NOTICE OF PREPARATION

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<th>Lead Agency:</th>
<th>Consulting Firm:</th>
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<td>Agency Name</td>
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<td>County of Los Angeles Regional Planning Department</td>
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SUBJECT: Notice of Preparation of Draft Environmental Impact Report for the Santa Clarita Valley Area Plan (One Valley, One Vision)

One Valley, One Vision (OVOV) is a joint effort between the County of Los Angeles (County), City of Santa Clarita (City), and Santa Clarita Valley (Valley) residents and businesses to create a single vision and guidelines for the future growth of the Valley and the preservation of natural resources. The result of this project will be an Area Plan document and Environmental Impact Report (EIR) for the buildout of the entire Santa Clarita Valley Planning Area (Planning Area). The Planning Area includes the County communities of Stevenson Ranch, Castaic, Val Verde, Agua Dulce, and the future Newhall Ranch, and the City and its four communities of Canyon Country, Newhall, Saugus, and Valencia (see attached July 10, 2008, Preliminary Land Use Map).

Realizing that development within both jurisdictions can have regional implications, the County and City have jointly endeavored to prepare planning policies and guidelines to guide future development within the Santa Clarita Valley. The result of this work effort will require the adoption of two separate documents. The County will adopt a new Area Plan to replace the Santa Clarita Valley Area Plan and prepare its own EIR, while the City will adopt a new General Plan and EIR.

We need to know the views of your agency as to the scope and content of the environmental information, which is germane to your agency’s statutory responsibilities in connection with the proposed project. Your agency may need to use the County’s OVOV Area Plan EIR prepared by our agency when preparing your permit or other approval for the project.
Planning Area

The Planning Area combines two geographical areas, the City corporate limits and the unincorporated area of the County within Santa Clarita Valley as described above. The Planning Area was defined mutually by the County and City and represents the area for which both jurisdictions have joint interest in planning. The Planning Area is located in southern California at the northernmost portion of Los Angeles County (North County). It is situated at the convergence of Los Angeles and Ventura counties, approximately 35 miles northwest of downtown Los Angeles.

Project Background

In 2000, the County and City kicked-off Phase I of the OVOV process by conducting a series of citizen and stakeholder workshops to solicit feedback from the community regarding their vision for the future of the Santa Clarita Valley. Phase II of the OVOV included development of a community-guided Vision Statement and Guiding Principles. The Vision Statement and 35 Guiding Principles developed during Phase II, served as tools to guide the development of the Area Plan goals and policies and the Area Plan Land Use Map.

Phase III of OVOV included the creation of a Technical Background Report (TBR) that has been used as a starting point to evaluate future buildout of the Planning Area by providing a snapshot of current population, jobs, housing, infrastructure, community services, health and safety, and environmental conditions within the Planning Area. Phase IV of OVOV will culminate in the preparation of the preferred land use plan for the Planning Area in coordination with areawide circulation planning. Phases V and VI will complete the preparation of the various state-mandated elements and the Program Environmental Impact Report.

Project Description

The County is preparing a comprehensive update to its Area Plan and an associated EIR for the proposed Planning Area. Development within the County and City shall be consistent with the OVOV’s Vision and Guiding Principles, which are intended to sustain and enhance environmental resources, economic vitality, and the social well being of its residents. The following Area Plan elements are either available or will soon be available on the City’s website www.santa-clarita.com/vgp:
Land Use Element and Map

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 City’s General Plan; in addition, it forms the land use component of the Area Plan adopted for the Santa Clarita Valley by the County. It designates the general location of eight land uses—residential, commercial, mixed use, industrial, public and institutional, transportation, communication, and utilities; open space and recreation, and non-urban/agriculture. The Land Use Element addresses the permitted density and intensity of the various land use designation as reflected on the General Land Use Map and it forms the land use component of the Area Plan adopted for the Santa Clarita Valley. The following is a brief description of the Land Use Map Designations.

- **Residential**: Residential uses include dwelling units developed at various densities and with varying housing types, including single-family detached, single-family attached (condominiums), multiple-family (apartments), mobilehome parks, and senior housing. Special residential uses include live-work units and group living facilities.

- **Commercial**: Commercial development includes both retail and offices providing goods and services to the general public, and wholesale and service uses provided to businesses. Commercial uses also include food services, personal services, automobile services, entertainment and hospitality services, and regional commercial uses such as big box retailers and auto malls.

