

San Diego County General Plan

A Plan for Growth, Conservation and Sustainability



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SAN DIEGO COUNTY GENERAL PLAN

A PLAN FOR GROWTH, CONSERVATION,
AND SUSTAINABILITY

August 2011



CERTIFICATE OF ADOPTION

I hereby certify that this is the text and exhibits of the San Diego County General Plan, and that it was considered by the San Diego County Planning Commission during nine hearings from November 6, 2009 through the 20th day of August 2010, and adopted by the San Diego County Board of Supervisors on the 3rd day of August 2011.

Attest: **MARK WARDLAW**, Director
 Planning & Development Services

Amendments

- | | |
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CHAPTER 1 Introduction



Overview of the General Plan

This document is the first comprehensive update of the San Diego County General Plan since 1978 and is the result of the collective efforts of elected and appointed officials, community groups, individuals, and agencies who spent countless hours developing a framework for the future growth and development of the unincorporated areas of the County. This document replaces the previous General Plan and is based on a set of guiding principles designed to protect the County’s unique and diverse natural resources and maintain the character of its rural and semi-rural communities. It reflects an environmentally sustainable approach to planning that balances the need for adequate infrastructure, housing, and economic vitality, while maintaining and preserving each unique community within the County, agricultural areas, and extensive open space.



Rural landscape



Public meeting



Lakeside community

The General Plan directs future growth in the unincorporated areas of the County with a projected capacity that will accommodate more than 232,300 existing and future homes. This growth is targeted to occur primarily in the western portions of the unincorporated County where there is the opportunity for additional development. Compared to the previous General Plan, this update reduces housing capacity by 15 percent and shifts 20 percent of future growth from eastern backcountry areas to western communities. This change reflects the County’s commitment to a sustainable growth model that facilitates efficient development near infrastructure and services, while respecting sensitive natural resources and protection of existing community character in its extensive rural and semi-rural communities. The General Plan provides a renewed basis for the County’s diverse communities to develop Community Plans that are specific to and reflective of their unique character and environment consistent with the County’s vision for its future.

What Is a General Plan?

State law requires each city and county to prepare and adopt a comprehensive and long-range general plan for its physical development. The General Plan provides a consistent framework for land use and development decisions consistent with an established community vision. As the equivalent of a local “constitution” for land use and development, the General Plan’s diagrams, goals, and policies form the basis for the County’s zoning, subdivision, and infrastructure decisions. A number of important themes that are integral components of the County’s vision for its future are woven throughout the General Plan rather than structured as separate elements such as community character, environmental sustainability, and global warming. As required by State law, the seven required elements of the General Plan are highly correlated and are presented in six chapters of the San Diego County General Plan as shown in the following matrix.

OVERVIEW OF THE GENERAL PLAN

San Diego County General Plan Elements	Legally Required General Plan Topics						
	Lands Use	Circulation	Housing	Conservation	Open Space	Noise	Safety
Land Use	●						
Housing			●				
Circulation (Mobility)		●					
Conservation & Open Space				●	●		
Safety							●
Noise						●	
Implementation Plan	●	●	●	●	●	●	●



The General Plan serves as the “constitution” for decision-making regarding the County’s physical development

How Is It Organized?

Following the Introduction and Vision, Chapters 3 through 8 comprise the “elements” of the General Plan required by State law. Each element includes a purpose and scope, the context of the planning issues, and the goals and policies for the various element topics. Chapter 9 describes the broad actions that implement the Plan’s policies and the final chapter presents the acronyms and a glossary of terms. Map figures depicted in the General Plan are also available online or hard copies are available for purchase at the County DPLU. The General Plan also includes appendices and other documents such as community plans that are separately bound. An overview of the Plan’s chapters follows:



1. **Introduction** presents information about the Plan’s purpose and organization, describes the General Plan process, and provides a profile of San Diego County.
2. **Vision Statement and Guiding Principles** presents the vision and overarching themes that guided development of the goals, policies, and implementation programs.
3. **Land Use Element** presents a policy framework for shaping the type and location of new development and strategies to maintain and enhance existing development and community character.
4. **Circulation (Mobility) Element** provides a framework for providing a balanced, multi-modal transportation system for the movement of people and goods within the County.
5. **Conservation and Open Space Element** provides policies relating to the conservation, protection, and management of natural resources and the preservation of open space, along with provision of park and recreation resources.
6. **Housing Element** presents goals, policies, and programs designed to assist the development of housing for the County’s current and future residents at all income levels.
7. **Safety Element** establishes policies that minimize the risk of personal injury, loss of life, and property and environmental damage associated with natural and man-made hazards.
8. **Noise Element** provides a process to control and abate environmental noise and to protect citizens from excessive exposure.
9. **Implementation of the General Plan** summarizes the general categories of the actions to be taken to carry out the vision of the General Plan as specified in the goals and policies. The Implementation Plan, a separate document from the General Plan, is envisioned to be a fluid document that will be used for developing annual work programs and establishing funding needs and priorities for County departments, as appropriate.
10. **Acronyms and Glossary** provides a listing and full description of acronyms used in the General Plan and a glossary that defines terminology used in the General Plan.

Appendices that provide technical information and maps in support of the elements:

- Land Use Maps are community-level maps that depict designations as color or graphic patterns that indicate allowable uses and permitted development densities or intensities.
- Mobility Element Roadway Network is depicted on community-level maps that show the road classification series and the general route of each road.
- Forest Conservation Initiative language enacted in 1993.

Separately Bound Documents

- Community Plans, adopted as an integral parts of the County of San Diego’s General Plan, are policy plans specifically created to address the issues, characteristics, and visions of communities within the unincorporated County.
- Housing Element Background Report

How to Use the General Plan

The General Plan is intended for use by all members of the community as described below. The General Plan must be referred to in its entirety, including separately bound portions (such as community plans). While the General Plan is internally consistent, some issues are addressed through multiple policies and some receive refined and more detailed direction in community plans.

OVERVIEW OF THE GENERAL PLAN

The policies contained within this General Plan were written to be a clear statement of policy but also to allow flexibility when it comes to implementation. Policies cannot be applied independently; rather, implementation of the policies must be balanced with one another and will address details such as how and when the policy is applied and any relevant exceptions. For example, a policy to conserve open space is not a mandate for preservation of 100 percent of the existing undeveloped land in the County. It must be balanced with other policies that allow development and other uses of the land. In this case, implementation of the policy in new developments will be achieved through regulations such as the Resource Protection Ordinance, Biological Mitigation Ordinance, and California Environmental Quality Act, which will guide to what degree open space must be conserved.

If you are a San Diego County resident or property owner, the General Plan indicates the general types of uses that are permitted around your home and changes that may affect your neighborhood, and the policies the County will use to evaluate development applications that might affect you and your neighbors. The Plan also informs you regarding how the County plans to improve mobility infrastructure, continue to provide adequate parks, schools, police, fire, and other public services, protect valued open spaces and environmental resources, and protect you from the risks of earthquakes, fires, and other natural hazards.

If you are interested in developing land within the County or moving your household or business to the County, the Plan will introduce you to the community and provides an overview of the County's overall approach to land development within its jurisdiction. However, it is also important to review other County planning documents and regulations to get a complete perspective on how and where development may take place. A complete listing of relevant documents and regulations is available on the Department of Planning and Land Use website (<http://www.sdcounty.ca.gov/dplu/>).

The General Plan is also a tool to assist County supervisors and planning commissioners as well as County staff in making land use and public infrastructure decisions. It provides the framework for the County's Zoning Ordinance. It identifies mobility and infrastructure improvements, community services, and environmental sustainability initiatives to sustain the County's quality of life. Future development decisions must be consistent with the Plan. Finally, the Plan is intended to help other public agencies, from Caltrans to local school districts, as they contemplate future actions in the County.



County Administration Center

While the General Plan's narrative text and maps frame the key proposals, the essence of the Plan lies in its goals, policies, and implementation programs. These are declarative statements that set forth the County's approach to various issues. Goals, policies, and implementation measures are described as follows:

- *Goals* describe ideal future conditions for a particular topic, such as town centers, rural character, protection of environmental resources, traffic congestion, or sustainability. Goals tend to be very general and broad.
- *Policies* provide guidance to assist the County as it makes decisions relating to each goal and indicates a commitment by the County to a particular course of action. The policy is carried out by implementation measures. While every effort has been made to provide clear and unambiguous policies, the need for interpretation will inevitably arise. The authority of interpretation lies with the



County and will be enacted through its implementation measures and decisions. Therefore, the Implementation Plan should be reviewed for a complete understanding of each policy.

- *Implementation Measures*, adopted by the County in a separate Implementation Plan, identify all the specific steps to be taken by the County to implement the policies. They may include revisions of current codes and ordinances, adoption of plans and capital improvement programs, financing actions, and other measures that will be assigned to different County departments after the General Plan is adopted.

The following diagram is intended to serve as a “reader’s guide” to the goals and policies of the General Plan.

Process for Preparing the General Plan

Steps in the Planning Process

The process of preparing the General Plan included the following key steps:

- Prepare background reports and technical studies
- Develop alternative growth plans and select a preferred plan through a public outreach process
- Prepare draft goals and policies
- Prepare the Draft General Plan
- Prepare the Implementation Plan
- Prepare the Draft Environmental Impact Report
- Conduct public hearings to adopt the General Plan and certify the EIR
- Publish the final General Plan and EIR

TECHNICAL STUDIES AND BACKGROUND REPORTS

As required by State law, a General Plan must be based upon existing conditions and trends in a community and be responsive to the needs and issues identified in an analysis of existing conditions. Background Reports were prepared for each of the seven State-mandated topical areas to be covered in the General Plan including Land Use, Mobility, Housing, Safety, Conservation, Open Space, and Noise. In addition, technical studies such as traffic impacts, noise, and commercial and industrial lands needs analyses were conducted as a basis to develop a Land Use Plan responsive to community needs and issues.

How to Use the General Plan

GOAL NUMBERING
Each goal number starts with the element acronym and is followed by the number of the goal (e.g., S-14 = Safety Element, fourteenth goal).

GOAL TITLE
Each goal contains a leading title in bold for a quick reference to the goal.

GOALS
A goal is a general direction-setter. Each goal has one or more policies associated with the goal.

POLICIES
A policy is a specific statement that guides decision-making. It indicates a commitment to a particular course of action carried out by implementation measures. Each policy is associated with a specific goal.

POLICY NUMBERING
Continuing from the goal numbering, the policy number is shown as the last number, supporting the goal it follows (e.g., Policy S-14.3 = Safety Element, fourteenth goal, third policy).

POLICY TITLE
Each policy contains a leading title in bold for a quick reference to the policy.

SAFETY ELEMENT GOALS AND POLICIES

GOAL S-5
Regional Fire Protection. Regional coordination among fire protection agencies.

Policies

S-5.1 **Regional Coordination Support.** Advocate and support regional coordination among fire protection and emergency service providers.

S-5.2 **Fire Service Provider Agreements.** Encourage agreements between fire service providers to improve fire protection and to maximize service levels in a fair, efficient, and cost effective manner.

GOAL S-6
Adequate Fire and Medical Services. Adequate levels of fire and emergency medical services (EMS) in the unincorporated County.

Policies

S-6.1 **Water Supply.** Ensure that water supply systems for development are adequate to combat structural and wildland fires.


S-6.2 **Fire Protection for Multi-Story Development.** Coordinate with fire services providers to improve fire protection services for multi-story construction.

S-6.3 **Funding Fire Protection Services.** Require development to contribute its fair share towards funding the provision of appropriate fire and emergency medical services as determined necessary to adequately serve the project.

S-6.4 **Fire Protection Services for Development.** Require that development demonstrate that fire services can be provided that meet the minimum travel times identified in Table S-1 (Travel Time Standards).

Travel times are to be calculated using accepted methodology based on the travel distance from the fire station to the furthest dwelling unit of the development. Fire stations must be staffed year-round, publicly supported, and committed to providing service. These do not include volunteer stations, seasonal fire stations, and stations that are not obligated by law or agreement to automatically respond to an incident. Table S-1 establishes a service level standard for fire and first responder emergency medical services that is appropriate to the area that a development is located. Standards are intended to (1) help ensure development occurs in areas with adequate fire protection and/or (2) help improve fire service in areas with inadequate coverage by requiring services level improvements prior to project approval.

Multi-story structures are associated with densities of 15 to 30 dwelling units per acre—particularly in areas within the County Water Authority (CWA) Boundary. Design features may include safe zones and increased building design features.



Fire station in Pine Valley

COUNTY OF SAN DIEGO 7-9 GENERAL PLAN

SECTION HEADER
Identifies the section (if on an even-numbered page) or element (if on an odd-numbered page).

PAGE NUMBER
Shows the chapter and page number (e.g., 7-28 = Chapter 7, page 28).

POLICY BACKGROUND AND SIDEBARS
Provides further clarification and reasoning for the policy.



ALTERNATIVE LAND USE/GROWTH PLANS

Prior to adoption of the Land Use Map, four alternative maps were considered. These alternatives included (1) a Referral Map that the Board of Supervisors created during the land use mapping phase of the project to incorporate a number of property-specific requests not included in the Draft Land Use Map, (2) a Draft Land Use Map that was created out of a stakeholder-driven process and includes land uses to meet the County’s Housing Element allocation and achieve a balanced road network, (3) a Hybrid Map that strikes a balance between the Referral Map and the Draft Land Use Map in meeting the County’s targeted growth consistent with its guiding principles, and (4) an Environmentally Superior Map that reflects more stringent and aggressive application of the principles to restrict growth in portions of the Semi-Rural and Rural Lands Regional Categories.

GOALS, POLICIES, AND IMPLEMENTATION PLAN

Goals, policies, and an Implementation Plan were prepared based on the land use maps, current issues, and community needs, understandability, effectiveness in previous applications, practicality, and feasibility, embodiment of state-of-the-art planning practices, consistency with current legislation and court decisions, community values, and past Board of Supervisors policy decisions. General guiding principles, goals, and policies developed by the advisory committees served as the foundation for this undertaking. Specific goals, policies, and implementation measures were then prepared by working with internal and external technical review committees for inclusion in the Draft General Plan.

DRAFT GENERAL PLAN

The Draft General Plan was first circulated for public review in November 2008, incorporating an overview of background data, goals, and policies. As part of this review, the Draft General Plan was reviewed by the advisory committees, stakeholders, and relevant public agencies. Comments were incorporated and the revised Draft General Plan was circulated for public review in July 2009, along with the Draft Environmental Impact Report, Implementation Plan, and revisions to the Community Plans.

ENVIRONMENTAL IMPACT REPORT

A Draft EIR was prepared in accordance with the requirements of the *California Environmental Quality Act* (CEQA). In July 2008, the Draft EIR was circulated for a 60-day public review and comment period. Responses to all comments were prepared and incorporated into the Final EIR, which was reviewed and certified by the Board of Supervisors.

ADOPTION AND CERTIFICATION

The Planning Commission and Board of Supervisors conducted public hearings on the Draft General Plan and EIR. In consideration of the public input, the Commission made a recommendation to the Board of Supervisors regarding the General Plan and certification of the Final EIR. The Board of Supervisors considered the Commission’s



Meeting of the County Board of Supervisors

PROCESS FOR PREPARING THE GENERAL PLAN

input and based on its findings, the Board of Supervisor adopted the General Plan with changes and certified the Final EIR.

PLAN IMPLEMENTATION

Once adopted, implementation of the County of San Diego General Plan will begin in accordance with the Implementation Plan. Associated changes to zoning, other regulations, policies, and procedures will be made. Implementation of the General Plan will be monitored and reported on an annual basis.



Planning Commission meeting

Public Outreach and Involvement in the Planning Process

The General Plan planning process involved a broad spectrum of the community through an extensive public outreach program that included hundreds of meetings, mailings, and e-mail updates, a hotline, and a website. The outcome of the effort led to the development of land use maps and a road network, the development of goals and policies, and the preparation of the General Plan based upon input from the numerous workshops, open houses, and community meetings.



Interest Group meeting



Steering Committee meeting



Community meeting

The entire process was guided by two regional advisory committees:

- *Steering Committee*—Chairpersons or designated representatives from 26 Community Planning and Sponsor Groups
- *Interest Group*—Designated representatives from environmental groups, professional organizations, building industry representatives, and the Farm Bureau

These groups made policy recommendations to staff, the Planning Commission, and Board of Supervisors. All meetings were advertised, open to the public, and held in accordance with the Brown Act.

Through frequent work sessions, the public and stakeholders were provided the opportunity for involvement throughout the entire planning process from the initial establishment of population growth targets, to development of a land use framework, identification and refinement of desired goals and policies, and review of land use map and road network alternatives. In addition to the advisory groups, the community



planning and sponsor groups served as the primary conduit for public outreach throughout the planning process. Community planning groups worked closely with staff throughout the development of the land use map, along with town center and road network planning efforts. Since 2000, staff participated in over 212 meetings with the full Planning and Sponsor groups, 109 workshops, and 216 subcommittee meetings. All meetings were advertised to the general public through standard planning and sponsor group agendas or through the General Plan Update mailing lists described below. Most meetings were advertised in multiple ways.



Public workshop

Other groups involved in the planning process included:

- *Native American Tribal Nations*—A tribal outreach strategy that invited the 18 tribes in the County to participate in the process coordinated through the Native American Heritage Commission.
- *City Planning Directors*—Staff coordinated with the Planning Directors from incorporated cities within the County to provide status reports on the progress of the General Plan Update and solicit their feedback.

In an effort to continually involve interested parties in the planning process to obtain valuable feedback, other methods of public outreach over the course of the project included a General Plan Update Hotline number, informational flyers, and a General Plan website where members of the public could find out up-to-date information about the project.

- *Hotline*—An unmanned telephone hotline was established that allowed the public direct access to the San Diego County Department of Planning and Land Use with an ability to leave a message (i.e., be placed on mailing lists), or could get general questions answered.
- *Project Initiation Postcard*—All property owners in the unincorporated County in January 2001 were mailed a postcard introducing the General Plan Update to inform the public about the update and encourage their involvement.
- *Flyer*—In 2002, an informational flyer was developed to inform the public about the proposed changes to land use density and announce a Land Use Map. This flyer was mailed to every property owner in the unincorporated County.
- *Monthly Newsletter*—A monthly e-mail newsletter was used to inform interested parties of project progress, major milestones, website updates, documents available for review, and upcoming meetings or events.
- *Mailing Lists*—Mailing lists were accumulated over the project duration of individuals and organizations interested in receiving the newsletter, notices of specific meetings, hearings, and documents available for review. Parties were notified through their requested method, mail or e-mail, when appropriate.
- *Website*—A website was developed and maintained by County Staff to inform the public about the General Plan Update, including its progress and any upcoming public meetings. The site also provided the population forecast projections, land use and circulation frameworks, and land use distribution and road network maps for each community for quick access to information as they evolved

throughout the planning process. In addition, complete reports to the Planning Commission and Board of Supervisors were posted prior to each public hearing to inform the public of the issues and other information that were planned to be addressed during the hearing. <http://www.sdcounty.ca.gov/dplu/gpupdate/index.html>

- *Local Newspapers*—Several regional and local newspapers published notices, stories, and editorials related to the General Plan Update.

Community Plans

Community plans are policy plans specifically created to address the issues, characteristics, and visions of communities within the County. These diverse communities each have a distinct physical setting with a unique history, culture, character, life style, and identity. Community and subregional plans, thus provide a framework for addressing the critical issues and concerns that are unique to a community and are not reflected in the broader policies of the Land Use Element of the General Plan. These goals and policies are designed to provide more precise guidance regarding the character, land uses, and densities within each community planning area. Generally, these goals and policies are more limiting and restrictive than the countywide goals and policies, consistent with State legislation for internal consistency. The Community Plans are adopted as integral parts of this General Plan but bound separately, and must be referenced in determining the types and density of land use that may be considered for any property within the community planning area.

When updating Community Plans, communities are encouraged to delineate areas within their plans that will assist with the future planning of developments, infrastructure, facilities, and regulations. An Urban Limit Line and/or Village Boundary may be defined in the Community Plan as a community-specific growth boundary that identifies an area to which development should be directed. These boundaries may also serve as the basis for community specific goals and policies.

Another convention that is encouraged for use in Community Plans is the designation of Special Study Areas. Special Study Areas define areas for further planning and implementation and should be further defined in more detail in the Community Plan for each area that is identified. The designation a Special Study Area does not presume that modifications to the General Plan are necessary nor does it bestow any additional entitlement upon the property. The property retains the land use designations shown in the General Plan. Any changes to the General Plan resulting from this additional study must occur through a General Plan Amendment (GPA), be evaluated independently, and must be consistent with all other components of the General Plan. The designation of a Special Study Area is intended to give a clear commitment to the community and property owners that if further changes to the General Plan are processed in the future, those changes will address the areas identified as areas needing further information and evaluation. The Special Study Area designation provides assurances that the areas of concern will be addressed as staff and stakeholders change over time. Outlining the objectives of the study area helps ensure that all interested parties continue to have the same understanding of the intent of efforts for that area.

The scope of the additional planning will vary widely between areas and communities but some possibilities include (but are not limited to): Specific Plans; master development plans; design guidelines; circulation networks including local public roads, bicycle and pedestrian facilities; and plans for civic, park and



recreational facilities. Special Study Areas are particularly useful for town centers, village cores where revitalization is desired, areas designated for mixed use, transit nodes, and areas that are generally undeveloped or developed at low intensities but are planned as future growth areas. Where appropriate, the Community Plan may restrict development within the Special Study Area until more detailed plans are prepared and approved, so that interim development does not preclude the preparation and implementation of the study.

As integral components of the County of San Diego General Plan, Community Plans have the same weight of law and authority in guiding their physical development. The Community Plans are introduced by a vision statement defining intentions regarding the role, character, and values of each community. This is followed by a description of the community and goals and policies corresponding to each of the countywide elements. In some cases, there may be no unique local policies applicable to a countywide element topic.

The Community Plans are prepared for the following communities and subregional planning areas:

- Alpine
- Bonsall
- Central Mountain
 - > Cuyamaca
 - > Descanso
 - > Pine Valley
- Crest/Dehesa/Harbison Canyon/Granite Hills
- Desert
 - > Borrego Springs
- Fallbrook
- Jamul/Dulzura
- Julian
- Lakeside
- Mountain Empire
 - > Boulevard
 - > Jacumba
 - > Campo/Lake Morena
 - > Potrero
 - > Tecate
- North County Metro
 - > Twin Oaks Valley
 - > Hidden Meadows
- North Mountain
- Otay
- Pala-Pauma Valley
- Pendleton/ De Luz
- Rainbow
- Ramona
- San Dieguito
- Spring Valley
- Sweetwater
- Valle de Oro
- Valley Center

Related Documents

Background Reports and GIS

The General Plan is based upon a series of Background Reports containing relevant topical data and analyses as well as identification of relevant issues and trends to be considered in preparation of the General Plan. These reports and technical studies serve as the existing conditions or existing setting for the General Plan elements and the Environmental Impact Report (EIR). These background reports are not adopted by the County and may be expanded or modified without an amendment to the General Plan. Also, separate from the General Plan but utilized as background data for analysis is the County’s Geographic Information System (GIS) database. Data related to land use, physical constraints, and resources, included in various figures in the General Plan are available from the San Diego Geographic Information Source (SanGIS) at www.sangis.org.

Environmental Impact Report

A program EIR was prepared for the General Plan in accordance with the substantive and procedural requirements of the *California Environmental Quality Act* (CEQA). The EIR describes environmental conditions

RELATED DOCUMENTS

in the County, assesses the possible adverse environmental impacts that the General Plan adoption will have on these conditions, identifies actions that will be undertaken to reduce these impacts, and evaluates the comparative impacts of alternatives to adoption of the General Plan. Mitigation measures in the EIR are incorporated both as policies in the General Plan and as implementation measures in the Implementation Plan and, consequently, the General Plan is generally considered to be “self-mitigating.”

The document is considered a “program level” EIR, meaning that it examines the general nature of impacts at a Countywide scale. The findings of the EIR help determine the appropriate level of environmental review that should be performed when subsequent projects consistent with the Plan are proposed.

Implementation Plan

The Implementation Plan is a set of the principal actions and procedures necessary to achieve the goals and policies set forth in the General Plan. It is a separate document that is directly correlated and cross referenced to the policies in the General Plan, but it may be modified and updated as necessary without the necessity of a General Plan amendment. An overview of the Implementation Plan is provided in Chapter 9.

Regional and Multi-Jurisdictional Plans

There are 19 jurisdictions in San Diego County, including the unincorporated County, with local land use authority along with the responsibility for preparing their own general plans. Regional coordination is necessary to guide overall development and ensure an efficient allocation of infrastructure funding. The San Diego Association of Governments (SANDAG) serves as the region’s Metropolitan Planning Organization (MPO) responsible for area-wide coordination and as the technical and informational resource for the region’s local jurisdictions. SANDAG prepares regional land use and transportation plans, which provide a basis for allocating federal and state funds used for specific items such as land use incentives and transportation improvements.

The Regional Comprehensive Plan (RCP) identifies existing and planned Smart Growth Opportunity Areas (SGOAs)—compact, mixed use, pedestrian-oriented development patterns where a higher priority is placed on providing transportation facility improvements. A specific SGOA category was developed to accommodate the unique community character and development patterns found in village centers for some unincorporated communities. Therefore, the SGOA is closely related to the community development model, which is one of the fundamental components of this General Plan Update. The Regional Transportation Plan (RTP) seeks to improve transportation connections to SGOAs. Road network planning for the County General Plan Update considered the RTP when identifying the necessary improvements to the County’s Mobility Element road network.

The Multiple Species Conservation Program (MSCP) is a County conservation planning program designed to establish connected preserve systems that ensures the long-term survival of sensitive plant and animal species and protects the native vegetation found throughout the unincorporated County. Plans created under this program are both a federal Habitat Conservation Plan (HCP) and a State Natural Community Conservation Planning (NCCP) program plan. The MSCP addresses the potential impacts of urban growth, natural habitat loss, and species endangerment and creates plans to mitigate for the potential loss of



sensitive species and their habitats. The MSCP Plan covers 582,243 acres over twelve jurisdictions. Each jurisdiction has its own Subarea Plan; however, there are only minor differences in how each is implemented. The MSCP is also an important program that significantly contributes to the County's ability to realize its watershed protection and climate change goals.

The County also works with the San Diego County Regional Airport Authority (SDCRAA) on a regular basis to ensure land use compatibility around each of the eight County-owned airports. The SDCRAA serves as San Diego County's Airport Land Use Commission (ALUC), responsible for protecting public health and safety surrounding airports. The ALUC is responsible for adopting Airport Land Use Compatibility Plans (ALUCPs) for all public-use and military airports in San Diego County. ALUCPs provide guidance on appropriate land uses surrounding airports to protect the health and safety of people and property within the vicinity of an airport, as well as the public in general.

The San Diego Local Agency Formation Commission (LAFCO) is a regulatory agency responsible for annexation and detachment of territory, incorporation of cities, and the formation of special districts. LAFCO also develops and adopts spheres of influence for each city and special district within the unincorporated county. A sphere of influence is defined as a "plan for the probable physical boundaries and service area of a local government agency. In addition to LAFCO, the County of San Diego also coordinates planning efforts with tribal governments and special district agencies, such as fire, water, school, and sanitation districts.

Other County Policies and Ordinances

A number of local plans and ordinances are impacted by the County's General Plan:

- **Zoning Ordinance**—The County administers its General Plan primarily through its Zoning Ordinance. While the General Plan identifies general land use designations, zoning identifies specific uses and development standards. As mandated by the State, the General Plan must be consistent with the County Zoning Ordinance. Changes in this General Plan Update require an update to the County Zoning Ordinance.
- **Subdivision Ordinance**—State law, through the *Subdivision Map Act*, governs local approval of land subdivision, which is further directed in the County Subdivision Ordinance. Review of proposed subdivisions and parcel maps includes a determination of consistency with General Plan goals and policies.
- **Specific Plans**—Specific plans provide an alternative to the Zoning Ordinance in that they are customized plans that delineate land uses, infrastructure, development standards and criteria, and implementation measures. Specific plans must be consistent with the General Plan, and can be used to implement the General Plan within a limited area.
- **The Forest Conservation Initiative (FCI)**—Enacted in 1993 with the goal of preserving the area's unique resources and the rural environment and open space, the FCI affects nearly 91,000 acres of privately owned land in the unincorporated County within the Cleveland National Forest by establishing a 40-acre minimum parcel size with a restriction of one dwelling unit per parcel. This initiative only remains in effect until December 31, 2010, and is included as an appendix to this General Plan. Upon expiration, a General Plan amendment will be required to redesignate the FCI lands to be consistent with the General Plan Update.

Implementing and Amending the Plan

This comprehensive update to the General Plan will be implemented through a variety of ordinances, programs, and activities. These specific actions are described in the Implementation Plan, which is a separate document to the General Plan.

The General Plan is intended to be a dynamic document and must be periodically updated to respond to changing community needs. An annual review of the Plan is required to ensure that it remains relevant. Moreover, any of the Plan's mandatory elements may be amended up to four times a year. Any proposed amendment will be reviewed to ensure that the change is in the public interest and would not be detrimental to public health, safety, and welfare. Environmental review is required for substantive General Plan amendments. A comprehensive update to the General Plan requires an assessment of all seven mandated regional elements, including the Land Use and Mobility Element network maps. This General Plan includes policies that require a comprehensive General Plan update to accommodate significant land use changes.

Global Climate Change: AB 32 Compliance



The issue of global climate change has received greater attention from governments around the world in recent years. Global climate change refers to the transformation in the average weather of the earth as observed in wind patterns, storms, precipitation, and temperature.

Human activities associated primarily with the use of carbon-based fossil fuels have led to changes in the composition of the atmosphere. The combustion of carbon-based fossil fuels creates greenhouse gas (GHG) emissions such as carbon dioxide (CO₂), methane (CH₄), and nitrous oxide (N₂O), which has caused the earth's atmosphere to absorb more heat from the sun. The concentration of greenhouse gases in the atmosphere has significantly increased as a result of combustion of fossil fuels primarily associated with automobile use and energy production. Scientists have already observed some of the negative effects of climate change, and expect more changes in the future. Governments, organizations, and private citizens all over the world are looking for ways to reduce GHG emissions to create a better future, while preparing to adapt as necessary to the inevitable repercussions of this situation.

In 2006, the California State Legislature took a proactive role in addressing the challenges of climate change with the adoption of the California *Global Warming Solutions Act of 2006*, Assembly Bill 32 (AB 32). AB 32 focuses on reducing GHG emissions in California. By 2020, AB 32 requires the California Air Resources Board (CARB), the state agency charged with regulating statewide air quality, to adopt rules and regulations that would achieve GHG emissions equivalent to statewide levels in 1990. Since 2006, the State Legislature has adopted several other pieces of legislation to further efforts in addressing climate change. Senate Bill 375 (SB 375), adopted in 2008, is one of those bills and is significant because it connects land use planning with AB 32. SB 375 will result in development of regional greenhouse gas emission reduction targets by the State



that will then be implemented by regional transportation planning agencies. In San Diego, this responsibility falls to the San Diego Association of Governments (SANDAG).

In California, carbon dioxide accounts for approximately 84 percent of all greenhouse gases, while methane makes up approximately eight percent and nitrous oxide and hydrocarbons contributing an additional six and two percent, respectively. Fossil fuel combustion is the principal source, an estimated 98 percent, of carbon dioxide emissions. Of this, transportation and development are the primary sources of fossil fuel combustion. In California, more than half of fossil fuel emissions of carbon dioxide are related in some way to transportation. Worldwide, buildings contribute 40 percent of greenhouse gases, though this is comparatively less in the County due to the rural character of many areas. Clearly, dispersed development patterns that necessitate extensive vehicle trips and gasoline consumption and the predominance of buildings that use extensive climate control systems play a significant role in affecting greenhouse gases.

An underlying premise of the San Diego County General Plan is to conserve natural resources and develop lands and infrastructure more sustainably in the future. Planning and developing a truly sustainable future depends on a healthy environment, strong economy, and the social well-being of the County’s residents. Throughout the General Plan are goals and policies that contribute to achieving this goal, including the following:

- Environment: conserving air, water, land, soils, minerals, natural habitat, energy, and aesthetic resources; while protecting life and property from the risks of wildfires, flooding, and other hazards.
- Economy: creating good jobs, income, and financial resources.
- Equity and Social Well-Being: providing library, park and recreations facilities, along with programs that contribute to improvements in education, income, health, safety, arts, and cultural attainment for all.

AB 32’s mandate to reduce greenhouse gas emissions represents a key element in meeting sustainability objectives. The General Plan takes steps to address the challenging issue of climate change by reducing GHG emissions, retaining and enhancing natural areas, improving energy efficiency, reducing waste, recycling, and managing water use. The General Plan will reduce GHG emissions primarily through minimizing vehicle trips and approving land use patterns that support increased density in areas where there is infrastructure to support it, increased opportunities for transit, pedestrians, and bicycles, and through green building and land development conservation initiatives. Policies also address adaptation to climate change, such as continued wildfire management and protection, monitoring flood hazards, and regional collaboration on biological preservation, water use and supply, and other areas of concern.

The sources, impacts, and solutions to climate changes are complex. Climate change and GHG emissions reduction are addressed in policies and programs from multiple elements of this General Plan rather than in a single section. Table I-1 (General Plan Policies Addressing Climate Change) identifies the policies in the San Diego County General Plan that carry out the primary objectives of AB 32: mitigation (reduce greenhouse gas emissions) and adaptation (changing current strategies to adapt to climate change). Table I-1 further categorizes the General Plan policies according to the strategies identified to accomplish the two primary objectives. The primary objectives of AB 32 are identified below.

- **Mitigation (Objective A)**—Responses producing a strategy that seeks to reduce greenhouse gas emissions.

- **Adaptation (Objective B)**—Responses adapting current strategies so that Climate Change is integral to planning activities and decisions.

