ORDINANCE NO. _____

An ordinance amending Title 22 (Planning and Zoning) of the Los Angeles County Code to incorporate the hillside design guidelines into development standards for the protection of hillside resources.

SECTION 1. Chapter 22.14.080 is hereby amended to read as follows:

22.14.080 – H

Hillside Management Areas (HMAs). The following terms are defined solely for Chapter 22.104 (Hillside Management Areas):

…

~~Hillside Design Guidelines. The provisions set forth as an appendix to Chapter 22.104 and as maintained in the office of the Director, that provides guidance for development in HMAs.~~

…

Sensitive hillside design techniques. ~~Any s~~ Site planning, engineering, landscaping, and~~/or~~ architectural design ~~techniques~~ approaches that ~~, individually or combined,~~ minimize ~~horizontal and vertical~~ cut ~~or~~ and fill hillside disturbance, preserve natural landforms, ~~minimize the total volume of grading, minimize~~ reduce visual impacts ~~to~~on scenic hillsides ~~views~~, and ensure development is ~~are~~ compatible with the surrounding landscape ~~or enhance~~ and community character. ~~Such techniques may be found in the Hillside Design Guidelines.~~

…

SECTION 2. Chapter 22.14.130 is hereby amended to read as follows:

22.14.130 – M

…

Mid-Slope. The middle third portion of a contiguous hillside slope, ~~A location on a sloped hillside that is situated~~ measured vertically between the toe (bottom) of the slope and the crest or ridgeline (top) of the ~~(foot) and top (ridge) of a contiguous~~ slope.

…

SECTION 3. Chapter 22.104 is hereby amended to read as follows:

22.104.010 Purpose.

A. This Chapter is established to ensure that development preserves and enhances the physical integrity and scenic value of Hillside Management Areas ("HMAs"), protects significant natural features, reduces exposure to natural hazards, ~~to~~ and provides open space while ensuring ~~, and to be compatible with and enhance~~ compatibility with and enhancing community character. These goals are to be accomplished by:

1. Locating development outside of HMAs to the extent feasible;

2. Locating development in the portions of HMAs with the fewest hillside constraints; ~~and~~

3. ~~Using~~ Applying sensitive hillside design techniques through site planning, grading, building design, and landscaping tailored to the unique site characteristics~~.~~; and

4. Locating development away from portions of the HMAs with the highest wildfire and landslide risks.

B. This Chapter does not determine maximum allowable density or intensity for a proposed development. Maximum allowable density or maximum intensity for a

proposed development shall be determined as set forth in the applicable area, community, neighborhood, or specific plan. Where there is no applicable area, community, neighborhood, or specific plan, the maximum density or intensity for a proposed development shall be determined using the methodology and parameters set forth by the Land Use Element of the General Plan.

22.104.020 Definitions.

Specific terms used in this Chapter are defined in Section 22.14.080 of Division 2 (Definitions), under "Hillside Management Areas."

22.104.030 Applicability.

A. This Chapter applies to all development, as defined in Section 22.14.080 (Definitions - H) under “Hillside Management Areas”, located wholly or partially within areas designated as HMAs in the General Plan and related maps.

B. If any portion of a project site is located within an HMA, the provisions of this Chapter may be applied to the entire development where necessary to avoid impacts to hillside resources or to achieve the purpose of this Chapter.

22.104.0340 ~~Permit Required~~ Exemptions.

~~A Conditional Use Permit (Chapter 22.158) application shall be required for any development located wholly or partially in an HMA, except for:~~

The following developments are exempt from the regulations of this Chapter:

A. Development on a single lot, provided that grading in connection with the development does not exceed 15,000 cubic yards of total cut plus total fill material.

Notwithstanding the foregoing, a Community Standards District may require a Conditional Use Permit application for a lesser amount of total cut plus total fill material~~, in which case the Community Standards District controls~~. ~~The~~ This exception ~~to the Conditional Use Permit requirement in this Subsection A~~ shall not apply when:

1. ~~T~~ Two or more contiguous lots are developed ~~in a~~ as part of a coordinated ~~effort~~ project, regardless of the ownership of the involved lots~~, and regardless of~~ or whether the development~~s are applied for~~ applications are submitted concurrently or ~~through multiple~~ in successive ~~applications~~ phases. A coordinated project shall mean development that is functionally integrated across lots, including but not limited to shared grading, shared infrastructure or access, site improvements designed to function across lot lines, or a single unified development plan across multiple lots.

2. Any portion of a new habitable primary use structure is proposed on a natural or manufactured slope that is 50 percent or steeper and one-half acre or larger in size, where located in a VHFHSZ. ~~This provision does not apply to development on terrain with slopes 50 percent or steeper that is one-half acre or less in size and not contiguous with any other terrain with a natural slope gradient of 50 percent or steeper.~~

B. Lot line adjustments ~~of property lines~~ between two lots. This exception ~~to the Conditional Use Permit application requirement in this Subsection B~~ shall not apply to ~~the~~ lot line adjustments ~~of two or more property lines between~~ involving three or more contiguous lots undertaken as part of a ~~in a~~ coordinated ~~effort~~ project, regardless of the ownership of the involved lots, and regardless of whether the adjustments are applied for concurrently or through multiple successive applications.

C. Activities undertaken as on-site or off-site mitigation for biota impacts from another development, such as restoration of natural habitat or planting of oak trees.

D. Development in one ~~contiguous~~ HMA, provided that the HMA is:

1. Within a rural land use designation, one-half acre or less in size ~~(as measured from base of slopes to slopes 25 percent or greater~~ steeper~~)~~ and not contiguous with any other terrain with a natural slope gradient of 25 percent or steeper; or

2. Within a land use designation other than rural, one-quarter acre or less in size ~~(as measured from base of slopes to slopes of 25 percent or steeper)~~ and not contiguous with any other terrain with a natural slope gradient of 25 percent or steeper.

E. Development designed such that all HMAs on the ~~development~~ project site remain in a natural state or are restored to a natural state to the satisfaction of the Director, and are designated as ~~Open Space – Restricted Use Areas~~ open space on a recorded final map or parcel map waiver~~, or~~ and on a recorded covenant ~~if not associated with a land division~~.

F. Parcel maps that do not propose development and are designed such that all HMAs on the project site remain in a natural state, or are restored to a natural state to the satisfaction of the Director, and are designated as open space on a recorded final map or parcel map waiver and on a recorded covenant.

