation agencies and other entities to acquire and maintain open space, combining funding and other resources for joint-use projects, where appropriate.

Policy CO 10.1.12: Identify, pursue, and ensure adequate funding sources to maintain open space areas.

Policy CO 10.1.13: Provide reasonable accommodation to ensure that residents throughout the Santa Clarita Valley have equal access to open space areas, in consideration of the health benefits to residents from access to nature.

Policy CO 10.1.14: Protect open space from human activity that may harm or degrade natural areas, including but not limited to off road motorized vehicles, vandalism, campfires, overuse, pets, noise, excessive lighting, dumping, or other similar activities.

Policy CO 10.1.15: In conformance with State law, ensure that any action by which open space land is acquired or disposed of, restricted, or regulated, be consistent with the open space plan contained in this Element.

Policy CO 10.1.16: In conformance with State law, ensure that all development is consistent with the open space plan contained in this Element.

Policy CO 10.1.17: Allow alternative energy projects in areas designated for open space, where consistent with other uses and values.

Policy CO 10.2.1: Encourage provision of vegetated open space on a development project's site, which may include shallow wetlands and ponds, drought tolerant landscaping, and pedestrian hardscape that includes vegetated areas.

Policy CO 10.2.2: Encourage that open space provided within development projects be usable and accessible, rather than configured in unusable strips and left-over remnants, and that open space areas are designed to connect to each other and to adjacent open spaces, to the extent reasonable and practical.

Policy CO 10.2.3: Where feasible, integrate open space areas with neighboring uses and parcels, to create shared amenities and green spaces.

Policy CO 10.2.4: Seek opportunities to incorporate site features into the open space of a project design, which may include significant trees, vegetation, terrain, or water features, to provide thermal, acoustic, and aesthetic benefits.

Policy CO 10.2.5: Where appropriate, allow density transfers and density-controlled development (clustering) in accordance with the provisions of the Zoning Ordinance to encourage retention of open space, provided that all residential lots meet the minimum lot size requirements of Community Standards District, where applicable.

SAFETY ELEMENT

Purpose

Local governments are charged with the responsibility of protecting their citizens from unsafe conditions in the planning area, including natural and man-made hazards that could affect life or health, property values, economic or social welfare, and/or environmental quality. The Safety Element describes natural and man-made hazards that may affect existing and future residents, and provides guidelines for protecting public health and safety. It identifies present conditions and public concerns, and establishes policies and standards designed to minimize risks from hazards to acceptable levels. In addition, the Safety Element informs citizens about hazardous conditions in specific areas, and assists policy makers in making land use and development decisions. The Safety Element addresses risks associated with ground rupture and shaking, seiche and dam failure, slope and soil instability, flooding, urban and wildland fires, evacuation routes, crime prevention, emergency preparedness, law enforcement, and hazardous materials incidents.

Although some degree of risk is inevitable because disasters cannot be predicted with certainty, unsafe conditions may be minimized through development of plans and policies to limit the public's exposure to hazards. For those cases in which disasters cannot be avoided, the Safety Element addresses emergency response services, and includes policies intended to minimize disruption and expedite recovery following disasters.

Relationship of the Safety Element to Other Elements of the Area Plan

The Safety Element is consistent with the Land Use Element because the designation of land uses considered locations of earthquake zones, areas subject to flooding or wild fires, unstable soils, and other environmental hazards. In addition, the Land Use Element includes policies to ensure that new development plans in the County are evaluated for conformance with accepted crime prevention measures, and that adequate law enforcement and fire protection are provided to ensure the safety of County residents. The element is consistent with the Circulation Element, because circulation policies require adequate evacuation routes and emergency access throughout the community. The element is consistent with the Housing Element, because residential areas have been designated and are required to be designed to protect neighborhoods from hazardous conditions. The Safety Element is consistent with the Conservation and Open Space Element, because many of the areas prone to natural hazards, such as flooding and seismic shaking, are also subject to conservation issues such as water quality, groundwater recharge, slope stability, and soil erosion; the maps, policies and programs of both elements have been coordinated to preserve such areas as open space. The Safety Element is consistent with the Noise Element, because policies in both elements are intended to protect the public from unhealthful conditions.

Resource Maps

The Safety Element includes the following resource maps:

- Earthquake faults affecting the planning area
- Earthquake epicenters
- Seismic hazards
- Flood plains
- Existing and planned public safety facilities
- Fire hazard zones

Policies

Based on the existing conditions and issues outlined in the background sections of the Safety Element, goals, objectives, and policies have been created to address the Valley's safety planning needs. A full representation of the identified needs relating to safety is identified the element.

Geological Hazards

Policy S 1.1.1: Maintain maps of potentially active faults and fault zones, based on information available from the Alquist-Priolo Special Studies Zone maps, United States Geological Survey, State Board of Geologists, State Mining and Geology Board, and other appropriate sources.