Table I-1 General Plan Policies Addressing Climate Change		
Element	Policies	
OBJECTIVE A: MITIGATION—REDUCTION IN GREENHOUSE GAS EMISSIONS		
Strategy A-1: Reduce vehicle trips generated, gasoline/energy consumption, and greenhouse gas emissions		
Land Use	LU-1.2	Leapfrog Development
	LU-1.3	Development Patterns
	LU-1.4	Village Expansion
	LU-3.3	Complete Neighborhoods
	LU-5.1	Reduction of Vehicle Trips within Communities
	LU-5.2	Sustainable Planning and Design
	LU-5.4	Planning Support
	LU-5.5	Projects that Impede Non-Motorized Travel
	LU-6.3	Conservation-Oriented Project Design
	LU-6.4	Sustainable Subdivision Design
	LU-9.5	Village Uses
	LU-9.7	Town Center Planning and Design
	LU-9.8	Village Connectivity and Compatibility with Adjoining Areas
	LU-9.10	Internal Village Connectivity
	LU-9.12	Achieving Planned Densities in Villages
	LU-10.1	Residential Connectivity
	LU-10.4	Commercial and Industrial Development
	LU-11.1	Location and Connectivity
LU-11.3	Pedestrian-Oriented Commercial Centers	
LU-11.6	Office Development	
LU-11.8	Permitted Secondary Uses	
Mobility	M 1.2	Interconnected Road Network
	M-3.1	Public Road Rights-of-Way
	M-3.2	Traffic Impact Mitigation
	M-4.1	Walkable Village Roads
	M-4.2	Interconnected Local Roads
	M-4.3	Rural Roads Compatible with Rural Character
	M-5.1	Regional Coordination
	M-6.5	Adaptive Reuse of Abandoned Rail Lines
	M-8.1	Maximize Transit Service Opportunities
	M-8.2	Transit Service to Key Community Facilities and Services
	M-8.3	Transit Stops That Facilitate Ridership
	M-8.4	Transit Amenities
	M-8.5	Improved Transit Facilities
M-8.6	Park and Ride Facilities	
M-8.7	Inter-Regional Travel Modes	



Table I-1 General Plan Policies Addressing Climate Change

Element	Policies
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> M-8.8 Shuttles M-9.1 Transportation Systems Management M-9.2 Transportation Demand Management M-9.3 Preferred Parking M-9.4 Park-and-Ride Facilities M-10.1 Parking Capacity M-10.2 Parking for Pedestrian Activity M-10.3 Maximize On-Street Parking M-10.5 Reduced Parking M-10.6 On-Street Parking M-11.1 Bicycle Facility Design M-11.2 Bicycle and Pedestrian Facilities in Development M-11.3 Bicycle Facilities on Roads Designated in the Mobility Element M-11.4 Pedestrian and Bicycle Network Connectivity M-11.5 Funding for Bicycle Network Improvements M-11.6 Coordination for Bicycle and Pedestrian Facility Connectivity M-11.7 Bicycle and Pedestrian Facility Design M-11.8 Coordination with the County Trails Program M-12.1 County Trails System M-12.2 Trail Variety M-12.3 Trail Planning M-12.4 Land Dedication for Trails M-12.5 Future Trails M-12.6 Trail Easements, Dedications, and Joint-Use Agreements M-12.7 Funding for Trails M-12.8 Trails on Private Lands
Conservation and Open Space	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> COS-14.1 Land Use Development Form COS-14.2 Villages and Rural Villages COS-14.3 Sustainable Development COS-14.4 Sustainable Technology and Projects COS-14.9 Significant Producers of Air Pollutants COS-14.10 Low-Emission Construction Vehicles and Equipment COS-14.13 Incentives for Sustainable and Low GHG Development COS-15.1 Design and Construction of New Buildings COS-15.2 Upgrade of Existing Buildings COS-16.1 Alternative Transportation Modes COS-16.2 Single-Occupancy Vehicles COS-16.3 Low Emission Vehicles COS-16.5 Transit-Center Development COS-21.5 Connections to Trails and Networks COS-23.2 Regional Coordination

Table I-1 General Plan Policies Addressing Climate Change		
Element	Policies	
Housing	H-1.2	Development Intensity Relative to Permitted Density
	H-1.3	Housing near Public Services
	H-1.4	Special Needs Housing near Complementary Uses
	H-1.5	Senior and Affordable Housing near Shopping and Services
	H-1.6	Land for All Housing Types Provided in Villages
	H-1.7	Mix of Residential Development Types in Villages
	Strategy A-2: Reduce non-renewable electrical and natural gas energy consumption and generation (energy efficiency)	
Land Use	LU-5.2	Sustainable Planning and Design
Conservation and Open Space	COS-6.5	Best Management Practices
	COS-14.4	Sustainable Technology and Projects
	COS-14.5	Building Siting and Orientation in Subdivisions
	COS-14.6	Solar Access for Infill Development
	COS-14.7	Alternative Energy Sources for Development Projects
	COS-14.12	Heat Island Effect
	COS-15.1	Design and Construction of New Buildings
	COS-15.2	Upgrade of Existing Buildings
	COS-15.3	Green Building Programs
	COS-15.4	Title 24 Energy Standards
COS-15.5	Energy Efficiency Audits	
Strategy A-3: Increase generation and use of renewable energy sources		
Land Use	LU-4.6	Planning for Adequate Energy Facilities
	LU-5.2	Sustainable Planning and Design
Conservation and Open Space	COS-6.5	Best Management Practices
	COS-14.4	Sustainable Technology and Projects
	COS-14.5	Building Siting and Orientation in Subdivisions
	COS-14.6	Solar Access for Infill Development
	COS-14.7	Alternative Energy Sources for Development Projects
	COS-15.2	Upgrade of Existing Buildings
	COS-15.3	Green Building Programs
	COS-16.4	Alternative Fuel Sources
	COS-17.5	Methane Recapture
	COS-18.1	Alternate Energy Systems
COS-18.2	Energy Generation from Waste	
Strategy A-4: Reduce water consumption		
Land Use	LU-5.2	Sustainable Planning and Design
	LU-6.4	Sustainable Subdivision Design
	LU-6.9	Development Conformance with Topography
Conservation and Open Space	COS-4.1	Water Conservation
	COS-4.2	Drought-Efficient Landscaping



Table I-1 General Plan Policies Addressing Climate Change

Element	Policies
	COS-4.5 Recycled Water COS-14.4 Sustainable Technology and Projects COS-14.11 Native Vegetation COS-15.1 Design and Construction of New Buildings COS-15.2 Upgrade of Existing Buildings COS-15.3 Green Building Programs
Strategy A-5: Reduce and maximize reuse of solid wastes	
Land Use	LU-5.2 Sustainable Planning and Design LU-6.1 Environmental Sustainability LU-6.4 Sustainable Subdivision Design LU-16.3 New Waste Management Facilities
Conservation and Open Space	COS-10.7 Recycling of Debris COS-14.4 Sustainable Technology and Projects COS-15.1 Design and Construction of New Buildings COS-15.2 Upgrade of Existing Buildings COS-15.3 Green Building Programs COS-17.1 Reduction of Solid Waste Materials COS-17.2 Construction and Demolition Waste COS-17.4 Composting COS-17.6 Recycling Containers COS-17.7 Material Recovery Program COS-18.2 Energy Generation from Waste
Strategy A-6: Promote carbon dioxide consuming landscapes	
Land Use	LU-1.3 Development Patterns LU-2.5 Greenbelts to Define Communities LU-5.2 Sustainable Planning and Design LU-5.3 Rural Land Preservation LU-6.1 Environmental Sustainability LU-6.2 Reducing Development Pressures LU-6.3 Conservation-Oriented Project Design LU-6.6 Integration of Natural Features into Project Design LU-6.9 Development Conformance with Topography LU-7.1 Agricultural Land Development LU-7.2 Parcel Size Reduction as Incentive for Agriculture LU-9.10 Internal Village Connectivity
Conservation and Open Space	COS-14.4 Sustainable Technology and Projects COS-14.11 Native Vegetation

Table I-1 General Plan Policies Addressing Climate Change		
Element	Policies	
Strategy A-7: Maximize preservation of open spaces, natural areas, and agricultural lands		
Land Use	LU-1.3	Development Patterns
	LU-1.4	Village Expansion
	LU-1.6	Conversion of Public Lands to Private Ownership
	LU-3.3	Complete Neighborhoods
	LU-5.2	Sustainable Planning and Design
	LU-5.3	Rural Land Preservation
	LU-6.1	Environmental Sustainability
	LU-6.2	Reducing Development Pressures
	LU-6.3	Conservation-Oriented Project Design
	LU-6.4	Sustainable Subdivision Design
	LU-6.6	Integration of Natural Features into Project Design
	LU-6.7	Open Space Network
	LU-6.9	Development Conformance with Topography
	LU-7.1	Agricultural Land Development
	LU-7.2	Parcel Size Reduction as Incentive for Agriculture
	LU-9.11	Integration of Natural Features in Villages
	LU-10.2	Development—Environmental Resource Relationship
Mobility	M-2.3	Environmentally Sensitive Road Design
Conservation and Open Space	COS-1.1	Coordinated Preserve System
	COS-1.2	Minimize Impacts
	COS-1.3	Management
	COS-1.4	Collaboration with other Jurisdictions
	COS-1.5	Regional Collaboration
	COS-2.1	Protection, Restoration and Enhancement
	COS-2.2	Habitat Protection Through Site Design
	COS-3.1	Wetland Protection
	COS-3.2	Minimize Impacts of Development
	COS-7.2	Open Space Easements
	COS-14.11	Native Vegetation
	COS-23.2	Regional Coordination
	COS-24.1	Park and Recreation Contributions
	COS-24.2	Funding Opportunities
Housing	H-2.2	Projects with Open Space Amenities in Villages
OBJECTIVE B: ADAPTATION—ADAPTING CURRENT STRATEGIES SO THAT CLIMATE CHANGE IS INTEGRAL TO PLANNING ACTIVITIES AND DECISIONS		
Strategy B-1: Reduce risk from wildfire, flooding, and other hazards resulting from climate change		
Land Use	LU-1.2	Leapfrog Development
	LU-1.4	Village Expansion
	LU-5.2	Sustainable Planning and Design



Table I-1 General Plan Policies Addressing Climate Change

Element	Policies
	LU-5.3 Rural Land Preservation LU-6.3 Conservation-Oriented Project Design LU-6.4 Sustainable Subdivision Design LU-6.7 Open Space Network LU-6.9 Development Conformance with Topography LU-6.10 Protection from Hazards LU-6.11 Protection from Wildfires and Unmitigable Hazards LU-6.12 Flooding
Mobility	M-2.3 Environmentally Sensitive Road Design
Conservation and Open Space	COS-5.1 Impact to Floodways and Floodplains COS-5.3 Downslope Protection COS-5.4 Invasive Species COS-14.4 Sustainable Technology and Projects
Safety	S-1.3 Risk Reduction Programs S-2.2 Participation in Mutual Aid Systems S-2.3 Familiarity with National and State Response Plans S-2.5 Existing Development within 100-year Flood Zones S-2.6 Effective Emergency Evacuation Programs S-3.1 Defensible Development S-3.2 Development in Hillsides and Canyons S-3.3 Minimize Flammable Vegetation S-3.4 Service Availability S-3.5 Access Roads S-3.6 Fire Protection Measures S-4.1 Fuel Management Programs S-5.1 Regional Coordination Support S-5.2 Fire Service Provider Agreements S-6.1 Water Supply S-6.4 Fire Protection Services for Development S-9.1 Floodplain Maps S-9.2 Development in Floodplains S-9.3 Development in Flood Hazard Areas S-9.4 Development in Villages S-9.5 Development in the Floodplain Fringe S-9.6 Development in Dam Inundation Areas S-10.1 Land Uses within Floodways S-10.2 Use of Natural Channels S-10.3 Flood Control Facilities S-10.4 Stormwater Management S-10.5 Development Site Improvements S-10.6 Stormwater Hydrology

Table I-1 General Plan Policies Addressing Climate Change		
Element	Policies	
Strategy B-2: Conserve & improve water supply due to shortages from climate change		
Land Use	LU-5.2	Sustainable Planning and Design
	LU-6.2	Reducing Development Pressures
	LU-6.4	Sustainable Subdivision Design
	LU-6.5	Sustainable Stormwater Management
	LU-698	Development Conformance with Topography
	LU-8.1	Density Relationship to Groundwater Sustainability
	LU-8.2	Groundwater Resources
	LU-8.3	Groundwater-Dependent Habitat
	LU-8.4	Program for Borrego Valley Aquifer
	LU-13.1	Adequacy of Water Supply
	LU-13.2	Commitment of Water Supply
LU-16.1	Location of Waste Management Facilities	
Mobility	M-2.5	Minimize Excess Water Runoff
	M-10.7	Parking Area Design for Stormwater Runoff
Conservation and Open Space	COS-4.1	Water Conservation
	COS-4.2	Drought-Efficient Landscaping
	COS-4.3	Stormwater Filtration
	COS-4.4	Groundwater Contamination
	COS-4.5	Recycled Water
	COS-5.2	Impervious Surfaces
	COS-5.5	Impacts of Development to Water Quality
	COS-14.4	Sustainable Technology and Projects
	COS-19.1	Sustainable Development Practices
COS-19.2	Recycled Water in New Development	
Strategy B-3: Promote agricultural lands for local food production		
Land Use	LU-1.3	Development Patterns
	LU-5.2	Sustainable Planning and Design
	LU-5.3	Rural Land Preservation
	LU-6.1	Environmental Sustainability
	LU-6.2	Reducing Development Pressures
	LU-6.3	Compatibility with Recreational Open Space
	LU-6.4	Sustainable Subdivision Design
	LU-7.1	Agricultural Land Development
	LU-7.2	Parcel Size Reduction as Incentive for Agriculture
LU-12.9	Environmental and Agricultural Resources	
Conservation and Open Space	COS-6.1	Economic Diversity
	COS-6.2	Protection of Agricultural Operations
	COS-6.4	Conservation Easements



Table I-1 General Plan Policies Addressing Climate Change

Element	Policies	
Housing	H-3.6	Housing for Special Need Populations
	H-3.7	Alternative Affordable Housing Options
Strategy B-4: Provide education & leadership		
Conservation and Open Space	COS-17.8	Education
	COS-20.1	Climate Change Action Plan
	COS-20.2	GHG Monitoring and Implementation
	COS-20.4	Public Education
Safety	S-2.4	Emergency and Disaster Education Programs

San Diego County History and Community Profile

The San Diego County Profile is described below in terms of its history, physical setting, economy, population and growth patterns, and the unique communities in the unincorporated County.

History

The County of San Diego was established on February 18, 1850, as one of the original 27 counties of California. The newly created County covered nearly 40,000 square miles including the present counties of San Diego, Imperial, Riverside, and San Bernardino, along with the eastern portion of Inyo County.

The territory comprising San Diego County was under Mexican rule from 1821 until 1846 during which time private land grants covering 948 square miles were bestowed throughout the County. The grants resulted in the formation of private ranchos, some of which are recognizable areas today, such as Rancho Santa Fe (Rancho San Dieguito), Marine Corps Base Camp Pendleton (Rancho Santa Margarita y Las Flores), Rancho Santa Maria (Ramona), and Rancho El Cajon (El Cajon, Lakeside, Santee, and Bostonia). Many ranchos were transformed into incorporated cities; for example, National City and Chula Vista were formed from Rancho de la Nación. Today, the County includes 18 incorporated cities, but retains a large unincorporated area which is the subject of this General Plan.

Physical Setting and Community Planning Areas



Valley landscape



Borrego desert



Fallbrook community

SAN DIEGO COUNTY HISTORY AND COMMUNITY PROFILE

San Diego County, including incorporated cities, contains approximately 4,261 square miles that cover 65 miles north to south and 86 miles east to west. The County is bordered by Riverside County and Orange

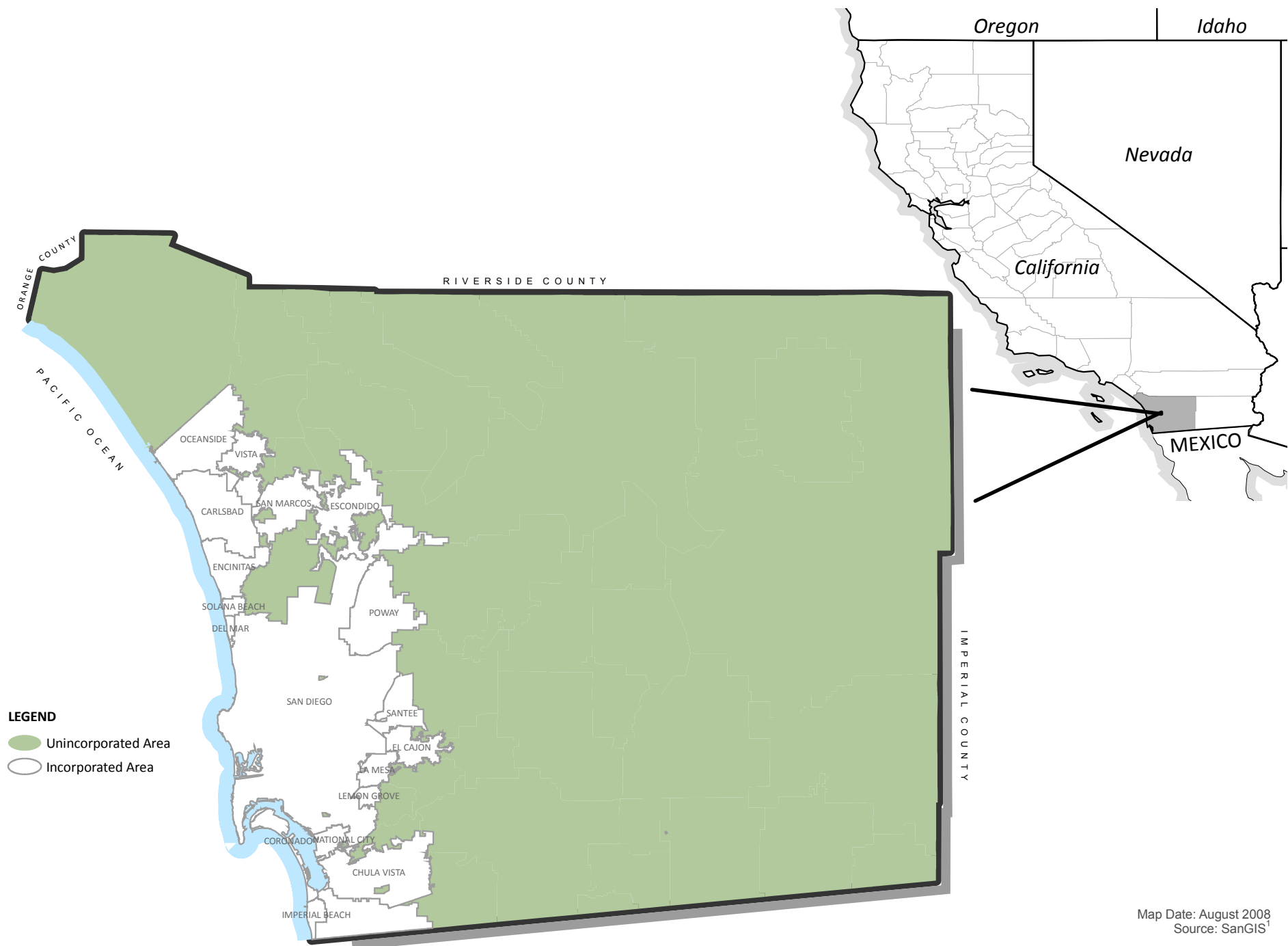
County to the north; Imperial County to the east; the nation of Mexico to the south; and the Pacific Ocean to the west as shown in Figure I-1 (Regional Context). The County's western portion includes 18 cities, while in the unincorporated area specifically designated subregions and community planning areas encompass the remainder of the County. These community and subregional planning areas are shown in Figure I-2 (Unincorporated County Communities). A majority of the land in the unincorporated area is open space or undeveloped and includes large tracts of federal, state, or regional parklands, and agricultural production areas. Residential land uses account for the majority of the developed land in the unincorporated County.

Relative to the incorporated areas located near the coast, development opportunities in the unincorporated areas of the County are generally more highly constrained due to more rugged terrain, more occurrences of sensitive species and habitat; and less opportunity for the provision of infrastructure and essential services. These physical, environmental, and infrastructure considerations, particularly the limited availability of water service from the County Water Authority (CWA), and the limited availability of other urban services such as sewer, fire, and emergency services, are major factors that shape the County's future growth and development potential.

The most developed communities in the unincorporated County are located at its westernmost boundaries within the CWA boundary; they have access to public services and infrastructure and have sustained growth at a more rapid rate than in other parts of the County. The communities closest to the core metropolitan area of the region have limited potential for future growth because much of their land is already developed. These communities—Valle de Oro, Spring Valley, Sweetwater, the western portions of Lakeside—contain substantial existing populations. These communities desire to retain the existing community character and remaining open space. These more densely populated communities are also concerned about limiting negative impacts caused by road construction and certain developments in incorporated jurisdictions.

Other communities that are more distant from the San Diego metropolitan center but within the CWA—Alpine, Ramona, Valley Center, North County Metro, Bonsall, Fallbrook, and Otay Mesa—have a greater capacity to grow when compared to other communities. However, in all of these communities, any future growth must be carefully balanced with other factors to preserve their identity and unique resources. Although within the CWA, growth potential is more limited in Rainbow, Twin Oaks, and Hidden Meadows (part of North County Metro), Jamul, and Crest/Dehesa/Harbison Canyon/Granite Hills due to the absence of infrastructure, the rugged terrain, and sensitive habitats.

San Diego's remaining major rural communities include Dulzura, Julian, Pala-Pauma, Palomar, Borrego Springs, Cuyamaca, Descanso, Pine Valley, Jacumba, Boulevard, Lake Morena, Campo, Potrero, and Tecate. Rugged terrain, agriculture, and sensitive environmental habitats, as well as limited road networks and public services, limit growth in these areas. With few exceptions, these communities are sparsely populated and lack the infrastructure and employment opportunities to support anything more than limited population growth. With the exception of some limited areas of sewer service, these communities rely largely upon septic systems. Without imported water, groundwater is also a limiting factor to growth. Further, this area of the County contains a substantial amount of public lands, tribal land, and land affected by the Forest Conservation Initiative (FCI). Residents in these communities desire to preserve the existing rural setting and character.



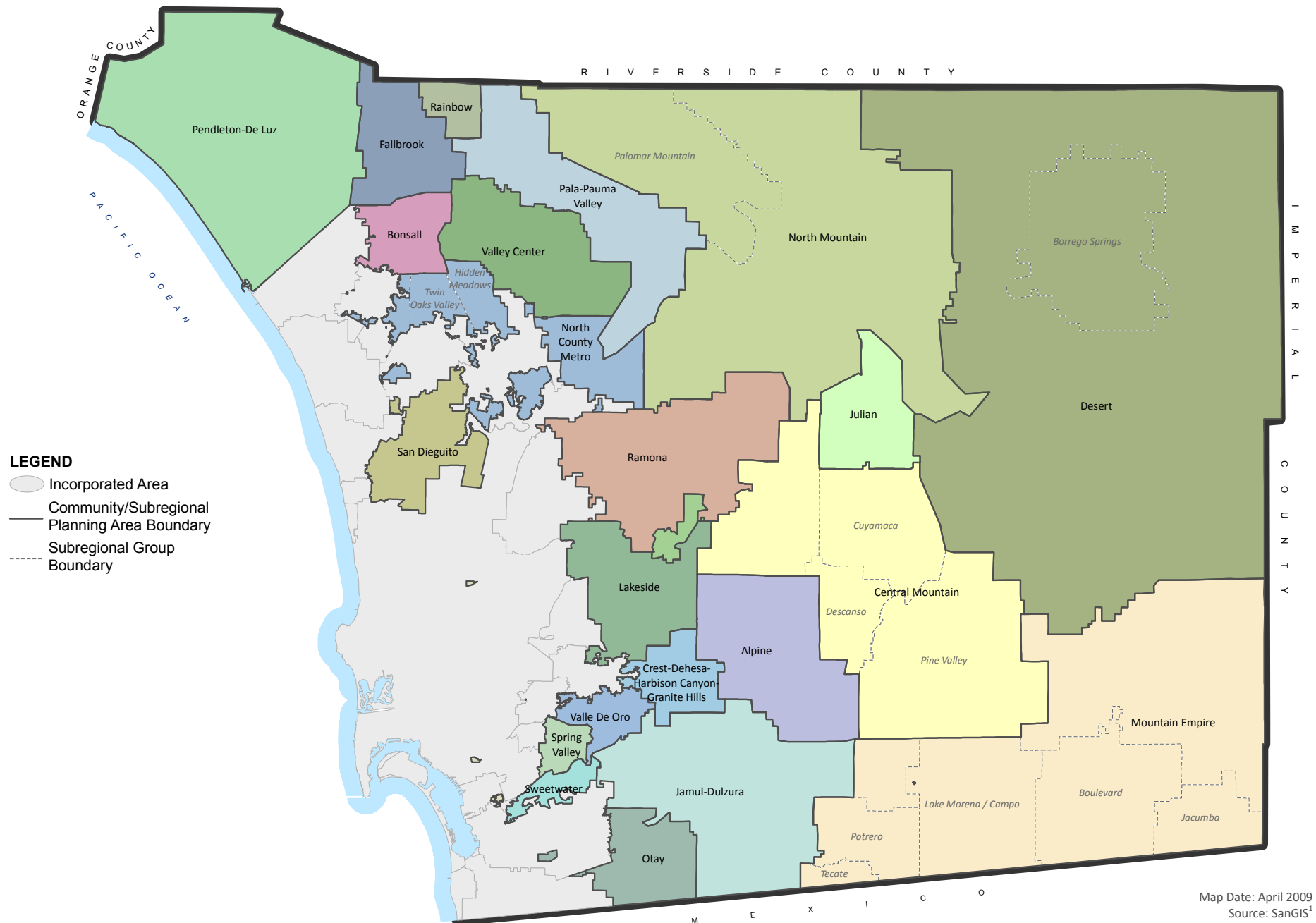
REGIONAL CONTEXT

San Diego County General Plan

Map Date: August 2008
 Source: SanGIS¹



Figure I-1



UNINCORPORATED COUNTY COMMUNITIES



Demographic Patterns

The unincorporated County encompasses 3,570 square miles that represent 84 percent of the total land area of San Diego County, yet its 2008 population of 491,764 persons represented only 15.6 percent of the total County population. During the period from 1980 to 2008, the average annual population rate increase for the unincorporated area was approximately 1.1 percent, whereas the average annual rate of increase for the entire County was 3.4 percent between 1980 and 1990 and 1.3 between 1990 and 2008. Population forecasts for 2030 indicate that the population of the entire County will grow by 42 percent.

Once dependent on the military and defense-related industries, San Diego County now has a diverse economy that includes manufacturing, telecommunications, tourism, trade, biosciences, software, multimedia, and digital technology. These industries are largely located in the 18 cities, with the exception of agricultural production, which is primarily located in the unincorporated County and which is a significant component of its economy.



Valley Center



Fallbrook Village



Twin Oaks agriculture

CHAPTER 2 **Vision and Guiding Principles**



Introduction

The County of San Diego’s General Plan sets a direction for the future of the unincorporated area of San Diego County by providing clear, unified framework for community development and conservation. The development of this General Plan began in 1998 and included extensive community involvement, the results of which informed the creation of the Vision Statement and Guiding Principles. The Vision Statement and Guiding Principles in turn establish the foundation upon which the General Plan elements and its components are consistent, related, and measured. The Vision represents the basis by which all updated plan goals, policies, and implementation programs are measured and constitute the Plan’s legislative intent as approved by the Board of Supervisors.

Vision

The Vision is derived from the strategic initiatives of the County’s General Management System (GMS), which include:

- Kids—Improve opportunities for children
- The Environment—Manage resources to ensure environmental preservation, quality of life, and economic development
- Safe and Livable Communities—Promote safe and livable communities



The General Plan provides a key vehicle for the County to implement these strategic initiatives by identifying innovative growth solutions that address a full spectrum of issues, including housing, transportation, community infrastructure, and environmental impact. The County of San Diego is committed to improving opportunities and outcomes for children by providing a healthy and safe physical environment, while supporting recreational opportunities and land use patterns that encourage a healthy lifestyle. This General Plan guides the County’s management of its environmental resources through policies to sustain and enhance the land, water, air, and biodiversity upon which all life depends, while recognizing that our growing population must also be accommodated. While the General Plan’s goals and policies address San Diego County’s natural hazards and human activities that pose a threat to public safety, promoting livable communities requires much more than just safety. Essential components of livable communities include: a sense of place with attractive and convenient service and support facilities, a safe and efficient

VISION

transportation network, public and personal safety, and sustainable development. The following represents the vision for what San Diego County is intended to become with build-out of this General Plan.

What We Plan to Be



San Diego County is comprised of diverse communities offering residents with places to live, work, shop, be educated, and recreate in settings dominated by the natural environment and open spaces. It is generally a low-density alternative to the urbanized San Diego coastline and inland areas. Many communities consist of small scale villages or residences on large lots with agriculture and open space. Our villages are intended to grow in compact land development patterns to minimize intrusion into agricultural lands and open spaces; the distance that we travel to our local services and businesses; and the need for extensive infrastructure and services; while also inducing community association, activity, and walking. The County's ambience will remain quiet and peaceful, with nighttime skies illuminated by the stars. Our infrastructure and services will retain the characteristics of rural places with natural water courses, septic systems, low-level street lighting, and limited sidewalks. Buildings and architecture will continue to be subsumed within and complement our physical setting of valleys, hillsides, and deserts.

Our Physical Setting



We recognize the importance of the San Diego region's natural environment and are committed to sustaining its diversity, health, and integrity as a distinguishing asset for residents and visitors. New development shall respect and maintain the physical and visual integrity of the hillsides, valleys, and deserts that shape and provide identity for our community. We will continue to avoid or minimize developing in areas susceptible to geologic, wildfire, and flooding risks and we will continue to retain and protect the viability of our woodlands, riparian corridors, and important plant and animal habitats, maintaining the health and viability of declining species. The County's lakes and streams will be free of toxins and harmful pollutants, sustaining fish populations and a healthy water supply, while offering abundant recreation opportunities for residents and



visitors. We will continue to recognize and maintain strong partnerships with state and federal agencies in protecting and preserving our natural environment.

Protecting Our Agriculture



We will continue to value our agricultural lands and recognize the importance of preserving opportunities for the production of healthy food and ornamental crops for our population and others. We will emphasize the distribution of our agricultural products locally and within the region. Our future development patterns and parcel sizes will avoid incentivizing the conversion of agriculture for urban uses.

Our Communities

The County of San Diego will continue to provide a diversity of choices for the type and character of community in which we live. These choices will include villages that contain a mix of housing types that are located near retail businesses, employment, schools, parklands, churches, and public institutions. These villages will vary in density and character that will provide affordable housing choices, some will be located near and transitioning with coastal suburban communities, while others will reflect the unique character of their mountain, valley, and desert setting. An alternative choice will be to continue to live on large parcels, separated from our neighbors by agriculture and open spaces with few or no urban services.

How We Get Around



San Diego County infrastructure will be planned to offer easy and convenient access within and between our communities and to the greater region. The County's streets and highways will be planned to provide a comprehensive, well-connected network maintained to support use by all our road users — cars, trucks, transit, bicyclists, and pedestrians. Our road network will also be planned to channel traffic to avoid conflicts with our residential neighborhoods. Our traffic signalization and traffic control mechanisms will be planned to facilitate traffic flow and avoid congestion. As an alternative to the automobile, bicycle paths and

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pedestrian-ways will be planned to be strategically located within and around village areas and designed to provide a pleasant experience for users. We will continue to explore opportunities to expand transit services commensurate with needs and density. Our village cores will be planned to shared parking facilities that enable residents and visitors to park once, walk along lively streets, and patronize multiple business establishments and community services.

How We Sustain Our Community



The County of San Diego recognizes its long-term obligations to future residents by simultaneously promoting ecological health, economic vitality, and social well-being. In our villages, the Land Use Map provides a mix and density of land uses that will minimize automobile trips and their length, invigorate the economic health of our businesses, and promote association with our neighbors. These, coupled with increased access to transit, will reduce our air emissions, greenhouse gas emissions, energy consumption, noise, and time spent away from our families. We will walk more in our village cores and participate in recreational activities, improving the health of our families and children. We will develop our properties and design our buildings to reduce energy consumption, use low-impact alternative energy sources, capture stormwater and recycle wastewater, use recycled construction materials, reuse our solid wastes, and use non-toxic paints and materials. Our sustainable practices will contribute to a healthy environment, enhancing the livability of San Diego County.

Our Sustainable and Vital Economy

We will continue to strive to maintain a healthy and vital economy, providing a variety of jobs for our residents and a climate in which our businesses can prosper. Our businesses are diverse, building on the resources uniquely available in the County, including its agriculture and natural setting that offers opportunities for tourism and, at the same time, providing goods and services to our residents. By providing our residents with housing in compact villages, we will provide a strong customer base to maintain the viability of our businesses.



Our Safe Community

We value the safety of our community. Our neighborhoods continue to be safe places to live and we continue to be comfortable in our business districts, parks, and open spaces with almost non-existent crime.



While we value and enjoy the beauty of our outdoors and environment, we continue to recognize the inherent risks of wildfires, flooding, earthquakes, and other natural hazards and take measures to locate and design our development to avoid these risks and provide excellent and responsive police and fire services to protect our well-being.

Guiding Principles

The Guiding Principles constitute a set of rules by which updated General Plan policies were developed. They guide the formulation of growth and development plans, environmental conservation, provision of infrastructure and services, and protection from environmental and man-induced hazards. The General Plan maps, goals and policies, and implementation programs are based on a set of ten interrelated principles that provide guidance for accommodating future growth while retaining or enhancing the County’s rural character, its economy, its environmental resources, and its unique communities. The ten Guiding Principles are:

1. Support a reasonable share of projected regional population growth.
2. Promote health and sustainability by locating new growth near existing and planned infrastructure, services, and jobs in a compact pattern of development.
3. Reinforce the vitality, local economy, and individual character of existing communities when planning new housing, employment, and recreational opportunities.
4. Promote environmental stewardship that protects the range of natural resources and habitats that uniquely define the County’s character and ecological importance.
5. Ensure that development accounts for physical constraints and the natural hazards of the land.
6. Provide and support a multi-modal transportation network that enhances connectivity and supports community development patterns and, when appropriate, plan for development which supports public transportation.
7. Maintain environmentally sustainable communities and reduce greenhouse gas emissions that contribute to climate change.
8. Preserve agriculture as an integral component of the region’s economy, character, and open space network.
9. Minimize public costs of infrastructure and services and correlate their timing with new development.
10. Recognize community and stakeholder interests while striving for consensus.

In summary, the Guiding Principles provide for the development of land uses, investment in infrastructure and public services, and conservation of natural resources that enable the County’s residents and businesses to enjoy a more sustainable environment, economy, and well-being and health. Each of the guiding principles is outlined in more detail below.

Guiding Principle 1

Support a reasonable share of projected regional population growth.