~~F~~ G. Development to be undertaken by or for the County, or a special district, provided that such development complies with Section 22.104.~~070~~ 090 (Development by the County or Special District).

~~G~~ H. Development located within any adopted Specific Plan, provided that such development complies with the provisions of that Specific Plan.

~~H~~ I. Development related to drilling for and production of oil and gas within the Baldwin Hills Community Standards District ("CSD"), provided that such development complies with the provisions of that CSD.

~~I~~ J. Development where the project's fuel modification activities are located within ~~affects~~ slopes of 25 percent or ~~greater~~ steeper to satisfy Fire Department requirements. For this exemption to apply, there must be no accompanying grading activities~~, and only minimal disturbance to plant roots is allowed~~.

~~J~~ K. Any of the following activities required, requested, authorized, or performed by a governmental agency:

1. Removal or thinning of vegetation, including trees for fire/public/roadway/bridge safety (including under bridge hydraulic vegetation reduction) in response to an emergency;

2. Operations and maintenance of flood, water supply, water conservation, and roadway infrastructure that includes the removal or thinning of vegetation, including trees; or

3. Hazard management activities in response to an emergency or other public safety concerns including maintenance, preservation, or restoration of existing roadways

or trails, bridges, soil erosion, or flood protection facilities involving adjacent slopes, shoulders, drains, and appurtenant structures (e.g. guardrail, rail and timber walls, head walls, etc.) located near or within dedicated public right of way or associated easements.

22.104.045~~0~~ ~~Application Materials~~ Permit Required.

~~If a Conditional Use Permit (Chapter 22.158) application is required by this Chapter, the applicant shall submit the following:~~

Except for development exempt under Section 22.104.040 (Exemptions), a Conditional Use Permit (Chapter 22.158) application shall be required for any development located wholly or partially in an HMA.

A. Application Materials. An application for a Conditional Use Permit shall be filed and processed in compliance with Chapter 22.230 (Type III Review – Discretionary). The applicant shall submit the following:

~~A~~1. All materials and information required by Section 22.158.030 (Application and Review Procedures) and a statement that substantiates the findings required by Section 22.104.~~060~~ 070 (Findings), below.

~~B~~2. Site Photographs. Six panoramic or composite color photographs taken from each corner of the ~~development~~ project site and from the highest elevated points within the ~~development~~ project site, taken no more than 90 days prior to application submission, along with a photograph key. Additional photographs may be required if the Director determines such materials are necessary for adequate evaluation.

~~C~~3. Proposed Development Exhibits. The following exhibits, each of the same size and scale, showing the natural topography and the proposed development of the

project site ~~in accordance with the Hillside Design Guidelines in the appendix following this Chapter~~:

~~1~~a. A slope map that includes the following:

~~a~~i. The land use designations and all existing and proposed development as defined in Section 22.104.020 (Definitions).

~~b~~ii. The following slope categories as determined by a licensed civil engineer, licensed land surveyor, or a registered geologist; and associated color for: Zero to 24.99 percent natural slope (green), 25 to 49.99 percent natural slope (yellow), and 50 percent or greater natural slope (red).

~~c~~iii. A table listing the number of gross and net acres, land use designations, proposed non-residential square footage or proposed number of units, and proposed grading amounts within each slope category and within the overall project boundary.

~~2~~b. An open space exhibit that includes the following:

~~a~~i. A site plan depicting proposed lot configuration, proposed streets, proposed grading design, and proposed open space areas. The site plan shall number and label each proposed open space area. The site plan shall also indicate natural open space or improved open space, and within an open space lot or within an Open Space—Restricted Use Area. The site plan shall also depict and describe the type of improved open space within each improved open space area.

~~b~~ii. A table listing the acreage and percentage of natural open space areas and improved open space areas on each proposed lot, the total acreage and percentage of natural open space areas, and the total acreage and percentage of improved open space areas.

~~3~~c. A map showing hillside constraints as defined in Section 22.104.020 (Definitions).

~~4~~ d. A vegetation exhibit showing existing groundcover, shrubs, and trees.

~~D~~4. Information on Proposed Structures. If a new structure is proposed, exterior elevation cross sections at a scale satisfactory to the Director, indicating proposed building, retaining wall heights, and proposed retaining wall construction materials.

~~E~~5. Additional Materials. The Director may request additional materials at the time of application submission or during review by the Department if the Director determines such materials are necessary to evaluate compliance with this Chapter ~~such materials are necessary for adequate evaluation~~. Such materials may include but are not limited to: ~~These materials may include the exhibits listed in the Hillside Design Guidelines.~~

a. Site Profile. A scaled drawing that shows a cross-section view of the site from one edge to the other, showing the location of all proposed development and the overall extent of hillside encroachment and landform alteration. Multiple cross-sections may be required to evaluate hillside impacts.

b. Landscape Plan. A plan showing all proposed landscaped areas, plant materials, and any pedestrian or aesthetic features such as walkways, recreation areas, or gardens. The plan shall also depict existing vegetation that will be preserved, including oak trees or protected trees as applicable.

c. Fuel Modification Plan. A plan showing all fuel modification zone boundaries, distances between zones, and types of vegetation, consistent with applicable Fire Department requirements. If the required fuel modification radius cannot be located completely within the project site, the Fuel Modification Plan shall indicate any off-site defensible space located on adjacent lots.

d. Block Elevation. For land divisions or larger multi-unit developments, a drawing that shows multiple building elevations as they would appear to the public from a lower vantage point on or adjacent to the site to illustrate the visual dimension of development and potential landscape screening.

e. Buildout Simulation. An exhibit depicting the anticipated appearance of the new development on the hillside from selected viewpoints. Simulations and renderings may include "before" and "after" perspectives showing proposed development and landscaping to evaluate potential visual impacts. If located in a VHFHSZ, the buildout simulation shall also include and call out fire risk reduction strategies such as fuel modification zones and ‘structure hardening’ features.

f. Viewshed Analysis. A site plan or cross-section showing lines of sight from identified viewpoints to key features such as ridgelines, roadways, or scenic

resources. The analysis may identify any intervening features that may block the line of sight.

22.104.05~~6~~0 Conditions of Approval.