Policy S 1.1.2: Maintain maps of areas subject to liquefaction and landslides, based on data provided by the State and other appropriate sources.

Policy S 1.1.3: In the event of significant incidents of soil subsidence, compile data and prepare maps showing areas with potential for this hazard.

Policy S 1.1.4: Maintain maps showing potential inundation areas from dam failure.

Policy S 1.2.1: Implement requirements of the Alquist-Priolo Earthquake Fault Zoning Act.

Policy S 1.2.2: Restrict the land use type and intensity of development in areas subject to fault rupture, landslides, or liquefaction, in order to limit exposure of people to seismic hazards.

Policy S 1.2.3: Require soils and geotechnical reports for new construction in areas with potential hazards from faulting, landslides, liquefaction, or subsidence, and incorporate recommendations from these studies into the site design as appropriate.

Policy S 1.2.4: Enforce seismic design and building techniques in the County Building Code.

Policy S 1.2.5: Consider the potential for inundation from failure of the Castaic or Bouquet Canyon Reservoir dams when reviewing development proposals within potential inundation areas.

Policy S 1.3.1: Identify any remaining unreinforced masonry buildings or other unstable structures, and require remediation or seismic retrofitting as needed to meet seismic safety requirements.

Policy S 1.3.2: Increase earthquake safety in all public facilities through bracing of shelves, cabinets, equipment, and other measures as deemed appropriate.

Policy S 1.3.3: Provide informational materials to the public on how to make their homes and businesses earthquake safe.

Policy S 1.3.4: Cooperate with other agencies as needed to ensure regular inspections of public infrastructure such as bridges, dams, and other critical facilities, and require repairs to these structures as needed to prevent failure in the event of seismic activity.

Flood Hazards

Policy S 2.1.1: On the Land Use Map, designate appropriate areas within the floodplain as open space for multi-use purposes, including flood control, habitat preservation, and recreational open space. Development in the floodplain will require mitigation as deemed necessary by the reviewing authority.

Policy S 2.1.2: Promote Low Impact Development standards on development sites, including but not limited to minimizing impervious surface area and promoting infiltration, in order to reduce the flow and velocity of stormwater runoff throughout the watershed.

Policy S 2.1.3: Promote the use of vegetated drainage courses and soft-bottom channels for flood control facilities to the extent feasible, in order to achieve water quality and habitat objectives in addition to flood control.

Policy S 2.1.4: Cooperate with other agencies, as appropriate, regarding the related issues of flood control, watershed management, water quality, and habitat protection.

Policy S 2.1.5: Promote the joint use of flood control facilities with other beneficial uses where feasible, such as by incorporating detention basins into parks and extending trails through floodplains.

Policy S 2.2.1: Prepare and maintain maps of floodways and floodplains based on information from the Federal Emergency Management Agency (FEMA) and other appropriate sources in order to qualify for FEMA's National Flood Insurance Program.

Policy S 2.2.2: Identify areas subject to localized short-term flooding due to drainage deficiencies.

Policy S 2.3.1: Implement drainage master plans designed to handle storm flows from the 100-year storm.

Policy S 2.3.2: Include funding for drainage and flood control improvements in the annual County Budget.

Policy S 2.4.1: Require that new development comply with FEMA floodplain management requirements.

Policy S 2.4.2: On the Land Use Map, restrict the type and intensity of land use in flood-prone areas, or require flood-proof construction, as deemed appropriate.

Policy S 2.5.1: Address drainage problems that cause flooding on prominent transportation corridors by working with multi-jurisdictional agencies and stakeholders to construct needed drainage improvements.

Policy S 2.5.2: Provide for the maintenance of drainage structures and flood control facilities to avoid system malfunctions and overflows.

Fire Hazards

Policy S 3.1.1: Coordinate on planning for new fire stations to meet current and projected needs.

Policy S 3.1.2: Program adequate funding for capital fire protection costs and explore all feasible funding options to meet facility needs.

Policy S 3.1.3: Require adequate fire flow as a condition of approval for all new development, which may include installation of additional reservoir capacity and/or distribution facilities.

Policy S 3.2.1: Identify areas of the Santa Clarita Valley that are prone to wildland fire hazards and address these areas in fire safety plans.

Policy S 3.2.2: Enforce standards for maintaining defensible space around structures through clearing of dry brush and vegetation.

Policy S 3.2.3: Establish landscape guidelines for fire-prone areas with recommended plant materials, and provide this information to builders and members of the public.

Policy S 3.2.4: Require sprinkler systems, fire resistant building materials, and other construction measures deemed necessary to prevent loss of life and property from wildland fires.

Policy S 3.2.5: Ensure adequate secondary and emergency access for fire apparatus, which includes minimum requirements for road width, surface material, grade, and staging areas.

Policy S 3.2.6: For areas adjacent to the National Forest, cooperate with the United States Forest Service regarding land use and development issues.