California and the San Diego region have been among the fastest growing areas in the nation and projections indicate that this will continue during the upcoming decades, regardless of variations associated with

GUIDING PRINCIPLES

economic cycles. Data indicate that much of the growth has been and will continue to be attributable to birth rates of existing residents coupled with the longer lifespan of the population and, secondarily, due to immigration. The San Diego Association of Governments (SANDAG) projects that the entire County's population will increase by 40 percent between 2000 and 2030, or approximately 1,140,000 persons. Though considerable growth in the region is likely to gravitate toward existing urbanized areas to facilitate access to jobs and services and reduce vehicle commutes and gasoline consumption, demand for development in unincorporated County areas is anticipated to continue as available lands within urbanized areas diminish and residents choose to live in a rural environment.

As growth continues in the region, the County will accommodate a reasonable share in the unincorporated County in a manner that sustains the natural setting, characteristics, and qualities that distinguish the County, its communities, and rural places as special places to live. The County will implement this guiding principle by planning and facilitating housing in and adjacent to existing and planned villages.

Guiding Principle 2

Promote health and sustainability by locating new growth near existing and planned infrastructure, services, and jobs in a compact pattern of development.

Low-density, large-parcel development patterns in the County afford residents the opportunity to enjoy open spaces, natural areas, and a rural lifestyle. However, such fragmentation and dispersal of development can result in corresponding increases in impacts on environmental resources and the costs of community infrastructure and services. The complexity and cost of the network of highways, water pipes, electrical energy, and other utility infrastructure needed to serve development is a function of the distance from supply source to the user. The greater the dispersal of development, the greater the improvements and associated costs required for the user and community. Similarly, community services such as police and fire are provided from central locations and require travel times to access users. Those travel times increase with decreasing densities. Low-density and fragmented development patterns also increase travel distances and times from homes to jobs, shopping, and services. These, in turn, increase gasoline consumption, air pollution, greenhouse gas (GHG) emissions, and time away from home and the family.



Julian's compact development patterns with a small central core surrounded by semi-rural and rural development

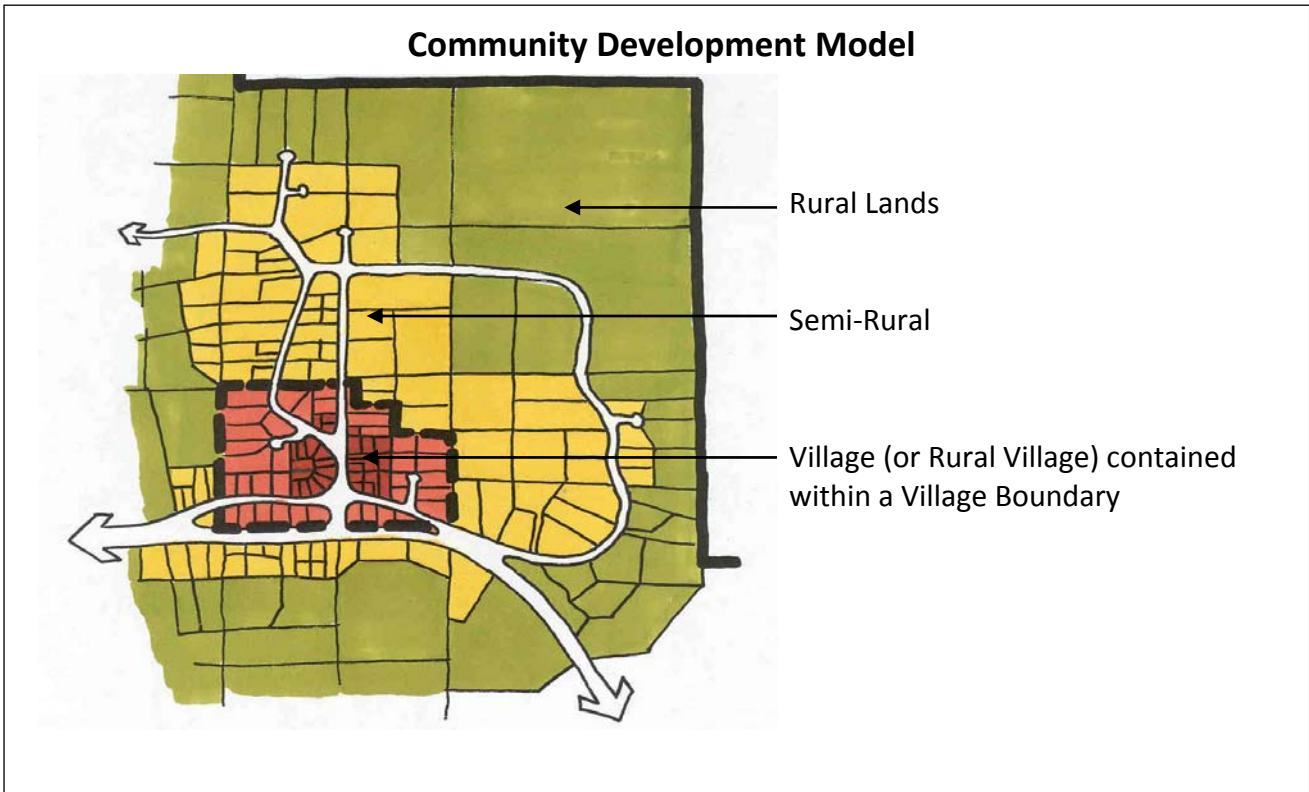
Large-parcel development also contributes to the loss of agriculture and natural habitats. Research for the Multi-Species Conservation Program (MSCP) indicates that there has been a considerable loss of habitat in San Diego region over the past several decades, with some habitats occupying less than 10 percent of their historic range.

As population growth continues in the San Diego County, more compact development should occur within existing and planned communities to reduce these impacts. Locating housing closer to retail, services, schools, and jobs and on smaller lots within communities can reduce the size of required infrastructure

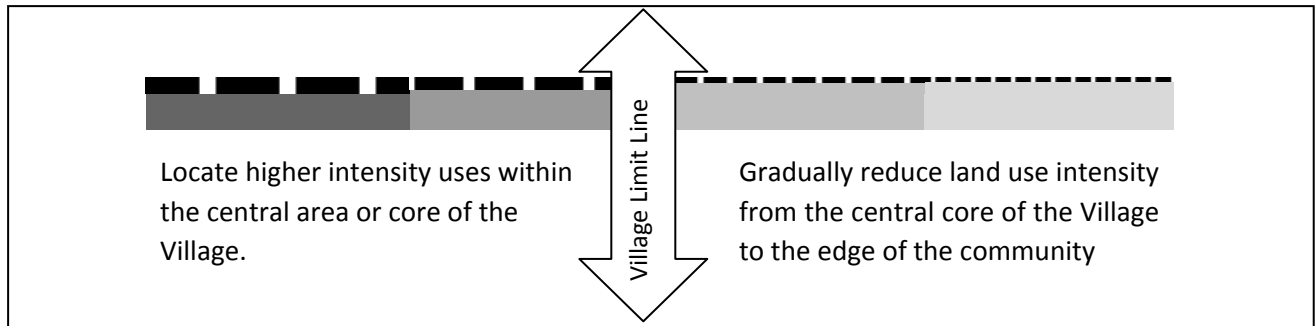


improvements and number and length of automobile trips, while increase the efficiency of delivering police, fire, and other public services and enhancing community livability. A more compact form of development in the County would reduce the amount of developed land, or its “footprint,” increasing the amount of open space, natural habitat, and agriculture that can be preserved, as well as reducing pressure on groundwater resources. It also would contribute to the retention of the rural setting and lifestyle of backcountry communities.

A model of compact development begins with a central core, referred to as a “Village” or, in very rural communities, a “Rural Village” in which the highest intensities of development are located. Under ideal conditions for achieving sustainability, the central core would be surrounded by areas of very low density. In unincorporated San Diego County, the ideal model has been modified with semi-rural areas surrounding the central core to reflect the existing pattern of development for most of the unincorporated County, along with a realization that the ideal Community Development Model is only achievable with a wide ranging and extensive transit network. Therefore, in the County’s Community Development Model, the central core is surrounded by areas of lesser intensity including “Semi-Rural” and “Rural Lands.” The edge of a “Village” or “Rural Village” can be defined by a boundary that can be used to differentiate permitted development densities and design standards. The “Village” would contain the densest neighborhoods and a broad range of commercial and civic uses that are supported by a dense network of local roads containing bicycle lanes and walkways linking the neighborhoods with parks, schools, and public areas. Outside of the “Village,” “Semi-Rural” areas would contain low-density residential neighborhoods, small-scale agricultural operations, and rural commercial businesses. In turn, these would be surrounded by “Rural Lands” characterized by very low-density residential areas that contain open space, habitat, recreation, agriculture, and other uses associated with rural areas. The diagrams below illustrate these relationships:



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Developing the County’s communities more compactly meets critical objectives for compliance with the mandates of AB 32, the *California Global Warming Solutions Act of 2006*. The bill requires the reduction of GHG emissions to 1990 levels by 2020, about a 25 percent reduction from current levels. Governor Schwarzenegger’s Executive Order S-E-05 requires further reductions to 80 percent below 1990 levels by 2050. As automobile use and energy consumption are principal contributors to GHG emissions, compact land use patterns and development practices that reduce trip generation and distances will be essential.

Guiding Principle 3

Reinforce the vitality, local economy, and individual character of existing communities when planning new housing, employment, and recreational opportunities.

Critically important in defining the San Diego region is the diversity and character of its distinct communities. Some are located at the edges and serve as transitions from coastal and inland urbanized cities to agriculture and open spaces. These communities are often integrated into the more urban fabric of the region and will serve an important role in meeting the region’s housing and employment needs. Others are remotely located in agricultural, pine-covered mountain, valley, and desert locations. Each has emerged in a distinct physical setting with a unique history, culture, character, life style, and identity that has attracted residents and, in some cases, tourists.



As the County continues to grow, it is critical that development be located, scaled, and designed to retain and enhance the qualities that distinguish its communities. Development planning must consider uses; parcel sizes; building form, scale, massing, and architecture; landscapes; and site development practices that are comparable to, or transition with, existing development to ensure that new development “fits” with the community. Smaller parcel sizes in community cores, for example, can be developed to replicate the character and scale of existing development. An economically viable community must also provide housing for all income levels. Close coordination with communities will be essential in understanding those attributes that distinguish them. Clear and effectively crafted community plans have an important role in communicating these principles.



With new development, it is also crucial to accommodate, and provide incentives for, important missing uses that residents and other stakeholders indicate are needed to “complete” the community. These may include locally-needed retail and services and/or amenities, such as parks, sidewalks that are pedestrian-friendly, trails and pathways, and parking facilities.

Guiding Principle 4

Promote environmental stewardship that protects the range of natural resources and habitats that uniquely define the County’s character and ecological importance.

The San Diego region is considered to be one of the most biologically diverse areas in the United States¹ and it is home to more rare and endangered species than any other region in the continental United States. Large lot development practices during recent decades have resulted in a loss of habitat resources, with some habitat types occupying less than five to ten percent of their historic ranges. The continued existence of over 400 sensitive plant and animal species depends on the assurance that sufficient amounts of native habitat, wildlife corridors, and habitat linkages are preserved and managed in a viable manner. The County, in cooperation with the City of San Diego, local, state, and federal agencies, has been aggressive in documenting and developing policies for the protection of sensitive species and habitats. The Multiple Species Conservation Program (MSCP) provides the foundation for these efforts through conservation of land and adaptive management and monitoring activities.

As growth and new development occur in the County, critical lands and habitat should be set aside and protected from development. On other lands, buildings, infrastructure, and other improvements should be located and designed to prevent degradation and adverse impacts on adjoining resources. Maintenance of viable and healthy habitats and biological resources not only sustains sensitive plant and animal species, but also contributes to the economic value, character, and identity of the County.

As practiced, the strict correlation of parcel size with density has been contrary to these objectives. Smaller lot sizes are an essential tool when planning for new development to preserve sensitive resources. Another important consideration is the configuration of the lots, which should be arranged to connect open spaces and create a linked network throughout the region.



¹ Dobson, A.P., J.P. Rodriguez, W.M. Roberts, and D.S. Wilcove. 1997 Geographic Distribution of Endangered Species in the United States. *Science* 275(5299): 550-553

Guiding Principle 5

Ensure that development accounts for physical constraints and the natural hazards of the land.

Residents, businesses, and visitors to the San Diego region are exposed to a diversity of natural and human-induced hazards that could affect life and property. Rupture of the Elsinore, Earthquake Valley, and San Jacinto Faults, and other ancillary faults, may incur property and personal damage due to ground shaking, landslides, liquefaction, and tsunamis. Landslides and rockfalls occur throughout the County's mountainous terrain. Hillside canyons, valleys, the desert floor, and flatlands may be impacted by heavy storm runoff and flooding. Wildland fires often occur in grasslands, chaparral, and forests, while threatening structures in urbanized areas. Some industrial and commercial businesses involve the use of toxic chemicals and hazardous materials that pose a risk to human health.



New development should be located and designed to protect life and property from these and similar hazards. In high risk areas, development should be prohibited or restricted in type and/or density. In other areas, structures, properties, infrastructure, and other improvements should be designed to mitigate potential risks from these hazards. Development that cannot avoid high risk areas should be carefully reviewed for consistency with County building codes and development regulations to eliminate or minimize potential risks.

Guiding Principle 6

Provide and support a multi-modal transportation network that enhances connectivity and supports community development patterns and, when appropriate, plan for development which supports public transportation.

The transportation system within the unincorporated County will rely primarily on a public road network that contains transportation routes for vehicular and non-vehicular travel such as pedestrians and bicycles. Future development will be more compact, which will reduce travel distances and the geographic extent of the transportation network, as discussed in Guiding Principle 2. These compact development patterns will support the development of a public transportation system. However, the mix and densities of land uses in the rural setting will be insufficient to support the development of a more comprehensive public transportation system accessible to a significant number of residents and the automobile will remain the primary mode of transportation in these areas. Nevertheless, public transit will be supported and enhanced where appropriate. Additionally, bike routes, pathways, and trails will be integrated with the road network providing options for travel and recreation.



An effective transportation system should provide convenient access to employment, education, public service, commercial, and recreational centers. It should provide connectivity within each community and within the region. The capacity of the transportation network should be adequate to support the development capacity of the land use plan for housing, retail, industrial, recreational, and other uses. Routes should be designed and developed that are sensitive to their context and minimize construction and environmental costs.

The transportation network should be built to support and correlate with community development patterns. Where more compact forms of development occur, a transportation network should provide a unified and connected system of public roads that accommodate private vehicles, bus or transit stops, pedestrian routes, and bicycles. In low-intensity rural areas, transportation routes should provide safe connections within the community, as well as connections to the regional transportation network.

Guiding Principle 7

Maintain environmentally sustainable communities and reduce greenhouse gas emissions that contribute to climate change.

There is a growing body of evidence that our built communities and typical lifestyles are resulting in over-consumption and degradation of natural resources and that a major shift in human behavior and development practices is necessary to overcome these. Increasingly, communities are seeking more sustainable approaches to development and conservation where persons and societies can live within the means of what the Earth can provide over the long term. A generally accepted definition states “sustainability meets the needs of the present without compromising the ability of future generations to meet their own needs.”² The emission of GHGs is one critical issue among many that cumulatively contribute to a community’s and a region’s sustainability.



Example of native landscaping

Sustainability principles also recognize the need to balance the environment with economic and social equity needs. A sustainable economy is one in which good jobs are available for residents and businesses thrive, providing capital to support human needs and protect the environment. A sustainable society is one in which residents are well-educated, have access to cultural activities, are physically active and healthy, and

² United Nations World Commission on Environment and Development

GUIDING PRINCIPLES

participate with their neighbors in community activity. Together, these are referred to as the “triple bottom line” of sustainability and all are considered of equal importance.

The County of San Diego can move towards sustainability and a reduction of GHG emissions by managing land development and building construction, conserving habitats and natural resources, providing efficient transportation and mobility systems, and developing its infrastructure and public services. As described for Guiding Principle 2, land should be developed more compactly, resulting in reduced automobile use and increased use of public transit, walking, and bicycling. This will result in less consumption of gasoline, generation of less air pollution and GHG emissions, the preservation of greater amounts of habitat and agricultural lands, and the improvement of the lifestyles and health of community residents. Locating residences closer to retail stores and jobs also increases the economic viability of those commercial entities. Providing new recreational facilities and access to the County’s abundant open spaces can improve public health. Similarly, choices for alternative transportation modes including bus and transit systems, pedestrian routes, and bicycle paths should be expanded, as described in Guiding Principle 6. This will result in similar benefits to public health by increasing outdoor activities.

Reduced consumption of energy, water, and raw materials, generation of waste, and use of toxic and hazardous substances should be considered in all aspects of development. Buildings should be oriented on properties to maximize opportunities for solar access and photovoltaic energy systems. Rainfall should be captured on site, lessening runoff into storm drainage facilities and pollution of creeks and streams, and used for irrigation and to replenish the groundwater supply. Buildings should be designed to reduce energy consumption by incorporating natural ventilation, insulation, sunshades, use of energy-efficient equipment, and similar techniques. Wastewater should be re-used for irrigation, toilets, and other suitable purposes. Sites should be landscaped with plant materials that are drought-tolerant and require little water and fertilizer. These represent some of the diverse techniques that should be considered as growth occurs in the County.

Guiding Principle 8

Preserve agriculture as an integral component of the region’s economy, character, and open space network.

Agriculture contributes to the County’s rural character and is an important contributor to the regional economy. Unlike many agricultural areas that depend primarily on soil quality, agriculture in San Diego County relies primarily on the region’s mild climate and its long growing seasons. These factors allow the County to facilitate small farms and crop diversification through support of the Farm and Home Advisor.



Growth and development in the County should be directed to areas so as to protect opportunities for continued agricultural production. Development of compact communities, as defined by Guiding Principle 2, will contribute to this objective. Permitted densities in prime agricultural areas should be reduced to sustain sufficient parcel size



for viable agricultural activities. Incentives should be provided to enable farmers to create small lot subdivisions while retaining the bulk of their land for agricultural operation. Land uses that are incompatible with agricultural uses should be prohibited from major agricultural areas. Finally, a program for the purchase of development rights for agricultural lands should be implemented.

Guiding Principle 9

Minimize public costs of infrastructure and services and correlate their timing with new development.

Population growth impacts the cost to build and operate essential public services. The development of housing, retail stores, and industrial jobs and services requires new roads, schools, parks, law enforcement, fire protection, and other public services. National studies indicate that a residential development does not pay for itself, requiring an estimated \$1.42 in public expenditures for every dollar it generates in tax revenues. In California, this deficit is even greater due to the limitations of Proposition 13. In addition, dispersed development patterns, common in unincorporated areas, are costly to serve because they require a more extensive road network for transportation and fire protection, law enforcement, and emergency services. The U.S. Department of Agriculture, for example, found that the capital costs for public infrastructure are typically 74 percent greater for low-density, semi-rural development than for high-density development.³ Although entitlement fees cover some of the initial public costs for capital improvements, they do not pay for operational or maintenance costs and property taxes do not generate sufficient revenue to fund operational costs.

To reduce the costs of construction and maintenance, development in the County should be designed to be more compact and located in proximity to existing and planned infrastructure and services. New development located near existing and planned infrastructure and services would be served in a more efficient manner and would require less extensive roads and infrastructure, as defined by Guiding Principle 2. This could reduce the need to build and operate new road networks, emergency and law enforcement facilities, libraries, schools, parks, and other public services needed to support residential development in remote areas. Additionally, new technologies and planning approaches that improve cost effectiveness of services and infrastructure should be continually sought out and applied when appropriate.

Guiding Principle 10

Recognize community and stakeholder interests while striving for consensus.

The residents of San Diego County's unincorporated communities and rural areas have chosen to live here largely due to its environmental setting of hillsides, valleys, deserts, and agriculture; low-density rural character; absence of congestion and pollution; friendliness of neighbors; and pace of life that contribute to a high quality of life distinct from the urbanized environment of coastal San Diego and adjoining inland areas. As growth continues, development must be managed to protect these assets.

³ "Development of the Urban Fringe and Beyond," Economic Research Service, USDA, June 2001. The report defines "low density" as less than 2 dwelling units per acre.

GUIDING PRINCIPLES



A community meeting held during the General Plan Update planning process

In addition to individual property owners, stakeholders of this Plan primarily include community groups, the building industry, environmental organizations, agricultural interests, and planning and design professionals. These groups represent a myriad of competing interests as do the goals and policies in this Plan that address those interests. While there is often an apparent disconnect between the goals and policies, the Plan's implementation must strike a balance between these individual interests.

To this end, opportunities must continue to be provided to engage the County's residents, business persons, and stakeholder interests in planning and development decisions that affect the character and quality of the communities and rural areas. Forums for citizens to voice their opinions and provide input regarding proposed land uses to be accommodated; their density, design and development character; compatibility and "fit" with existing uses; obligations to support public infrastructure and services; and impact mitigation must be continued. Where significant debates occur, processes should be established to enable each viewpoint to be heard and for compromise positions to be reached. Community groups such as the community planning and sponsor groups should continue to have an active role in these processes.

CHAPTER 3 **Land Use Element**



Introduction

The **Land Use Element** provides a framework to accommodate future development in an efficient and sustainable manner that is compatible with the character of unincorporated communities and the protection of valuable and sensitive natural resources.

Currently, the County of San Diego is faced with both significant growth pressures and severe environmental constraints. While population continues to grow, the supply of land capable of supporting development continues to decrease. In accommodating this growth, the land use plan encourages the provision of diverse housing choices while protecting the established character of existing urban and rural neighborhoods.

In general, the majority of new development—approximately 80 percent—is planned within the County Water Authority (CWA) boundary. This strategy coincides with the provision of imported water in San Diego County’s semi-arid environment, and reflects the development pattern of the County’s largest unincorporated communities, which are located in the County’s western areas where demand for new development has and will continue to be greatest. The County’s unincorporated communities and rural lands, however, exhibit tremendous diversity. This General Plan recognizes and encourages these unique identities by providing sufficient flexibility within a countywide framework to respect the character of individual communities, neighborhoods, and landscapes.

Focusing development in and around existing unincorporated communities allows the County to maximize existing infrastructure, provides for efficient service delivery, and strengthens town center areas while preserving the rural landscape that helps define the unique character of the unincorporated County.

Purpose and Scope

COUNTYWIDE

The Land Use Element is a framework that provides maps, goals, and policies that guide planners, the general public, property owners, developers, and decision makers as to how lands are to be conserved and developed in the unincorporated County. The first section, **Land Use Framework**, defines the categories of use to be permitted. These are defined at two scales: (a) broadly defined regional categories differentiated by character and overall density and (b) detailed categories that break-down the regional categories into more precise land use types, population densities, and development intensities. The Land Use Maps Appendix presents the **Land Use Map** depicting the allocation of these categories to all unincorporated County lands based on the General Plan’s **Guiding Principles** in Chapter 2 (Vision and Guiding Principles). The Land Use Map serves as the regulatory document guiding land use, conservation, and development. The final section presents the goals and policies that carry out and amplify the intentions of the Land Use Map.

COMMUNITY PLANS

While the Land Use Element inclusive of Land Use Maps and Goals and Policies applies to all lands throughout the unincorporated County, there are special land use issues and objectives that uniquely pertain to each of its diverse communities. These are addressed by **Community Plans** in which goals and policies are

INTRODUCTION

defined to provide more precise guidance regarding the character, land uses, and densities within each community planning area. Though Community Plans are a part of this General Plan, they are bound separately and must be referenced in determining the types and density of land use that may be considered for any property within the community planning area.

PUBLIC INFRASTRUCTURE AND SERVICES

Public infrastructure such as roads, drainage facilities, sewer and water lines, and treatment plants are the structural framework that supports development. Their availability plays an important part in determining the pattern of land uses within a community, as well as the direction and intensity of growth. Community services such as law enforcement, fire protection, libraries, and parks are important to the safety and livability of communities. They can affect the well-being of communities and should also be accounted for when planning future growth.

Community services and infrastructure in the County of San Diego are either provided by the County or by independent agencies and special districts at the local, regional, state, and federal levels. Actions taken by these independent districts for the planning, provision, and funding of public facilities are not subject to the County's land use authority. The County does operate and maintain several dependent sanitation districts and wastewater facilities. In addition, some regional public facilities, such as courthouses, are under the authority of the County and serve the entire San Diego region, including residents of the County's 18 cities. Also, the County operates the library system for all unincorporated areas, along with some incorporated jurisdictions.

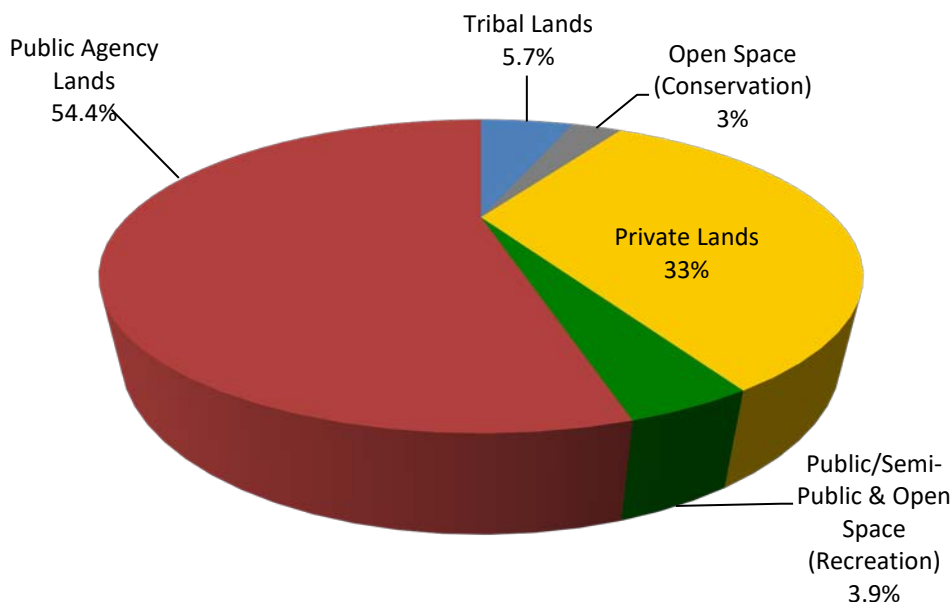
This element includes a **Community Services and Infrastructure** section. Goals and policies specific to services or infrastructure that correspond to other elements can be found in those elements. Refer to the Mobility Element for transportation-related infrastructure, the Conservation and Open Space Element for recreational facilities, and the Safety Element for emergency services and law enforcement.

Land Use Setting

The unincorporated portion of San Diego County is located in the southwestern corner of California and encompasses approximately 2.3 million acres, or 3,570 square miles. A majority of the unincorporated County's land, in excess of 90 percent, is either open space or undeveloped. This includes several large federal, state, and regional parklands that encompass much of the eastern portion of the County. Only 35 percent or about 807,000 acres of the unincorporated County is privately owned. In 2007, it was estimated that approximately 5.6 percent of the unincorporated County, or 128,369 acres, was private undeveloped land with potential for future development in Village, Semi-Rural, Commercial, or Industrial areas.



Land Ownership in the Unincorporated County



SOURCE: County of San Diego DPLU 2011

The predominant pattern of development in the unincorporated County is rural in character, offering a choice in use and lifestyle different from the urbanized coastal and inland communities. Dispersed throughout the unincorporated County are over 20 distinct communities that vary in land use and density. In general, the communities include a core of local-serving commercial uses, services, schools, and public facilities surrounded by residential neighborhoods. They vary from “semi-suburban” communities that transition in scale and density from adjoining incorporated cities to low-density “village” centers surrounded by agricultural lands and open spaces. Some of the communities are uniquely defined by their setting in hillside areas, the desert valley, and agricultural areas.

The most developed communities are located along the unincorporated territory’s westernmost boundaries and include the community plan areas of Spring Valley, Sweetwater, Valle de Oro, Lakeside, San Dieguito, portions of North County Metro, and Fallbrook. These areas are largely within the County Water Authority service area and have had access to water, sewer, roads, schools, and comparable public facilities, enabling them to grow at a faster rate. As such facilities are more costly and difficult to develop as distances increase further inland, development occurs more sparsely in the backcountry region.

Guiding Principles for Land Use

The Land Use Element’s maps and goals and policies are based on and amplify the Guiding Principles specified in Chapter 2 of the General Plan. Central to the land use concept for unincorporated San Diego County is a development pattern that balances the land requirements of residential growth, with those of commerce, agriculture, recreation, and wildlife habitats.

The location and densities of land uses, as depicted on the Land Use Map, are based on an analysis of development constraints such as road access, available water/sewer services, topography, significant

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habitats, groundwater resources, hazards, and accessibility to emergency fire protection services. Using these factors in defining permitted land use locations and densities is consistent with the County's Strategic Initiatives (which include safe livable communities and the environment) and *California Government Code* requirements. This approach will promote health and well being, while reducing environmental impacts that would likely result from locating development in inappropriate locations.

Within these constraints, the core concept for the County's development directs future growth to areas where existing or planned infrastructure and services can support growth and locations within or adjacent to existing communities. By giving priority to areas identified for urban level densities, this concept also helps to retain the rural setting and lifestyle of remaining areas of the County. Most areas that are appropriate for growth are located within the CWA boundary, while future development outside that boundary is limited. To decrease potential development outside the CWA boundary and areas without infrastructure and services, residential densities will typically be reduced where land is not already subdivided.

The Land Use Element establishes a model for community development based on a physical structure defining communities by a "village center" surrounded by semi-rural or rural land. In communities inside the CWA boundary, higher density neighborhoods and a pedestrian-oriented commercial center would provide a focal point for commercial and civic life. Medium-density, single-family neighborhoods, as well as a broad range of commercial or industrial uses, would surround the commercial core. Semi-rural neighborhoods surrounded by greenbelts, agricultural uses, or other rural lands would be located outside the more urbanized portion of the community.

Relationship to Other GP Elements

In many respects, the issues, goals, and policies discussed in the Land Use Element represent the synthesis of those of all or most other General Plan elements. Nearly any issue that deals with the physical characteristics of the land has implications for land use conservation and development. Recognition and understanding of the interrelationship between the Land Use Element and these other elements is necessary to assure an integrated and cohesive General Plan. The following describes the interrelationships between these elements:

- **Mobility Element**—The Mobility Element provides the backbone of roads, bike routes, and trails that support the uses designated by the Land Use Element, connect the communities, and are linked within the region. The capacity required for the road network is based on the average number of daily vehicle trips that would be generated with build-out of the uses designated by the Land Use Map, in consideration of infrastructure costs, environmental constraints, and community compatibility. Goals and policies of the Land Use Element closely consider the design, characteristics, and availability of transportation infrastructure addressed by the Mobility Element to assure their compatibility with the character and needs of the communities.
- **Housing Element**—The Land Use Element is closely related to the Housing Element in that the Land Use Map must provide sufficient capacity to meet goals of the State Housing Law including the Regional Housing Needs Assessment. It establishes the distribution of residential growth and densities appropriate for a range of housing types and affordability.
- **Conservation / Open Space Element**—The Conservation and Open Space Element provides measures for the preservation, conservation, development, and use of natural resources. In turn, these influence



the distribution and density of use depicted by the Land Use Map. Additionally, the Land Use Map incorporates designations that support the conservation and preservation of natural resources.

- **Safety Element**—The Safety Element identifies and maps hazards and provides hazard-specific goals and policies to more clearly guide land use to protect life and property from potential hazards. The Land Use Element goals, policies, and map minimize future development in hazardous areas.
- **Noise Element**—The Noise Element establishes noise compatibility guidelines that are applied to future development. In addition, noise compatibility concerns were taken into account during development of the Land Use Map.

Land Use Framework

The General Plan guides the intensity, location, and distribution of land uses in the unincorporated County through a two-tier land use framework. The first tier, **Regional Categories**, establishes a hierarchy for the overall structure and organization of development that differentiates areas by overall character and density, while the second tier, **Land Use Designations**, disaggregates these categories and provide more precise direction regarding the planned density and intensity of residential, commercial, industrial, open space, and public land uses. This framework establishes the range and intensity of allowable land uses, for all areas under the County of San Diego’s land use jurisdiction. Unincorporated San Diego County contains numerous lands that are outside the land use jurisdiction of the County, such as tribal lands, military installations, public utility lands, State parks, and national forests. Examples of these lands include the Cleveland National Forest, Anza-Borrego State Park, Cuyamaca Rancho State Park, Palomar Mountain State Park, Marine Corps Base Camp Pendleton, and 18 different tribal reservations. While the land use framework does not apply to these lands, the present and planned uses on these lands were considered in its development and assignment of the Regional Categories and Land Use Designations. Additionally, this element contains goals and policies that relate to the planning and development of these lands.

The Community Development Model

A major component to guiding the physical planning of the County is the **Community Development Model** (discussed in Chapter 2). The Community Development Model is implemented by three regional categories—Village, Semi-Rural, and Rural Lands—that broadly reflect the different character and land use development goals of the County’s developed areas, its lower-density residential and agricultural areas, and its very low-density or undeveloped rural lands (see Figure LU-1 [Regional Categories Map] at the end of the section). The Community Development Model directs the highest intensities and greatest mix of uses to **Village** areas, while directing lower-intensity uses, such as estate-style residential lots and agricultural operations, to **Semi-Rural** areas. The Semi-Rural category may effectively serve as an edge to the Village, as well as a transition to the lowest-density category, **Rural Lands**, which represents large open space areas where only limited development may occur.

The three regional categories are described further in the following section. As a broad set of development classifications, the Regional Categories do not specify allowable land uses, but rather the general regional structure, character, scale, and intensity of development. The Regional Categories allow many different land

LAND USE FRAMEWORK

use types to be planned in a more unified, regional manner. As a result, they do not regulate allowed uses or intensities of individual development proposals. Instead, they are intended to provide a structure for the location of specific Land Use Designations, described later in this element, that define allowed type and intensity of uses.

To facilitate a regional perspective, the Regional Categories of Village, Semi-Rural Lands, and Rural Lands have been applied to all privately-owned lands within the unincorporated County. The Open Space (Recreation), Open Space (Conservation), and Public/Semi-Public Facilities designations can be assigned to any of the Regional Categories, based on ownership and location. Tribal Lands and Federal and State Lands (including MCB Camp Pendleton) are assigned to the No Jurisdiction Regional Category. As shown in Figure LU-1, approximately 2.3 percent of the County is designated as Village, 10.3 percent as Semi-Rural, 36.7 percent as Rural Lands, and 50.7 percent as No Jurisdiction.¹

Regional Categories

As stated above, the Regional Categories provide a framework for the regional distribution of uses that serves as the foundation for the Land Use Map designations, goals, policies, and regulations that guide future development.

VILLAGE

The Village category identifies areas where a higher intensity and a wide range of land uses are established or have been planned. Typically, Village areas function as the center of community planning areas and contain the highest population and development densities. Village areas are typically served by both water and wastewater systems. Ideally, a Village would reflect a development pattern that is characterized as compact, higher density development that is located within walking distance of commercial services, employment centers, civic uses, and transit (when feasible).