Every Conditional Use Permit (Chapter 22.158) application required by this Chapter shall be subject to the following requirements which shall be included as a condition of the permit. Each condition of an approved Conditional Use Permit application shall specify whether it applies to the entire development, to the portion of the development within HMAs, or to an individual lot. For a land division, the conditions may specify that any subsequent applications to modify the approved Conditional Use Permit pursuant to Chapter 22.236~~8~~ (Minor Modification or Elimination of Conditional Use Permit Conditions) need only relate to the lots affected by such modification. The Review Authority, in granting approval of a Conditional Use Permit application may impose additional conditions as necessary so that an approved project meets the requirements of this Section and Section 22.104.~~060~~ 070 (Findings), below. Other than as provided herein, any other modification to conditions required by this Section may be granted pursuant to Chapter 22.194 (Variances):

A. Open Space Requirement.

1. Rural Land Use Designation.

a. Required Open Space. At least 70 percent of the net area of the ~~development~~ project site shall be provided as required open space.

b. Type of Open Space. Up to 33 percent of total required open space may be provided as improved open space. The Review Authority may approve a

greater percentage of improved open space if the Review Authority finds that improvement of open space is necessary for public safety or is aesthetically superior.

2. Other Land Use Designations.

a. Required Open Space. At least 25 percent of the net area of the ~~development~~ project site shall be provided as required open space. Development in Zone RPD shall also comply with open space requirements in accordance with Section 22.18.060.C.4 (Open Space).

b. Type of Open Space. The Review Authority may approve up to 100 percent of total required open space as improved open space, except that in a rural transition site, up to 50 percent of the required open space may be improved open space. In determining the required amount of improved open space, the Review Authority shall consider the characteristics of the ~~development~~ project site and the surrounding area.

B. Open Space Use and Configuration.

1. Required open space areas shall not be used for residential, commercial, industrial, or agricultural activities, except for community gardens and golf courses.

2. At least 51 percent of required natural open space shall be configured into one contiguous area. Land with hillside constraints shall be prioritized for inclusion as required open space. The 51 percent natural area may be configured in two areas only if the County biologist determines that such configuration is environmentally superior to one contiguous area.

3. A street may be placed within the contiguous natural open space area if the Review Authority finds such street is necessary to ensure adequate circulation or access. Such a street shall not be counted as a portion of the total required open space provided.

4. The contiguous natural open space area shall be contiguous with dedicated natural open space areas on adjoining lots, as feasible.

5. If the development is located on a rural transition site, the contiguous natural space area shall also be contiguous with the portions of the site perimeter that adjoin land within a rural land use designation as feasible.

6. For a land division:

a. The following types of improved open space shall be configured into, or contained within open space lots, unless owned in common and maintained by a home owner's or property owner's association:

i. Parks, playgrounds, golf courses, and other recreational facilities.

ii. Equine riding, hiking, and mountain biking trails.

iii. Pedestrian paseos.

iv. Community gardens.

b. Natural open space shall be configured into separate open space lots if the land division is a "density-controlled development" as defined in Division 2 (Definitions), Section 22.14.040, or if the land division is in a rural land use designation with 20 or more dwelling units and residential lots of 15,000 square feet or smaller.

C. Open Space Recordation.

1. If the development is a land division, required open space areas shall be shown on the tentative map and the final map or parcel map waiver, and shall be subsequently recorded on the final map or parcel map waiver as a fee lot or as an Open Space—Restricted Use Area with the Registrar-Recorder/County Clerk.

2. If the development is not a land division, required open space areas shall be shown on the site plan or lot line adjustment exhibit. All required open space shall be labeled as ~~Open Space—Restricted Use Area~~ open space in a covenant recorded with the Registrar-Recorder/County Clerk.

D. Open Space Ownership and Management. If the development is a land division and open space lots are provided or required by Subsection B.6, above, a condition of approval shall provide for ownership and management of the open space lots. This may be established through one or more of the following, listed in the order of County preference:

1. Dedication to a government entity, such as a federal, State, County, city, or joint powers authority.

2. Dedication to a non-profit land conservation organization that meets the qualifications of non-profits requesting to hold mitigation land pursuant to Section 65965 et seq. of the California Government Code.

3. A conservation easement recorded with the Registrar-Recorder/County Clerk as an Irrevocable Offer to Dedicate or equivalent instrument that requires the open space to remain in perpetuity and extinguishes all future development rights.

4. A maintenance agreement with a home-owners' association or property owner's association.

E. Design. The Review Authority may impose additional conditions pertaining to sensitive hillside design techniques ~~provided such conditions are consistent with the Hillside Design Guidelines~~ to ensure the development avoids impacts to hillside resources and to achieve the purpose of this Chapter.

22.104.06~~7~~0 Findings.

The Review Authority shall approve a Conditional Use Permit application if the Review Authority finds that the application substantiates, in addition to those required by Section 22.158.050 (Findings and Decision), the following findings:

A. That the proposed development preserves the physical integrity of HMAs to the greatest extent feasible, resulting in lesser impacts to hillside resources, by:

1. Locating development outside of HMAs to the extent feasible based on site constraints;

2. Locating development in the portions of HMAs with the fewest~~r~~ hillside constraints; and

3. ~~Using~~ Incorporating sensitive hillside design techniques tailored to the site characteristics ~~requirements~~.

B. That the proposed development preserves the scenic value of HMAs to the extent feasible, resulting in lesser impacts to on-site and off-site scenic views of slopes and ridgelines as well as views of other unique, site-specific aesthetic or significant natural features of the hillside, by:

1. Locating development outside of HMAs to the extent feasible based on site constraints;

2. Locating development in the portions of HMAs with the fewest hillside constraints; and

3. ~~Using~~ Incorporating sensitive hillside design techniques tailored to the site characteristics ~~requirements~~.

C. That the proposed development is compatible with or enhances community character, and provides open space as required in this Chapter.

D. Where open space requirements of this Chapter are modified:

1. For development in a rural land use designation, that a greater percentage of improved open space is necessary for public safety or is aesthetically superior; or

2. For streets within a natural open space area, that such street is necessary to ensure adequate circulation or access. In such cases, no portion of the street shall be counted as open space.