Policy S 3.2.7: Continue to provide information and training to the public on fire safety in wildland interface areas.

Policy S 3.3.1: Plan for fire response times of 5 minutes in urban areas, 8 minutes in suburban areas, and 12 minutes in rural areas.

Policy S 3.3.2: Require the installation and maintenance of street name signs on all new development.

Policy S 3.3.3: Require the posting of address numbers on all homes and businesses that are clearly visible from adjacent streets.

Hazardous Materials

Policy S 4.1.1: Continue to support clean-up efforts and re-use plans for the Whittaker-Bermite property in the City of Santa Clarita.

Policy S 4.1.2: Coordinate with other agencies to address contamination of soil and groundwater from hazardous materials on various sites, and require that

contamination be cleaned up to the satisfaction of the County and other responsible agencies prior to issuance of any permits for new development.

Policy S 4.2.1: On the Land Use Map, restrict the areas in which activities that use or generate large amounts of hazardous materials may locate, to minimize impacts to residents and other sensitive receptors in the event of a hazardous materials incident.

Policy S 4.2.2: Through the development review process, ensure that any new development proposed in the vicinity of a use that stores or generates large amounts of hazardous materials provides adequate design features, setbacks, and buffers to mitigate impacts to sensitive receptors in the event of a hazardous materials incident.

Policy S 4.2.3: Require businesses to verify procedures for storage, use, and disposal of hazardous materials.

Policy S 4.2.4: Cooperate with other agencies to hold regular events to promote safe disposal of small amounts of household hazardous waste, including e-waste, by Santa Clarita Valley residents.

Law Enforcement

Policy S 5.1.1: Participate in a multi-jurisdictional task force to evaluate alternatives for combining public safety services with administrative services within a centralized government complex serving the entire Santa Clarita Valley.

Policy S 5.1.2: Provide staff assistance to assess future law enforcement needs, and work together with the City of Santa Clarita, the Sheriff's Department, and other partners to develop and implement plans for meeting these needs.

Policy S 5.1.3: Cooperate on implementation of funding mechanisms for law enforcement services.

Policy S 5.2.1: Promote and participate in the Business Watch program to assist business owners in developing and implementing crime prevention strategies.

Policy S 5.2.2: Promote and support Neighborhood Watch programs to assist residents in establishing neighborhood crime prevention techniques.

Policy S 5.2.3: Provide code enforcement services to maintain minimum health and safety standards and as a deterrent to crime.

Accidents

Policy S 6.1.1: Continue tree trimming and maintenance programs for trees in the right-of-way and on public property, to limit damage from falling limbs.

Policy S 6.1.2: Promote the planting of tree types appropriate to the local climate, to avoid breakage by brittle, non-native trees.

Policy S 6.2.1: In reviewing development plans, ensure that lighting levels are adequate to provide safe and secure nighttime use of each site, while limiting excessive or unnecessary light and glare.

Policy S 6.2.2: In reviewing development plans, consider Crime Prevention Through Environmental Design (CPTED) principles to increase public safety through establishing defensible space, clearly delineated public and private areas, and effective surveillance of common areas.

Policy S 6.2.3: In reviewing development plans, ensure that pedestrian pathways, stairs, steps, and ramps are designed to provide clear and unimpeded passage in order to avoid trip hazards and conflicts with vehicles.

Policy S 6.2.4: Continue to monitor traffic accident data in order to evaluate and address any traffic control needs to enhance public safety.

Policy S 6.2.5: Use traffic calming devices and reduced street widths to slow traffic speeds and reduce accidents, where deemed appropriate.

Policy S 6.3.1: In cooperation with other agencies, ensure adequate shelter for homeless persons to limit their exposure to accidental injury and illness.

Policy S 6.3.2: Implement the provisions of the Americans with Disabilities Act to ensure safe travel paths and accommodations for persons with disabilities.

Policy S 6.4.1: Require all new development in the vicinity of the Agua Dulce Airpark to comply with the Airport Land Use Plan and applicable Federal Aviation Administration (FAA) regulations.

Emergency Planning

Policy S 7.1.1: Regularly update emergency preparedness and response plans that are consistent with State plans.

Policy S 7.1.2: Continue to provide regular training to public officials and the public on emergency procedures.

Policy S 7.1.3: Ensure that evacuation routes are clearly posted throughout the Santa Clarita Valley.

Policy S 7.1.4: Strengthen communication and cooperation between agencies, citizens and non-profit groups to plan for disaster response.

Policy S 7.2.1: In cooperation with other agencies, plan for temporary shelters for residents displaced by disasters and emergency incidents.

Policy S 7.2.2: Plan for expedited plan check, permitting, and inspection programs to aid recovery efforts involving the rebuilding of damaged structures.

Policy S 7.2.3: Ensure that proper record-keeping procedures are in place for purposes of obtaining reimbursement from state and federal agencies.

Policy S 7.2.4: Purchase disaster and recovery supplies locally to assist local businesses in their recovery efforts.