- **Mixed Use**: The mixed use category generally includes commercial retail, office, and service uses intermingled with higher density residential uses, within a master-planned complex designed to ensure that residents are not adversely impacted by commercial traffic or operations, and that businesses benefit from the proximity of customers living nearby. The benefits of mixed-use development include a reduction in vehicle trips by residents to shopping areas, and the proximity of residents to employment-generating uses.
Industrial: The industrial category includes heavy manufacturing, less intensive
industrial uses that are typically located in business parks, and research and
development complexes. Light industrial activities include warehousing,
wholesale trade, and some assembly. Heavy industrial uses include fabrication
and assembly of large items, resource extraction, processing of raw or recycled
materials, and businesses that use or generate hazardous materials.

Public and Institutional: Government buildings, libraries, schools, fire stations,
museums, cultural and community centers, and other similar public uses are
typical of this category. In addition, private schools, churches, convalescent care
and other social care facilities, private meeting and convention facilities, and
similar uses are included. Special uses in this category include correctional
facilities.

Transportation, Communication, and Utilities: This category includes freeways
and major arterials, railroads, park and ride lots, truck terminals, airports,
communication facilities, electric power and natural gas facilities, solid waste
and liquid waste disposal, transfer facilities, reservoirs and pumping stations,
treatment plants, and similar uses.

Open Space and Recreation: This category includes Angeles National Forest
and land used for agriculture, private and public recreational facilities, and local
and regional parks. Golf courses and water bodies are also included.

Non-Urban/Agriculture: Non-urban lands are used for low-density residential
uses on large lots, in areas characterized by rural development interspersed with
natural open space. Agricultural lands are used for grazing, horticulture, row,
field, and tree crops, and limited keeping of livestock, horses and other large
animals.

Specific Plan: The Specific Plan designation indicates those lands in the planning
area governed by a Specific Plan. Allowable land uses and intensity of
development are those permitted by the Specific Plan.

Circulation Element

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. A comprehensive transportation network
of streets and highways, multi-use trails, bus transit, commuter rail, and airport facilities
provides mobility options to Valley residents and businesses. 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.

**Noise Element**

The Noise Element contains maps and policies to ensure that residents are not exposed to health risks or nuisances due to noise generated from freeways and high-volume roadways, airports, industrial and recreational uses, special events, and other uses emitting loud sounds. Policies in the Noise Element address sound attenuation measures, such as setbacks, noise barriers, and buffering, to protect the public health, safety, and welfare.

**Open Space and Conservation Element**

The Open Space and Conservation Element contains maps and policies to ensure preservation of an open space greenbelt around most portions of the Santa Clarita Valley, in addition to preserving water quality, historic and cultural resources, scenic views, and providing recreational facilities to enhance the quality of life for Valley residents. Significant Ecological Areas (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. SEAs as designated by the County will be presented on a map included in the Open Space and Conservation Element.

**Safety Element**

The Safety Element contains maps and policies to ensure that residents are not exposed to health risks due to air pollution, earthquakes, wildland fires, or other environmental hazards, and that adequate provisions are made for crime prevention, law enforcement, and fire protection services.
Potential Environmental Effects

Potential environmental effects that will be addressed in the EIR include effects to the following:

- Aesthetics
- Agricultural Resources
- Air Quality
- Biological Resources
- Climate Change
- Geology / Soils
- Cultural Resources
- Hazards / Hazardous Materials
- Hydrology / Water Quality
- Land Use / Planning
- Mineral Resources
- Noise
- Population / Housing
- Public Services
- Recreation
- Transportation / Traffic
- Utilities / Service Systems

Further refinement of the scope of technical issues to be addressed will be occurring through the planning process, including input received in response to this NOP.

Intended Uses of the EIR

The County will use the EIR to consider the environmental effects, mitigation measures, and alternatives, when reviewing the proposed Area Plan approval. The EIR will serve as the CEQA compliance document for adoption of the Area Plan. It will also serve as the programmatic environmental document that may be referenced in implementing future actions in the Area Plan. Subsequent project-level activities identified in the Area Plan will be examined in the light of the program EIR to determine whether an additional environmental document must be prepared prior to project approval and implementation.

Where to Respond with Comments

Due to the time limits mandated by State law, your response must be sent at the earliest possible date, but not later than 30 days after receipt of this notice. As such, the comment period for the Notice of Preparation begins on July 28, 2008, and ends on August 26, 2008. Please send your written responses to Mitch Glaser at 320 W. Temple
Street, Room 1354, Los Angeles, CA 90012. We would appreciate the name of a contact person in your agency.

*Scoping Meeting*

To help assist and promote local participation, a Scoping Meeting (see attached Scoping Meeting Notice) will be held to present the proposed project and to solicit suggestions from the public and responsible agencies on the content of the Draft EIR. This meeting will be held on August 4, 2008, 6:00 pm in the Council Chambers of Santa Clarita City Hall, 23920 Valencia Blvd., Santa Clarita, California 91355.

Project Title: One Valley, One Vision

Date:

Title:  Mitch Glaser, Supervising Regional Planner
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