E. ~~That the proposed development is in substantial compliance with the Hillside Design Guidelines.~~ That the proposed development reduces potential hazards on the project site by:

1. Incorporating fire mitigation and resilience measures through project design, siting, and other methods when located in a Very High Fire Hazard Severity Zone (VHFHSZ);

2. Incorporating strategies to reduce slope instability, landslide, and flooding risks.

22.104.080 HMA Development Standards

All new development in HMAs shall avoid or minimize impacts to hillside resources in accordance with this Section. The development standards in this Section are intended to ensure sensitive hillside design and shall be applied in consideration of the unique site conditions of each project, including topography, environmental resources, natural hazards, and project scale. Compliance shall be evaluated based on the overall project design, the extent to which the development standards of this Section are satisfied, and the development's effectiveness in minimizing grading, preserving natural landforms, protecting hillside resources, and achieving the purpose of this Chapter. The development standards in this Section apply to all development within HMAs unless otherwise specified.

A. Site Planning. Development shall be designed to conserve hillside landforms, link open spaces, reduce wildfire and landslide hazards, and promote development patterns that complement the hillside terrain through the following:

1. Development Location. At least 50 percent of the total development footprint shall be located on areas of the site with natural slopes of less than 25 percent or within previously graded or disturbed areas, where such areas are present on the site. Where such areas are not present, development shall be located on the least constrained portions of the site to minimize grading and disturbance of natural hillside landforms.

This requirement shall not apply where locating development in such areas would result in greater impacts to rare or sensitive biological resources, including federally or state listed threatened or endangered species.

2. Setbacks from Slopes.

a. Development shall be set back a minimum of 15 horizontal feet from any portion of the site containing natural or graded slopes of 25 percent to 49 percent, measured from top and toe of the slope, as applicable.

b. Development shall be set back a minimum of 30 horizontal feet from any portion of the site containing natural or graded slopes of 50 percent or steeper, measured from the top and toe of the slope, as applicable.

3. Development shall cluster all buildings on site to consolidate Fuel Modification Zones 1 and 2, as applicable under Section 4906 of Title 32 (Fire Code), to the maximum extent feasible.

a. This Section shall apply only to structures subject to Fuel Modification Zone requirements under the Fire Code.

b. Compliance with this Section may be achieved through the following:

i. Consolidation of Fuel Modification Zones 1 and 2 within the project site;

ii. Shared Fuel Modification Zone 2 with structures on adjacent lots; or

iii. Locating structures within 100 horizontal feet of a public roadway.

All clustering and fuel modification configurations shall be subject to review and approval by the Director and Fire Department.

4. Structures subject to fuel modification requirements under Section 4906 of Title 32 (Fire Code) shall be located a minimum of 200 horizontal feet from the boundary of any designated open space located offsite.

5. Improved Open Space. Improved open space shall be located and designed to provide a buffer between development and natural open space areas. Such open space shall generally be a minimum of 50 feet in width, unless a reduced width is approved by the Director based on site constraints. Improved open space may overlap with areas subject to fuel modification requirements pursuant to Title 32 (Fire Code).

6. A street may be placed within the contiguous natural open space area if the Review Authority finds such street is necessary to ensure adequate circulation or access. Such a street shall not be counted as a portion of the total required open space provided.

7. The contiguous natural open space area shall be contiguous with dedicated natural open space areas on adjoining lots, where such conditions exist. Preserved open space shall include segments with a minimum width of 150 feet, unless a reduced width is approved by the Director based on site constraints.

8. If the development is located on a rural transition site, the contiguous natural space area shall also be contiguous with the portions of the site perimeter that adjoin land within a rural land use designation, where such conditions exist ~~as feasible~~. Preserved open space shall include segments with a minimum width of 150 feet, unless a reduced width is approved by the Director based on site constraints.

9. For a land division:

a. The following types of improved open space shall be configured into, or contained within open space lots, unless owned in common and maintained by a home-owner's or property owner's association:

i. Parks, playgrounds, golf courses, and other recreational facilities.

ii. Equine riding, hiking, and mountain biking trails.

iii. Pedestrian paseos.

iv. Community gardens.

b. Natural open space shall be configured into separate open space lots if the land division is a "density-controlled development" as defined in Division 2 (Definitions), Section 22.14.040, or if the land division is in a rural land use designation with 20 or more dwelling units and residential lots of 15,000 square feet or smaller.

B. Grading and Facilities. Development shall be designed to avoid mass landform alteration, preserve the natural form of hillsides, and minimize visual impacts on scenic views through the following:

1. Grading. For projects with more than 100,000 cubic yards of total onsite grading, cut or fill grading shall not result in a change in elevation of 25 feet or greater between existing natural grade and the finished manufactured grade at any single point on site.

2. Contoured Grading. Graded slopes shall utilize contoured grading techniques that follow and reflect the natural hillside topography. Grading slopes shall

incorporate variable contours and rounded transitions to minimize the appearance of artificial landforms.

3. Water Tanks and Similar Structures. Water tanks and other structures with a height of 20 feet or greater shall be located so that their highest point is at least 50 vertical feet below the crest of the nearest hilltop or ridgeline located onsite or within 500 horizontal feet of the structure. Such structures shall also be located and designed to minimize visibility from public rights-of-way through placement behind hills, buildings, existing vegetation, or other screening features.

4. Retaining Walls. Retaining walls shall not exceed six feet in exposed height. Retaining walls that would otherwise exceed six feet in exposed height, the wall shall be terraced into multiple segments, with no individual segment exceeding six feet in exposed height.

5. Hardscape Surfaces. Hardscape surfaces visible from public rights-of-way, including block walls, retaining walls, drainage terraces, and stormwater infrastructure, shall utilize earth-tone colors and materials that minimize visual contrast with surrounding hillside landscapes. For the purpose of this standard, earth-tone colors include shades of brown, tan, beige, sand, taupe, gray, olive, clay, or similar colors approved by the Director that resemble natural soil, rock, bark, or vegetation.

C. Circulation. Roadways and access improvements shall be designed to preserve the natural form of hillsides, maintain connectivity, provide adequate emergency access, and preserve scenic roadway views through the following:

1. Secondary Access. Any project (or portion of development) greater than 30 dwelling units shall provide at least two separate roadway access points to a County highway classified as Major or Secondary Highway.

a. The second access point may be provided through a separate direct roadway or a connection to the roadway system of an adjacent existing development.

b. All roadway access points shall:

i. Remain unobstructed and publicly accessible; and

ii. Comply with applicable County Fire Department emergency access standards.