NOISE ELEMENT

Purpose

The Noise Element of the Area Plan is a comprehensive program for including noise management in the planning process, providing a tool for local planners to use in achieving and maintaining land uses that are compatible with existing and future environmental noise levels. The Noise Element identifies current noise conditions within the County's Planning Area, and projects future noise impacts resulting from continued growth allowed by the Land Use Element. The Element identifies noise-sensitive land uses and

noise sources, and defines areas of noise impact for the purpose of developing programs to ensure that residents in the OVOV area will be protected from excessive noise intrusion. As development proposals are reviewed in the future, the County will evaluate each proposal with respect to the Noise Element to ensure that noise impacts are reduced through planning and project design. Through implementation of the policies and programs of the Noise Element, current and future adverse noise impacts will be reduced or avoided in order to protect the general health, safety, and welfare of the community.

Relationship of the Noise Element to Other Elements of the Area Plan

The Noise Element is directly related to the Land Use and Circulation Elements, because traffic on highways and arterial roadways has been identified as a major source of noise that has the potential to affect sensitive land uses. Within the context of a noise analysis, sensitive land uses are those in which persons occupying the use are particularly sensitive to the effects of noise, including housing, schools, medical facilities, libraries, social care facilities, and similar facilities. The Noise Element contains policies that are intended to protect sensitive land uses from noise that exceeds recommended levels. Analysis of noise from mobile sources, including traffic on streets and highways, airport activity, and rail operations, has been completed for the Noise Element based on projected traffic volumes identified in the Circulation Element. The Noise Element is consistent with policies of the Safety Element and Housing Element because it contains policies and guidelines designed to protect residents from noise exceeding recommended levels. The Noise Element is also consistent with the Conservation and Open Space Element, because policies in the Noise Element address noise compatibility between sensitive receptors adjacent to parks, sports and recreation uses, and entertainment centers.

Resource Maps

The Noise Element contains a map showing the location of the noise measurements that were taken within the Area Plan. The following is a list of the resource maps in the Noise Element:

- Locations of Noise Measurements Taken in the County's Planning Area
- Noise Contours of Existing Conditions (August 2008)
- Noise Contours of Future Projected Noise Buildout

Policies

Based on the existing conditions and issues outlined in the background sections of the Noise Element, policies have been created to address the Valley's noise conditions. A full representation of the identified needs relating to noise is identified in the element.

Noise Environment

Policy N 1.1.1: Use the Noise and Land Use Compatibility Guidelines contained in Figure N 8, which are consistent with state guidelines, as a policy basis for decisions on land use and development proposals related to noise.

Policy N 1.1.2: Continue to implement the adopted Noise Ordinance and other applicable code provisions, consistent with state and federal standards, which establish noise impact thresholds for noise abatement and attenuation, in order to reduce potential health hazards associated with high noise levels.

Policy N 1.1.3: Include consideration of potential noise impacts in land use planning and development review decisions.

Policy N 1.1.4: Control noise sources adjacent to residential, recreational, and community facilities, and those land uses classified as noise sensitive.

Policy N 1.1.5: Monitor and update data and information regarding current and projected noise levels in the planning area.

Policy N 1.1.6: Provide development review comments on projects proposed by other agencies and special districts that may generate noise impacts affecting land uses within the Santa Clarita Valley, including any freeway and high-speed rail projects.

Reduction of Noise from Traffic

Policy N 2.1.1: Encourage owners of existing noise-sensitive uses, and require owners of proposed noise sensitive land uses, to construct sound barriers to protect users from significant noise levels, where feasible and appropriate.

Policy N 2.1.2: Encourage the use of noise absorbing barriers, where appropriate.

Policy N 2.1.3: Where appropriate, coordinate with the California Department of Transportation (Caltrans) to ensure that sound walls or other noise barriers are constructed along Interstate 5 and State Route 14 in the immediate vicinity of residential and other noise sensitive developments, where setbacks and other sound alleviation devices do not exist.

Policy N 2.1.4: Reduce significant noise levels related to through-traffic in residential areas by promoting subdivision circulation designs to contain a hierarchy of streets which efficiently direct traffic to highways.

Policy N 2.1.5: Encourage employers to develop van pool and other travel demand management programs to reduce vehicle trip-generated noise in the planning area.

Policy N 2.1.6: Work with City of Santa Clarita Transit to improve and expand current public transit services and routes to reduce vehicle trips and resulting noise levels.

Policy N 2.1.7: Require vehicle owners to properly maintain their equipment to avoid generating excessive noise levels.

Residential Neighborhoods

Policy N 3.1.1: Require that developers of new single-family and multi-family residential neighborhoods in areas where the ambient noise levels exceed 60 CNEL provide mitigation measures for the new residences to reduce interior noise levels to 45 CNEL, based on future traffic and railroad noise levels.