Alpine Boulevard serves as the primary circulation route in the village of Alpine



Rural Village of Pine Valley in the Central Mountain Subregion

Generally, larger Villages are anchored by “**Town Center**” areas that serve as focal points for commercial and civic life. Town Centers often benefit from the development of more detailed plans to guide new

¹ These percentages are based off the Draft Land Use Map, and will be updated based upon what Land Uses are adopted by the Board of Supervisors.



development in achieving consistency with the goals and policies of the General Plan. A Town Center will typically contain one or more of the following:

- Pedestrian-oriented commercial area
- Mixed-use development: residential, retail, and office/professional uses
- Higher-density residential developments
- Community-serving private and public facilities

Transit Nodes typically encompass lands within walking distance—approximately one-half mile—of future rapid transit stations and should be located within a Village. These may be planned as diverse, mixed-use areas with a range of residential, commercial, and where appropriate, employment-generating land uses (e.g., office/professional or industrial) as well as parks and civic spaces. However, planning must be consistent with the type and quantity of ridership expected of the node as well as the surrounding community. Potential Transit Node locations are based on long-range transit plans and include rail stations as well as express bus stops that feed into rail systems.

SEMI-RURAL

The Semi-Rural category identifies areas of the County that are appropriate for lower-density residential neighborhoods, recreation areas, agricultural operations, and related commercial uses that support rural communities. Semi-Rural areas often function as a transition between the Village and Rural Lands categories, providing opportunities for development, but without the intensity and level of public services expected in Villages and with design approaches that blend the development with the natural landscape. Semi-Rural residential densities are derived in consideration of the physical conditions, community character, and availability of public services, roads, and other infrastructure. Higher densities within the allowable range should be located near Village areas, while lower densities should be located near Rural Land areas. Site design methods that reduce on-site infrastructure costs and preserve contiguous open space or agricultural operations are encouraged.



Semi-rural development patterns in Bonsall community



View of the Cuyamaca Reservoir and rural community

RURAL LANDS

The Rural Lands category is applied to large open space and very-low-density private and publicly owned lands that provide for agriculture, managed resource production, conservation, and recreation and thereby retain the rural character for which much of unincorporated County is known. Rural areas are not appropriate for intensive residential or commercial uses due to significant topographical or environmental constraints, limited access, and the lack of public services

LAND USE FRAMEWORK

or facilities. Further, the undeveloped nature of Rural Lands benefits all of San Diego County by doing the following:

- Preserving the County’s rural atmosphere
- Protecting land with significant physical or environmental constraints or hazards
- Preserving open space, farmland, and natural resources
- Providing open space buffers and a visual separation between communities
- Preserving and providing land for agricultural opportunities
- Preventing sprawl development, which reduces vehicle miles traveled and greenhouse gas emissions

NO JURISDICTION

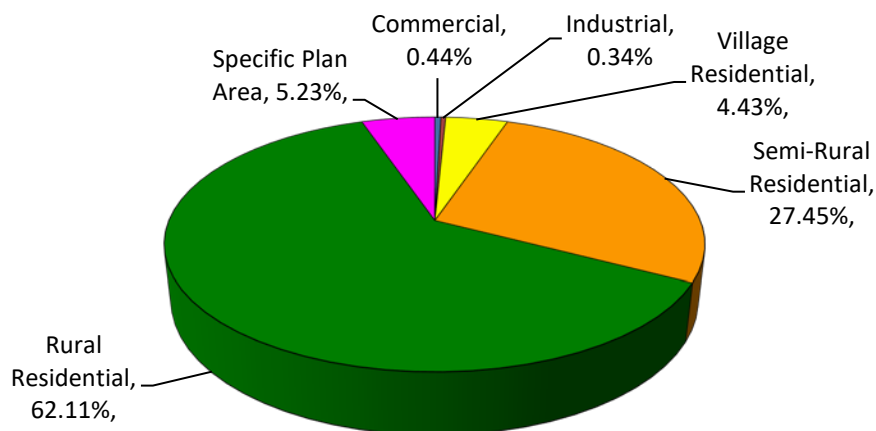
The No Jurisdiction Regional Category is applied to those areas where the County does not have land use planning jurisdiction, including lands under state or federal jurisdiction and tribal reservations.

Land Use Designations

Where the Regional Categories represent a broad framework for the form and organization of development, the Land Use Designations are property specific and identify the type and intensity of land uses that are allowed. The Land Use Designations are defined by the land use type—Residential, Commercial or Industrial—and the maximum allowable residential density or nonresidential building intensity. The designations are applied throughout the County, as shown on Land Use Maps, which are located in the Land Use Maps Appendix. More specific standards may be established for each Land Use Designation to implement the goals and policies of the General Plan, through such tools as the Zoning Ordinance, to address impacts related to specific land uses or the needs of an individual community.

Assignment of the land use designations to lands in the County is guided by the goals and policies contained in this element, which reflect the Guiding Principles presented in Chapter 2. A general summary of the designations is shown on the Land Use Maps in the Land Use Maps Appendix. The pie chart shown below depicts how the privately owned lands are designated.

Land Use Designations for Privately Owned Lands in the Unincorporated County





Development within **Residential, Commercial, Industrial, Specific Plan Areas**, and **Public/Semi-Public** General Plan land use designations is regulated through either a maximum residential density or building intensity. **Residential density** is expressed as a maximum number of dwelling units per gross acre (exclusive of public road rights-of-way). **Nonresidential building intensity** is expressed as a maximum floor-area ratio (FAR). A **floor-area ratio (FAR)** is the ratio of the gross building square footage on a lot to the net square footage of the lot or parcel (listed in Table LU-1 [Land Use Designations and Compatible Regional Categories]). For example, on a lot with 10,000 net square feet of land area, an FAR of 1.00 will allow 10,000 square feet of gross building area, regardless of the number of stories in the building. When combined with height and setback standards in the Zoning Ordinance, a maximum FAR can also be clearly translated into limits on building mass and bulk. In addition to density/intensity standards, some land use classifications also stipulate allowable building types, such as single-family residential, to respect the character of certain existing and planned neighborhoods.



Multifamily housing in 4S Ranch



Single-family residential at 7.3 dwelling units per acre

RESIDENTIAL LAND USE DESIGNATIONS

Seventeen residential land use designations provide for a full range of housing types, from village multi-family development to rural single-family housing. As noted previously, residential densities are stated as a maximum number of housing units per gross acre with the provision that at least one dwelling unit may be built on each existing legal lot designated for residential use. The stated maximum residential density may or may not be achievable in a given area due to local site conditions and constraints. In addition to these primary residential designations, residential uses are also permitted in certain commercial designations as specified in the Zoning Ordinance.

Second dwelling units are allowed pursuant to the Zoning Ordinance and are in addition to the maximum densities otherwise permitted.

VILLAGE RESIDENTIAL DESIGNATIONS

Nine residential land use designations are applied within the Village regional category ranging from two to 30 dwelling units per gross acre. Village residential densities are not subject to density reductions based on slope. The residential densities permitted within Village areas typically require water and wastewater service and can support a range of housing types including single-family and multifamily housing. Generally, residential densities of 10.9 dwelling units per gross acre or higher require multi-family development. Typically, multi-family development is characterized as attached apartments or condominiums that are two to three stories in height. The higher densities may require structured or underground parking.

Table LU-1 Land Use Designations and Compatible Regional Categories					
Designation	Maximum Density ^b	Maximum FAR ^a	Compatible Regional Category ^f		
			Village	Semi-Rural	Rural Lands
Village Residential					
Village Residential 30 (VR-30)	30 units per gross acre	—	X		
Village Residential 24 (VR-24)	24 units per gross acre	—	X		
Village Residential 20 (VR-20)	20 units per gross acre	—	X		
Village Residential 15 (VR-15)	15 units per gross acre	—	X		
Village Residential 10.9 (VR-10.9)	10.9 units per gross acre	—	X		
Village Residential 7.3 (VR-7.3)	7.3 units per gross acre	—	X		
Village Residential 4.3 (VR-4.3)	4.3 units per gross acre	—	X		
Village Residential 2.9 (VR-2.9)	2.9 units per gross acre	—	X		
Village Residential 2 (VR-2)	2 units per gross acre	—	X		
Semi-Rural					
Semi-Rural 0.5 (SR-0.5)	1 unit per 0.5, 1, or 2 gross acre	—	X	X	
Semi-Rural 1 ^c (SR-1)	1 unit per 1, 2, or 4 gross acres	—	X	X	
Semi-Rural 2 ^c (SR-2)	1 unit per 2, 4, or 8 gross acres	—	X	X	
Semi-Rural 4 ^c (SR-4)	1 unit per 4, 8, or 16 gross acres	—	X	X	
Semi-Rural 10 ^c (SR-10)	1 unit per 10 or 20 gross acres	—	X	X	
Rural Lands					
Rural Lands 20 (RL-20)	1 unit per 20 gross acres	—	X	X	X
Rural Lands 40 (RL-40)	1 unit per 40 gross acres	—	X	X	X
Rural Lands 80 (RL-80)	1 unit per 80 gross acres	—	X	X	X
Commercial					
General Commercial (C-1)	— ^e	0.45 or 0.70 ^a	X	X	
Office Professional (C-2)	— ^e	0.45 or 0.80 ^a	X	X	
Neighborhood Commercial (C-3)	— ^e	0.35 or 0.65 ^a	X	X	
Rural Commercial (C-4)	2 units per gross acre	0.35 or 0.60 ^a	X	X	X
Village Core Mixed Use (C-5)	30 units per gross acre ^d	0.70 ^d	X		
Industrial					
Limited Impact Industrial (I-1)	— ^e	0.60	X	X	
Medium Impact Industrial (I-2)	0	0.50	X	X	X
High Impact Industrial (I-3)	0	0.35	X	X	X
Other - with the exception of Specific Plan Area, the following designations are compatible with the No Jurisdiction Regional Category (see page 3-7)					
Tribal Lands (TL)	— ^f	—			
Public Agency Lands	— ^{f, h}	—			
Specific Plan Area (SPA) ^g	refer to individual SPA	—	X	X	X
Public/Semi-Public Facilities (P/SP)	— ^h	0.50	X	X	X
Open Space—Conservation (OS-C)	0	—	X	X	X
Open Space—Recreation (OS-R)	1 unit per 4, 8, or 16 gross acres ⁱ	—	X	X	X

- a. Maximum floor area ratio is provided based on regional categories to guide intensity of development. Community Plans may specify specific areas where these FARs may be exceeded such as areas with shared parking facilities or mixed uses, areas in or around town centers or transit nodes, or when other special circumstances exist.
- b. The General Plan land use densities for emergency shelters shall not apply to the County of San Diego, or lands that they control, during, immediately following, or throughout the recovery efforts authorized by the County of San Diego, related to an emergency declared by the Governor of the State of California and/or the Board of Supervisors of the County of San Diego.
- c. The maximum density for lands designated as Semi-Rural is based on the slope of the site (see Table LU-2).
- d. This denotes the upper range for each component, but there is no expectation that this would be achieved when each component is applied in the same area. The maximum FAR in the Village Core Mixed Use Designation is 0.7 unless offsite parking or underground parking is provided in conjunction with the proposed development. In that case, the maximum FAR could be up to 1.3.
- e. Maximum residential densities are applied per the Zoning Ordinance.
- f. The reflection of existing land uses on the Land Use Map results in some land use designations that are not consistent with the compatibility set forth in this table. This exception is available to existing land uses only.
- g. This designation solely reflects those designations retained from the former General Plan. New SPAs will not be shown on the Land Use Map under the SPA designation, rather these areas will retain their underlying land uses.
- h. Refer to Policy LU-1.6
- i. Residential uses would not occur within this designation unless the proposed development has been carefully examined to assure that there will be no significant adverse environmental impacts, and erosion and fire problems will be minimal.



SEMI-RURAL RESIDENTIAL DESIGNATIONS

Five residential land use designations are applied within Semi-Rural regional category (refer to Table LU-1). Semi-Rural densities range from one dwelling unit per 0.5 acre to one dwelling unit per ten gross acres. Residential development within Semi-Rural areas is not typically served by municipal sewer systems, but is often served by municipal water systems especially where water-intensive crops such as avocado and citrus are common.



Examples of semi-rural residential at one to two dwelling units per acre

In an effort to balance the allowance of reasonable use of property on lands constrained by steep slopes, the maximum allowable residential densities for the five Semi-Rural designations are reduced according to Table LU-2 (Density Formula for Slope-Dependent Lands).

Table LU-2 Density Formula for Slope-Dependent Lands			
Land Use Designation	Slope less than 25%	Slope 25% to less than 50%	Slope 50% or greater
Semi-Rural 0.5	2 du/gross acre	1 du/gross acre	1 du/2 gross acres
Semi-Rural 1	1 du/gross acre	1 du/2 gross acres	1 du/4 gross acres
Semi-Rural 2	1 du/2 gross acres	1 du/4 gross acres	1 du/8 gross acres
Semi-Rural 4	1 du/4 gross acres	1 du/8 gross acres	1 du/16 gross acres
Semi-Rural 10	1 du/10 gross acres	1 du/20 gross acres	1 du/20 gross acres

Density calculations shall be based on a topographic map with 10-foot contour intervals or less. To calculate maximum density for a property the acreage of the property should be divided into the above three categories (<25%, 25–50%, >50%), each total should be multiplied by the associated density, and then the resulting yields combined.
du = dwelling unit

RURAL LANDS RESIDENTIAL DESIGNATIONS

Four residential land use designations are applied within the Rural Lands regional category. The densities provided by these designations are the lowest in the unincorporated County—ranging from one dwelling unit per 20 gross acres, to one dwelling unit per 80 gross acres—and are intended to reflect and preserve the rural agricultural, environmentally constrained, and natural “backcountry” areas of the County (see Table LU-1). Residential development within the Rural Lands category is typically not served by either municipal water and or municipal sewer systems.



House on a large lot in a rural area of County

NONRESIDENTIAL LAND USE DESIGNATIONS

Eight nonresidential land use designations provide for commerce and employment in the unincorporated County. The maximum development intensity of uses in these designations is expressed as a maximum FAR (see Table LU-1). As these are expressed as maximums, in many communities the desired FAR will likely be lower. Similarly, in specific areas (identified by Community Plans) it may be appropriate to accommodate an increased FAR to meet specific development objectives, such as areas with shared parking facilities, mixed uses, or around Town Centers or Transit Nodes. Detailed regulations specified in the Zoning Ordinance will support the desired development intensity. In any case, the permitted development intensity must be supportive of the goals and policies of the General Plan and the applicable Community Plan.

While zoning regulations and site constraints may reduce development potential within the allowable range, zoning can also provide specific exceptions to the FAR limitations, such as FAR bonuses in return for the provision of public amenities or other community benefits. Illustrative public amenities and benefits include public parks and affordable housing units.

COMMERCIAL DESIGNATIONS

General Commercial. This designation provides for commercial areas where a wide range of retail activities and services are permitted. This designation is appropriate for the following types of commercial areas: (1) regional shopping centers, (2) community shopping centers, and (3) existing strip development or commercial clusters containing small but diverse commercial uses. Uses permitted within this designation are typically limited to commercial activities conducted within an enclosed building. Residential development may also be allowed as a secondary use in certain instances. The maximum intensity of General Commercial development varies according to the compatible regional category as follows:

- Village—0.70 FAR
- Semi-Rural—0.45 FAR

Neighborhood Commercial. This designation provides locations for limited, small-scale retail sales and service uses intended to meet the convenience needs of local residents. The limited commercial uses allowed under this designation should be considered in contrast to the larger scale and more broadly serving General Commercial designation. Neighborhood Commercial establishments should be compatible in bulk and scale with adjacent residential



Shopping center in the Valle de Oro community



Neighborhood Commercial use in the Crest community



neighborhoods. Residential development may also be allowed as a secondary use in certain instances. The maximum intensity of Neighborhood Commercial development varies according to the compatible regional category as follows:

- Village—0.65 FAR
- Semi-Rural—0.35 FAR

Rural Commercial. This designation provides for small-scale commercial and civic development. Mixed-use development may take the form of small offices or residences up to two units per gross acre (as further specified by the Zoning Ordinance) either above ground-floor retail uses or separated structures typically with commercial or civic uses located along the road frontage. A wide variety of local serving commercial and civic uses is encouraged by this designation, including: retail stores; visitor-oriented services; automotive sales and services; eating and drinking establishments; professional offices; business and personal services; and parks, libraries, and other community facilities. The maximum intensity of Rural Commercial development varies according to the compatible Regional Category as follows:



Rural Commercial use in Valley Center

- Rural Village—0.60 FAR
- Semi-Rural and Rural Lands—0.35 FAR



Mixed uses along Main Avenue in Fallbrook

Village Core Mixed Use. This designation is intended for pedestrian-scaled town center development. A wide variety of commercial, civic, and residential uses are encouraged by this designation, and these uses may be mixed “vertically”—on separate floors of a building—or “horizontally”—in separate buildings on a single site or on adjacent parcels. To maintain a pedestrian scale and orientation, retail and other active uses are encouraged at street level. Structured parking may be necessary to accommodate allowable densities, and shared

parking arrangements may be allowed consistent with the nature of the mixed uses. Specific maximum FAR and residential density standards shall be developed through community-specific town center planning, though in no case, within either multiple- or single-use buildings, may nonresidential intensities exceed 1.3 FAR or residential densities exceed 30 units per acre. Permitted uses must be consistent with the town center plan, or in absence of a town center plan, shall not preclude the development and implementation of such a plan.

LAND USE FRAMEWORK

Office Professional. This designation provides areas dedicated to administrative and professional services as well as limited retail uses related to or serving the needs of the primary office uses. Residential development may also be allowed as a secondary use in certain instances. The maximum intensity of Office Professional development varies according to compatible regional category as follows:

- Village—0.80 FAR
- Semi-Rural—0.45 FAR

INDUSTRIAL DESIGNATIONS

Limited-Impact Industrial. This designation provides for both freestanding and campus-style industrial development in Village and Semi-Rural areas with access to key transportation corridors at a maximum FAR of 0.60. Typical uses within this designation include light manufacturing, processing, and assembly, all within enclosed buildings, with no exterior indications of such activity or need for outdoor storage. This designation may be located in close proximity to residential and commercial designations in Village and Semi-Rural areas with suitable screening and buffering. Supporting uses—such as office, business service, and institutional uses—and accessory retail uses are also allowed.

Medium-Impact Industrial. This designation provides for freestanding industrial development in all Regional Category areas with access to key transportation corridors at a maximum FAR of 0.5. Typical uses within this designation include: manufacturing, processing, and assembly; warehousing and distribution; large equipment supply and sales; and other industrial and commercial activities that are generally incompatible with dissimilar adjacent land uses. Uses in this designation may include outdoor operations or require significant outdoor storage of process materials and product. This designation should generally not be located in close proximity to residential and commercial designations in Village areas, because significant screening and buffering will typically be required to minimize unacceptable off-site impacts. Supporting uses are allowed in this designation, including business services.



Office complex in Rancho San Diego



Public storage facility in Spring Valley



Medium-Impact Industrial use with outdoor storage in 4S Ranch



High-Impact Industrial. This designation provides for freestanding industrial development in areas with access to key transportation corridors at a maximum FAR of 0.35. Typical uses within this designation are similar to those of the Medium Impact Industrial designation and include: manufacturing, processing, and assembly; warehousing and distribution; large equipment supply and sales; and other industrial and commercial activities that are generally incompatible with dissimilar adjacent land uses. However, the off-site impacts of industrial uses in this designation are likely to be more significant due to process,



Steel fabricating plant in Spring Valley

product, and reliance on outdoor operations or storage of process materials and product. Therefore, this designation may be incompatible with most Village areas and must be thoughtfully applied in any location in the unincorporated area. In certain limited circumstances it may be designated near the periphery of Village areas where the industrial use is isolated from residential and commercial designations and all allowed uses are adequately screened and buffered to eliminate unacceptable off-site impacts. Secondary support uses are also allowed in this designation, including related business and industrial services.

OTHER LAND USE DESIGNATIONS

Seven additional land use designations are applied in the General Plan to recognize other existing land use types and jurisdictions. Four designations—Specific Plan Areas, Public and Semi-Public Facilities, Open Space—Conservation, and Open Space—Recreation—generally relate to areas where the County or some other agency controls land under County jurisdiction to provide public facilities, such as schools, protect open space resources, or to serve recreational needs. Two other designations—Tribal Lands, and Federal and State lands—apply to areas where the County has no jurisdiction over land use.

Tribal Lands. These lands comprise about 126,000 acres, or five percent of the unincorporated County on 18 federally recognized reservations or Indian villages. Tribal lands are primarily located in Rural Areas.



Resort hotel, casino, and golf course on the Barona Reservation

Public Agency Lands (State Parks, National Forests and other public agency non-conservation lands). Public agency lands comprise 1,160,700 acres, or 50.8 percent, the majority of the unincorporated County land area. State Parks—including Anza-Borrego Desert State Park, Cuyamaca Rancho State Park, and Palomar Mountain State Park—and the Cleveland National Forest contribute significantly to the unique and unspoiled character of the County’s backcountry. The County contains several military installations, including Marine Corps Base Camp Pendleton, which alone encompasses about 135,000 acres, or



Laguna Meadow within the Cleveland National Forest

LAND USE FRAMEWORK

six percent of the unincorporated County. These installations are designated as “Military Installations.” This category also includes lands owned by the Bureau of Land Management (BLM) and incorporated jurisdictions.

Specific Plan Area. This designation is applied to **areas** where a Specific Plan was adopted by the County prior to the adoption of this General Plan. Specific Plans may contain residential, commercial, industrial, public, institutional, and/or open space uses; and detailed land use regulations are contained within each adopted specific plan document. The designation of new Specific Plan Areas to substitute for General Plan Land Use Designations is not permitted. This is not intended to restrict the use of Specific Plans, which are useful planning tools allowed for by State law and may be developed for areas of the County to provide more precise guidance for land development, infrastructure, amenities, and resource conservation consistent with the use types and densities specified by the Land Use Designations and the goals and polices of the General Plan. The intention is to retain the underlying densities on the General Plan Land Use Plan to clearly show the area’s relationship within the context where it is located.

Public and Semi-Public Facilities. This designation identifies major facilities built and maintained for public use. Examples include institutional uses, academic facilities, governmental complexes, and community service facilities, such as County airports, public schools, correctional institutions, solid waste facilities, water facilities, and sewer facilities. This designation may include privately owned facilities built and maintained for public use, such as hospitals, cemeteries, and landfills. A maximum FAR of 0.50 is permitted by this designation.



Post office in the rural village of Pine Valley

Public/Semi-Public Lands (Solid Waste Facility). This designation occurs on two sites in the County: the Gregory Canyon and East Otay Mesa landfill sites. On November 8, 1994, the voters adopted County of San Diego Initiative Proposition C, which amended the General Plan and re-designated the Gregory Canyon site. Similarly, on June 8, 2010, the voters adopted County of San Diego Initiative Proposition A, which re-designated the East Otay Mesa Site. Both initiatives assigned a (22) Public/Semi-Public Lands designation with a Solid Waste Facility Designator based on the General Plan that was in effect at that time. Although that designation has since been amended in an updated General Plan, the previous designation has been retained for those two sites to comply with the voter-adopted ordinances.



Open space preserved in Mountain Empire Subregion

Open Space—Conservation. This designation is primarily applied to large tracts of land, undeveloped and usually dedicated to open space, that are owned by a jurisdiction, public agency, or conservancy group. Allowed uses include habitat preserves, passive recreation, and reservoirs. Grazing and other uses or structures ancillary to the primary open space use may be permitted if they do not substantially diminish protected resources or alter the character of the



area. Such ancillary uses within this designation will typically be controlled by use-permit limitations. Open space preserves total 159,400 acres or 7 percent of the total land area in the unincorporated County. Due to the success of the County’s MSCP program, this number continues to grow.

This designation is not normally applied to conservation easements within residential subdivisions on private lots.

Open Space—Recreation. This designation is applied to large, existing recreational areas. This designation allows for active and passive recreational uses such as parks, athletic fields, and golf courses. Uses and structures ancillary to the primary open space use may be permitted to enhance recreational opportunities only if they relate to the recreational purpose and do not substantially alter the character of the area.

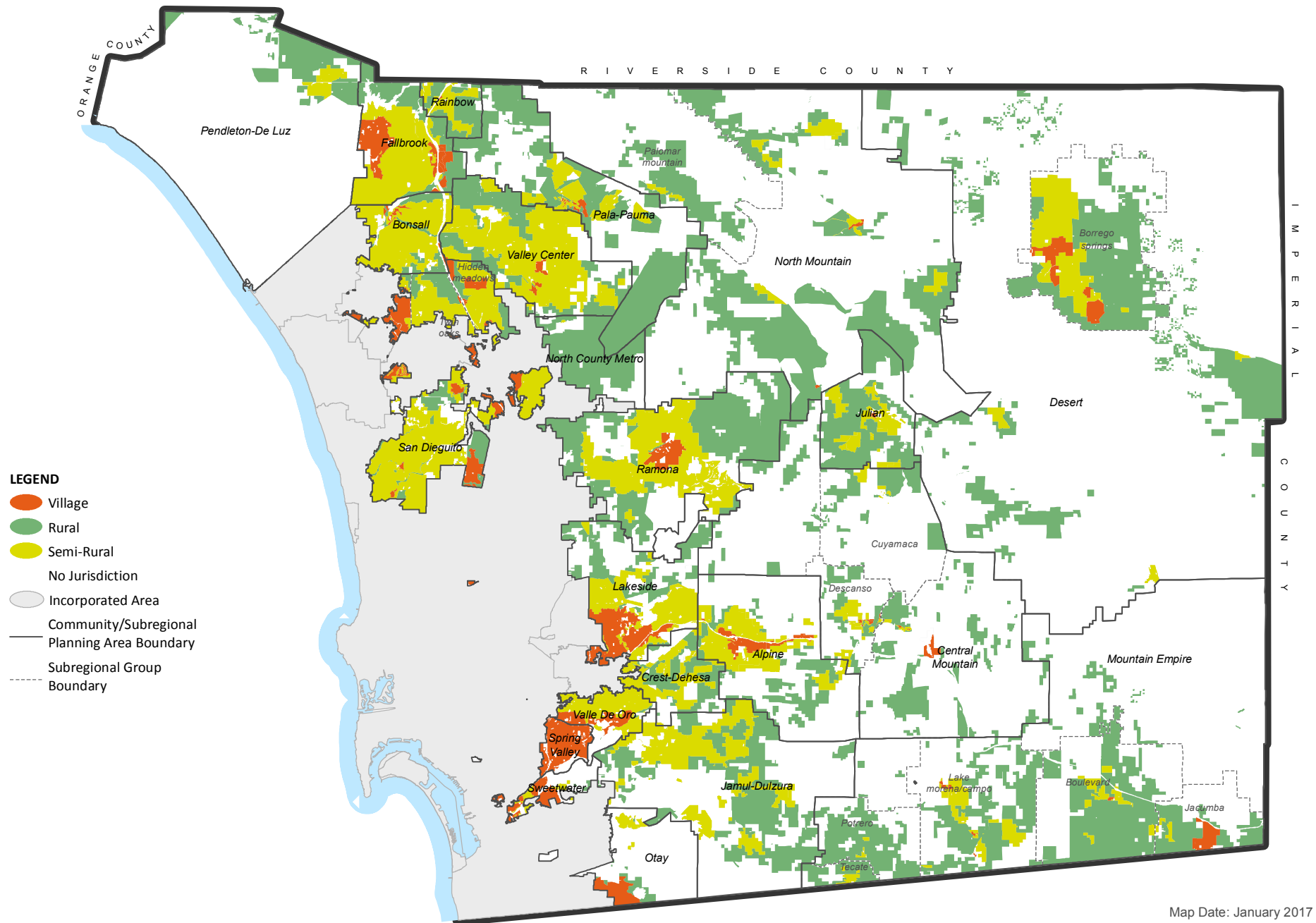


Valle de Oro Park

Regional Categories Map and Land Use Maps

The Regional Categories Map (Figure LU-1) and the Land Use Maps (located in the appendix) are graphic representations of the Land Use Framework and the related goals and policies of the General Plan. As required by State law, these depict the general distribution, location, and extent of the uses of the land for housing, business, industry, open space, education, public buildings, and other categories of public and private uses of the land. The land use designations are shown on these maps as color or graphic patterns and correspond directly to the designations shown on Table LU-1 and defined in the Land Use Designations section, including allowable uses and permitted development densities or intensities. These may be further modified by specific policies for the Community Plan Areas as specified by their respective Community Plan (separately bound as a part of this General Plan). As an adopted part of the General Plan, the Land Use Maps are to be used and interpreted only in conjunction with the text and other figures contained in the General Plan.

In the Land Use Maps Appendix are 35 land use maps. Of the 35 maps, 23 are regional maps, some of which have subarea maps that are within the geographic boundary of the subregion. These maps also correlate to the community plans, which are bound separately.



Map Date: January 2017



REGIONAL CATEGORIES MAP



Legacy Communities

SENATE BILL 244 GENERAL PLAN REQUIREMENTS

Hundreds of disadvantaged unincorporated communities exist in California and often exhibit a lack of public and private investment that leads to a lack of basic infrastructure as well as economic, social, and educational inequality. In October 2011, Senate Bill (SB) 244 Land Use, General Plans, and Disadvantaged Communities was enacted requiring cities and counties to review and update the Land Use Element of the General Plan to identify disadvantaged unincorporated communities concurrent with the requirement to update their housing elements. The intent of SB 244 is to encourage investment and planning to address the regional inequality and infrastructure deficits that exist within disadvantaged unincorporated communities. For each subsequent revision of the Housing Element, a city or county is also required to conduct a review of the disadvantaged communities identified, and if necessary, amend the General Plan to update the required analysis of water, wastewater, stormwater drainage, and structural fire protection needs and deficiencies.

In this instance, a “community” means an inhabited area within a city or county that is comprised of no less than 12 or more registered voters adjacent or in close proximity to one another. In addition, a “disadvantaged unincorporated community” means a fringe, island, or legacy community in which the median household income is 80 percent or less than the statewide median household income. “Fringe”, “island” and “legacy” communities are defined below.

Island community — any inhabited and unincorporated territory that is surrounded or substantially surrounded by one or more cities or by one or more cities and a county boundary or the Pacific Ocean

Fringe community — any inhabited and unincorporated territory that is within a city’s sphere of influence

Legacy community — geographically isolated community that is inhabited and has existed for at least 50 years²

Per the state law, Counties must identify and describe each legacy community, as defined, within the boundaries of a county that is a disadvantaged unincorporated community. Consequently, Cities are responsible for identifying disadvantaged unincorporated communities that are fringe communities within the sphere of influence of an incorporated city and island communities that are substantially surrounded by one or more cities.

If legacy communities are identified, then the Land Use Element Amendment must include an analysis of the service needs and deficiencies for the identified legacy communities. As a minimum, this analysis of service needs and deficiencies would include the following:

1. Coordinate with the Local Agency Formation Commission (LAFCO) to incorporate the information contained in the Municipal Service Review into the infrastructure needs of the identified communities
2. Map the location of existing infrastructure elements including, but not limited to fire stations, sewer trunk lines, and drainage systems

² State Office of Planning & Research Technical Advisory: Senate Bill 244: Land Use, General Plans, and Disadvantaged Communities (page 5), February 15, 2013

GOALS AND POLICIES

3. Conduct an assessment of the capacity and availability of the physical infrastructure necessary to support the existing and proposed land uses in the identified community
4. Consult with affected public utilities and special districts, if any, for information on the location and capacity of their facilities to determine the ability and the timing of facility expansion for infrastructure improvements for the identified community
5. Review regional and state transportation, air quality, and water quality plans and regulations to consider whether any of these plans affect the future operation and expansion of public and private facilities³

After the assessment of service needs and deficiencies, SB 244 requires an analysis of financing alternatives that could make the extension of services and facilities to the identified communities financially feasible. This includes evaluating the opportunity for grants, taxes, benefit assessments, bonds, and exactions such as impact fees.

DISADVANTAGED UNINCORPORATED COMMUNITIES

Under SB 244, LAFCOs are required to identify and plan for disadvantaged unincorporated communities in conjunction with municipal service reviews, sphere of influence updates and annexation approval restrictions. In compliance with the requirements and recommendations of SB 244, the San Diego LAFCO identified and mapped the geographic locations within unincorporated San Diego County containing disadvantaged communities, both within and outside the cities' spheres of influence.

Identification of the disadvantaged unincorporated communities by the San Diego LAFCO was based on the SB 244 definitions addressing income, population size, and geographical relationships. In accordance with SB 244, the qualifying annual median household income is 80% or less than the statewide median household income, which based on 2010 census data is \$46,166⁴. Therefore, in accordance with the requirements of SB 244, communities that qualify as "disadvantaged" would have annual household incomes below \$36,932. The following is the process LAFCO used to identify and map disadvantaged communities in San Diego County:

1. Identify census tracts in San Diego County that meet the annual median household income range (80% or less than the 2010 statewide annual median household income) based on estimates provided by the San Diego Association of Governments (SANDAG). [While other GIS data besides census tracts exist to map disadvantage communities, San Diego LAFCO determined the census tract data was the most complete and reliable source of information for the purpose of this analysis.]
2. Integrate the census tract estimates into a county-wide map to identify each census tract that had a SB 244-qualifying annual median household income.

³ State Office of Planning & Research Technical Advisory: Senate Bill 244: Land Use, General Plans, and Disadvantaged Communities (pages 8-9), February 15, 2013.

⁴ Source: 2010 American Community Survey 1-Year Estimates, U.S. Census Bureau identified the statewide median household income as \$46,166.



3. The SB 244-qualifying census tracts were then overlaid with the incorporated city boundaries and adopted spheres of influence to determine if the identified disadvantaged unincorporated communities were island, fringe, or legacy communities, as defined by SB 244.

The LAFCO analysis identified 25 SB 244-qualifying census tracts that require further analysis to determine if they contain any disadvantaged unincorporated communities (see Figure 1).

IDENTIFICATION OF LEGACY COMMUNITIES

As discussed above, Counties must identify and describe disadvantaged unincorporated communities that are legacy communities located outside the sphere of influence of a city, while Cities are responsible for fringe and island communities. Based on the SB 244 criteria for island, fringe and legacy communities, six of the 25 census tracts have only island communities and two census tracts have only fringe communities. Therefore, the County analyzed the 17 remaining census tracts to determine if any contained legacy communities.