2. Cul-de-sacs. Cul-de-sacs may be allowed only when necessary to avoid a road connection that would require:

a. Grading into areas with natural slopes of 50 percent or steeper; or

b. Grading into areas with natural slopes of 25 percent or steeper for a continuous horizontal distance exceeding 500 feet, measured along the proposed roadway alignment.

3. Pedestrian Paths. Where a cul-de-sac is permitted, the development shall provide a publicly accessible trail or paved pedestrian connection to:

a. An adjacent public roadway;

b. Existing or planned trail;

c. Public open space area; or

d. Other pedestrian circulation network.

4. New Roadways. New roadways shall be located and designed to follow the natural contours of the hillside based on site constraints, minimizing mass landform alterations and excessive grading.

5. Roadways and Driveways. All new roadways and paved driveways shall be located at least 100 vertical feet below the crest of the nearest hilltop or ridgeline located onsite or within 500 horizontal feet of the project boundary.

D. Building Design. Buildings shall be designed and sited to minimize visual impacts on hillsides and preserve scenic views through the following:

1. Height. For development where the average natural slope within the proposed building footprint equals or exceeds 25 percent, or where the highest roofline of a proposed structure would be located within 50 vertical feet of the crest of the nearest ridgeline or hilltop, the maximum building height shall not exceed 25 feet or two stories, whichever is less.

2. Downhill Lots. For lots where the proposed building pad is located below an adjacent roadway, the highest roofline of any structure shall not exceed the elevation of the roadway.

3. Mechanical Equipment. Rooftop mechanical equipment for all new development shall be screened from view from adjacent public rights-of-way. Screening shall be architecturally integrated into the primary structure and constructed of materials compatible with the building's architectural design.

a. Mechanical equipment and associated screening shall not exceed the maximum allowable height for the building.

b. This Subsection shall not apply to roof-mounted solar energy systems.

E. Signs. Signs shall be designed and located to minimize visual impacts on hillsides and protect scenic views through the following:

1. Height. Freestanding signs and signs attached to a building shall not extend above the highest roofline of the building to which the sign is accessory.

2. Monument Signs. Monument signs shall not exceed six feet in height and shall be constructed of natural or textured materials compatible with the surrounding hillside landscape and community character. Placement of monument signs shall comply with applicable sight distance and traffic safety standards.

3. Business Signs. Business signs shall be limited to a maximum of 18 square feet of total sign area per establishment. Projecting signs shall not exceed 10 square feet. Signs shall be constructed of durable, non-reflective materials and designed to be compatible with the surrounding hillside landscape and community character.

4. Illuminated Signs. Signs shall be externally illuminated only. Illumination shall be provided by fully shielded, downward-directed light fixtures designed to prevent glare and light spill onto adjacent properties and the night sky.

F. Landscaping. Landscaping shall be designed to preserve existing vegetation, stabilize slopes, provide co-benefits, and enhance the visual quality of developed hillside areas through the following:

1. Topsoil. All topsoil removed during grading activities shall be reapplied to manufactured slopes and improved open space areas prior to revegetation.

2. Graded Slopes, Graded Areas, and Improved Open Space. All graded slopes, exposed graded areas, and improved open space shall be landscaped with native or drought-tolerant trees, shrubs, and/or ground cover. Plants shall consist of non-invasive species and include a variety of species compatible with the native vegetation found on the site. Landscaping design may incorporate features that restore habitat, conserve water, improve water quality, provide shade for pedestrian and bicycle paths, enhance slope stability, increase fire protection, or provide recreational opportunities.

3. Hardscape Surfaces. Hardscape surfaces and utility features, including block walls, infrastructure, and non-residential building facades, that are visible from public rights-of-way shall be screened with native or drought-tolerant trees and shrubs.

22.104.07~~7~~90 Development by the County or Special District.

The lead County department or the district shall prepare a written report that documents substantial compliance with the ~~Hillside Design Guidelines~~ HMA Development Standards in this Chapter. This report shall be included as part of the development's publicly available documents and included as part of any subsequent project reports to the Board and its attendant commissions. A report shall not be required for maintenance or operations activities or any activities listed in Section 22.104.~~030~~040.~~I~~J, above.

APPENDIX I HILLSIDE DESIGN GUIDELINES

I. PURPOSE AND OVERVIEW

The policies of the General Plan, and area and community plans, where applicable, seek to preserve significant natural features in hillside areas. These Hillside Design Guidelines (Guidelines) are intended to implement these policies by ensuring that hillside development projects use sensitive and creative engineering, architectural, and landscaping site design techniques. The Guidelines also help ensure that hillside development projects are designed in a manner that allows the project to meet the findings of the Hillside Management Areas Ordinance (Ordinance). To accomplish this, the Guidelines include specific and measurable design techniques that can be applied to residential, commercial, industrial, and other kinds of projects.

Some design techniques may be more appropriate or feasible than others, depending on the type of project, location, size, complexity, and site constraints, and other design techniques incorporated into the project. The design techniques most appropriate for a project to achieve the purpose of Chapter 22.104 (Hillside Management Areas) shall be determined by the project applicant and the Director.

The Guidelines are encouraged but optional for all other hillside projects not subject to Chapter 22.104. Hillside Management Areas (HMAs) have 25 percent or greater natural slopes; however, development on 24 percent or "lesser" slopes can have negative impacts on hillside terrain that could be minimized by following these Guidelines.

II. SUBSTANTIAL COMPLIANCE

Subsection 22.104.060.E (Design) of Chapter 22.104 (Hillside Management) requires that the projects subject to said Chapter "substantially comply" with the

~~Guidelines. The Guidelines are divided into five major design categories containing a variety of sensitive hillside design measures. The five major categories are:~~

- ~~Site Planning~~
- ~~Grading and Facilities~~
- ~~Road Circulation~~
- ~~Building Design~~
- ~~Landscaping~~

~~For substantial compliance with Chapter 22.104, projects must use the design measures contained in the Guidelines that reasonably can be implemented in the project design. The project applicant should consult and coordinate with County staff to determine the most appropriate design measures. While the design measures are not individually weighted in the Guidelines, more weight may be given to a particular design measure based on the location, context, size or complexity of the project. No individual design measure should be used as a sole means to deny or recommend denial of a project; rather, all characteristics of a project's design "as a whole" should be taken into consideration when making a final determination. The Board, Commission, or Hearing Officer is the authority in determining whether the findings required by Chapter 22.104 can be made for a project.~~

~~Due to the variety, size, geology, hydrology, and complexity of development projects, there is no set number of design measures required in a project to ensure that it, as stated in Section 22.104.010 (Purpose), preserves and enhances the physical integrity and scenic values of HMAs, provides open space, and is compatible with and enhances~~

community character. Staff and project applicants are advised that four design measures per category (Site Planning, Grading and Facilities, Road Circulation, Building Design, and Landscaping) is typically the appropriate number of design measures to be included in a project to allow the findings required by Chapter 22.104 to be made for that project.