Policy N 3.1.2: Require that developers of new single-family and multi-family residential neighborhoods in areas where the projected noise levels exceed 65 CNEL provide mitigation measures (which may include noise barriers, setbacks, and site design) for new residences to reduce outdoor noise levels to 65 CNEL, based on future traffic conditions. This requirement would apply to rear yard areas for single-family developments, and to private open space and common recreational and open space areas for multi-family developments.

Policy N 3.1.3: Through enforcement of the applicable Noise Ordinance, protect residential neighborhoods from noise generated by machinery or activities that produce significant discernable noise exceeding recommended levels for residential uses.

Policy N 3.1.4: Require that those responsible for construction activities develop techniques to mitigate or minimize the noise impacts on residences, and adopt standards that regulate noise from construction activities that occur in or near residential neighborhoods.

Policy N 3.1.5: Require that developers of private schools, childcare centers, senior housing, and other noise sensitive uses in areas where the ambient noise level exceeds 65 dB(A) (day), provide mitigation measures for these uses to reduce interior noise to acceptable levels.

Policy N 3.1.6: Ensure that new residential buildings shall not be located within 150 feet of the centerline for Interstate 5.

Policy N 3.1.7: Ensure that design of parks, recreational facilities, and schools minimize noise impacts to residential neighborhoods.

Policy N 3.1.8: As a condition of issuing permits for special events, require event promoters to mitigate noise impacts to adjacent sensitive uses through limiting hours of operation and other means as appropriate, which may include notification to affected residents.

Policy N 3.1.9: Implement a buyer and renter notification program for new residential developments where appropriate, to educate and inform potential buyers and renters of the sources of noise in the area and/or new sources of noise that may occur in the future. As determined by the reviewing authority, notification may be appropriate in the following areas:

a. Within 1 mile of Six Flags Magic Mountain theme park, potential buyers and renters should receive notice that noise may occasionally be generated from this facility and that the frequency and loudness of noise events may change over time.

b. Within 1,000 feet of the railroad, potential buyers and renters should receive notice that noise may occasionally be generated from this facility and that the frequency and loudness of noise events may change over time.

c. Within 200 feet of commercial uses in mixed-use developments, potential buyers and renters should receive notice that the commercial uses within the mixed-use developments may generate noise in excess of levels typically found in residential areas, that the commercial uses may change over time,

and the associated noise levels and frequency of noise events may change along with the use.

d. Within 1,000 feet of the Saugus Speedway, in the event speedway operations are resumed in the future.

Commercial and Industrial Noise

Policy N 4.1.1: Implement and enforce the applicable Noise Ordinance to control noise from commercial and industrial sources that may adversely impact adjacent residential neighborhoods and other sensitive uses.

Policy N 4.1.2: Require appropriate noise buffering between commercial or industrial uses and residential neighborhoods and other sensitive uses.

Policy N 4.1.3: Adopt and enforce standards for the control of noise from commercial and entertainment establishments when adjacent to residential neighborhoods and other sensitive uses.

HOUSING ELEMENT

Purpose

The Los Angeles County Housing Element serves as a policy guide to address housing issues, as well as the comprehensive housing needs of the unincorporated areas of Los Angeles County. The provision of decent, safe, sanitary, and affordable housing for current and future residents of the unincorporated areas of Los Angeles County is the primary focus of the Housing Element. Additionally, the Housing Element places special emphasis on certain segments of the population, such as the elderly, the disabled, single-parent households, and the homeless, as these groups may have more difficulty in finding decent and affordable housing due to their special needs. The purpose of the Housing Element is to

- determine the existing and projected housing needs of residents of the unincorporated areas;
- establish goals and policies that guide decision-making to address housing needs; and
- implement actions that encourage the private sector to build housing, while ensuring that government policies do not serve as constraint to housing production.

The Housing Element is designed to incorporate various assumptions about housing and development trends in Los Angeles County. These planning assumptions were derived from extensive demographic

research and data analyses, and extensive input from community members. As outlined in the Los Angeles County General Plan, these planning assumptions include

- housing demand, especially for affordable housing, will remain high;
- consistent housing construction to meet the County's regional housing goals will be needed to keep pace with the County's expected rate of population growth;
- development activities will proliferate in the Santa Clarita Valley;
- there will be a continued decrease in land available for new housing throughout the County, coupled with a continued increase in pressure to preserve open space and agricultural land; and
- higher-density housing is needed to balance the shortages of land for development and the increasing needs for housing and commerce.

The Housing Element contains policies and programs to ensure that adequate housing is provided to meet the needs of all residents. The element addresses the need for affordable housing, housing for people with special needs, constraints to providing affordable housing, the agency's progress in meeting its housing goals, quantified objectives for provision of housing, a survey or adequate sites for housing, a resource inventory, and identification of at-risk affordable units and methods of preservation. Housing programs are described in detail in the County's Housing Element and discussed in the Population and Housing section of this EIR.