The analysis to identify legacy communities consisted of a review of each census tract using aerial photography and GIS data to identify areas in the census tract where eight or more dwellings were located within a one-quarter mile radius. Eight is considered a reasonable number of dwellings to ensure the SB 244 definition of a community is met—areas with 12 or more registered voters reside adjacent or in close proximity to each other. The one-quarter mile radius was used to determine if the dwellings were in close proximity to each other. Any communities identified that met these criteria were further evaluated to determine if they meet the remaining SB 244 criteria for a legacy community.

Only communities that meet all the criteria below would be considered a legacy community.

1. Within the County’s land use authority (i.e.;; military installations are outside County’s land use authority)
2. Areas more than one mile from urban and suburban development patterns (these areas are more likely to be geographically isolated)
3. No evidence of recent or newer construction on dwellings and their lots, such as new roofs (these dwellings would likely be less than 50 years old)
4. Non-estate type development (large dwellings on lots two acres and larger) since these dwelling would not likely meet the maximum household income requirements

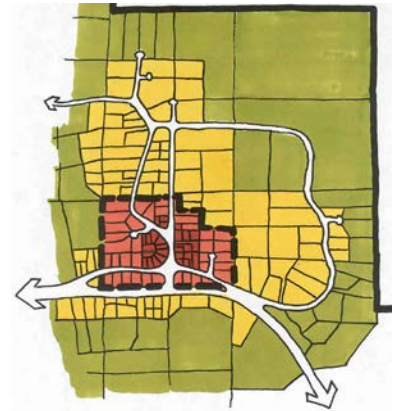
The 17 census tracts were analyzed using the methodology identified above (refer to the Background Report for more details). Based on this analysis, no legacy communities were identified within the land use jurisdiction of the County of San Diego. As such, the County has fulfilled the obligations set forth in SB 244 concurrent with the fifth cycle of the Housing Element.

Goals and Policies for Land Use Element

The Community Development Model

CONTEXT

The General Plan Land Use Framework defines a Community Development Model that uses three regional categories—Village, Semi-Rural, and Rural Lands—to broadly reflect the differing character of County lands that range from communities with substantial populations to predominantly undeveloped backcountry areas. The goals and policies in this section implement the Community Development Model and are intended to apply across the entire unincorporated County and are the basis for assigning densities to these areas. Further, they recognize the diversity of the unincorporated communities and need for community-specific planning and guidance. Lastly, they acknowledge that planning by other agencies with responsibilities within, around, or overlapping the unincorporated lands will also affect how the Community Development Model is implemented. The Community Development Model is included in the Vision and Guiding Principles chapter under Guiding Principle 2, and discussed further in pages 3-6 and 3-7.



*Community Development Model
(refer to Guiding Principle 2)*

GOALS AND POLICIES

GOAL LU-1

Primacy of the Land Use Element. A land use plan and development doctrine that sustain the intent and integrity of the Community Development Model and the boundaries between Regional Categories.

Policies

LU-1.1 Assigning Land Use Designations. Assign land use designations on the Land Use Map in accordance with the Community Development Model and boundaries established by the Regional Categories Map.

Refer to Guiding Principle 2 for an explanation of the Community Development Model.

LU-1.2 Leapfrog Development. Prohibit leapfrog development which is inconsistent with the Community Development Model. Leapfrog Development restrictions do not apply to new villages that are designed to be consistent with the Community Development Model, that provide necessary services and facilities, and that are designed to meet the LEED-Neighborhood Development Certification or an equivalent. For purposes of this policy, leapfrog development is defined as Village densities located away from established Villages or outside established water and sewer service boundaries. *[See applicable community plan for possible relevant policies.]*

LU-1.3 Development Patterns. Designate land use designations in patterns to create or enhance communities and preserve surrounding rural lands.



- LU-1.4 Village Expansion.** Permit new Village Regional Category designated land uses only where contiguous with an existing or planned Village and where all of the following criteria are met:
- Potential Village development would be compatible with environmental conditions and constraints, such as topography and flooding
 - Potential Village development would be accommodated by the General Plan road network
 - Public facilities and services can support the expansion without a reduction of services to other County residents
 - The expansion is consistent with community character, the scale, and the orderly and contiguous growth of a Village area
- LU-1.5 Relationship of County Land Use Designations with Adjoining Jurisdictions.** Prohibit the use of established or planned land use patterns in nearby or adjacent jurisdictions as the primary precedent or justification for adjusting land use designations of unincorporated County lands. Coordinate with adjacent cities to ensure that land use designations are consistent with existing and planned infrastructure capacities and capabilities.
- LU-1.6 Conversion of Public Lands to Private Ownership.** Assign lands in public use an underlying designation of Rural Lands 80. When such lands are transferred to private ownership, the RL-80 designation shall apply until the appropriate long-term use of the property is determined and a general plan amendment is approved for redesignation of the property. This policy applies to areas on the Land Use Map designated Public/Semi-Public Facilities, Federal and State Lands, and Tribal Lands.
- LU-1.7 Maximum Residential Densities.** Determine the maximum number of dwelling units permitted within the boundaries of any subdivision or single lot based on the applicable land use designation(s). When the total number of dwelling units is less than one, this shall be interpreted as permitting one dwelling unit. When more than one dwelling unit is permitted, fractional dwelling units are rounded down to the nearest whole number of dwelling units.
- LU-1.8 Density Allocation on Project Sites.** Permit changes in density within a project site with parcels that have more than one land use designation to provide flexibility in project design only when approved by Major Use Permit or Specific Plan. The policy does not allow a project to receive more units than is established by the Land Use Maps nor to supersede Housing Element requirements related to achieving the County's Regional Housing Needs Allocation. [*See applicable community plan for possible relevant policies.*]
- LU-1.9 Achievement of Planned Densities.** Recognizing that the General Plan was created with the concept that subdivisions will be able to achieve densities shown on the Land Use Map, planned densities are intended to be achieved through the subdivision process except in cases where regulations or site specific characteristics render such densities infeasible.

GOAL LU-2

Maintenance of the County's Rural Character. Conservation and enhancement of the unincorporated County's varied communities, rural setting, and character.

GOALS AND POLICIES

Policies

- LU-2.1 Community Plans.** Maintain updated Community Plans, as part of the General Plan, to guide development to reflect the character and vision for each individual unincorporated community, consistent with the General Plan.
- LU-2.2 Relationship of Community Plans to the General Plan.** Community Plans are part of the General Plan. These plans focus on a particular region or community within the overall General Plan area. They are meant to refine the policies of the General Plan as they apply to a smaller geographic region and provide a forum for resolving local conflicts. As legally required by State law, Community Plans must be internally consistent with General Plan goals and policies of which they are a part. They cannot undermine the policies of the General Plan. Community Plans are subject to adoption, review and amendment by the Board of Supervisors in the same manner as the General Plan.
- LU-2.3 Development Densities and Lot Sizes.** Assign densities and minimum lot sizes in a manner that is compatible with the character of each unincorporated community.
- LU-2.4 Relationship of Land Uses to Community Character.** Ensure that the land uses and densities within any Regional Category or Land Use Designation depicted on the Land Use Map reflect the unique issues, character, and development objectives for a Community Plan area, in addition to the General Plan Guiding Principles.
- LU-2.5 Greenbelts to Define Communities.** Identify and maintain greenbelts between communities to reinforce the identity of individual communities.
- LU-2.6 Development near Neighboring Jurisdictions.** Require that development in the proximity of neighboring jurisdictions retain the character of the unincorporated community and use buffers or other techniques where development in the neighboring jurisdiction is incompatible.
- LU-2.7 Commercial Viability.** Ensure that new commercial centers maintain or enhance the viability of existing commercial areas.
- LU-2.8 Mitigation of Development Impacts.** Require measures that minimize significant impacts to surrounding areas from uses or operations that cause excessive noise, vibrations, dust, odor, aesthetic impairment and/or are detrimental to human health and safety.
- LU-2.9 Maintaining Rural Character.** Consider level of service criteria, in accordance with Policy M-2.1, to determine whether adding lanes to a Mobility Element road would adversely impact the rural character of a community or cause significant environmental impacts. In those instances, consider other options to mitigate LOS where appropriate.

GOAL LU-3

Diversity of Residential Neighborhoods. A land use plan that accommodates a range of building and neighborhood types suitable for a variety of lifestyles, ages, affordability levels, and design options.

Policies

- LU-3.1 Diversity of Residential Designations and Building Types.** Maintain a mixture of residential land use designations and development regulations that accommodate various building types and styles.



- LU-3.2 Mix of Housing Units in Large Projects.** Require new large residential developments (generally greater than 200 dwelling units) to integrate a range of housing types and lot and building sizes. [See applicable community plan for possible relevant policies.]
- LU-3.3 Complete Neighborhoods.** Require new development sufficiently large to establish a complete neighborhood (typically more than 1,000 dwelling units) to include a neighborhood center within easy walking distance of surrounding residences. [See applicable community plan for possible relevant policies.]

GOAL LU-4

Inter-jurisdictional Coordination. Coordination with the plans and activities of other agencies and tribal governments that relate to issues such as land use, community character, transportation, energy, other infrastructure, public safety, and resource conservation and management in the unincorporated County and the region.

Policies

- LU-4.1 Regional Planning.** Participate in regional planning to ensure that the unique communities, assets, and challenges of the unincorporated lands are appropriately addressed with the implementation of the planning principles and land use requirements, including the provisions of SB375.
- LU-4.2 Review of Impacts of Projects in Adjoining Jurisdictions.** Review, comment, and coordinate when appropriate on plans, projects, and proposals of overlapping or neighboring agencies to ensure compatibility with the County’s General Plan, and that adjacent communities are not adversely impacted.
- LU-4.3 Relationship of Plans in Adjoining Jurisdictions.** Consider the plans and projects of overlapping or neighboring agencies in the planning of unincorporated lands, and invite comments and coordination when appropriate.
- LU-4.4 Development Compatibility with Military Facilities.** Ensure compatibility of new development with the current and planned mission and operations of U.S. government military installations.
- LU-4.5 Annexations with Incompatible Land Uses.** Coordinate with LAFCO to oppose annexations by neighboring cities that would result in land uses incompatible with unincorporated lands.
LAFCO is responsible for coordinating, directing, and overseeing annexation of territory. A prerequisite for annexation is the inclusion of a territory within an adjacent city’s sphere of influence.
- LU-4.6 Planning for Adequate Energy Facilities.** Participate in the planning of regional energy infrastructure with applicable utility providers to ensure plans are consistent with the County’s General Plan and Community Plans and minimize adverse impacts to the unincorporated County.
- LU-4.7 Airport Land Use Compatibility Plans (ALUCP).** Coordinate with the Airport Land Use Commission (ALUC) and support review of Airport Land Use Compatibility Plans (ALUCP) for development within Airport Influence Areas.

Planning for Sustainability

CONTEXT

As discussed in Chapter 2, sustainability is a key theme of this General Plan and is inextricably related to a number of General Plan elements, as well as land use topics. Addressing global climate change through the reduction of GHG emissions is a common tenant of sustainability. The types, densities, and distribution of land uses in the County play a profound role in sustaining natural resources, the economy, and well being of residents. Land use patterns defined by the Community Development Model and Land Use Map provide for a more compact land use pattern, where residents live closer to jobs, businesses, schools, parks, services, and their neighbors, and would reduce vehicle trips and miles traveled. In turn, this would reduce energy consumption, air pollution, noise, and GHG emissions, while improving the quality of life for residents and economic activity of local businesses. Policies are also defined for the application of more sustainable approaches to land development, building design, and construction.

The County also recognizes sustainability as it applies to the other natural systems that are integrated with our communities. Ecosystems, topography, riparian corridors, rock formations, mature trees, and our natural assets such as our air, water (and groundwater), agriculture, and views are important contributing elements to sustainability.

This section focuses on general goal and policies that relate to the designation of land uses and the development that could occur based on those land use designations. Climate Change–related goals and policies are found throughout this General Plan. Table I-1 (General Plan Policies Addressing Climate Change) in the introduction summarizes by topic area the goals and policies in the County’s General Plan that address reducing GHGs and adapting to climate change. The Air Quality, Climate Change, and Energy section of the Conservation and Open Space Element contains several goals and policies directly related to emissions reductions.

A complete reference to County General Plan Climate Change-related policies can be found in the Introduction Chapter in Table I-1 on page I-16.

GOALS AND POLICIES

GOAL LU-5

Climate Change and Land Use. A land use plan and associated development techniques and patterns that reduce emissions of local greenhouse gases in accordance with state initiatives, while promoting public health.

Policies

- LU-5.1 Reduction of Vehicle Trips within Communities.** Incorporate a mixture of uses within Villages and Rural Villages and plan residential densities at a level that support multi-modal transportation, including walking, bicycling, and the use of public transit, when appropriate.
- LU-5.2 Sustainable Planning and Design.** Incorporate into new development sustainable planning and design.



LU-5.3 Rural Land Preservation. Ensure the preservation of existing open space and rural areas (e.g., forested areas, agricultural lands, wildlife habitat and corridors, wetlands, watersheds, and groundwater recharge areas) when permitting development under the Rural and Semi Rural Land Use Designations.

Open space and rural lands are primary areas that provide carbon sequestration benefits for the Region.

LU-5.4 Planning Support. Undertake planning efforts that promote infill and redevelopment of uses that accommodate walking and biking within communities.

LU-5.5 Projects that Impede Non-Motorized Travel. Ensure that development projects and road improvements do not impede bicycle and pedestrian access. Where impacts to existing planned routes would occur, ensure that impacts are mitigated and acceptable alternative routes are implemented.

Examples include large parking areas that cannot be crossed by non-motorized vehicles, and new developments that block through access on existing or potential bicycle and pedestrian routes.

GOAL LU-6

Development—Environmental Balance. A built environment in balance with the natural environment, scarce resources, natural hazards, and the unique local character of individual communities.

Policies

LU-6.1 Environmental Sustainability. Require the protection of intact or sensitive natural resources in support of the long-term sustainability of the natural environment.

LU-6.2 Reducing Development Pressures. Assign lowest-density or lowest-intensity land use designations to areas with sensitive natural resources.

LU-6.3 Conservation-Oriented Project Design. Support conservation-oriented project design. This can be achieved with mechanisms such as, but not limited to, Specific Plans, lot area averaging, and reductions in lot size with corresponding requirements for preserved open space (Planned Residential Developments). Projects that rely on lot size reductions should incorporate specific design techniques, perimeter lot sizes, or buffers, to achieve compatibility with community character. [See applicable community plan for possible relevant policies.]

Approval of Conservation-Oriented projects is not guaranteed by-right but shall be allowed to process if consistent with applicable minimum lot sizes, design guidelines, and regulations

LU-6.4 Sustainable Subdivision Design. Require that residential subdivisions be planned to conserve open space and natural resources, protect agricultural operations including grazing, increase fire safety and defensibility, reduce impervious footprints, use sustainable development practices, and, when appropriate, provide public amenities. [See applicable community plan for possible relevant policies.]

GOALS AND POLICIES

LU-6.5 Sustainable Stormwater Management. Ensure that development minimizes the use of impervious surfaces and incorporates other Low Impact Development techniques as well as a combination of site design, source control, and stormwater best management practices, where applicable and consistent with the County's LID Handbook.



LU-6.6 Integration of Natural Features into Project Design. Require incorporation of natural features (including mature oaks, indigenous trees, and rock formations) into proposed development and require avoidance of sensitive environmental resources.

Low Impact Development practices on a landscaped median in 4S Ranch

LU-6.7 Open Space Network. Require projects with open space to design contiguous open space areas that protect wildlife habitat and corridors; preserve scenic vistas and areas; and connect with existing or planned recreational opportunities.

LU-6.8 Oversight of Open Space. Require that open space associated with future development that is intended to be preserved in perpetuity either be:

- 1) Retained in private ownership of the property owner or a third party with a restrictive easement that limits use of the land as appropriate; or
- 2) Transferred into public ownership of an agency that manages preserved open space.

The owner of the open space will be responsible for the maintenance and any necessary management unless those responsibilities are delegated through an adopted plan or agreement. Restrictive easements shall be dedicated to the County or a public agency (approved by the County) with responsibilities that correspond with the purpose of the open space. When transferred to a third party or public agency, a funding mechanism to support the future maintenance and management of the property should be established to the satisfaction of the County.

LU-6.9 Development Conformance with Topography. Require development to conform to the natural topography to limit grading; incorporate and not significantly alter the dominant physical characteristics of a site; and to utilize natural drainage and topography in conveying stormwater to the maximum extent practicable.

LU-6.10 Protection from Hazards. Require that development be located and designed to protect property and residents from the risks of natural and man-induced hazards.

LU-6.11 Protection from Wildfires and Unmitigable Hazards. Assign land uses and densities in a manner that minimizes development in extreme, very high and high fire threat areas or other unmitigable hazardous areas.

LU-6.12 Flooding. Document and annually review areas within floodways and 100- and 200-year floodplains to ensure areas subject to flooding are accurately mapped in accordance with AB 162 (enacted January 1, 2008). (*See also Policy S-9.1*)

Additional goals and policies that relate to natural resources are contained in the Conservation and Open Space Element, while those related to natural hazards are in the Safety Element.



GOAL LU-7

Agricultural Conservation. A land use plan that retains and protects farming and agriculture as beneficial resources that contribute to the County’s rural character.



Agricultural lands in the Pauma Valley

Policies

LU-7.1 Agricultural Land Development. Protect agricultural lands with lower-density land use designations that support continued agricultural operations.

LU-7.2 Parcel Size Reduction as Incentive for Agriculture. Allow for reductions in lot size for compatible development when tracts of existing historically agricultural land are preserved in conservation easements for continued agricultural use.

Refer to the Agricultural Resources section of the Conservation and Open Space Element for additional goals and policies.

GOAL LU-8

Aquifers and Groundwater Conservation. Sustainable aquifers and functional groundwater recharge areas.

Policies

LU-8.1 Density Relationship to Groundwater Sustainability. Require land use densities in groundwater dependent areas to be consistent with the long-term sustainability of groundwater supplies, except in the Borrego Valley.

LU-8.2 Groundwater Resources. Require development to identify adequate groundwater resources in groundwater dependent areas, as follows:

- In areas dependent on currently identified groundwater overdrafted basins, prohibit new development from exacerbating overdraft conditions. Encourage programs to alleviate overdraft conditions in Borrego Valley.
- In areas without current overdraft groundwater conditions, evaluate new groundwater-dependent development to assure a sustainable long-term supply of groundwater is available that will not adversely impact existing groundwater users.

A groundwater basin is considered in an overdraft condition when, during average conditions over a number of years, the amount of water being withdrawn from the basin exceeds the amount of water that recharges the basin.

LU-8.3 Groundwater-Dependent Habitat. Discourage development that would significantly draw down the groundwater table to the detriment of groundwater-dependent habitat.

LU-8.4 Program for Borrego Valley Aquifer. Support the Borrego Valley Water District with their program to slow the overdrafting and extend the life of the aquifer supporting the residents of the Borrego Valley.

GOALS AND POLICIES

An aquifer is in overdraft condition when the amount of water being withdrawn (by pumping or by other means) exceeds the amount of water that recharges the basin over a period of years, during which the water supply conditions approximate average conditions.

Refer to the Water Resources section of the Conservation and Open Space Element for additional groundwater-related goals and policies.

Villages and Town Centers

CONTEXT

Smart growth concepts focus growth in compact areas close to jobs, services, and public facilities to maximize the use of existing infrastructure and preserve open space and natural resources. The General Plan Land Use Map accommodates approximately 80 percent of the unincorporated County's population growth within the CWA boundary. The Village regional category, which allows the most intensive land uses in the unincorporated County, facilitates the use of compact development patterns.

Villages that contain a mix of land uses encourage strong neighborhoods and contribute to meeting a community's daily commercial, civic, and social needs. New development can facilitate the achievement of these objectives and enhance the vitality and livability of existing Villages. Such development is expected to be diverse considering the unique needs and character of each Village.

It is important that new development in Villages be compatible with and connects to its surrounding area. Under the General Plan land use designations, many of the County's Villages may realize a sizable amount of growth in the future years. Unchecked, growth and new development can easily transform a community. However, when planned and implemented wisely, growth can be beneficial to a community's identity, economy, and character. Compatibility should be directed through the Community Plan, where the community's character is defined in greater detail, and the Zoning Ordinance. Because Village development will occur as infill or redevelopment, compatibility takes on a greater scope, accounting for the immediately surrounding area as well as the overall character of the Village.

Connections are also important to support a Village that has vitality and mobility. These attributes allow components of a Village to interact and capitalize upon one another, thus improving economy, place, and the sense of a distinct and unified identity. This is achieved through interconnected street and pedestrian networks, the use of localized design standards, careful transitions between land uses, and the incorporation of pedestrian connections and public amenities within larger developments.

Town Centers are the hubs or cores of Villages and can be more than just an assemblage of high-intensity land uses. Ideally, they are active places where community members interact, contribute to the local economy, and enjoy the unique sense of place offered by each community. Development plans can facilitate these activities through the design of both public and private spaces. Major public facilities such as schools, libraries, community centers, and parks that are located in Town Centers often contribute to its identity and level of activity.

New residential development, whether infill or new neighborhoods, can complement adjacent Village residential neighborhoods through compatible site and building design and connected circulation networks.



Larger developments have greater ability to contribute to the Village with a mix of housing options and a range of community amenities and supporting uses, such as recreational facilities and, where appropriate, civic and neighborhood commercial uses.

New commercial and industrial uses are at least equally and often more important to enhancing Villages and contributing to their identity and viability. This is because they serve as attractors to residents and visitors, provide employment, and are often located near the core of the Village and have high visibility. In locating new commercial and industrial uses, care must be taken to avoid impacting existing business. Design will also require careful consideration to ensure compatibility.



Main Street in Julian provides a variety of land uses and building types

GOALS AND POLICIES

GOAL LU-9

Distinct Villages and Community Cores. Well-defined, well-planned, and well-developed community cores, such as Villages and Town Centers, that contribute to a community’s identity and character.

Policies

LU-9.1 Village and Community Core Planning. Encourage the delineation of and development of more detailed planning direction for the character, design, uses, densities, and amenities of Village areas, Town Centers, and other community cores in Community Plans to assist in the future planning of residences, infrastructure, businesses, and civic uses.



A commercial center in Bonsall

LU-9.2 Density Relationship to Environmental Setting. Assign Village land use designations in a manner consistent with community character, and environmental constraints. In general, areas that contain more steep slopes or other environmental constraints should receive lower density designations. [See applicable community plan for possible relevant policies.]

LU-9.3 Village and Community Core Guidelines and Regulations. Support the development and implementation of design guidelines, Village-specific regulations for roads, parking, and noise, and other planning and regulatory mechanisms that recognize the unique operations and character of Villages, Town Centers, and transportation nodes. Ensure that new development be compatible with the overall scale and character of established neighborhoods.

GOALS AND POLICIES

LU-9.4 Infrastructure Serving Villages and Community Cores. Prioritize infrastructure improvements and the provision of public facilities for Villages and community cores as sized for the intensity of development allowed by the Land Use Map.

LU-9.5 Village Uses. Encourage development of distinct areas within communities offering residents places to live, work, and shop, and neighborhoods that integrate a mix of uses and housing types.

LU-9.6 Town Center Uses. Locate commercial, office, civic, and higher-density residential land uses in the Town Centers of Villages or Rural Villages at transportation nodes. Exceptions to this pattern may be allowed for established industrial districts and secondary commercial districts or corridors.

In this reference, a transportation node is intended to be the intersection of two high volume Mobility Element roadways, along with a transit stop.



Residential areas surround commercial and office establishments, schools, and parks in Fallbrook

LU-9.7 Town Center Planning and Design. Plan and guide the development of Town Centers and transportation nodes as the major focal point and activity node for Village areas. Utilize design guidelines to be compatible with the unique character of a community. Roadways, streetscapes, building facades, landscaping, and signage within the town center should be pedestrian oriented. Wherever possible, locate public facilities, such as schools, libraries, community centers, and parks in Town Centers and Villages.

LU-9.8 Village Connectivity and Compatibility with Adjoining Areas. Require new development within Villages to include road networks, pedestrian routes, and amenities that create or maintain connectivity; and site, building, and landscape design that is compatible with surrounding areas. [See applicable community plan for possible relevant policies.]

LU-9.9 Residential Development Pattern. Plan and support an efficient residential development pattern that enhances established neighborhoods or creates new neighborhoods in identified growth areas.

LU-9.10 Internal Village Connectivity. Require that new development in Village areas are integrated with existing neighborhoods by providing connected and continuous street, pathway, and recreational open space networks, including pedestrian and bike paths.

LU-9.11 Integration of Natural Features in Villages. Require the protection and integration of natural features, such as unique topography or streambeds, into Village projects.

LU-9.12 Achieving Planned Densities in Villages. In villages, encourage future residential development to achieve planned densities through multi-family, mixed use, and small-lot single-family projects that are compatible with the community character.



Semi-Rural/Rural Lands

CONTEXT

As they share many common goals and policies, the Semi-Rural and Rural Lands regional categories are combined under this section. Semi-Rural areas comprise the majority of unincorporated land within the CWA boundary and include low-density residential, agricultural, and recreation uses. These lands buffer and separate Village areas and are expected to develop in a manner consistent with their natural environment and rural character. Rural Lands are typically located outside of or between Semi-Rural areas and further define and separate the communities they surround.



Rural lands outside the village of Julian

The majority of unincorporated land outside the CWA Boundary is largely undeveloped, lacks infrastructure, and is thus designated as Rural Lands. A significant portion of these lands is in public ownership and is typically used for recreation or environmental preservation. Outside the CWA boundary, Semi-Rural lands typically reflect established communities.

The lower densities in the Semi-Rural and Rural Lands allow for reduced development pressures and greater flexibility in a manner that minimizes impacts to the environment. This can be accomplished by implementing policies that require all development in Semi-Rural and Rural Lands to protect and sustain ecosystems, topography, riparian corridors, rock formations, mature trees and other natural assets, and avoid natural hazards, such as flooding, steep slopes, and seismic instability.

Despite numerous constraints to agriculture in San Diego County, such as high water and land costs, the County has a robust agricultural economy. Agriculture contributes to the character of the County, and particularly Semi-Rural and Rural Lands, supplying County residents with local agricultural products, and contributing significantly to the local economy. A goal of these categories is the preservation of local agriculture, which includes a diverse mix of high value commodities and takes advantage of a long—in some cases year-round—growing season. Incompatibility of adjacent land uses can present yet another constraint to the viability of local agriculture. As residential and other potentially incompatible development occurs in traditionally agricultural areas, careful attention should be given to the compatibility of these nonagricultural uses and to site design techniques that would reduce or avoid potential conflicts. Goals and policies that pertain to agriculture are located in the conservation and Open Space Element (Chapter 5).

GOALS AND POLICIES

GOAL LU-10

Function of Semi-Rural and Rural Lands. Semi-Rural and Rural Lands that buffer communities, protect natural resources, foster agriculture, and accommodate unique rural communities.

GOALS AND POLICIES

Policies

LU-10.1 Residential Connectivity. Require residential development in Semi-Rural areas to be integrated with existing neighborhoods by providing connected and continuous street, pathway/trail, and recreational open space networks.

LU-10.2 Development—Environmental Resource Relationship. Require development in Semi-Rural and Rural areas to respect and conserve the unique natural features and rural character, and avoid sensitive or intact environmental resources and hazard areas.



Echo Valley in the Jamul Community Planning Area

LU-10.3 Village Boundaries. Use Semi-Rural and Rural land use designations to define the boundaries of Villages and Rural Land Use designations to serve as buffers between communities.

LU-10.4 Commercial and Industrial Development. Limit the establishment of commercial and industrial uses in Semi-Rural and Rural areas that are outside of Villages (including Rural Villages) to minimize vehicle trips and environmental impacts.

Commercial, Office, and Industrial Development

CONTEXT

While the Community Development Model and the General Plan Regional Categories directly relate to the ranges of intensity of the residential Land Use Designations, as shown on Table LU-1, there is less of a correlation to the nonresidential Land Use Designations (Commercial, Office Professional, and Industrial). As such, specific guidance is needed to ensure that nonresidential development is planned and occurs in a manner consistent with the Guiding Principles for the General Plan and the plans of each unincorporated community.

Commercial, office, and industrial uses are important to a community's identity and viability. They serve as attractors to residents and visitors, provide employment, and contribute to the economy. Commercial uses accommodate the retail and service needs of, and provide employment opportunities for, surrounding residents. Primary commercial areas, such as Town Centers, typically serve an entire Village and its surrounding rural residents. Land-intensive commercial activity will generally serve regional as well as local needs, and is best located at key intersections of multi-modal transportation corridors. There is also a need for smaller scale commercial uses in residential neighborhoods beyond the Village core to serve the convenience needs of residents in that area.

Typical Office Professional uses include office-oriented professional and administrative services and research and development activities. Large-scale office uses are typically clustered in campus-style office or industrial park settings, while smaller-scale office uses are typically located in mixed-use Village and Neighborhood Centers. The Village Core Mixed Use, neighborhood commercial, and General Commercial land use



designations all provide for this type of mixed-use office development. While, office development that requires large, continuous floor area may be accommodated in campus-style office parks under the Office Professional and Light Industrial land use designations, it is important that these developments not be isolated and separated by location design from adjoining land uses, resulting in a distinct island. Compatibility with the adjacent development and connections to vehicular and pedestrian circulation networks remain important.

Typical industrial uses include manufacturing, processing, assembly, wholesaling, and warehouse activities that normally require large indoor and outdoor areas for processing and storage. In the unincorporated County, these uses typically occur on large development sites or as clusters of smaller sites served by municipal infrastructure and with direct access to major transportation corridors. Industrial uses with adverse impacts such as noise, vibration, odor, and aesthetic impairment must be carefully located and designed to avoid compatibility issues with adjacent land uses. Light industrial uses are considered compatible in pedestrian-oriented Village centers because they are similar in function and form to offices. Medium industrial uses are most compatible within Village boundaries but outside the pedestrian-oriented center and buffered from incompatible residential or commercial land uses.



The pedestrian-oriented Main Avenue in Fallbrook

GOALS AND POLICIES

GOAL LU-11

Commercial, Office, and Industrial Development. Commercial, office, and industrial development that is appropriately sited and designed to enhance the unique character of each unincorporated community and to minimize vehicle trip lengths.

Policies

- LU-11.1 Location and Connectivity.** Locate commercial, office, and industrial development in Village areas with high connectivity and accessibility from surrounding residential neighborhoods, whenever feasible.
- LU-11.2 Compatibility with Community Character.** Require that commercial, office, and industrial development be located, scaled, and designed to be compatible with the unique character of the community.

GOALS AND POLICIES

- LU-11.3 Pedestrian-Oriented Commercial Centers.** Encourage the development of commercial centers in compact, walkable configurations in Village centers that locate parking in the rear or on the side of the parcel, use transparent storefronts with active retail street-fronting uses, minimize setbacks, and discourage “strip” commercial development. “Strip” commercial development consists of automobile-oriented commercial development with the buildings set back from the street to accommodate parking between the building and street.
- LU-11.4 Town Center Intensity and Vitality.** Encourage revitalization of Town Center areas to strengthen neighborhoods, expand local employment opportunities, and establish or enhance a sense of place.
- LU-11.5 Large-Format Retail Stores.** Allow large-format retail uses, typically referred to as “big box stores,” only where the scale of the use and design is compatible with the surrounding areas. Large-format retail typically means retail stores with floor plans that are larger than 65,000 sq. ft.
- LU-11.6 Office Development.** Locate new office development complexes within Village areas where services are available, in proximity to housing, and along primary vehicular arterials (ideally with transit access) with internal vehicular and pedestrian linkages that integrate the new development into the multi-modal transportation network where feasible.
- LU-11.7 Office Development Compatibility with Adjoining Uses.** Require new office development, including office parks, to be compatible to the scale, design, site layout, and circulation patterns of adjacent existing or planned commercial and residential development.
- LU-11.8 Permitted Secondary Uses.** Provide a process where secondary land uses may be permitted when appropriate and compatible with the primary commercial, office, and light industrial uses, in order to better serve the daily needs of employees and to reduce the frequency of related automobile trips. This policy is not intended for high impact industrial uses.
- LU-11.9 Development Density and Scale Transitions.** Locate transitions of medium-intensity land uses or provide buffers between lower intensity uses, such as low-density residential districts and higher intensity development, such as commercial or industrial uses. Buffering may be accomplished through increased setbacks or other techniques such as grade differentials, walls, and/or landscaping but must be consistent with community design standards.
- LU-11.10 Integrity of Medium and High Impact Industrial Uses.** Protect designated Medium and High Impact Industrial areas from encroachment of incompatible land uses, such as residences, schools, or other uses that are sensitive to industrial impacts. The intent of this policy is to retain the ability to utilize industrially designated locations by reducing future development conflicts.
- LU-11.11 Industrial Compatibility with Adjoining Uses.** Require industrial land uses with outdoor activities or storage to provide a buffer from adjacent incompatible land uses (refer to Policy LU-11.9 for examples of buffering).

Community Services and Infrastructure

CONTEXT

Land uses in the County are supported by a diversity of public utilities and services. Among these are water supply, wastewater collection and treatment, solid waste management, schools, and libraries.



WATER SUPPLY

San Diego County is located in a semi-arid to arid desert climate with limited local water supplies, requiring that the majority of its water resources be imported. The County is not a purveyor of water and must rely on the San Diego County Water Authority (SDCWA) and its member agencies to provide the majority of water delivery to the region. Fifteen of the 24 current SDCWA member agencies provide water to the unincorporated areas of the County. An additional 14 independent special districts, along with private water systems, provide services to the unincorporated County. The water districts in the unincorporated County are shown on Figure LU-2 (Water Districts).