Staff and project applicants are also advised that these numbers are general recommendations, and not absolute requirements. Because projects are tailored to the individual site requirements and conditions, it is possible that more or less measures may be appropriate. When considering whether to support a request for a lower number of measures from a project applicant, factors staff may consider include density, the size of the project, or whether the project is able to meet several partial credit design measures.

In situations where it is unclear whether a design measure is being fully utilized, County staff will use its recommendation for whole or partial design measure "credit" towards satisfying the findings required by Chapter 22.104. Half-credit may be given for a design measure if the project design does not fully meet the design measure but partially satisfies it to the satisfaction of the County. Staff will also work with project applicants to determine which design measures can be implemented as project conditions of approval.

III. OTHER STANDARDS

In addition to meeting the findings required by Chapter 22.104, all projects are still subject to applicable Plans, County policies, Titles 21 (Subdivisions) and 22 (Planning and Zoning) of the County Code, Healthy Design standards, and CEQA. These standards or policies could influence which design measures to use within a project.

~~IV. FACTORS AFFECTING RESIDENTIAL DENSITY~~

~~Sensitive hillside design techniques can be used to achieve a better project design while still maintaining a desired number of dwelling units. The General Plan land use designation ("plan category") establishes the appropriate residential density range for a project, including the density maximum. However, there are a number of other factors that can affect the project's density, such as:~~

- ~~Land division standards (minimum lot size, lot width, street frontage and access)~~
- ~~Zoning designation (minimum lot size)~~
- ~~Zoning standards (building setbacks, maximum lot coverage)~~
- ~~Biological constraints (such as woodlands and wildlife habitats and corridors)~~
- ~~Natural environmental hazards (such as geologic, seismic, fire, flood)~~
- ~~Open space and parking requirements~~
- ~~Public easements and dedications (such as for utilities)~~
- ~~Community compatibility and neighbor concerns~~

~~V. LAND DIVISIONS~~

~~Past development patterns within the unincorporated County suggest that the largest hillside projects involve land divisions. Land divisions often have large amounts of grading along with the creation of new infrastructure and landscaping. While it should be expected that more design measures will be applicable to land divisions, quantity should not be confused with quality. Smaller land divisions and non-land division projects should be~~

evaluated not only by the number of design measures utilized, but also by how effectively they are used to achieve a sensitive hillside design.

VI. SENSITIVE HILLSIDE DESIGN MEASURES

1. Site Planning

Conserve land area and form, link open spaces, and promote a more attractive pattern of development that complements the hillside terrain.

1.1. Locate 50 percent or more of the project's buildings and developable lots within 500 feet of existing sewer, water, and roadway infrastructure.

1.2. Locate at least 50 percent of the development footprint on the flattest portions of the site[1] (i.e., those areas having slopes of less than 25 percent), when that area does not contain rare, sensitive, or federal or State listed threatened or endangered species.

1.3. Utilize all previously graded or disturbed areas on the site for new development to the greatest extent possible, before developing new areas, such that new development within undisturbed areas is reduced.

1.4. For new land divisions, contain at least 75 percent of developable lots within blocks that have a perimeter of one-quarter mile (1,320 feet) or less, measured from the roadway centerline. (Note: The purpose of this design measure is to avoid unattractive "superblocks" of development on the hillside and instead use smaller block sizes that are more distinguishable from each other and can better fit in with the natural topography.)

[1] "Site" referred to in the Design Measures means the "project site" or "subject property."

1.5. For new land divisions, where lot clustering is allowed and compatible with community character, reduce all single-family lot sizes to 15,000 square feet or less.

1.6. For new land divisions, utilize a variety of small, medium, and large lot sizes (such as 5,000, 10,000, and 20,000 square feet) in such a manner that it will produce different building layouts and sizes.

1.7. Throughout the project site, differentiate elevations so that elevations between adjacent pads, between adjacent blocks, or between adjacent streets, range from one to 30 feet.

1.8. Place the narrow side of the lot (or building pad) such that it allows the building facade to face the roadway.

1.9. Utilize terraced building pads in select areas within the site to preserve slopes that exceed 50 percent.

1.10. Preserve the most prominent and unique slopes, hilltops, and ridgelines[2] on the site for recreational uses within dedicated (or common) open space areas.

1.11. Exceed the minimum open space acreage requirements by 10 percent or more.

1.12. Preserve contiguous undisturbed open space throughout the site, utilizing segments of land that are at least 150 feet wide.

[2]When ridgelines are mapped as "significant ridgelines" by the County, the stricter regulations applicable to those ridgelines shall apply and staff shall determine whether it is appropriate for such compliance to also apply towards substantial compliance with the Hillside Management Areas Ordinance as described in Section II of this Appendix.

1.13. Utilize at least 25 percent of the overall project's disturbed (improved) open space for recreational purposes.

1.14. Locate and design improved open space as a buffer (recommended at least 50 feet wide) between undisturbed open space and development.

1.15. Create scenic vista points at prominent locations such as hilltops and ridgelines, providing amenities[3] at the points and making them accessible to the public. When provided, this shall count as improved open space.

1.16. Provide private (connector) trails or pedestrian paseos that link together all of the project's open space areas (one acre or larger) and connect to any onsite or offsite public trails.

1.17. For new land division blocks of development that exceed 800 feet between intersections, design mid-block through-paths such as trails or pedestrian paseos, that connect to intervening streets or open space areas, and make the paths accessible to the public.

1.18. Use any other site planning techniques not listed in this Chapter that either through innovation or in consideration of specific site constraints or other specific project factors, are tailored to allow the project to meet the findings required by Section 22.104.060 (Findings).

[3]Such as decks, seating arrangements, overhead cover (trellis or gazebo), landscaping and shade trees, and information signs for landmarks or points in interest.

2. Grading and Facilities

Avoid mass landform alteration, preserve the physical shape of the hillside, and maintain pleasant views.