Relationship of the Housing Element to Other Elements of the Area Plan

This Land Use Element is consistent with the Housing Element because the location and density ranges shown for residential land use districts on the land use map have been designated in consideration of the housing needs projected for all economic and demographic segments of residents, including households with special needs and those with incomes of less than the County median. Adequate sites for attached and multi-family housing have been identified to ensure that the need for affordable housing has been met in the unincorporated areas of the County. The number of dwelling units that can be built in the County's Planning Area is based on the land use plan, which will ensure that the regional housing needs allocated to the Valley by the Southern California Associated Governments (SCAG) will be met.

The Housing Element is consistent with the Circulation Element because streets and highways have been planned to convey vehicles through the County's Planning Area at acceptable service levels when the new housing provided for by the land use plan and housing objectives are developed. Policies in both the Housing and Circulation Elements ensure that residents have adequate access to streets and highways, public buses and commuter rail, bicycle trails, and walkways. Consistency between the Conservation and

Open Space Element and Housing Element is met because adequate sites to meet the regional housing needs allocation are available throughout the County's Planning Area without impacting open space or resource conservation areas. Adequate parkland and recreational facilities have been planned to meet the needs of existing and future residents. The Housing Element also addresses the need for resource conservation in new housing construction, including conservation of energy and water resources.

Policies in the Noise Element address sound attenuation measures such as setbacks, noise barriers, and buffering to protect the public health, safety, and welfare. Sensitive receptors such as residential neighborhoods, group housing, and support services including medical, child care, and educational facilities, will be protected from harmful effects of noise. The Housing Element is consistent with the Safety Element because residential land uses were designated in consideration of the locations of hazard areas, including known earthquake fault zones, areas subject to flooding or wildfires, unstable soils, and other environmental hazards. The Safety Element includes policies to ensure that new residential development plans in the County are evaluated for conformance with accepted crime prevention measures, and that adequate law enforcement and fire protection services are provided to ensure the safety of County residents.

Resource Maps

The Housing Element includes the following resource maps:

- Planning Area Boundaries
- Sites Suitable for Housing

Policies

The goals described in the County's Housing Element formulate the County's housing strategy and guide the implementation of the Housing Element programs. The policies described in this Housing Element are intended to guide the County in making decisions related to housing issues, including daily administration of the Area Plan, and to guide the public in understanding the general direction of the County's housing policies.

Housing Availability

A sufficient inventory of housing is needed to accommodate the housing needs of unincorporated area residents. The state legislature recognizes significant housing deficiencies among certain economic segments of the State's population and considers housing availability an issue of "vital statewide

importance." The County places particular emphasis on providing housing opportunities to low-income households and those with special needs, such as seniors, persons with disabilities, the homeless, and those in transitional living situations. Accordingly, the following policies are designed to give future development toward the production of a diverse housing supply to meet the varied needs of the population as a whole.

Goal 1 A wide range of housing types in sufficient supply to meet the needs of current and future residents, particularly persons with special needs, including but not limited to low-income households, seniors, persons with disabilities, single-parent households, the homeless and at-risk homeless, and farm workers.

Policy 1.1: Make available through land use planning and zoning an adequate inventory of vacant and underutilized sites to accommodate the County's RHNA.

Policy 1.2: Mitigate the impacts of governmental regulations and policies that constrain the provision and preservation of affordable housing and housing for persons with special needs.

Policy 1.3: Coordinate with the private section in the development of affordable and special needs housing for both rental and homeownership. Where appropriate, promote such development through incentives.

Policy 1.4: Assist in private nonprofit housing developers in identifying and consolidating suitable sites for developing housing for low-income households and other special needs groups.

Policy 1.5: Advocate legislation and funding for programs that expand affordable housing opportunities and support legislative changes to State housing programs to ensure that the criteria for the distribution of funds to local governments are based, in part, on the housing needs reflected in the RHNA.

Goal 2: Sustainable communities with access to employment opportunities, community facilities and services, and other amenities.

Policy 2.1; Support the development of affordable housing near employment opportunities and/or within a reasonable distance of public transportation.

Policy 2.2: Encourage mixed use developments along major commercial and transportation corridors.

Housing Affordability

The households least able to afford adequate housing are those with low incomes (including extremely low-, very low-, and lower-income households). To accommodate the housing needs of all economic segments of the population, the County must ensure a housing supply that offers a range of options and prices. A variety of mechanisms should be explored to enhance affordability.

Goal 3 A housing supply that ranges broadly in housing costs to enable all households, regardless of income, to secure adequate housing.

Policy 3.1: Promote mixed income neighborhoods and a diversity of housing types throughout the unincorporated areas to increase housing choices for all economic segments of the population.

Policy 3.2: Incorporate advances in energy-saving technologies into housing design, construction, operation, and maintenance.

Goal 4 A housing delivery system that provides assistance to low- and moderate-income households and those with special needs.