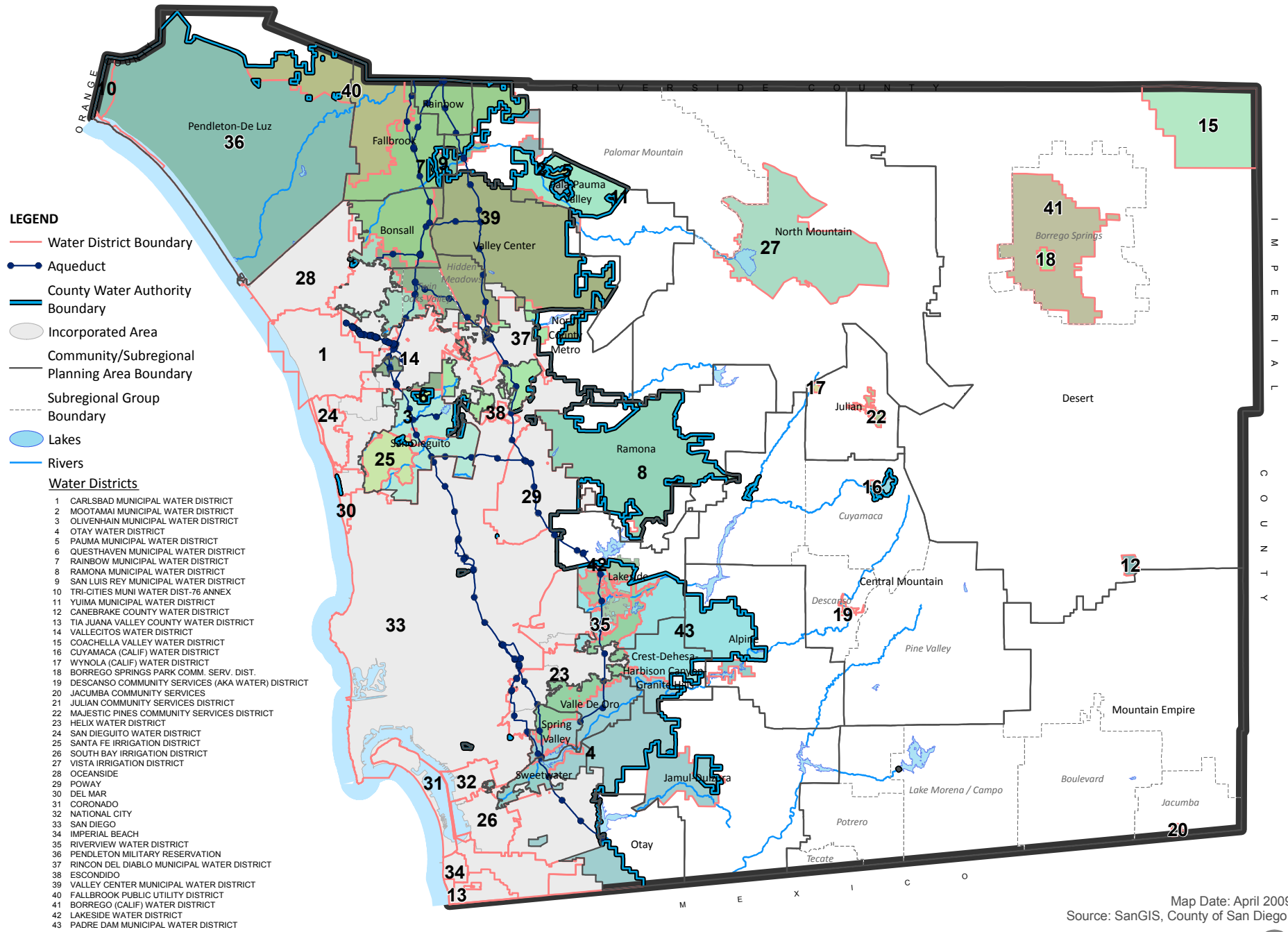
Otay Reservoir

The City of San Diego owns and maintains seven drinking source water reservoirs in the County. While these reservoirs do not provide potable water for residents outside the city, they are used by County residents for recreation and provide valuable habitat.

The California Urban Water Management Planning Act requires that each urban water supplier, providing water for municipal purposes either directly or indirectly to more than 3,000 customers or supplying more than 3,000 acre-feet of water annually, shall prepare, update and adopt an (Urban Water Management Plan) UWMP at least once every five years on or before December 31, in years ending in five and zero. In the 2005 UWMPs, the Metropolitan water District (MWD), SDCWA and all 15 SDCWA member agencies that serve the unincorporated County determined that adequate water supplies would be available to serve existing service areas under normal water year, single dry water year, and multiple dry water year conditions through the year 2030. However, there are multiple issues related to the projections included in the 2005 UWMPs. Factors such as cutbacks in water importation supplies from MWD and SDCWA and the statewide drought have not have been accounted for in 2005 UWMP supply and demand projections.

In addition to the UWMP, which deals with long term planning, SDCWA's Board of Directors approved a Drought Management Plan (DMP) in 2006. The DMP provides potential actions that the SDCWA can take to minimize or avoid the impacts associated with supply shortage conditions due primarily to droughts. The DMP also contains a water supply allocation methodology to be used if the SDCWA is required to allocate supplies to its member agencies.

In August 2007, a U.S. District court decision was issued to protect the endangered Delta smelt (fish). This federal court ruling set operational limits on pumping in the Sacramento-San Joaquin Delta from December 2007 to June 2008 to protect the Delta smelt. As a result of this ruling, MWD is estimated to see as much as a 20 to 30 percent reduction in State Water Project supplies in 2008 and beyond. This means that local water agencies would have to rely on increased conservation, along with contingency and emergency sources of water, including local groundwater and storage supplies, to lessen direct impacts on water availability for their customers.



WATER DISTRICTS





Additionally, after a record dry spring that dramatically curtailed snow runoff from the Sierra Nevada Mountains, Governor Schwarzenegger declared an official statewide drought on June 4, 2008. Following the Governor’s action, the MWD board of directors issued a Water Supply Alert for its six-county service area, urging local jurisdictions to adopt and implement water conservation ordinances and to significantly increase efforts and programs to conserve water.

The Colorado River, the other major source of imported supplies for MWD, has experienced drought conditions for eight of the last nine years. The Colorado River provides water to more than 31 million people in seventeen western states. Since the drought in the late 1980s and early 1990s, MWD enacted a plan to improve water supplies during dry conditions. The Integrated Resources Plan (2004) called for increasing MWD’s ability to store wet-year surplus supplies from the Colorado River and Northern California’s Sacramento-San Joaquin Delta. In 2007, enough water in reserve was available to help MWD withstand up to three successive dry years. The federal court decision on the Delta smelt reduces MWD’s ability to



Otay County Landfill

replenish reserves in wet years and prolonged dry conditions in California continue to draw on the reserves. As a result the, MWD’s near-term strategy is to lower demand and stretch the reserve supplies as much as possible.

Additionally, climate changes due to global warming also create new uncertainties that significantly affect California’s water resources and lessen the reliability of 2005 UWMPs. All 2005 UWMPs include a drought management or shortage contingency analysis section, which identifies how the agency will manage shortages. However, these UWMPs do not account for the severity or longevity of the above-mentioned difficulties in providing enough supply for the region’s demand. In preparing 2010 UWMPs, the SDCWA and its water districts will need to account for these issues and will likely place more emphasis on conservation, water recycling, and expanding local supplies through methods such as seawater desalination, groundwater, surface water, transfers, and imported supplies. Development of the diverse sources of water will aid in reducing the SDCWA’s purchases of imported supplies from the MWD. Groundwater is the primary source of supply for the special water districts and private water systems that serve the groundwater-dependent unincorporated areas. In addition, many areas of the County are dependent on individual wells and are not served by water agencies. The Land Use Map allows limited development in these areas. In California, individual groundwater users are typically not regulated in regard to the amount of groundwater they can use nor does the County typically restrict an individual’s use. However, the County can deny discretionary permits if the proposed groundwater resources are not sufficient for the proposed development. For permits with ongoing conditions, the County can require limitations or conditions on the amount of groundwater that can be withdrawn.

SOLID WASTE

Solid waste management has been recognized as an important regional issue in San Diego County because of limited landfill capacity, urban encroachment, and environmental concerns reducing potential facility expansions and replacement sites, environmental regulations, and the increased cost of developing and operating waste management facilities. Historically, the primary method of disposing of solid waste has been through the use of landfills. Since the early 1990s, there has been a growing emphasis to reduce the amount of solid waste being disposed of in landfills through integration of recycling and source reduction. There are seven active landfills in the San Diego region that serve both incorporated and unincorporated areas. The landfills currently operating in the County for public use are either privately owned and operated or are owned and operated by another local jurisdiction. There is sufficient landfill space for thirty years considering current landfill expansions, and proposed new landfills. However there is insufficient infrastructure to support the traffic flow to and from the landfills resulting in daily and annual permitted tonnage restrictions. Current plans for expansion of existing landfills and new landfills would add 179 million tons of capacity. The San Diego County Integrated Waste Management Plan Siting Element analysis (2005) determined that if the County would recycle at a rate of 75 percent, which complies with State mandates for integrated solid waste management, compared to the present 50 percent, there would be no need for additional landfills in the County, including the proposed Gregory Canyon and Campo landfills.

EDUCATION

The provision of educational facilities and services are mandated by the State Department of Education and administered by the San Diego County Board of Education and the San Diego County Office of Education, which is a public agency with land use authority that is separate from the County of San Diego. The County Offices of Education and the San Diego County Board of Education provide a support infrastructure for local schools and districts while acknowledging each school board's responsibility to represent and serve their community. The day-to-day development of facilities and delivery of instruction is generally the responsibility of the County's 42 local school districts. Student populations in the unincorporated areas of the County have generally experienced steady growth rates depending on the particular community or area that the school facility is located. Because the County of San Diego does not have jurisdiction over the land use decisions of public schools, its responsibility for school facilities is limited to review and comment on projects for proposed schools.

WASTEWATER

The majority of sewage treatment and disposal in the unincorporated areas of San Diego County is accomplished by one of the following three methods: (1) regional systems maintained by public water or sewer districts; (2) small wastewater treatment facilities operated by independent districts or the County; and (3) on-site subsurface sewage disposal (septic) systems. The method of treatment and disposal often depends on the district's location. Generally, those districts located in the proximity of the City of San Diego are members of the San Diego Metropolitan Sewerage System (Metro) and use its system for treatment and effluent disposal. A number of agencies also use a combination of the Metro system and inland treatment and disposal. Those districts located near the coastal areas provide effluent disposal through the use of an ocean outfall. Those districts located inland (a majority of the unincorporated areas of the County) provide sewage treatment and disposal through reuse, spray fields, evaporation, and other techniques.



The Department of Public Works (DPW) Wastewater Management Section (WWM) is responsible for maintaining sewer lines, pump stations, force mains and several treatment plants for the unincorporated areas of Alpine, Julian, Lakeside, Spring Valley, Pine Valley, Campo, East Otay Mesa, and the Winter Gardens area. Wastewater flows originating within the communities of Alpine, Lakeside, Winter Gardens, Spring Valley, and East Otay Mesa are transmitted to the City of San Diego metro system for treatment and disposal. The remaining communities of Julian, Pine Valley, and Campo utilize “inland” treatment and disposal systems.

TELECOMMUNICATIONS

Telecommunications services are offered to county residents by a diversity of providers. These include Time Warner and Cox Communications for cable television and digital services; AT&T for standard landline telephone; Verizon, Sprint, Cingular/AT&T, Nextel, Cricket, and T-Mobile for cell phone; and Vonage and Skype for voice over Internet protocol. Due to the dispersed and low-density pattern of development in the County, particularly in its eastern-most reaches, some telecommunication services are not available throughout the entirety of the area.

ISSUES

The following are the key issues related to community services and infrastructure in the unincorporated County:

- Coordination of service and infrastructure can be difficult in the unincorporated areas that are served by numerous other entities.
- The geographic extent of the unincorporated County precludes the ability to provide the same level of services and infrastructure to all of its lands.
- Limited population density and/or access to some areas of the unincorporated County also result in both physical and fiscal challenges to providing services.
- Maintenance and enhancement of public infrastructure is important to the well-being of existing communities. Many existing communities include basic infrastructure such as roads, water and sewer, but could benefit from enhancements such as pathways, trails, landscaping, and better connected roads.
- As development occurs, it is important to existing communities that this development provides for adequate services to meet its own needs without adversely affecting the existing residents.
- Some community services, such as libraries and community centers, may contribute to defining a community’s identity, location, and character.

These and other issues relevant to community services and infrastructure in the unincorporated County area are addressed in this General Plan. As previously stated, additional goals and policies on some specific services or infrastructure can be found in other elements of the General Plan (refer to the Mobility Element for transportation-related infrastructure, the Conservation and Open Space Element for recreational facilities, and the Safety Element for emergency services and law enforcement). The following goals and policies either pertain to those issues not covered by other elements or are more general.

GOALS AND POLICIES

GOAL LU-12

Infrastructure and Services Supporting Development. Adequate and sustainable infrastructure, public facilities, and essential services that meet community needs and are provided concurrent with growth and development.

Policies

LU-12.1 Concurrency of Infrastructure and Services with Development. Require the provision of infrastructure, facilities, and services needed by new development prior to that development, either directly or through fees. Where appropriate, the construction of infrastructure and facilities may be phased to coincide with project phasing.

In addition to utilities, roads, bicycle and pedestrian facilities, and education, police, and fire services, transit-oriented infrastructure, such as bus stops, bus benches, turnouts, etc, should be provided, where appropriate.

LU-12.2 Maintenance of Adequate Services. Require development to mitigate significant impacts to existing service levels of public facilities or services for existing residents and businesses. Provide improvements for Mobility Element roads in accordance with the Mobility Element Network Appendix matrices, which may result in ultimate build-out conditions that achieve an improved LOS but do not achieve a LOS of D or better.



LU-12.3 Infrastructure and Services Compatibility. Provide public facilities and services that are sensitive to the environment with characteristics of the unincorporated communities. Encourage the collocation of infrastructure facilities, where appropriate.

Public services and facilities in Village areas are expected to differ from those in rural lands. Development standards in the Implementation Plan, Zoning Ordinance, and community-specific planning documents may reflect this 'context-sensitive' approach.

LU-12.4 Planning for Compatibility. Plan and site infrastructure for public utilities and public facilities in a manner compatible with community character, minimize visual and environmental impacts, and whenever feasible, locate any facilities and supporting infrastructure outside preserve areas. Require context sensitive Mobility Element road design that is compatible with community character and minimizes visual and environmental impacts; for Mobility Element roads identified in Table M-4, an LOS D or better may not be achieved.



GOAL LU-13

Adequate Water Quality, Supply, and Protection. A balanced and regionally integrated water management approach to ensure the long-term viability of San Diego County’s water quality and supply.

Policies

LU-13.1 Adequacy of Water Supply. Coordinate water infrastructure planning with land use planning to maintain an acceptable availability of a high quality sustainable water supply. Ensure that new development includes both indoor and outdoor water conservation measures to reduce demand.



Olivehain Reservoir in the Elfin Forest Recreational Preserve

LU-13.2 Commitment of Water Supply. Require new development to identify adequate water resources, in accordance with State law, to support the development prior to approval.

GOAL LU-14

Adequate Wastewater Facilities. Adequate wastewater disposal that addresses potential hazards to human health and the environment.

Policies

LU-14.1 Wastewater Facility Plans. Coordinate with wastewater agencies and districts during the preparation or update of wastewater facility master plans and/or capital improvement plans to provide adequate capacity and assure consistency with the County’s land use plans.

LU-14.2 Wastewater Disposal. Require that development provide for the adequate disposal of wastewater concurrent with the development and that the infrastructure is designed and sized appropriately to meet reasonably expected demands.

LU-14.3 Wastewater Treatment Facilities. Require wastewater treatment facilities serving more than one private property owner to be operated and maintained by a public agency. Coordinate the planning and design of such facilities with the appropriate agency to be consistent with applicable sewer master plans.

LU-14.4 Sewer Facilities. Prohibit sewer facilities that would induce unplanned growth. Require sewer systems to be planned, developed, and sized to serve the land use pattern and densities depicted on the Land Use Map. Sewer systems and services shall not be extended beyond either Village boundaries or extant Urban Limit Lines, whichever is more restrictive, except:

- When necessary for public health, safety, or welfare;
- When within existing sewer district boundaries;
- When necessary for a conservation subdivision adjacent to existing sewer facilities; or
- Where specifically allowed in the community plan.

An Urban Limit Line is a growth boundary that can be used in Community Plans to define the maximum extent of urban and suburban development. An Urban Limit Line may be the basis for containment of growth inducing urban infrastructure or community-specific goals and policies.

GOALS AND POLICIES

LU-14.5 Alternate Sewage Disposal Systems. Support the use of alternative on-site sewage disposal systems when conventional systems are not feasible and in conformance with State guidelines and regulations.

GOAL LU-15

Adequate Wireless Communication Facilities. Wireless telecommunication facilities that utilize state-of-the-art techniques to minimize impacts to communities and the environment.

Policies

LU-15.1 Telecommunication Facilities Compatibility with Setting. Require that wireless telecommunication facilities be sited and designed to minimize visual impacts, adverse impacts to the natural environment, and are compatible with existing development and community character.

LU-15.2 Co-Location of Telecommunication Facilities. Encourage wireless telecommunication service providers to co-locate their facilities whenever appropriate, consistent with the Zoning Ordinance. *[See applicable community plan for possible relevant policies.]*

GOAL LU-16

Appropriately Sited Waste Management Facilities. Solid waste management facilities that are appropriately located and sited in a manner that minimizes environmental impacts and potential conflicts from incompatible land uses, while facilitating recycling and resource recovery activities.

Policies

LU-16.1 Location of Waste Management Facilities. Site new solid waste management facilities identified in the San Diego County Integrated Waste Management Plan, in a manner that minimizes environmental impacts and prevents groundwater degradation, and in accordance with applicable local land use policies.

LU-16.2 Integrity of Waste Management Facilities. Avoid encroachment of incompatible land uses upon solid waste facilities in order to minimize or avoid potential conflicts.

LU-16.3 New Waste Management Facilities. Encourage the establishment of additional recycling and resource recovery facilities in areas with Industrial land use designations or other appropriate areas based on the type of recycling.

For example, some agricultural areas may be appropriate for management or recycling of agricultural wastes (composting).

GOAL LU-17

Adequate Education. Quality schools that enhance our communities and mitigate for their impacts.

Policies

LU-17.1 Planning for Schools. Encourage school districts to consider the population distribution as shown on the Land Use Map when planning for new school facilities.



- LU-17.2 Compatibility of Schools with Adjoining Uses.** Encourage school districts to minimize conflicts between schools and adjacent land uses through appropriate siting and adequate mitigation, addressing such issues as student drop-off/pick up locations, parking access, and security.
- LU-17.3 Priority School Locations.** Encourage school districts to locate schools within Village or Rural Village areas wherever possible and site and design them in a manner that provides the maximum opportunity for students to walk or bicycle to school.
- LU-17.4 Avoidance of Hazards.** Assist school districts with locating school facilities away from fault zones, flood or dam inundation zones, and hazardous materials storage areas in conformance with State statutes.

GOAL LU-18

Adequate Civic Uses. Civic uses that enhance community centers and places.

Policies

- LU-18.1 Compatibility of Civic Uses with Community Character.** Locate and design Civic uses and services to assure compatibility with the character of the community and adjoining uses, which pose limited adverse effects. Such uses may include libraries, meeting centers, and small swap meets, farmers markets, or other community gatherings.
- LU-18.2 Co-Location of Civic Uses.** Encourage the co-location of civic uses such as County library facilities, community centers, parks, and schools. To encourage access by all segments of the population, civic uses should be accessible by transit whenever possible.

CHAPTER 4 **Mobility Element**



Introduction

Purpose and Scope

The Mobility Element includes several components including a description of the County’s transportation network, the goals and policies that address the safe and efficient operation, maintenance, and management of the transportation network, and the Mobility Element Network Appendix, which depicts in map and matrix format the location of road network components. The goals and policies strive for a balanced multimodal transportation system with adequate capacity to support the land uses and development patterns in the Land Use Element of this General Plan.

The Mobility Element provides a framework for a balanced, multi-modal transportation system for the movement of people and goods within the unincorporated areas of the County of San Diego. A balanced system uses multiple modes of travel including motor vehicles, public transportation, bicycles, pedestrians, and to a lesser extent, rail and air transportation. While the automobile is the predominant mode of travel in the unincorporated County due largely to its rural character, opportunities for increased mode choice are addressed in this Element.



Interstate 8, east of Alpine

The Mobility Element identifies the County road network, much of which currently exists, to be developed in the unincorporated County during the implementation of this General Plan so that future rights-of-way can be preserved for future motorized and non-motorized roadway purposes. This network includes County and State roads that form the backbone of a regional network providing movement within and between communities in the unincorporated County. Interstate highways, as with State roads and highways, are managed and maintained by the California Department of Transportation (Caltrans). While the Mobility Element network map indicates some roadways within city boundaries, the County has no jurisdiction over roads in these cities. When applicable, the Mobility Element road network has been coordinated with adjacent cities to ensure consistency to the extent feasible.

With the exception of State roads and highways, the County is responsible for the operation and maintenance of the public roadway system in unincorporated areas of the County along with the operation of eight public aviation facilities. The San Diego Association of Governments (SANDAG) serves as the regional planning agency for the entire County and is a key partner to the County along with other State, regional, and public agencies, in planning and funding roadways and other components of the transportation network within the County.

Guiding Principles for Mobility

The Mobility Element’s goals and policies are based on and reflective of a number of the Guiding Principles for the General Plan introduced in Chapter 2. A central theme is support for a multi-modal transportation network that enhances connectivity and supports existing development patterns while retaining community character and maintaining environmental sustainability by reducing gasoline consumption and greenhouse gas emissions.

The Mobility Element balances competing goals of accommodating trips generated by land use, while striving to retain a transportation network that complements, rather than impacts, the character of communities, which is generally rural in much of the unincorporated County. Therefore, widening of roads, which can dramatically change the character of a community, should be pursued only after environmental and community character impacts are also considered. The need to widen roads is minimized when trip vehicle miles traveled are reduced, the performance of the existing network is optimized, and the use of alternative modes of travel is maximized.

Reducing vehicle miles traveled is also an important component of reducing greenhouse gas emissions. Along with compact land use patterns, a well-connected road network contributes to reducing vehicle miles traveled. The Mobility Element requires the provision of multi-modal facilities to accommodate alternative modes of travel, such as public transportation, bicycling, and walking. In addition, goals and policies are included to minimize single occupancy vehicular travel through carpooling, vanpooling, and other transportation demand management methods.

The Mobility Element strives to maximize traffic movement and enhance connectivity by creating multiple connections between existing and planned retail or employment centers and residential communities and between different areas within communities. A continuous network where roads have enhanced connectivity facilitates the provision of optional routes of travel. This enables commuters to avoid areas when roads are congested or closed. In addition, a network with enhanced connectivity provides multiple evacuation routes during emergencies, such as wildfires. The Mobility Element incorporates road types that are compatible with surrounding land uses and reinforce the positive aspects of a community’s character, contributing to the economic and social development of the community.



Road in Alpine



Bus service to Tecate



Biking at William Heise County Park in Julian

Requiring new development to pay its fair share of road and related infrastructure costs minimizes public costs while ensuring the infrastructure is available to support the increased demand for services.



Relationship to Other General Plan Elements

As mandated by State law, the Mobility Element must be consistent with all other elements of the General Plan (including community plans) and is related to these elements as discussed in the following section.

- *Land Use Element.* The Mobility Element is directly correlated to the Land Use Element this includes the identification of a road network that can adequately support the uses designated in the Land Use Map at build-out, based on a reasonable expectation for funding of the regional transportation network. The capacity required for the Mobility Element road network is based on the average number of daily vehicle trips that would be generated with build-out of the Land Use Map. The Mobility Element framework of road types relates to the varying characteristics of communities. The Land Use Element addresses non-transportation infrastructure components such as water, sewage, storm drainage, and communications; many of which are located within the rights-of-way of the road network.
- *Noise Element.* This element addresses noise generated by motorized traffic on roadways, rail lines, and at airports. Also, the Noise Element identifies noise level contours and determines their compatibility with each land use type.
- *Conservation and Open Space Element.* This element provides measures for the preservation, conservation, development, and use of natural resources. The element addresses the air quality impacts from motor vehicular traffic, along with the impacts to environmentally sensitive habitats from road construction or improvements. In addition, the Mobility Element identifies the regional trail system that enhances community circulation and provides connections to recreational opportunities within County parks, open space preserves, and other public lands.
- *Safety Element.* Emergency ingress and egress routes are addressed in both the Mobility and Safety Elements. The Safety Element further establishes land use compatibility policies for areas located within the vicinity of airports.

Goals and Policies for Mobility Element

County Road Network

CONTEXT

In the unincorporated County, the road network is by far the most dominant component of the County's transportation system. Although motorists are the primary users of the system, transit riders, bicyclists, pedestrians, and equestrians rely on the network for mobility within the unincorporated County as well as the greater San Diego region. State highways and regional arterials in the unincorporated County are part of an extensive regional network that is integrated with an interstate highway system that provides intra- and interregional travel within and through the unincorporated County as described below.

- Traffic from Orange County enters the County along Interstate 5 through Marine Corps Base Camp Pendleton and travels to the coastal cities.
- Traffic from Riverside County travels into the unincorporated County along Interstate 15 and State Route 79, through the Rainbow Community Planning Area and North Mountain Subregion, respectively.

GOALS AND POLICIES

- Traffic from Imperial County enters the County along Interstate 8 through the Mountain Empire Subregion and along State Routes 78 and S22 through the Desert Subregion.
- Traffic from Baja California, Mexico enters the unincorporated County through the Tecate Port of Entry in Tecate, U.S.A. in the Mountain Empire Subregion.

COUNTY ROAD SYSTEM

With the exception of state-maintained highways and roads, the County is responsible for the maintenance of the public (Mobility Element and Local Public) road network in the unincorporated areas, including associated bicycle and pedestrian facilities. In addition, the County also reviews development projects with private roads to ensure adequate ingress and egress is being provided. The three primary types of roads under the purview of the County are as follows:

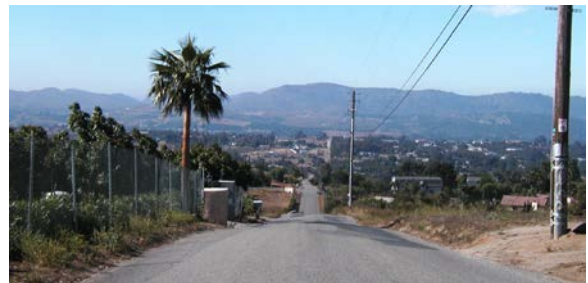
- *Mobility Element roads* are County-maintained roads shown on the Mobility Element map and adopted in the General Plan. They provide for the movement of people and goods between and within communities in the County. The Mobility Element displays these roads showing both the road classification and its general alignment.
- *Local public roads* are County-maintained roads that feed traffic onto Mobility Element roads. These roads are not adopted in the General Plan; therefore deviations from planned networks do not require a general plan amendment.
- *Private roads*, including their rights-of-way, are not maintained by the County and generally are not available for general public use.



Mobility Element road



Via de Fortuna Road, a San Dieguito local public road



Yellow Brick Road, a private road in Valley Center

Transportation and land use are two important and related components of every community that help establish its character and function. Land use decisions take into account the road network when assessing the physical characteristics of the site along with resulting traffic impacts. Road design should minimize impacts to land use by including elements and features that accommodate community needs and reflect the character of the area. For example, the design of a four-lane road in an urbanized commercial center would differ from a four-lane road in a sparsely developed rural area. Functional road classifications are correlated to the Regional Categories identified in the Land Use Element.

While well designed roads respond to land use characteristics. A second major objective of the Mobility Element is to develop roads that are multi-modal and can safely accommodate vehicular, as well as transit, bicycle, equestrian, and pedestrian modes of travel. The San Diego County Public Road Standards and



supplemental manuals provide guidance for the road designs, along with including bus stops and non-motorized circulation facilities into the road right-of-way.

COUNTY ROAD OPERATIONS AND NETWORK

The backbone of the County’s road network is referred to as the Mobility Element network, which includes both State highways and County roads. However, the goals and policies for roadways apply to all roads, public and private, unless otherwise stated.

The Mobility Element road network is based on a combination of physical and environmental conditions, community input, and SANDAG traffic model forecasts based on full build-out of the General Plan land use map. When physical and other constraints preclude constructing roads to the number of lanes required to accommodate traffic with a LOS D or better, exceptions, coordinated with community planning or sponsor groups, have been made to accept the road operating at LOS E or F, according to the SANDAG traffic model forecasts. The SANDAG traffic model used 2030 projections for build-out of the regional (freeways, state highways, and transit facilities) transportation network and the road networks and land use plans for incorporated jurisdictions.

The road network identified by the Mobility Element is depicted on community level maps showing the road classification series and the general route of each road (see Mobility Element Network Appendix). Freeways, although shown on these maps, are included only for reference, as Mobility Element roads include State highways, but not freeways. The maps are accompanied by a matrix that identifies the road segment, its classification, any necessary improvements (such as a raised median, continuous or intermittent turn lanes, passing lanes, reduced shoulder width, or increased right-of-way requirements), and special circumstances including when it is deemed acceptable for a specific road segment to operate at a level of service E or F. Further explanation regarding the operating levels of service for each road segment is provided in the Background Material Section at the end of this chapter, along with specific exceptions to the established levels of service.

ROAD CLASSIFICATIONS

The County’s road classifications are specific to roads operated and maintained by the County, and may be different from roads in other jurisdictions. The County’s classification system is arranged by road type in a hierarchy that begins with roads that provide the greatest capacity (six-lane roads) to those that provide the least capacity (two-lane roads). The greater the road capacity, the more vehicles can travel on the roadway at an acceptable level of service. Table M-1a (Road Classifications: Six- and Four-Lane Roads) and Table M-1b (Road Classifications: Two-Lane Roads) provide a description for each classification, the number of travel lanes, and both the minimum right-of-way requirements and the right-of-way requirements when bicycle lanes and pathways are provided. The County’s Public Road Standards provide additional criteria for these road types, such as design speed and threshold capacity. When the volume of a roadway increases beyond the threshold capacity of its classification, a higher capacity classification is required.

Road/bicycle classifications depicted in the General Plan Mobility Element Matrix are full buildout classifications. Evaluation of individual projects through required traffic studies may identify project design considerations that are less than the full buildout classification and may not require a General Plan Amendment.

GOALS AND POLICIES

Flexibility exists within the Public Road Standards for exceptions that may be appropriate for community context or other reasons. Additionally, community specific road standards may also be prepared to implement context-sensitive solutions for individual communities. Where it is demonstrated that permanent bus or transit facilities are needed, such as in a regional transit or school district plan based upon the demand and frequency of buses, additional right of way may be required/obtained for the provision of a bus turn out at designated bus stop locations, based upon design criteria provided by the transit district or school district. In some instances this has been done by utilizing part of the parkway in lieu of increasing the overall right-of-way. The bus turn-outs are designed and implemented on a case by case basis depending on the need and design parameters at the proposed bus turnouts.



Residential street with parking

These road classifications are specific to County Mobility Element roads, and although another jurisdiction may have a similar classification, the design criteria and standards are not necessarily the same. In addition, although State highways are included in the Mobility Element road network, the cross-section and right-of-way requirements for State highways are within Caltrans' jurisdiction and may be different than those of Mobility Element road classifications. Generally Caltrans prefers that rural conventional highways with at-grade intersections and with speeds greater than 40 mph, have a Clear Recovery Zone of 20 feet beyond the edge of the traveled way. Fixed objects located at distances less than the required Clear Recovery Zone may not be allowed.

Table M-1a Road Classifications: Six- and Four-Lane Roads				
No.	Road Classification	Description	Typical ROW Range* (Feet)	Lanes
SIX LANE ROAD SERIES				
Roads that accommodate high speed, high volume traffic and should be located away from Villages and in areas with limited physical constraints. The median serves as a separation between travel ways, as opposed to an area for turning or entering adjacent property.				
6.1	Expressway	A divided roadway with a wide median and grade separated interchanges. Road type has a capacity of 86,000 ADT (or more depending upon the number of lanes).	146–160	6 or more
6.2	Prime Arterial	A divided roadway with a median and at-grade interchanges. Capacity for road type is 50,000 ADT.	122–136	6



Table M-1a Road Classifications: Six- and Four-Lane Roads

No.	Road Classification	Description	Typical ROW Range* (Feet)	Lanes
MAJOR ROAD SERIES				
A roadway that primarily serves medium to high volume traffic. Because of its high design speed, this road should typically be located in physically unconstrained areas and its use in Villages should be limited to industrial or heavy commercial areas with low levels of pedestrian and bicycle traffic. In some circumstances, an exception can be made for using a modified design speed of 45 mph.				
4.1A	Major Road with Raised Median	Appropriate for regional travel between communities where higher traffic volumes are forecast.	98-112	4
4.1B	Major Road with Intermittent Turn Lanes	Typically used in areas where turning movements are infrequent or where ROW is limited.	84-112	
BOULEVARD SERIES				
A roadway with a lower design speed and a wider parkway that should be used in Villages or similar locations where higher traffic volumes are combined with on-street parking, pedestrian, bicycle, and transit activities. The Boulevard Series can also be used in rural areas that are constrained by steep slopes or where the community requests a context sensitive solution that minimizes cut, fill, and grading requirements and pathways are requested.				
4.2A	Boulevard with Raised Median	Increased road capacity and access control by providing a separation between travel lanes and dedicated turn lanes, along with a wide parkway to accommodate non-motorized circulation.	106-120	4
4.2B	Boulevard with Intermittent Turn Lane	Typically used where turning movements are infrequent or where ROW is limited.	92-120	

* Range reflects ROW requirement both with and without the provision of bicycle lanes, in accordance with the Bicycle Transportation Plan. The provision of pathways identified in the Community Trails Master Plan could require additional ROW, depending upon what other needs are being accommodated in the parkways.