2.1. For projects with more than 100,000 cubic yards of onsite earthwork, avoid any mass cut and fill grading that would result in a change of 25 feet or greater in elevation from the existing natural grade to the finished manufactured grade at any one point on the site.

2.2. Use contoured grading lines that match or closely match the existing topography, generally avoiding lines that trace 45 to 90 degrees against the natural contour.

2.3. Utilize undulating banks for graded slopes to maintain the natural pattern of the topography to the greatest extent feasible.

2.4. Design the project's longer graded horizontal slope surfaces and slope increments (typically 300 or more feet in length) to be variable in terms of height and spacing to replicate natural topographical patterns, taking into account hydrology design and any sewer, water, and storm drain infrastructure.

2.5. Locate water tanks and other similar types of structures that are 20 feet tall or taller so that their highest point is at least 50 feet below the crest of the highest hilltop or ridgeline, on or off the site, that is located within 500 feet of the water tank or similar structure.

2.6. Locate visually intrusive structures (such as water tanks) so that they are hidden from public views, placing them behind hills, buildings, landscaping, existing trees, or other more appropriate and attractive screening objects.

2.7. Avoid berms and block walls that obstruct views from or to buildings; instead, locate and design the buildings in accordance with the other site planning, road circulation, building, and landscaping design measures contained in the Guidelines.

2.8. Design drainage facilities as multi-purpose site features[4] that are attractively landscaped, conserve water, improve water quality, and provide opportunity for recreational activity. (Note: These features may be counted towards required open space acreage, as improved open space, if designed to the County's satisfaction. Such features should be located in areas already designated for improvement such as park sites, roadsides, or previously-graded flat areas.)

2.9. Build retaining walls to be less than six feet in exposed height, and terrace the walls where appropriate and in a manner that does not substantially increase visual impacts.

2.10. Use earth-tone colors and materials[5] for exposed hardscape surfaces such as block walls, retaining walls, drainage terraces, and storm gutters.

2.11. Use attractive designs and materials that are compatible with, or that enhance, community character for any walls or fencing used to enclose public facilities (such as debris and retention basins), especially when such facilities are in highly-visible locations or are designed as "multi-purpose" site features. (Note: Safety and security shall be maintained for the facilities when using a more attractive wall or fence design.)

[4]Subject to the approval of Public Works.

[5]Subject to the approval of the Department.

2.12. Use any other grading and public facility design techniques not listed in this Chapter that either through innovation or in consideration of specific site constraints or other specific project factors, are tailored to the site, and allow the project to meet the findings required by Section 22.104.060 (Findings).

3. Road Circulation

Preserve the physical shape of the hillside, maintain good connectivity, and provide scenic roadway views.

3.1. Provide at least two points of paved roadway access[6] to a County highway (major or secondary) for any project (or portion of development) greater than 50 dwelling units and 10 acres in size. (Note: This practice should only be considered when the second road connection will not require a substantial amount of additional grading; special consideration may be given when connecting to an adjacent community or providing access to community services such as schools and parks.)

3.2. Locate and design new roadways to follow the existing natural slope contours, avoiding mass landform alteration and excessive grading.[7]

3.3. Utilize private drives instead of public streets on 50 percent or more of the project road circulation system to allow slightly higher gradients (up to 15 percent) that result in less grading and better conformance to natural slope contours, taking into account hydrology design and any sewer, water, and storm drain infrastructure.

[6]May be a private roadway or fire lane but shall be un-gated, accessible by the public, and of sufficient width to meet Fire Department requirements.

[7]Subject to the sight distance, signing, striping and marking requirements of Public Works.

3.4. Use undulating patterns and varying grades[8] for roadway segments exceeding 1,000 feet in length.

3.5. Connect roadways to form blocks wherever feasible (2,000 square feet or less block perimeter), such that at least 75 percent of the development footprint (to include public facilities) is contained within blocks. (Note: The purpose of this is to provide good access and connectivity for safety reasons, and to use roadways to buffer development from natural vegetated areas.)

3.6. Use culs-de-sacs in limited instances, such as where road connections would require grading into 50 percent or greater slopes or grading into 25 percent or greater slopes for a distance of more than 500 feet.

3.7. Provide unpaved trail or paved pedestrian path thru-connections (e.g. pedestrian paseos) for all culs-de-sacs. (Note: Fee-dedicated strips are recommended instead of easements on private lots.)

3.8. Utilize "edge" (single-loaded) roads along at least 50 percent of the development perimeter, in areas with steep hillside terrain, and to buffer development from undisturbed open space.

3.9. Place all new roadways and paved driveways at least 100 feet below the crest of the tallest hilltop or ridgeline located onsite, or offsite within 500 feet of the project boundary.

[8]Subject to the maximum allowed street grade requirements of Public Works.

3.10. Design "split" roadways or landscaped medians to preserve unique or important natural features (such as oak trees or rock outcroppings).

3.11. Use bridge design techniques that are attractive, maximize the preservation of natural watercourses, and allow easy wildlife migration beneath the bridge (minimum 6 feet of vertical and horizontal clearance recommended).

3.12. Use private drives instead of public roadways when it will result in narrower roadway widths that create less grading. (Note: Private drives should conform to the Los Angeles County Private Drives and Traffic Calming Manual, and should not eliminate sidewalks or reduce sidewalk connections throughout the development.)

3.13. Use any other roadway circulation design techniques not listed in this Chapter that either through innovation or in consideration of specific site constraints or other specific project factors, are tailored to the site and allow the project to meet the findings required by Section 22.104.060 (Findings).

4. Building Design

Promote more attractive views through building siting and orientation, and use of building materials and colors that complement natural hillside features.

4.1. Place structures or limit their height so that their rooflines are equal to or below the elevation of the roadway grade of the development above.

4.2. Utilize terraced (split-level) or "cantilevered" building designs wherever feasible on 25 percent or greater slopes. (Note: Split-level homes should have a second floor exterior that is visibly set-back from the first floor exterior so that a terraced profile can be seen from the public view.)

4.3. Use a variety of house, garage, and other building placements that better responds to the hillside terrain and creates a more interesting and attractive streetscape.

4.4. Limit building heights to two stories (or 25 feet) when sited on 25 percent or greater slopes or when the building pad elevation is located less than 50 feet below the crest of the nearest hilltop or ridgeline located within a linear distance of 500 feet.