Policy 4.1: Provide financial assistance and supportive services to assist low- and moderate-income households and those with special needs to attain and maintain affordable and adequate housing.

Neighborhood and Housing Preservation

The preservation of sound, quality neighborhoods and the revitalization of deteriorating neighborhoods are essential to maintaining an adequate and decent housing supply. The state legislature considers "decent housing and a suitable living environment for every California family a priority of the highest order." To this end, the following policies seek to ensure the general health, safety, and welfare for all economic segments of the population.

The improvement and conservation of existing housing will serve to meet the overall goal of maintaining a healthy and diverse housing supply. These efforts are especially important with regard to the preservation or replacement of units that are affordable to low-income households. Future development and preservation efforts must also carefully consider environmental, physical, and economic constraints to generate effective housing developments.

Goal 5 Neighborhoods that protect the health, safety, and welfare of the community, and enhance public and private efforts in maintaining, reinvesting in, and upgrading the existing housing supply.

Policy 5.1: Support neighborhood preservation programs, such as graffiti abatement, abandoned or inoperative automobile removal, tree planting, and trash and debris removal.

Policy 5.2: Maintain adequate neighborhood infrastructure, sound community facilities, and services as a means of sustaining the overall livability of neighborhoods.

Policy 5.3: Enforce health, safety, building, and zoning laws directed at property maintenance as an ongoing function of the County government.

Goal 6 An adequate supply of housing preserved and maintained in sound condition, located within safe and decent neighborhoods.

Policy 6.1: Invest public and private resources in the maintenance and rehabilitation of existing housing to prevent or reverse neighborhood deterioration.

Policy 6.2: Allocate Federal and State resources toward the preservation of residential units, particularly those that are affordable to extremely low-, very low-, and lower-income households.

Policy 6.3: Inspect multi-family rental housing (with five or more units), contract shelters, and voucher hotels on a regular basis by the appropriate County agencies to ensure that landlords are

maintaining properties, and not allowing them to fall into disrepair.

Policy 6.4: Maintain and improve community facilities, public housing services, and infrastructure, where necessary, to enhance the vitality of older, low-income neighborhoods.

Goal 7 An affordable housing stock that is maintained for its long-term availability to low- and moderate-income households and those with special needs.

Policy 7.1: Conserve existing affordable housing stock that is at risk of converting to market-rate housing.

Policy 7.2: Preserve and, where feasible, provide additional affordable housing opportunities within the Coastal Zone.

Equal Housing Opportunity

The opportunity to obtain adequate housing without discrimination is an important component of a diverse housing supply.

Goal 8 Accessibility to adequate housing for all persons without discrimination in accordance with Federal and State fair housing laws.

Policy 8.1: Support the distribution of affordable housing, energy shelters, and transitional housing in geographically diverse locations throughout the unincorporated areas, where appropriate support services and facilities are available in close proximity.

Policy 8.2: Enforce laws against illegal acts of housing discrimination. These include housing discrimination based on race, color, ancestry, national origin, sex, religion, sexual orientation, marital status, familial status, age, disability, source of income, or any arbitrary reason excluding persons from housing choice.

Policy 8.3: Promote equal opportunity in housing and community development programs Countywide.

Policy 8.4: Encourage housing design to accommodate the special needs of seniors, large families, single-parent households, and low-income households. Designs may include units with three, four, or five bedrooms; shared facilities, on-site child care facilities; or on-site job training facilities.

Implementation and Monitoring

Monitoring, enforcement, preservation, and innovation in housing should be established and maintained as an ongoing function of the County government.

Goal 9 Planning for and monitoring the long-term affordability of sound, quality housing.

Policy 9.1: Ensure collaboration among various County departments in the delivery of housing and related services.

Policy 9.2: Enforce and enhance the housing monitoring system to ensure compliance with funding program regulations and compliance with local, State, and Federal laws.

ALTERNATIVES

The purpose of the alternatives analysis is to identify potentially feasible ways to avoid or substantially lessen significant effects of the proposed project. According to the *State CEQA Guidelines* Section 15126.6, an EIR needs to examine a reasonable range of alternatives to a project, or its location, which would feasibly meet most of the basic objectives of the project while avoiding or substantially lessening significant impacts. When addressing feasibility, the *State CEQA Guidelines* Section 15126.6 states that "among the factors that may be taken into account when addressing the feasibility of alternatives are site suitability, economic viability, availability of infrastructure, general plan consistency, other plans or regulatory limitations, jurisdictional boundaries (projects with a regionally significant impact should consider the regional context), and whether the applicant can reasonably acquire, control or otherwise have access to the alternative site (or the site is already owned by the proponent)." Therefore, based on the *State CEQA Guidelines*, several factors need to be considered in determining the range of alternatives to be analyzed in an EIR and the level of analytical detail that should be provided for each alternative. These factors include (1) the nature of the significant impacts of the proposed project; (2) the ability of alternatives to avoid or substantially lessen the significant impacts associated with the project; (3) the

ability of the alternatives to meet the objectives of the project; and (4) the feasibility of the alternatives. These factors are unique for each project. Each alternative selected for evaluation in this EIR is described in brief below. **Section 6.0, Alternatives,** of this EIR provides a comparative analysis of these alternatives. Provided below is a brief description of the alternatives analyzed and alternatives rejected from further analysis.