Table M-1b Road Classifications: Two-Lane Roads

No.	Road Classification	Description	Typical ROW Range* (Feet)	Lanes
COMMUNITY COLLECTOR SERIES				
Roadway with higher design speeds that is appropriate for areas with few physical constraints and minimal pedestrian, bicycle, or other non-motorized traffic. Road type for use where physical constraints are limited.				
2.1A	Community Collector with Raised Median	The raised median provides more capacity, controls turn movements, and improves flow.	74-86	2
2.1B	Community Collector with Continuous Turn Lane	The continuous turn lane improves traffic flow in areas with multiple driveways and left-turn access requirements.	74-86	
2.1C	Community Collector with Intermittent Turn Lane	Intermittent turn lanes provide more capacity over a normal two-lane road and improve traffic flow.	60-86	
2.1D	Community Collector with Improvement Options	Road type with wider right-of-way for added flexibility to accommodate improvement options such as turn lanes, medians, or passing lanes.	84-96	

GOALS AND POLICIES

Table M-1b Road Classifications: Two-Lane Roads				
No.	Road Classification	Description	Typical ROW Range* (Feet)	Lanes
2.1E	Community Collector	Roadway with no improvement options. It accommodates low to medium traffic volumes in areas where turning movements are infrequent and where non-motorized traffic is limited.	60–72	
LIGHT COLLECTOR SERIES				
Roads with a lower design speed and wider parkway than the Community Collector. They can be used in rural areas with medium physical constraints or in urbanized areas with moderate levels of non-motorized circulation.				
2.2A	Light Collector with Raised Median	The median provides a separation between travel lanes; controls turn movements, and improves traffic flow.	78–90	2
2.2B	Light Collector with Continuous Turn Lane	Continuous turn lane improves traffic flow in areas with multiple driveways and left-turn access requirements.	78–90	
2.2C	Light Collector with Intermittent Turn Lanes	Dedicated intermittent turn lanes provide more capacity and improve traffic flow.	64–90	
2.2D	Light Collector with Improvement Options	Has a wider right-of-way for added flexibility to accommodate improvement options such as turn lanes, medians, or passing lanes.	88–100	
2.2E	Light Collector	Roadway has no special features and accommodates low to medium traffic volumes where turning movements are infrequent and where non-motorized traffic and physical constraints are limited.	64–76	
2.2F	Light Collector with Reduced Shoulder	Roadway with two-foot shoulder, a rolled curb with graded pathway, and a narrow right-of-way. In some instances the shoulder can be widened to six feet to serve as a bicycle lane.	52–60	
MINOR COLLECTOR SERIES				
Roadway with a low design speed that is appropriate for highly constrained rural areas and for areas within a Village with heavy non-motorized circulation and transit activities. This standard could also be used in semi-rural areas with high levels of "side friction" or access from adjacent parcels. Minor Collectors have a wide parkway that, in rural areas, can be used to grade slopes and improve visibility or moderate tight curves. In more urbanized areas, the wide parkway can be used for pathways and for landscape buffers between vehicular and non-vehicular circulation.				
2.3A	Minor Collector with Raised Median	Raised median with dedicated turn lanes and controlled turning movements that improve traffic flow and enhance community character when the median is landscaped.	82–94	2
2.3B	Minor Collector with Intermittent Turn Lane	Improves traffic flow in areas with multiple driveways and left-turn access requirements.	68–82	
2.3C	Minor Collector	No additional features and is primarily intended for residential neighborhoods or for rural areas with steep slopes and physical constraints.	68–80	

* Range reflects ROW requirement both with and without the provision of bicycle lanes, in accordance with the Bicycle Transportation Plan. The provision of pathways identified in the Community Trails Master Plan could require additional ROW, depending upon what other needs are being accommodated in the parkways.



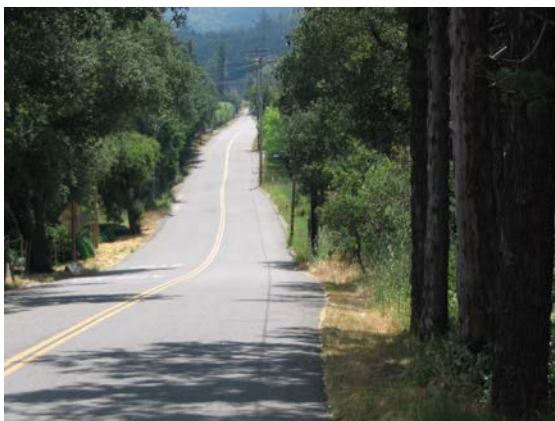
Local public roads provide important system connectivity and continuity for the road network designated by the Mobility Element by providing access to local residential neighborhoods and commercial and industrial areas. They support local traffic at a lower design speed and accommodate traffic volumes up to 4,500 average daily trips. The County Public Road Standards establish the local public road classifications and specify the associated range of improvements.

Local public roads are normally not included in the Mobility Element network, but are depicted with the network for informational purposes when they provide continuity between two Mobility Element roads, especially those that would operate at an unacceptable level of service without the local public roads. Local public roads are also depicted in areas that are currently undeveloped but planned as a future development area. Right-of-way should be reserved for these roads for local ingress/egress and non-motorized uses until subsequent planning efforts in the area determine specific locations of the local public road network. The basic criteria for depicting local public roads in the Mobility Element are provided in the County’s Public Road Standards.

LOCATION GUIDE

A Road Classification Location guide that expresses the suitability of a road classification based upon its correlation to the County’s Regional Categories is provided as Table M-2 (Road Classification Suitability). As shown in this table, road classifications with lower design speeds are recommended for Villages and for Semi-Rural or Rural Lands with physical constraints. Classifications of roads should consider the predominant topography or land use patterns, and a change in road classification should occur only at road intersections or another easily identifiable location in the network.

At build-out of both the General Plan Land Use plan and designated road network, it is estimated that the road network will not meet the desired level of service standard (LOS D) on approximately 10 percent of all County roads and State highways. For these roads, a lower LOS was deemed acceptable only under special circumstances based on specific criteria as described in Policy M-2.1.



Rural roadway



Residential street in the Valle de Oro community

Lanes	Village	Semi-Rural	Rural Lands
6	Limited use only: 6.1 Expressway or 6.2 Prime Arterial	6.1 Expressway or 6.2 Prime Arterial	6.1 Expressway or 6.2 Prime Arterial
4	Primary Suitability: 4.2 Boulevard Limited use only: 4.1 Major Road	Primary Suitability: 4.1 Major Road Limited use only: 4.2 Boulevard	Primary Suitability: 4.1 Major Road Areas with Physical Constraints: 4.2 Boulevard
2	Primary Suitability: 2.3 Minor Collector Secondary Suitability: 2.2 Light Collector Limited use only: 2.1 Community Collector	Primary Suitability: 2.2 Light Collector Secondary Suitability: 2.1 Community Collector Areas with Physical Constraints: 2.3 Minor Collector	Primary Suitability: 2.1 Community Collector Areas with Physical Constraints: 2.2 Light Collector or 2.3 Minor Collector

ROAD NETWORK

State law requires jurisdictions to develop a network that accommodates the land uses proposed in the General Plan. A portion of the Mobility Element road network depicted in the Mobility Element Network Appendix is currently in place, and the remainder will need to be constructed as development proceeds. The network will be constructed by new development as a condition of project approval and/or mitigation for project traffic-related impacts, by County capital improvement projects funded by the Transportation Impact Fee (TIF) Program or other local funding, and by State or federal funds whenever available. The TIF fees collected are to fund identified transportation facilities, or portions thereof, that will provide increased road capacity necessitated by the cumulative impacts of future development. The primary objectives identified below form the basis for the network.

- *Efficient and effective movement of people and goods*—A primary goal of the Mobility Element is a road network that accommodates build-out of the land use map while operating with acceptable levels of congestion. The policies in this General Plan address the need to relieve traffic congestion by balancing the consideration of road capacity and connectivity with the accommodation of alternate modes of travel and the use of transportation demand management methods. Road capacity is based on the type of road constructed, along with its side friction, such as intersection spacing and driveways. Road capacity is maintained when the number of driveways accessing Mobility Element roads is minimized. In addition, a highly connected road network reduces the overall vehicle miles traveled and allows for a greater dispersion of the traffic.
- *Accommodate all users of the road right-of-way*—The Mobility Element also supports the concept of complete streets that are designed and operated to enable safe access for all users and for all modes of travel including non-motorized users and transit riders. This includes users of all ages and abilities such as the elderly, children, and people with disabilities.
- *Right-of-way for road alignments reserved by development*—New development generally causes the need for road improvements. Proposed development within or adjacent to the alignment of a road shown on the Mobility Element map will require coordination with the County to determine the extent to which property needs to be reserved for the alignment and the extent of property owner responsibility for construction of the roadway and right-of-way improvements for non-motorized uses.



An assessment of the need for coordinating the project development with the roadway, potential dedication of property, and/or acquisition of property will be discussed with the property owner. The County may, depending upon the specific circumstances, require dedication of the full width of the right-of-way for designated corridors or acquire all or a portion of the right-of-way for roads being constructed with TIF funds

- *The provision of a road network balanced with other General Plan goals*—While providing for mobility is a primary goal, specific road improvements need to also consider factors such as the protection of environmental resources, the reduction of noise impacts, the development of livable communities, land use compatibility issues related to health risks from air pollution, and the effective allocation of limited County resources. New or expanded road alignments should avoid environmental constraints such as floodplains and steep slopes. Noise impacts from roads vary depending on the type of vehicle and the speed and volume of traffic. To limit noise impacts, high volume roadways should be located away from residential areas and sensitive noise receptors (such as schools) or should include noise mitigating factors in their design.
- *Road design, operation, and maintenance that reflects community character and the Community Plan*—Transportation and land use are two related components of every community that help establish its character and function. Just as land use decisions take into account the road network, road design should include components and features that serve community needs and reflect the character of the surrounding area. Proper road design should accommodate both motorized and non-motorized users of the road and respond to both travel demands and the character of the place (neighborhood, village, open space, etc.) that the road traverses. Road design should also consider environmental impacts and minimize runoff pollutants entering County watersheds.

GOALS AND POLICIES

GOAL M-1

Balanced Road Network. A safe and efficient road network that balances regional travel needs with the travel requirements and preferences of local communities.

Policies

- M 1.1 Prioritized Travel within Community Planning Areas.** Provide a public road network that accommodates travel between and within community planning areas rather than accommodating overflow traffic from State highways and freeways that are unable to meet regional travel demands.
- M 1.2 Interconnected Road Network.** Provide an interconnected public road network with multiple connections that improve efficiency by incorporating shorter routes between trip origin and destination, disperse traffic, reduce traffic congestion in specific areas, and provide both primary and secondary access/egress routes that support emergency services during fire and other emergencies.
- M 1.3 Treatment of High-Volume Roadways.** Consider narrower rights-of-way, flexibility in design standards, and lower design speeds in areas planned for substantial development in order to avoid bisecting communities or town centers. Reduce noise, air, and visual impacts of new freeways, regional arterials, and Mobility Element roads, through landscaping, design, and/or careful location of facilities.

GOAL M-2

Responding to Physical Constraints and Preservation Goals. A road network that provides adequate capacity to reasonably accommodate both planned land uses and regional traffic patterns, while supporting other General Plan goals such as providing environmental protections and enhancing community character.

Policies

M-2.1 Level of Service Criteria. Require development projects to provide associated road improvements necessary to achieve a level of service of “D” or higher on all Mobility Element roads except for those where a failing level of service has been accepted by the County pursuant to the criteria specifically identified in the accompanying text box (Criteria for Accepting a Road Classification with Level of Service E/F). When development is proposed on roads where a failing level of service has been accepted, require feasible mitigation in the form of road improvements or a fair share contribution to a road improvement program, consistent with the Mobility Element road network.

Refer to the Background Material section (Road Segments Where Adding Travel Lanes is Not Justified) at the end of this chapter for list of road segments accepted to operate at LOS E/F.

Criteria for Accepting a Road Classification with Level of Service E / F

Identified below are the applicable situations, and potential improvement options, for accepting a road classification where a Level of Service E / F is forecast. The instances described below specify when the adverse impacts of adding travel lanes do not justify the resulting benefit of increased traffic capacity. In addition, adding capacity to roads can be growth inducing in areas where additional growth is currently not planned, which is not consistent with County Global Climate Change strategies.

Marginal Deficiencies

When This Would Apply—Marginal deficiencies are characterized when only a short segment of a road is forecast to operate at LOS E or F, or the forecasted traffic volumes are only slightly higher than the LOS D threshold. Classifying the road with a designation that would add travel lanes for the entire road would be excessive and could adversely impact community character and / or impede bicycle and pedestrian circulation. Also, in some instances, although underutilized alternate routes exist that could accommodate the excess traffic; they were not included in the traffic forecast model.

Potential Improvement Options—Rather than increase the number of travel lanes for the entire road segment to achieve a better LOS, it is more prudent to apply operational improvements only on the portion of the road operating at LOS E and F. This may require specifying a road classification “With Improvement Options” to retain sufficient right-of-way to construct any necessary operational improvements.

Town Center Impacts

When This Would Apply—This situation would apply when the right-of-way required to add travel lanes would adversely impact established land development patterns and / or impede bicycle and pedestrian circulation. The Community Development Model (see the General Plan’s Guiding Principle #2) concept strives to establish a land development pattern with compact villages and town centers surrounded by areas of low and very low density development. The construction of large multi-lane roads could divide an established town center, even though the intent of the road would be to connect areas within the community or improve access to areas within or surrounding the community.

Potential Improvement Options—Traffic congestion impacts can be mitigated without adding travel lanes by establishing alternate parallel routes that would distribute the traffic volumes, such as a network of local public roads. Other means of mitigating traffic congestion impacts other than increasing the number of traffic lanes include promoting the use of alternate modes of travel in town centers to reduce single-occupant vehicle trips or maximizing the efficiency of a roadway with operational improvements, such as intersection improvements.



Regional Connectivity

When This Would Apply—Regional connectivity issues would apply when congestion on State freeways and highways causes regional travelers to use County roads, resulting in congestion on the County road network. Rather than widening County roads to accommodate this traffic, the deficiencies in the regional road network should be addressed.

Potential Improvement Options—Coordinate with SANDAG to identify the necessary improvements to the regional transportation network and to support appropriate priority in the Regional Transportation Plan to improve these congested freeways and highways, rather than contributing to increased congestion on County roads.

Impacts to Environmental and Cultural Resources

When This Would Apply—This situation would occur when adding travel lanes to a road that would adversely impact environmental and cultural resources such as significant habitat, wetlands, MSCP preserves, wildlife movement, historic landmarks, stands of mature trees, or archaeological sites. This situation would also occur in areas with steep slopes where widening roads would require massive grading, which would result in adverse environmental impacts and other degradation of the physical environment.

Potential Improvement Options—Provide improvement options, such as passing lanes, to areas without significant environmental or cultural constraints. This may require specifying a road classification “With Improvement Options” to retain sufficient right-of-way to construct any necessary operational improvements.

M-2.2 Access to Mobility Element Designated Roads. Minimize direct access points to Mobility Element roads from driveways and other non-through roads to maintain the capacity and improve traffic operations.

M-2.3 Environmentally Sensitive Road Design. Locate and design public and private roads to minimize impacts to significant biological and other environmental and visual resources. Avoid road alignments through floodplains to minimize impacts on floodplain habitats and limit the need for constructing flood control measures. Design new roads to maintain wildlife movement and retrofit existing roads for that purpose. Utilize fencing to reduce road kill and to direct animals to under crossings.

M-2.4 Roadway Noise Buffers. Incorporate buffers or other noise reduction measures consistent with standards established in the Noise Element into the siting and design of roads located next to sensitive noise-receptors to minimize adverse impacts from traffic noise. Consider reduction measures such as alternative road design, reduced speeds, alternative paving, and setbacks or buffers, prior to berms and walls.

Sensitive noise-receptors are described in the Noise Element.

M-2.5 Minimize Excess Water Runoff. Require road improvements to be designed and constructed to accommodate stormwater in a manner that minimizes demands upon engineered stormwater systems and to maximize the use of natural detention and infiltration techniques to mitigate environmental impacts.

GOAL M-3

Transportation Facility Development. New or expanded transportation facilities that are phased with and equitably funded by the development that necessitates their construction.

Policies

M-3.1 Public Road Rights-of-Way. Require development to dedicate right-of-way for public roads and other transportation routes identified in the Mobility Element roadway network (see Mobility Element Network Appendix), Community Plans, or Road Master Plans. Require the provision of

GOALS AND POLICIES

sufficient right-of-way width, as specified in the County Public Road Standards and Community Trails Master Plan, to adequately accommodate all users, including transit riders, pedestrians, bicyclists, and equestrians.

- M-3.2 Traffic Impact Mitigation.** Require development to contribute its fair share toward financing transportation facilities, including mitigating the associated direct and cumulative traffic impacts caused by their project on both the local and regional road networks. Transportation facilities include road networks and related transit, pedestrian and bicycle facilities, and equestrian.
- M-3.3 Multiple Ingress and Egress.** Require development to provide multiple ingress/egress routes in conformance with State law and local regulations.

GOAL M-4

Safe and Compatible Roads. Roads designed to be safe for all users and compatible with their context.

Policies

- M-4.1 Walkable Village Roads.** Encourage multi-modal roads in Villages and compact residential areas with pedestrian-oriented development patterns that enhance pedestrian safety and walkability, along with other non-motorized modes of travel, such as designing narrower but slower speed roads that increase pedestrian safety.



Road in Valle de Oro with bicycle lane and multi-use pathway

- M-4.2 Interconnected Local Roads.** Provide an interconnected and appropriately scaled local public road network in Village and Rural Villages that reinforces the compact development patterns promoted by the Land Use Element and individual community plans.

- M-4.3 Rural Roads Compatible with Rural Character.** Design and construct public roads to meet travel demands in Semi-Rural and Rural Lands that are consistent with rural character while safely accommodating transit stops when deemed necessary, along with bicyclists, pedestrians, and equestrians. Where feasible, utilize rural road design features (e.g., no curb and gutter improvements) to maintain community character. [See applicable community plan for possible relevant policies.]

- M-4.4 Accommodate Emergency Vehicles.** Design and construct public and private roads to allow for necessary access for appropriately-sized fire apparatus and emergency vehicles while accommodating outgoing vehicles from evacuating residents.

- M-4.5 Context Sensitive Road Design.** Design and construct roads that are compatible with the local terrain and the uses, scale and pattern of the surrounding development. Provide wildlife crossings in road design and construction where it would minimize impacts in wildlife corridors.

- M-4.6 Interjurisdictional Coordination.** Coordinate with adjacent jurisdictions so that roads within Spheres of Influence (SOIs) or that cross jurisdictional boundaries are designed to provide a



consistent cross-section and capacity. To the extent practical, coordinate with adjacent jurisdictions to construct road improvements concurrently or sequentially to optimize and maintain road capacity.

Regional Transportation Coordination and Facilities

CONTEXT

The Mobility Element addresses the County-operated multi-modal transportation network that provides a variety of mobility options within the unincorporated County. These services are provided by the County in partnership with the San Diego Association of Governments (SANDAG), Caltrans, transit agencies, the San Diego County Airport Authority, and various railroad operators.

SANDAG is the Regional Transportation Planning Authority and has responsibility for planning and allocating local, state, and federal funds for the region's transportation network. State law and the California Transportation Commission require SANDAG to adopt a 20-year regional transportation plan every four years, which considers improvements to freeways, state highways, transit, and regional bicycle and pedestrian routes. A long-range plan, the *2030 Regional Transportation Plan (RTP): Pathways for the Future* addresses countywide growth through the year 2030 and is available on the SANDAG website at: www.sandag.org/2030rtp.

The 2030 RTP identifies \$4.5 billion in improvement projects for highway and regional arterials in the unincorporated County necessary to accommodate development capacity through 2030. The Mobility Element road network is based on reasonably expected revenue forecasts where \$3.7 billion in funds of the \$4.5 billion in requirements will be available to fund improvement projects in the unincorporated County through 2030.

State highways serve intra-county traffic and include State Routes 67, 76, 78, 79, 94, and 125. The design of these roadways varies according to the volume of traffic they carry and ranges from freeway-style construction to two-lane rural roads with at-grade intersections. Generally, these roads require a larger right-of-way so they can be expanded if future traffic volumes warrant.



Interstate 15 looking north

In addition to the County's road network, there are other regional facilities that are critical to the movement of people and goods within unincorporated areas as well as the larger region including freight and cargo services via truck or rail, and air travel from local airports that primarily accommodate private aircraft, with limited, if any cargo service. These facilities, in conjunction with the County's extensive roadway network, provide a safe and comprehensive multi-modal mobility system for County residents, businesses, and visitors.

TRUCK ROUTES

Trucks are the primary mode used to move goods in and out of the San Diego region although rail, water transport, and air transport facilities are located in the region and contribute to this goods movement system. Commercial trucking in San Diego region primarily uses interstate and State highways as routes of travel. The SANDAG 2030 RTP identifies the major interstate highways and State routes used for commercial trucking in the San Diego region and designated truck routes in the unincorporated County include the following roadways:

- Segments of Interstates 8 and 15
- State Routes 94, 125, 188, and 905
- Otay Mesa Road

The 2030 RTP states that the potential use of managed lanes in off-peak periods will be evaluated in the near future. It also identifies other considerations for additional truck capacity that include improvements on an outer loop which includes SR 67, SR 94, and SR 125 in the unincorporated County. Generally, County roads are only used when destinations are not accessible by one of these major routes.



Semi-truck with cargo

State Route 94 (Campo Road), south of Melody Road in the Jamul / Dulzura Subregion is proposed to remain a two-lane road. This results in inherent limitations for truck traffic using this segment of SR-94. Truck traffic should be shifted to Interstates 8, 805, and 905 and SR-125 after the Otay Mesa II and Calexico Ports of Entry are upgraded.

RAIL FACILITIES

The North County Transit District (NCTD) and Metropolitan Transit System (MTS) own and maintain the main rail line along the coast from downtown San Diego to the Orange County line, which is shared between Amtrak intercity, COASTER, and Metrolink commuter passenger rail services and Burlington North Santa Fe (BNSF) Railway freight service. NCTD also owns the rail corridor between Oceanside and Escondido, operating SPRINTER light rail service, and shares the corridor with BNSF Railway freight service.

A freight line, the San Diego & Arizona Eastern Railway's Desert Line, is the primary rail line that traverses the unincorporated County. Existing rail lines, such as the Desert Line, may be underutilized at their current capacities. For these lines to remain economically feasible for continued operation, their usage should be maximized to provide an alternative to trucks, especially on SR-94, whenever feasible. In addition, BNSF is the operator of a freight line that runs from Oceanside to Escondido. The Amtrak and COASTER passenger lines run along the coast through Marine Corps Base Camp Pendleton. In addition, historical abandoned rail rights-of-way exist in broken segments, some of which are in public ownership, yet are currently underutilized and should be encouraged for adaptive reuse, such as rail to trail conversions.

Since 1996, the California High-Speed Rail Authority (CHSRA) has been the state agency charged with planning, designing, constructing, and operating a statewide high-speed train system. The High Speed Rail



alignment from San Diego would be connected to this proposed system via the Interstate 15 corridor, from downtown San Diego to Escondido, Riverside County, and Los Angeles. The High Speed Rail alignment would originate in Downtown San Diego linking University City, Escondido, Riverside County, and Los Angeles via the San Diego-Los Angeles-San Luis Obispo Rail Corridor Agency (LOSSAN), Miramar Road/Carroll Canyon Road, and Interstate 15 corridors. A programmatic environmental impact report/environmental impact statement (PEIR/EIS) was certified in 2005 and planning work continues on the corridor.

AIRPORTS

San Diego International Airport, located in the city of San Diego, along with John Wayne Airport (Orange County), Los Angeles International Airport (Los Angeles County), and Ontario International Airport (San Bernardino County) are regional airports located in Southern California that provide residents and businesses in the unincorporated County with passenger and cargo services.



Borrego Valley Air field

In addition to San Diego International Airport, eleven public-use airports are located within the boundaries of the County, along with four major military aviation facilities and numerous independent airports and heliports. The County owns and operates eight of these airports, six of which are located in the unincorporated County (Agua Caliente Airstrip, Borrego Valley Airport, Fallbrook Community Airpark, Jacumba Airport, Ocotillo Airstrip, and Ramona Airport). The County also owns Gillespie Field in the City of El Cajon and McClellan-Palomar Airport in the City of Carlsbad. The remaining public-use airports include Brown Field and Montgomery Field (City of San Diego) and Oceanside Municipal Airport (City of Oceanside). These airports are shown in Figure M-1 (Airport Locations).



GOALS AND POLICIES

GOAL M-5

Safe and Efficient Multi-Modal Transportation System. A multi-modal transportation system that provides for the safe, accessible, convenient, and efficient movement of people and goods within the unincorporated County.

Policies

M-5.1 Regional Coordination. Coordinate with regional planning agencies, transit agencies, and adjacent jurisdictions to provide a transportation system with the following:

- Sufficient capacity consistent with the County General Plan Land Use Map
- Travel choices, including multiple routes and modes of travel to provide the opportunity for reducing vehicle miles traveled
- Facilities sited and designed to be compatible with the differing scales, intensities, and characteristics of the unincorporated communities while still accommodating regional, community, and neighborhood travel demands
- Maximized efficiency to enhance connectivity between different modes of travel



Interstate 8 east of Alpine

M-5.2 Impact Mitigation for New Roadways and Improvements. Coordinate with Caltrans to mitigate negative impacts from existing, expanded, or new State freeways or highways and to reduce impacts of road improvements and/or design modifications to State facilities on adjacent communities.

GOAL M-6

Efficient Freight Service Linked to Other Transportation Modes. Freight services that efficiently move goods and that are effectively linked to other transportation modes.

Policies

M-6.1 Designated Truck Routes. Minimize heavy truck traffic (generally more than 33,000 pounds and mostly used for long-haul purposes) near schools and within Villages and Residential Neighborhoods by designating official truck routes, establishing incompatible weight limits on roads unintended for frequent truck traffic, and carefully locating truck-intensive land uses.

M-6.2 Existing Rail Line Use. Support the use of existing rail lines for freight, public transit, and tourism.



Rail depot and tourist train in Campo

GOALS AND POLICIES

- M-6.3 Visual Impacts on Scenic Corridors.** Coordinate with railroad and transit operators to ensure that infrastructure for freight and passenger service is planned and designed to limit visual impacts on scenic corridors.
- M-6.4 Locate Rail Facilities in Established Communities.** Encourage railroad operators to use existing rights-of-way and locate stations and support facilities in established communities.
- M-6.5 Adaptive Reuse of Abandoned Rail Lines.** Support the retention of abandoned railroad rights-of-way and adaptation for uses that benefit the general public, such as public transit, new road connections, regional trails and bike paths, or protected habitat areas, where appropriate.

GOAL M-7

Airport Facilities. Viable and accessible airport facilities whose continuing operations effectively serve the evolving needs of the region while minimizing any adverse impacts of airport operations.

Policies

- M-7.1 Meeting Airport Needs.** Operate and improve airport facilities to meet air transportation needs in a manner that adequately considers impacts to environmental resources and surrounding communities and to ensure consistency with Airport Land Use Compatibility Plans.

Refer to the Airport Hazards section of the Safety Element for additional goals and policies pertaining to airports.

Public Transit

CONTEXT

With the passage of State law (SB 1703), SANDAG is now responsible for transit planning, programming, project development, and construction. SANDAG prepared the 2007–2011 Coordinated Plan, which provides a framework for transit system development over the next five years and reflects the goals and direction for service development as described in the 2030 RTP. This plan also defines the level of service for transit in suburban and rural areas as follows:

- **Suburban**—Direct service along commute corridors with critical mass featuring rapid, frequent service during peaks with seamless coordinated transfers, and local service focused on smart growth areas and lifeline needs
- **Rural**—Transportation services that run only a few times a day on select days of the week (lifeline services)



Pine Valley bus stop with rural-level services



The Sprinter, operated by the North County Transit District

The two agencies responsible for transit operations and services in the unincorporated County areas are the Metropolitan Transit System (MTS) and the North County Transit District (NCTD). Transit services provided by these agencies include heavy and light rail, fixed-route bus service, demand-response service, and paratransit. Existing transit services for the unincorporated County consist of limited regional or local bus services, and light rail (the NCTD SPRINTER) in one very localized area. Transit services are primarily provided to the larger, more urbanized

communities, although limited services are available outside this area. In addition, tribal governments operating casinos and non-profit agencies also provide transit services for their clients and customers.

SANDAG has the responsibility to designate the local Consolidated Transportation Services Agency (CTSA) in adherence to and to be funded in part by the state *Transportation Development Act* (TDA). SANDAG then retains regional oversight. The CTSA works to expand the availability and use of specialized transportation services by serving as an information resource for specialized transportation providers and providing technical assistance and public outreach to increase awareness of specialized transportation options. Full Access & Coordinated Transportation, Inc. (FACT), appointed under contract by SANDAG to serve as the CTSA for the San Diego region, is a non-profit corporation formed to coordinate and consolidate transportation services to people with disabilities, senior citizens, and social service agencies.

In addition, Tribal governments established the Reservation Transportation Authority (RTA), a consortium of 24 tribes, in order to pool resources and more effectively coordinate on transportation issues. In conjunction with SANDAG and the RTA, a consultant prepared a Transit Feasibility Study to assess the needs of tribes in the County to improve access for medical, educational, employment, and other essential transportation needs. As a result of the study, some bus routes were expanded.

The availability of public transit can reduce the dependency on motor vehicles and help to shape future growth patterns. Due to existing and planned development patterns, there are currently limited plans for expansion of transit service into unincorporated communities. Although transit currently comprises a small percentage of total trips in the unincorporated County, certain corridors enjoy high transit ridership. In addition, transit-supportive land uses can encourage increased transit use, and transit also is an important public service for lower income residents as well as residents with special needs including seniors and the disabled. A primary objective of the Land Use Element is to focus development in and around existing unincorporated communities to maximize existing infrastructure, provide for efficient delivery of services, and strengthen Town Center areas while preserving the rural landscape. The development patterns of the Land Use Map are intended to facilitate the use of public transportation in Village areas.

The goals and policies in this section seek to maximize opportunities for transit ridership in Village areas while reducing congestion on roadways.

GOALS AND POLICIES

GOAL M-8

Public Transit System. A public transit system that reduces automobile dependence and serves all segments of the population.

Policies

- M-8.1 Maximize Transit Service Opportunities.** Coordinate with SANDAG, the CTSA, NCTD, and MTS to provide capital facilities and funding, where appropriate, to:
- Maximize opportunities for transit services in unincorporated communities
 - Maximize the speed and efficiency of transit service through the development of transit priority treatments such as transit signal priority, transit queue jump lanes, and dedicated transit only lanes
 - Provide for transit-dependent segments of the population, such as the disabled, seniors, low income, and children, where possible
 - Reserve adequate rights-of-way to accommodate existing and planned transit facilities including bus stops
- M-8.2 Transit Service to Key Community Facilities and Services.** Locate key County facilities, healthcare services, educational institutions, and other civic facilities so that they are accessible by transit in areas where transit is available. Require those facilities to be designed so that they are easily accessible by transit, whenever possible.
- M-8.3 Transit Stops That Facilitate Ridership.** Coordinate with SANDAG, NCTD, and MTS to locate transit stops and facilities in areas that facilitate transit ridership, and designate such locations as part of planning efforts for Town Centers, transit nodes, and large-scale commercial or residential development projects. Ensure that the planning of Town Centers and Village Cores incorporates uses that support the use of transit, including multi-family residential and mixed-use transit-oriented development, when appropriate.
- M-8.4 Transit Amenities.** Require transit stops that are accessible to pedestrians and bicyclists; and provide amenities for these users' convenience.
- M-8.5 Improved Transit Facilities.** Require development projects, when appropriate, to improve existing nearby transit and/or park and ride facilities, including the provision of bicycle and pedestrian facilities, provisions for bus transit in coordination with NCTD and MTS as appropriate including, but not limited to, shelters, benches, boarding pads, and/or trash cans, and to provide safe, convenient, and attractive pedestrian connections.
- M-8.6 Park and Ride Facilities.** Coordinate with SANDAG, Caltrans, and tribal governments to study transit connectivity and address improving regional opportunities for park-and-ride facilities and transit service to gaming facilities and surrounding rural areas to reduce congestion on rural roads.
- M-8.7 Inter-Regional Travel Modes.** Coordinate with SANDAG, Caltrans, and the California High-Speed Rail Authority, where appropriate, to identify alternative methods for inter-regional travel to serve the unincorporated County residents.



- M-8.8 Shuttles.** Coordinate with Tribal governments, the Reservation Transportation Authority, and other large employers to provide shuttles and other means of connecting transit stops with job locations, civic, and commercial uses, where appropriate.

Transportation System and Travel Demand Management

CONTEXT

The road network designated in the Mobility Element strives to accommodate the Land Use Map while minimizing the need to build new roads or improve existing roads. Transportation System Management seeks to optimize the transportation network, while Travel Demand Management seeks to reduce the use of the road network.

TRANSPORTATION SYSTEM MANAGEMENT (TSM)

TSM strategies focus on increasing the efficiency, safety, and capacity of existing transportation systems through strategies that relieve, lessen, or control congestion with minimal roadway widening. Techniques include performance monitoring, various types of intersection modifications, advanced technology, coordinated traffic signal timing across jurisdictional boundaries and with freeway ramps, signage and lighting upgrades, facility design treatments, high-occupancy vehicle (HOV) lanes, and targeted traffic enforcement. These strategies can reduce vehicle travel time and enhance system accessibility with little impact on other modes. Reducing traffic congestion keeps automobiles on roads designated for regional mobility, while minimizing through traffic within communities. Through better management and operation of existing transportation facilities, these techniques are designed to improve traffic flow, air quality, and movement of people and goods, as well as enhance system accessibility and safety.

TRAVEL DEMAND MANAGEMENT (TDM)

TDM addresses traffic congestion by reducing travel demand rather than increasing transportation capacity. TDM programs such as employer outreach, carpool partner matching, parking cash outs, vanpools, subsidies and/or preferred parking to rideshare participants, guaranteed. rides home, bicycle lockers, and other amenities for bicyclists and pedestrians including clothing lockers and shower facilities are designed to increase the efficiency of the transportation system. TDM is a key tool to reduce single-occupant-vehicle travel as well as facilitate mobility options for area residents. SANDAG manages the regional TDM program including 511, a free phone and web service that consolidates the San Diego region's transportation information into a one-stop resource. The 511 program provides up-to-the minute information on traffic conditions, incidents and driving times, schedule, route and fare information for San Diego public transportation services carpool and vanpool referrals, bicycling information and more. The County has an opportunity to facilitate the use of TDM methods by encouraging land use planning and infrastructure improvements that better accommodate pedestrians, bicyclists, and transit users. In addition, the County can also offer incentives that encourage projects to implement TDM programs.

GOALS AND POLICIES

GOAL M-9

Effective Use of Existing Transportation Network. Reduce the need to widen or build roads through effective use of the existing transportation network and maximizing the use of alternative modes of travel throughout the County.

Policies

M-9.1 Transportation Systems Management. Explore the provision of operational improvements (i.e. adding turn lanes, acceleration lanes, intersection improvements, etc.) that increase the effective vehicular capacity of the public road network prior to increasing the number of road lanes. Ensure operational improvements do not adversely impact the transit, bicycle, and pedestrian networks.

M-9.2 Transportation Demand Management. Require large commercial and office development to use TDM programs to reduce single-occupant vehicle traffic generation, particularly during peak periods to maximize the capacity of existing or improved road facilities.

M-9.3 Preferred Parking. Encourage and provide incentives for commercial, office, and industrial development to provide preferred parking for carpools, vanpools, electric vehicles and flex cars. [Refer also to Policy COS-16.3 (Low-Emission Vehicles) in the Conservation and Open Space Element.] Encourage parking cash out programs to reimburse employees for the cost of “free” on-site parking to provide incentives to use alternate modes of travel and to reduce parking requirements (see also Policy M-10.5).

M-9.4 Park-and-Ride Facilities. Require developers of large projects to provide, or to contribute to, park-and-ride facilities near freeway interchanges and other appropriate locations that provide convenient access to congested regional arterials. Require park-and-ride facilities that are accessible to pedestrians and bicyclists, and include bicycle lockers and transit stops whenever feasible.