4.5. Use a wider variety of architectural treatments and materials[9] for the facades and exteriors of buildings that are located in highly-visible areas on the site (such as main entryways, higher elevations, and isolated lots or building pads that can be seen from public view).

4.6. Use pitched roofs (at least 1.5:1) and shingles for new residences.[10]

4.7. Utilize architectural design techniques to screen rooftop mechanical equipment from public view.

4.8. Design building exteriors with stonework or woodwork that matches rock and tree varieties found in visible locations on the site or in the surrounding community within a distance of one mile. (Note: Materials shall not be sourced from sensitive or scarce local resources such as oak trees, unless the project design is already removing these materials on site due to other project constraints and reusing them).

[9]Such as metal, stone, wood, brick, plaster, and concrete.

[10]

4.9. For business signs, use wood construction materials and painted lettering/logos, avoiding the use of metal and plastic, and with 18 square feet or less total sign surface area (10 square feet for projecting signs) per business establishment.

4.10. Design monument signs to be constructed with wood, stone, brick, or decorative concrete, and to be no more than six feet in height. (Note: The placement of all monument signs shall accommodate an adequate line of sight to the adjacent roadway.)

4.11. Limit all signs so that they project upward no higher than the roofline of the building (or nearest adjacent building), and do not disrupt sightlines to the horizon.

4.12. Illuminate signs from the exterior, with downward-projecting, hooded light fixtures that minimize light trespass.

4.13. Use any other building design techniques not listed in this Chapter that either through innovation or in consideration of specific site constraints or other specific project factors, are tailored to the site and allow the project to meet the findings required by Section 22.104.060 (Findings).

5. Landscaping

Preserve existing vegetation, conserve water, and provide more attractive and comfortable settings within the developed areas of the hillside project.

~~5.1. Retain and incorporate 50 percent or more of existing onsite trees and woodlands (particularly native and drought-tolerant species, and oak woodlands) into the overall project landscaping plan.[11]~~

~~5.2. Avoid all healthy[12] oak tree encroachments and removals through the sensitive location and design of development.~~

~~5.3. Landscape all graded slopes and improved open spaces in an attractive manner that accomplishes at least two or more of the following beyond a State- or County-required minimum (whichever is more restrictive): a) restores habitat; b) conserves water or improves water quality; c) provides shade for pedestrians and bicyclists; d) enhances slope stability (must landscape all slopes at least five feet high); e) increases fire protection; and f) provides recreational opportunities.~~

~~5.4. Utilize native and drought-tolerant trees, shrubs, and ground cover over all exposed graded areas.~~

~~5.5. Landscape at least 50 percent of all graded slopes and improved open spaces at a minimum ratio of one new shrub per 100 square feet of total graded slopes and improved open space area and one new tree per 800 square feet of total graded slopes and improved open space area.~~

~~5.6. Vary the height, placement, and color of appropriate landscaping materials throughout the site.~~

~~Subject to approval by the Fire Department.~~

5.7. Use a wide variety of local and non-invasive plant species within the project's improved open space areas, matching or exceeding the variety found onsite and listed in the project's plant surveys and biota reports.

5.8. Plant new native and drought-tolerant trees and shrubs of a sufficient interval, size, and height to screen hardscape surfaces and unadorned features such as block walls, infrastructure, and exposed and prominently located building facades.

5.9. Use plant materials and irrigation systems that, combined, conserve water 20 percent or more beyond State and County requirements.

5.10. Reapply the graded topsoil to manufactured slopes and improved open space areas.

5.11. Use any other landscaping design techniques not listed in this Chapter that either through innovation or in consideration of specific site constraints or other specific project factors, are tailored to the site and allow the project to meet the findings required by Section 22.104.060 (Findings).

VII. List of Design Exhibits

Design exhibits are necessary to evaluate the proposed development in accordance with County policies, code requirements, and case processing procedures. Some projects may not need to provide all exhibits listed below, but rather on an as-needed basis at the discretion of County staff when applicable.

- Site Plan (Exhibit "A")—A plan that shows existing contour intervals (10 feet or less), existing development and proposed development, to include lots,

~~structures, roadways, driveways, grading, and building pads. Should also depict roadway and retaining wall cross sections.~~

- ~~Site Profile—A scaled drawing that shows a cross-section view of the site from one edge to the other, showing the location of all development in the hillside and the overall extent of hillside encroachment and landform alteration. (Note: More than one cross section may be required to accurately assess hillside impacts.)~~
- ~~Block Elevation—(For land divisions or larger multi-unit developments as applicable) A drawing that shows a row of multiple house (or other building) elevations as they would appear to the public from a lower vantage point on or adjacent to the site. May also include depictions of landscape screening.~~
- ~~Landscape Plan—A color plan that shows all proposed landscaped areas, to include plant materials and any pedestrian and aesthetic features such as walkways, recreation equipment, fountains, gardens, etc. Should also depict existing vegetation that will be preserved, as well as oak or other mitigation trees (if known).~~
- ~~Fuel Modification Plan—A specific type of landscape plan that shows all fuel modification zone boundaries, distances between boundaries, and types of vegetation, as required by the Fire Department. (Please refer to the Fire Department's separate guidelines when creating this plan.)~~
- ~~Open Space Exhibit—A simplified site plan showing all proposed lots, roadways, and grading only; also depicts, numbers, and labels the restricted-use areas and separate lots to be preserved as open space; distinguishes between different~~

types of open space and provides a legend that describes each type of open space; and provides a table listing the approximate acreage of the individual open space types and the quantity and percentage of improved (disturbed) and undisturbed open space within each lot, and for the overall project.

- Slope Map—A complete site plan (road and retaining wall cross sections excluded) that depicts the three different slope ranges (<25 percent, 25—49 percent, and <50 percent) according to a color scheme of green—yellow—red, respectively.

- Buildout Simulation—A color exhibit that shows how new development would impact existing hillside views. It typically depicts a "before" and "after" perspective view of the hillside(s), and includes realistic or semi-realistic photos or renderings of the actual buildings and landscaping that will be used in the development, showing how they will affect the hillside views.

- Viewshed Analysis—A site plan or cross section showing the specific degree angle of view from one or more vantage points on the site. The "sight-line" is drawn from the point of view to some object of observation (such as a road intersection or ridge-top) depicted at some distance from the point of view on or off-site. The sight line will show any intervening features that may block the line of sight.