Alternative 1 - No Project

Section 15126(2)(4) of the *State CEQA Guidelines* requires evaluation of the No Project Alternative. As described in the *State CEQA Guidelines,* the purpose of describing and analyzing the No Project Alternative is to allow decision makers to compare the impacts of approving the proposed project with the impacts of not approving the proposed project. When the project is the revision of an existing land use plan, *State CEQA Guidelines* Section 15126.6(e)(3)(A) states that "the No Project Alternative will be the continuation of the existing plan … into the future." Under the No Project Alternative, the proposed Area Plan would not be adopted or implemented, and buildout within the County's Planning Area would continue to occur under the existing Area Plan (adopted in 1984) and adopted Specific Plans. Buildout of the existing Area Plan circulation map is assumed. The No Project analysis discusses the existing conditions at the time the notice of preparation was prepared as well as what would be reasonably expected to occur in the foreseeable future if the Santa Clarita Valley Area Plan (proposed project) was not approved. Since the existing Area Plan was adopted in 1984, many of the policies would not reflect changes to the population, economy, or the environment. Under this alternative, there would be a higher density than with the proposed Area Plan.

Alternative 2 – Preservation Corridor Alternative

This alternative would support the South Coast Missing Linkages wildlife corridor and the proposed SEAs in this region. The South Coast Wildlands is an organization that proposed a wildlife corridor between two separate parts of the Angeles National Forest. This alternative would propose a density reduction creating more open space for wildlife movement. The land use category for this region would change from Rural Land 2 (RL2, 1 dwelling unit per 2 acres) to Rural Land 10 (RL10, 1 dwelling unit per 10 acres). Policies would be developed to create minimal obstructions on these properties and allow wildlife movement.

Alternative 3 – Transit Corridor/Increased Employment Opportunity Alternative

This alternative would create a mixed use transit corridor around the proposed Lang Station. A high density residential area located next to a major transportation/transit corridor would support policies in

Los Angeles County's Housing Element and the vision created in the OVOV planning process. The types of development recommended for this area would be designed at an urban density and have a mix of commercial uses. Adjacent to the proposed high density transit corridor would be a proposed business/office park located just north of the area. This would create an employment center near the transportation/transit corridor and give other residents an opportunity to work and live in the Valley.

Alternatives Considered but Rejected

Designate All Rural Land as Rural Land 2 (RL2)

This alternative involves re-designating properties with a proposed designation of Rural Land 1 (RL1), Rural Land 5 (RL5), Rural Land 10 (RL10), and Rural Land 20 (RL20) as Rural Land 2 (RL2). Under this alternative, all rural properties in the County's Planning Area would have a proposed designation of Rural Land 2 (RL2), which would provide a substantial increase in the number of dwelling units in the County's Planning Area. This alternative was rejected because a single designation for all rural properties in the County's Planning Area does not account for the various development constraints on each property, including but not limited to topography, access, proximity to infrastructure, hazard areas, and environmental resources. Many properties in the County's Planning Area are subject to a relative abundance of development constraints that merit designations with a lower development potential than that allowed under the Rural Land 2 (RL2) designation.

Designate All Rural Land as Rural Land 20 (RL20)

This alternative involves redesignating properties with a proposed designation of Rural Land 1 (RL1), Rural Land 2 (RL2), Rural Land 5 (RL5), and Rural Land 10 (RL10) as Rural Land 20 (RL20). Under this alternative, all rural properties in the County's Planning Area would have a proposed designation of Rural Land 20 (RL20). This alternative would substantially decrease the number of dwelling units in the County's Planning Area. This alternative was rejected because a single designation for all rural properties in the County's Planning Area does not account for the various development constraints on each property, including but not limited to topography, access, proximity to infrastructure, hazard areas, and environmental resources. Many properties in the County's Planning Area are subject to a relative lack of development constraints that merit designations with a higher development potential than that allowed under the Rural Land 20 (RL20) designation.

Retain Existing Significant Ecological Areas

This alternative involves retaining the existing SEA designations, as established pursuant to the adoption of the Countywide General Plan in 1984, instead of designating the new SEAs identified through the SEA Study completed by PCR in September 2000. This alternative would decrease the proposed acreage of SEA designations in the County's Planning Area from 47,458 to 12,458. This alternative was rejected because the new SEAs are based on more recent biological analysis and their designation will ensure that development projects in environmentally sensitive areas are properly reviewed and evaluated for compatibility with biological resources. Guiding Principle #10 of the Area Plan also supports designating the new SEAs.