Park-and-ride facility at Jamacha Boulevard in Spring Valley



Parking

CONTEXT

Parking is an essential component of an efficient transportation system that includes accommodation for automobiles, motorcycles, and bicycles. Parking requirements have an ability to alter transportation choices. Excess free parking promotes an auto-oriented community, discourages high-frequency transit, and can negatively affect walkability. Yet as land becomes scarcer and construction costs increase, so do the costs of providing parking. If an insufficient number of vehicular parking spaces are provided, additional travel is required to find a



Parking in a commercial area in Fallbrook

parking space, causing congestion and delays. If too much vehicular parking is provided, a larger portion of the site is unnecessarily paved, causing degradation in community character and excess stormwater run-off.

The provision of a sufficient quantity of bicycle parking, that is both secure and convenient, will contribute to increased bicycle usage. In addition, a multi-modal transportation network that reduces the reliance on single-occupant vehicles reduces the number of parking spaces needed.

Parking spaces are either provided on the street or within a project site as parking lots. Parking regulations address off-street parking in an effort to provide functionally adequate, safe, convenient, and aesthetically pleasing parking and loading facilities for motor vehicles. On-street parking is allowed within the road shoulder, unless the County imposes a parking prohibition. If a parking prohibition is in place, the shoulder is available for use as a bike facility.

GOALS AND POLICIES

GOAL M-10

Parking for Community Needs. Parking regulations that serve community needs and enhance community character.

Policies

M-10.1 Parking Capacity. Require new development to:

- Provide sufficient parking capacity for motor vehicles consistent with the project's location, use, and intensity
- Provide parking facilities for motorcycles and bicycles
- Provide staging areas for regional and community trails

M-10.2 Parking for Pedestrian Activity. Require the design and placement of on-site automobile, motorcycle, and bicycle parking in Villages and Rural Villages that encourages pedestrian activity

GOALS AND POLICIES

by providing a clear separation between vehicle and pedestrian areas and prohibit parking areas from restricting pedestrian circulation patterns.

M-10.3 Maximize On-street Parking. Encourage the use of on-street parking in commercial and/or high-density residential town center areas to calm traffic and improve pedestrian interaction. Traffic operations and pedestrian safety must not be compromised.

M-10.4 Shared Parking. Support town center plans, when desired by the community, that incorporate on-street and/or shared vehicular parking facilities to reduce on-site parking requirements.

M-10.5 Reduced Parking. Accommodate appropriate reductions in on-site parking requirements in situations such as:

- Development of low-income and senior housing
- Development located near transit nodes
- Employment centers that institute Transportation Demand Management programs
- Development that integrates other parking demand reductions techniques such as parking cash out, when ensured by ongoing permit conditions

Transportation Demand Management programs are described in the previous section.

M-10.6 On-Street Parking. Minimize on-street vehicular parking outside Villages and Rural Villages where on-street parking is not needed, to reduce the width of paved shoulders and provide an opportunity for bicycle lanes to retain rural character in low-intensity areas. Where on-street parking occurs outside Villages and Rural Villages, require the design to be consistent with the rural character. [See applicable community plan for possible relevant policies.]

M-10.7 Parking Area Design for Stormwater Runoff. Require that parking areas be designed to reduce pollutant discharge and stormwater runoff through site design techniques such as permeable paving, landscaped infiltration areas, and unpaved but reinforced overflow parking areas that increase infiltration. Require parking areas located within or adjacent to preserve areas to also include native landscaping and shielded lighting.

Bicycle, Pedestrian, and Trail Facilities

CONTEXT

The Mobility Element recognizes that a well planned and designed multi-modal road network, complete with non-motorized travel options that include bicycle and pedestrian facilities as well as hiking, horseback riding, and mountain biking trails and pathways, offers an important alternative to motor-vehicle use. These modes of travel also reduce traffic congestion, dependency on motorized vehicles, roadway noise, and air pollution. A safe and enjoyable walk, hike, bike ride, or horseback ride experience provides many health benefits and encourages more people to walk or bicycle rather than drive their vehicles.



Bike path in the Sweetwater Regional Park



The California Highway Design Manual defines a "Bikeway" as a facility that is provided primarily for bicycle travel. The County Public Road Standards include provisions to allow the construction of Class I, Class II, or Class III bikeways as defined in the California Highway Design Manual, which are described below.

- (1) Class I Bikeway (Bike Path). Provides a completely separated right of way for the exclusive use of bicycles and pedestrians with crossflow by motorists minimized.
- (2) Class II Bikeway (Bike Lane). Provides a striped lane for one-way bike travel on a street or highway.
- (3) Class III Bikeway (Bike Route). Provides for shared use with pedestrian or motor vehicle traffic.

SANDAG is in the process of developing a regional bicycle plan update that seeks to encourage development of a unified regional bicycle system that will serve the needs of bicycle riders by identifying the best ways to provide connections to local and regional activity centers, transit facilities, and regional trail systems. The County's Bicycle Transportation Plan, the County's near term plan for constructing bicycle facilities, is coordinated with the regional plan, and guides the development and maintenance of a bicycle network, support facilities, and other programs for the unincorporated portions of the County. Completing gaps in the bicycle network is a consideration, among other priorities as well, for allocation of funds and the inclusion of a project. Careful consideration is given when weighing the use of limited funds to build Class I Bikeways. In corridors that could be treated with Class II or Class III bicycle facilities by way of minimal investment, options that would complete bicycle networks in the near-term are pursued.

In addition to bicycle lanes and routes, the County Trails Program provides an extensive natural surface trails system that supplements the road network as an alternative off-road travel mode for County residents. Trails are primarily designed for the purpose of recreation and significantly enhancing the quality of life and health benefits associated with walking, hiking, mountain biking, and horseback riding throughout the County's varied environments. The more urban and populated communities have few accessible trails. Most of the existing trails are in the mountains and deserts, and when located within or adjacent to biological preserves are guided by ecological principles and the County's MSCP, which require mitigation of impacts to biological resources. Additional trails are needed closer to population centers in the western portion of the County to provide residents with convenient access and opportunities to enjoy the recreational, health and transportation benefits associated with these facilities. The two types of regional trail facilities are identified below.

- *Trails*, typically located away from vehicular roads, are primarily recreational in nature but can also serve as an alternative mode of transportation. They are soft-surface facilities for single or multiple uses by pedestrians, equestrians, and mountain bicyclists. Trail characteristics vary depending on location and user types.
- *Pathways* are facilities located within a parkway or road right-of-way. A riding and hiking trail located in the road right-of-way is considered a pathway. They are typically soft-surfaced facilities intended to serve both circulation and recreation purposes. Pathways help make critical connections and are an integral part of a functional trail system.



Pathway in Blossom Valley in Lakeside

GOALS AND POLICIES

A regional trails map is included as Figure M-2 (Regional Trails), which identifies approved general alignment corridors for regional trails in the San Diego region. In addition, regional trails are shown on the community level maps in Figure M-A-1 through Figure M-A-23 of the Mobility Element Network Appendix. These trails have characteristics and conditions that serve a regional function by covering long linear distances, transcending community and/or municipal borders, having state, national, or historical significance, or providing important connections to existing parks, open space preserves, and other public lands. Additional



Pine Valley trail

existing trail segments and proposed reroutes for portions of some of the regional trails are identified in the Community Trails Master Plan (CTMP), the implementation tool for the County Trails Program.

GOALS AND POLICIES

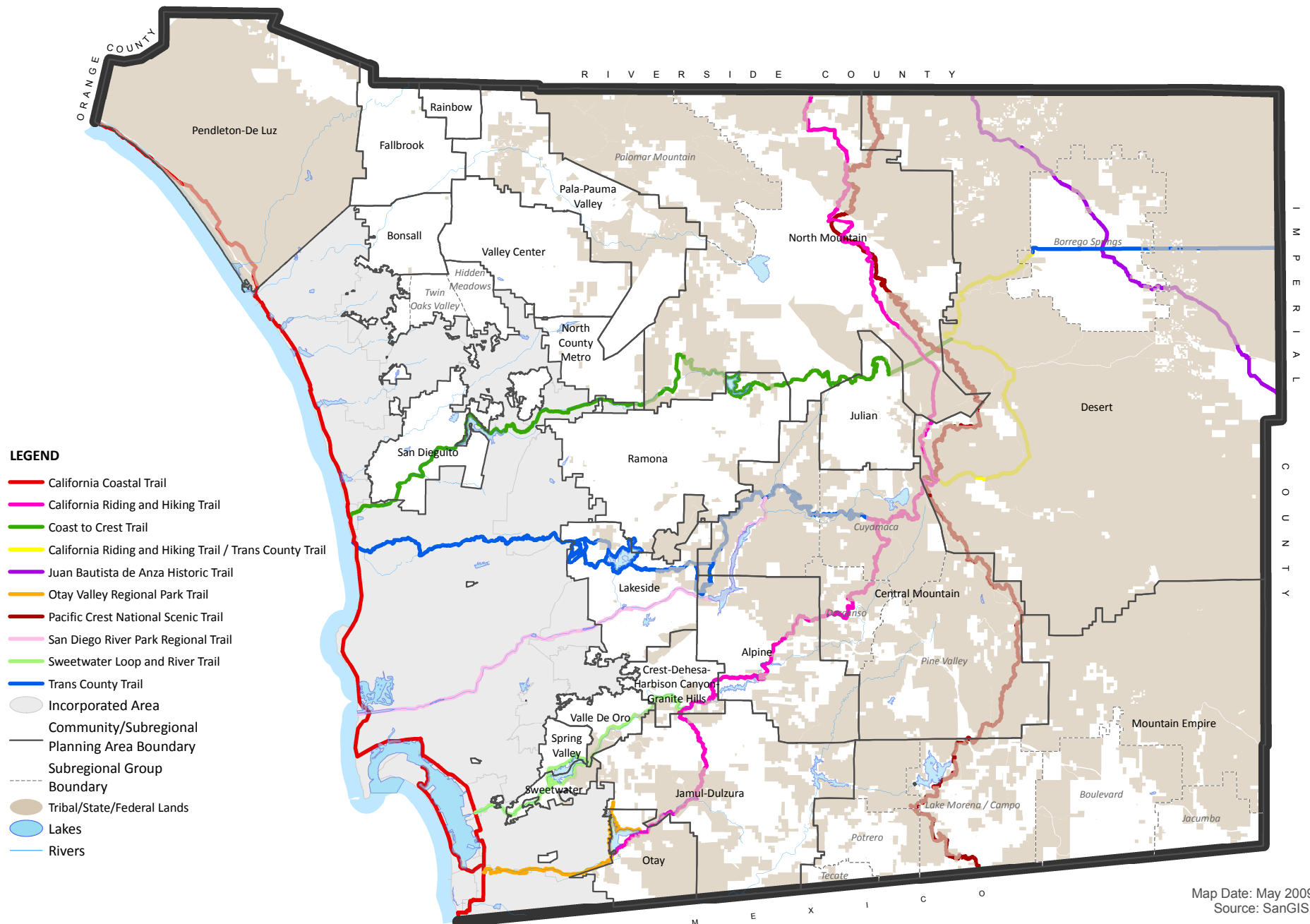
GOAL M-11

Bicycle and Pedestrian Facilities. Bicycle and pedestrian networks and facilities that provide safe, efficient, and attractive mobility options as well as recreational opportunities for County residents.

See also Goals and Policies in the Conservation and Open Space Element, Biological Resources section, which address the protection of sensitive biological resources and habitat areas.

Policies

- M-11.1 Bicycle Facility Design.** Support regional and community-scaled planning of pedestrian and bicycle networks.
- M-11.2 Bicycle and Pedestrian Facilities in Development.** Require development and Town Center plans in Villages and Rural Villages to incorporate site design and on-site amenities for alternate modes of transportation, such as comprehensive bicycle and pedestrian networks and facilities, including both on-street facilities as well as off-street bikeways, to safely serve the full range of intended users, along with areas for transit facilities, where appropriate and coordinated with the transit service provider.
- M-11.3 Bicycle Facilities on Roads Designated in the Mobility Element.** Maximize the provision of bicycle facilities on County Mobility Element roads in Semi-Rural and Rural Lands to provide a safe and continuous bicycle network in rural areas that can be used for recreation or transportation purposes, while retaining rural character.
- M-11.4 Pedestrian and Bicycle Network Connectivity.** Require development in Villages and Rural Villages to provide comprehensive internal pedestrian and bicycle networks that connect to existing or planned adjacent community and countywide networks.



Map Date: May 2009
 Source: SanGIS¹



REGIONAL TRAILS PLAN

San Diego County General Plan

Figure M-2

GOALS AND POLICIES

M-11.5 Funding for Bicycle Network Improvements.

Seek outside funding opportunities for bicycle and pedestrian network improvement projects, particularly those that provide safe and continuous pedestrian and bicycle routes to schools, town centers, parks, park-and-ride facilities, and major transit stops.



Bike lane in shoulder of Old Highway 80 in the Central Mountain Subregion

M-11.6 Coordination for Bicycle and Pedestrian Facility Connectivity.

Coordinate with Caltrans to provide alternate connections for past, existing, or planned bicycle and pedestrian routes that were or would be severed by State freeway and highway projects that intersect pathways or divide communities.

Caltrans endeavors to provide safe mobility for all users, including bicyclists, pedestrians, transit riders, and motorists appropriate to the function and context of the facility. Caltrans is committed to working with the County to complete bicycle and pedestrian facilities.

M-11.7 Bicycle and Pedestrian Facility Design. Promote pedestrian and bicycle facility standards for facility design that are tailored to a variety of urban and rural contexts according to their location within or outside a Village or Rural Village.

M-11.8 Coordination with the County Trails Program. Coordinate the proposed bicycle and pedestrian network and facilities with the Community Trails Master Plan's proposed trails and pathways.

GOAL M-12

County Trails Program. A safe, scenic, interconnected, and enjoyable non-motorized multi-use trail system developed, managed, and maintained according to the County Trails Program, Regional Trails Plan, and the Community Trails Master Plan.

Policies

M-12.1 County Trails System. Implement a County Trails Program by developing the designated trail and pathway alignments and implementing goals and policies identified in the Community Trails Master Plan.

M-12.2 Trail Variety. Provide and expand the variety of trail experiences that provide recreational opportunities to all residents of the unincorporated County, including urban/suburban, rural, wilderness, multi-use, staging areas, and support facilities.

M-12.3 Trail Planning. Encourage trail planning, acquisition, development, and management with other public agencies that have ownership or jurisdiction within or adjacent to the County.

M-12.4 Land Dedication for Trails. Require development projects to dedicate and improve trails or pathways where the development will occur on land planned for trail or pathway segments shown on the Regional Trails Plan or Community Trails Master Plan.

M-12.5 Future Trails. Explore opportunities to designate or construct future trails on County-owned lands, lands within the Multiple Species Conservation Program (MSCP), or other lands already under public ownership or proposed for public acquisition.



- M-12.6 Trail Easements, Dedications, and Joint-Use Agreements.** Promote trail opportunities by obtaining easements, dedications, license agreements, or joint-use agreements from other government agencies and public and semi-public agencies.
- M-12.7 Funding for Trails.** Seek funding opportunities for trail acquisition, implementation, maintenance and operation.
- M-12.8 Trails on Private Lands.** Maximize opportunities that are fair and reasonable to secure trail routes across private property, agricultural and grazing lands, from willing property owners.
- M-12.9 Environmental and Agricultural Resources.** Site and design specific trail segments to minimize impacts to sensitive environmental resources, ecological system and wildlife linkages and corridors, and agricultural lands. Within the MSCP preserves, conform siting and use of trails to County MSCP Plans and MSCP resource management plans.
- M-12.10 Recreational and Educational Resources.** Design trail routes that meet a public need and highlight the County’s biological, recreational and educational resources, including natural, scenic, cultural, and historic resources.

Background Material

Level of Service

Level of service (LOS), a qualitative measure describing operational conditions within a traffic stream and the motorists' perceptions of those conditions, provides a measure of how well a road is able to meet the demands or volume of traffic. The capacity threshold of a road is the maximum number of vehicles that can traverse a uniform section of road within a specified timeframe. Road capacity for County roads is measured according to average daily traffic (ADT), while State facilities are measured according to Caltrans criteria based on peak-hour volumes that a roadway could accommodate.



San Dieguito Trail

Six LOS capacity thresholds are defined for each type of roadway, with letters A through F used to establish the LOS measure. Criteria for each LOS threshold include: speed, travel time, freedom to maneuver, traffic interruptions, comfort, convenience, and safety. For example, LOS A represents free flow, almost complete freedom to maneuver within the traffic stream. LOS F represents forced flow where more vehicles are attempting to use the road facility than can be served resulting in stop and go traffic. Table M-3 (Level of Service Descriptions) provides definitions for the various LOS categories based upon typical peak traffic periods. LOS D is the standard to maintain for Mobility Element roads, unless the criteria presented in Policy M-2.1 preclude improving roads beyond LOS E/F.

BACKGROUND MATERIAL

Table M-3 Level of Service Descriptions	
LOS	Description
A	This LOS represents a completely free-flow conditions, where the operation of vehicles is virtually unaffected by the presence of other vehicles and only constrained by the geometric features of the highway and by driver preferences.
B	This LOS represents a relatively free-flow condition, although the presence of other vehicles becomes noticeable. Average travel speeds are the same as in LOS A, but drivers have slightly less freedom to maneuver.
C	At this LOS the influence of traffic density on operations becomes marked. The ability to maneuver within the traffic stream is clearly affected by other vehicles.
D	At this LOS, the ability to maneuver is notably restricted due to traffic congestion, and only minor disruptions can be absorbed without extensive queues forming and the service deteriorating.
E	This LOS represents operations at or near capacity. LOS E is an unstable level, with vehicles operating with minimum spacing for maintaining uniform flow. At LOS E, disruptions cannot be dissipated readily thus causing deterioration down to LOS F.
F	At this LOS, forced or breakdown of traffic flow occurs, although operations appear to be at capacity, queues forms behind these breakdowns. Operations within queues are highly unstable, with vehicles experiencing brief periods of movement followed by stoppages.

SOURCE: Highway Capacity Manual, 2000

The LOS for operating on State highways is based upon Measures of Effectiveness (MOE) identified in the Highway Capacity Manual (HCM). Caltrans endeavors to maintain a target LOS at the transition between LOS C and LOS D. If an existing State highway facility is operating at less than this target LOS, the existing MOE should be maintained.



SANDAG and the County elected to be exempt from the State Congestion Management Plan (CMP) program, which includes selected freeways, state highways, and regional arterials in the County. Existing CMP monitoring, threshold levels, guidelines and mitigation strategies will be incorporated into other SANDAG plans and/or programs as a result.

Accepted Road Classifications with Level of Service E / F

As described under Goal M-2, there are instances where the County considers it more appropriate to retain a road classification that could result in a LOS E / F rather than increase the number of travel lanes. These instances are based on criteria established under Policy M-2.1. Table M-4 (Road Segments Where Adding Travel Lanes is Not Justified) identifies the County segment where the County has determined that the adverse impacts of adding travel lanes do not justify the resulting benefit of increased traffic capacity.

Table M-4 Road Segments Where Adding Travel Lanes is Not Justified			
Road	Classification	From	To
State Highways^a			
SR 67	4.1B Major Road with Intermittent Turn Lanes	Poway city limits	Scripps Poway Pkwy. (Lakeside)
	4.1A Major Road with Raised Median	Scripps Poway Pkwy. (Lakeside)	Sycamore Park Dr. (Lakeside)
	4.1A Major Road with Raised Median	Johnson Lake Rd. (Lakeside)	Posthill Rd. (Lakeside)
	4.1B Major Road with Intermittent Turn Lanes	11 th Street (Ramona)	Pine Street/SR-78 (Ramona)
SR-76/Pala Rd. ^b	4.1A: 4-Ln Major Road w/ Raised Median	Old Hwy 395 (Fallbrook)	I-15 SB Ramps (Fallbrook)
	2.1D Community Collector w/ Improvement Options	Pala Del Norte Rd. (Pala Pauma)	Sixth St (Pala Pauma)
Main Street/SR-78	4.2B: 4-Ln Boulevard w/ Intermittent Turn Lanes	9th St (Ramona)	Pine St (Ramona)
County Mobility Element Roads			
Alpine Blvd.	2.2A Light Collector w/ Raised Median	Tavern Rd. (Alpine)	South Grade Rd. (Alpine)
	2.1D Community Collector w/ Improvement Options	South Grade Rd. (Alpine)	West Willows Rd. (Alpine)
	2.1C Community Collector w/Intermittent Turn Lanes	West Willows Rd. (Alpine)	Willows Rd. (East) (Alpine)
Bancroft Dr.	2.2D Light Collector w/ Improvement Options	Troy St (Spring Valley)	SR-94 EB Ramps (Spring Valley)
Briarwood Rd.	2.1D Community Collector w/ Improvement Options	SR-54 WB Ramps (Sweetwater)	Robinwood Rd (Sweetwater)
Campo Rd.	4.2B Boulevard w/ Intermittent Turn Lanes	Kenwood Dr. (Valle de Oro)	Conrad Dr. (Valle de Oro)

BACKGROUND MATERIAL

Table M-4 Road Segments Where Adding Travel Lanes is Not Justified			
Road	Classification	From	To
Central Ave.	2.2B Light Collector w/ Continuous Turn Lane	Sweetwater Rd. (Sweetwater)	Bonita Rd. (Sweetwater)
	2.2C Light Collector w/ Intermittent Turn Lanes	Bonita Rd. (Sweetwater)	Frisbee St. (Sweetwater)
De Luz Rd.	2.2C Light Collector w/ Intermittent Turn Lanes	Dougherty St. (Fallbrook)	W. Mission Rd. (Fallbrook)
Deer Springs Rd.	4.1B Major Road w/ Intermittent Turn Lanes	I-15 NB Ramps (NC Metro)	N Centre City Pkwy (NC Metro)
Del Dios Hwy.	2.1D Community Collector w/ Improvement Options	El Camino Del Norte (San Dieguito)	Via Rancho Pkwy (North County Metro)
E. Mission Rd.	4.2B Boulevard w/ Intermittent Turn Lanes	Live Oak Park Rd. (Fallbrook)	I-15 SB Ramps (Fallbrook)
El Apajo.	2.1A Community Collector w/ Raised Median	Villa De La Valle (San Dieguito)	Via De Santa Fe (San Dieguito)
El Camino del Norte	2.2F Light Collector w/ Reduced Shoulder	Aliso Canyon Rd. (San Dieguito)	Del Dios Hwy./Paseo Delicias (San Dieguito)
Fuerte Dr.	2.2E Light Collector	Bancroft Dr. (Valle de Oro)	Avacado Blvd. (Valle de Oro)
Jamacha Rd.	6.2 Prime Arterial	Campo Rd/SR-94 (Valle de Oro)	Fury Ln. (Valle de Oro)
	4.1B Major Road w/ Intermittent Turn Lanes	SR-125 SB Ramps (Spring Valley)	Sweetwater Rd (Spring Valley)
La Bajada/ La Granada	2.2F Light Collector w/ Reduced Shoulder	Rancho Santa Fe Rd. (San Dieguito)	Paseo Delicias (San Dieguito)
Lake Jennings Park Rd.	4.1B Major Road w/ Intermittent Turn Lanes	I-8 Business Route (Lakeside)	I-8 WB Off-Ramp (Lakeside)
Lilac Rd.	4.2B Boulevard w/ Intermittent Turn Lanes	New Road 19 (Valley Center)	Valley Center Rd. (Valley Center)
Linea del Cielo	2.2F Light Collector w/ Reduced Shoulder	El Camino Real (San Dieguito)	Rambla de las Flores (San Dieguito)
Los Coches Rd.	2.1D Community Collector w/ Improvement Options	Woodside Ave (Lakeside)	I-8 Business Route (Lakeside)
Lyons Valley Rd.	2.2B Light Collector w/ Continuous Turn Lane	Campo Rd. (Jamul)	Skyline Truck Trail (Jamul)
Maine Ave.	2.2E Light Collector	Mapleview St (Lakeside)	Woodside Ave (Lakeside)
Mapleview St.	4.1A Major Road w/ Raised Median	Maine Ave. (Lakeside)	Ashwood St (Lakeside)
Mountain Meadow Rd./ Mirar de Valle	2.1D Community Collector w/ Improvement Options	North Broadway (NC Metro)	New Road 19 (Valley Center)
New Road 19	4.2B Boulevard w/ Intermittent Turn Lanes	Mirar de Valle Road (Valley Center)	Lilac Road (Valley Center)
Old Hwy 395	2.1D Community Collector w/ Improvement Options	5th St. (Rainbow)	Interstate 15 NB ramp (Fallbrook)



Table M-4 Road Segments Where Adding Travel Lanes is Not Justified			
Road	Classification	From	To
Old Hwy 395	2.1A Community Collector w/ Raised Median	Interstate 15 SB ramp (Fallbrook)	Stewart Canyon Dr. (Fallbrook)
	2.1D Community Collector w/ Improvement Options	Pala Rd. (Fallbrook)	Dublin (W) Rd. (Fallbrook)
Paradise Valley Rd.	4.1B Major Road w/ Intermittent Turn Lanes	Elkelton Blvd (Spring Valley)	Sweetwater Rd (Spring Valley)
Paseo Delicias	2.2A Light Collector w/ Raised Median	Via De La Valle (San Dieguito)	El Camino Del Norte (San Dieguito)
Pomerado Rd.	4.1A Major Road w/ Raised Median	I-15 NB Ramps (County Islands)	Willow Creek Rd. (County Islands)
Rainbow Valley Blvd. West	2.2D Light Collector	I-15 NB Ramps (Rainbow)	Old Hwy. 395 (Rainbow)
Rancho Santa Fe Road	2.2F Light Collector w/ Reduced Shoulder	Encinitas city limits	La Bajada (San Dieguito)
San Dieguito Rd.	2.1A Community Collector w/ Raised Median	El Apajo Rd. (San Dieguito)	San Diego city limits
7 th St.	2.2E Light Collector	Elm St. (Ramona)	A St. (Ramona)
		Main St. (Ramona)	D St. (Ramona)
South Grade Rd.	2.2C Light Collector w/ Intermittent Turn Lanes	Eltinge Drive (Alpine)	Olive View Road (Alpine)
Valley Center Rd.	4.2A Boulevard w/ Raised Median	Miller Rd (Valley Center)	Indian Creek Rd (Valley Center)
Via de la Valle	2.1B Community Collector w/ Continuous Turn Lane	San Diego city limits (San Dieguito)	Las Planideras (San Dieguito)
	2.1E Community Collector	Las Planideras (San Dieguito)	Paseo Delicias (San Dieguito)
West Willows Rd.	2.2E Light Collector	Alpine Blvd (Alpine)	Otto Ave. (Alpine)
Wildcat Canyon Rd.	2.1D Community Collector w/ Improvement Options	Willow Rd. (Lakeside)	Barona Casino (Ramona)
Willows Road (West)	2.2E Light Collector	Otto Ave. (Alpine)	Viejas Casino Rd. (Alpine)
Willows Road (East)	4.2B Boulevard w/ Intermittent Turn Lanes	Viejas Casino Rd. (Alpine)	Alpine Blvd. (Alpine)
Woods Valley Rd.	2.2C Light Collector w/ Intermittent Turn Lanes	Oakmont Rd (Valley Center)	Karibu Ln. (Valley Center)
Woodside Ave.	4.2A Boulevard w/ Raised Median	SR-67 NB Off Ramp (Lakeside)	Riverford Rd. (Lakeside)

- a. The cross-sections for State Highway reflect the design in the Project Authorization/Environmental Document (PA/ED), which are different from those of the County Mobility Element road classifications.
- b. Roads noted are on the Congestion Management Program (CMP). Acceptable LOS for roads on the CMP is LOS E or better.

CHAPTER 5 **Conservation and Open Space
Element**



Introduction

Purpose and Scope

The primary focus of the Conservation and Open Space Element is to provide direction to future growth and development in the County of San Diego with respect to the following:

- The conservation, management, and utilization of natural and cultural resources
- The protection and preservation of open space
- The provision of park and recreation resources

Open space is defined as any parcel or area of land or water that is essentially unimproved and devoted to open space use. There is not a specific Open space section in this Element. Open space issues are addressed in every section of this document.

Population growth and development continually require the use of both renewable and nonrenewable resources. Goals and policies provided in this General Plan Element are divided into nine sections that address the following:

- *Biological Resources*—Land use-based conservation goals and policies that protect the ecological and lifecycle needs of threatened, endangered, or otherwise sensitive species and their associated habitats.
- *Water Resources*—Conserve and efficiently use water and protect the groundwater aquifer, water bodies, and water courses, which include reservoirs, rivers, streams, and the watersheds located throughout the region.
- *Agricultural Resources*—Minimize land use conflicts, preserve agricultural resources, and support the long-term presence and viability of agricultural industry as an important component of the region's economy and open space linkage.
- *Cultural Resources*—Federal and State legislation such as the *National Environmental Policy Act (NEPA)*, *National Historic Preservation Act (NHPA)*, and *California Environmental Quality Act (CEQA)* establish requirements to ensure cultural resources are protected and preserved. This section supplements this legislation with goals and policies that set the framework for local ordinances and regulations that protect these important cultural resources.
- *Paleontological Resources and Unique Geologic Features*—Preserve the County's rich geologic and paleontological history by establishing achievable land-use-based goals and policies.
- *Mineral Resources*—Manage the remaining mineral deposits while striving to ensure that adequate resources are available to support the economic prosperity of future generations of San Diego County residents.
- *Visual Resources*—Protect scenic corridors, geographically extensive scenic viewsheds, and dark skies within the natural environment.
- *Air Quality, Climate Change, and Energy*—Reduce the emissions of criteria air quality pollutants, emissions of greenhouse gases, and energy use in buildings and infrastructure, while promoting the use of renewable energy sources, conservation, and other methods of efficiency.

INTRODUCTION

- *Park and Recreation Facilities*—Ensure that adequate park and recreational facilities will adequately serve current and future residents.

Guiding Principles for Conservation and Open Space

The Guiding Principles for the General Plan are introduced in Chapter 2. Guiding Principles 3, 4, 7 and 8 are relevant to the Conservation and Open Space Element. The conservation of natural resources and the preservation of open space are essential actions required to realize the overall vision of this General Plan, along with the achievement of the County’s strategic initiatives.

The Conservation and Open Space Element establishes goals, policies, and programs that value and protect natural resources to ensure they are available for the future. Primary objectives of the Conservation and Open Space Element are to preserve the diverse range of visual, natural, and cultural resources that exemplify the County. The Element strives to minimize the impact of future development in areas with significant visual, natural, and cultural resources and supports the creation and enhancement of important habitat preserves and open space areas that are well managed and maintained. The Element also promotes efficient use of water and other natural resources and strives to ensure the long-term sustainability of non-renewable resources. The Element also supports the preservation and creation of parks, recreational facilities, and open spaces.

Energy production, transportation, and consumption are key contributors to greenhouse gases affecting climate change, poor local air quality, and a variety of other sustainability challenges. The Conservation and Open Space Element encourages and supports land use development patterns and transportation choices that reduce pollutants and greenhouse gases. In addition, the Element encourages renewable energy production, along with efficient energy use in buildings and infrastructure and minimizes the impacts of projects that can generate air pollutants.

The Conservation and Open Space Element also sets forth goals and polices that minimize agricultural land use conflicts and support the long-term presence and viability of the County’s agricultural industry.

Relationship to Other General Plan Elements

The effectiveness of the Conservation and Open Space Element depends upon its integration with the other elements comprising this General Plan. Elements that share topics, issues, and policy direction with the Conservation and Open Space Element include Land Use, Mobility, Housing, Noise, and Safety.

Primary objectives of the Land Use Element are to minimize future development in areas with significant natural resources that are identified in the Conservation and Open Space Element; along with areas that may be affected by natural hazards that are identified in both the Conservation and Open Space and Safety Elements. In addition, the Land Use Element encourages the development of vibrant and healthy communities, of which park and recreation facilities are an integral part. The Land Use Element also balances the availability of water with future development, while the Conservation and Open Space Element establishes policies that protect and conserve water resources to ensure they are available for future supplies. The Land Use and Mobility Elements also include goals and policies that address Climate Change by fostering land use patterns that facilitate a reduction in vehicle miles traveled and by planning for



transportation networks that encourage other modes of travel rather than the single-occupant motor vehicle.

The purpose of the Safety Element is to establish policies related to future development that will minimize the risk of personal injury, loss of life, property damage, and environmental damage associated with natural hazards, as identified in both the Conservation and Open Space and Safety Elements. The Safety Element identifies floodplain locations throughout the County, while Figure C-2 (Floodwater Accommodation) identifies the rivers, creeks, streams, flood corridors, riparian habitats, and land that may accommodate floodwater for purposes of groundwater recharge and stormwater management. The Mobility Element includes regional trails and bikeways, which are major recreational assets for the region.

This Element also has connections to the Housing and Noise Elements. Regarding the Housing Element, the goals and policies contained in this Element affect where and how housing is planned and developed, such as requiring development to avoid sensitive resources. With regard to noise issues, biological resources can be adversely affected by noise. Additionally, the mining of mineral resources typically has noise, traffic, air, and groundwater impacts that must be addressed.

Goals and Policies for Conservation and Open Space Element

Biological Resources

CONTEXT

The San Diego region is recognized as one of the most biologically important areas in the United States, and one of the most biologically diverse areas in the world.¹ The diversity of species found in the San Diego region can be attributed to the wide variety of vegetation and habitats associated with the region's range of microclimates, topography, soils, and other natural features. Unincorporated lands comprise the largest geographical area in the County with natural features that include lagoons, foothills, mountain ranges, and deserts. Today, the San Diego region supports over 400 sensitive plants and animals, ranging in sensitivity from common to critically endangered. All of this diversity is part of the San Diego region's unique natural heritage and a legacy for future generations.

HABITATS & SPECIES

The physical and climatic conditions found in the San Diego region provide for a wide variety of habitats and biological communities. These communities are associations of plants, animals, fungi, and microbes. Different habitat types may occur separately or be intermixed, but because they have different characteristics, they often support unique assemblages of species.

¹ Dobson, A.P., J.P. Rodriguez, W.M. Roberts, and D.S. Wilcove. 1997 Geographic Distribution of Endangered Species in the United States. *Science* 275(5299): 550-553.

GOALS AND POLICIES

The San Diego region's unique attributes have resulted in a relatively large number of endemic species in the area, that is, species that are only found in a limited geographic location. For example, 26 plant species in the County are found nowhere else in the world². When combined with habitat loss from urban, rural, and agricultural development, the result is that the County is home to an exceptional number of rare, threatened, endangered, or otherwise sensitive species. Both wildfire events and invasive plant and animal species further disrupt native habitat regeneration and pose a threat to conservation of native habitat and endemic species.

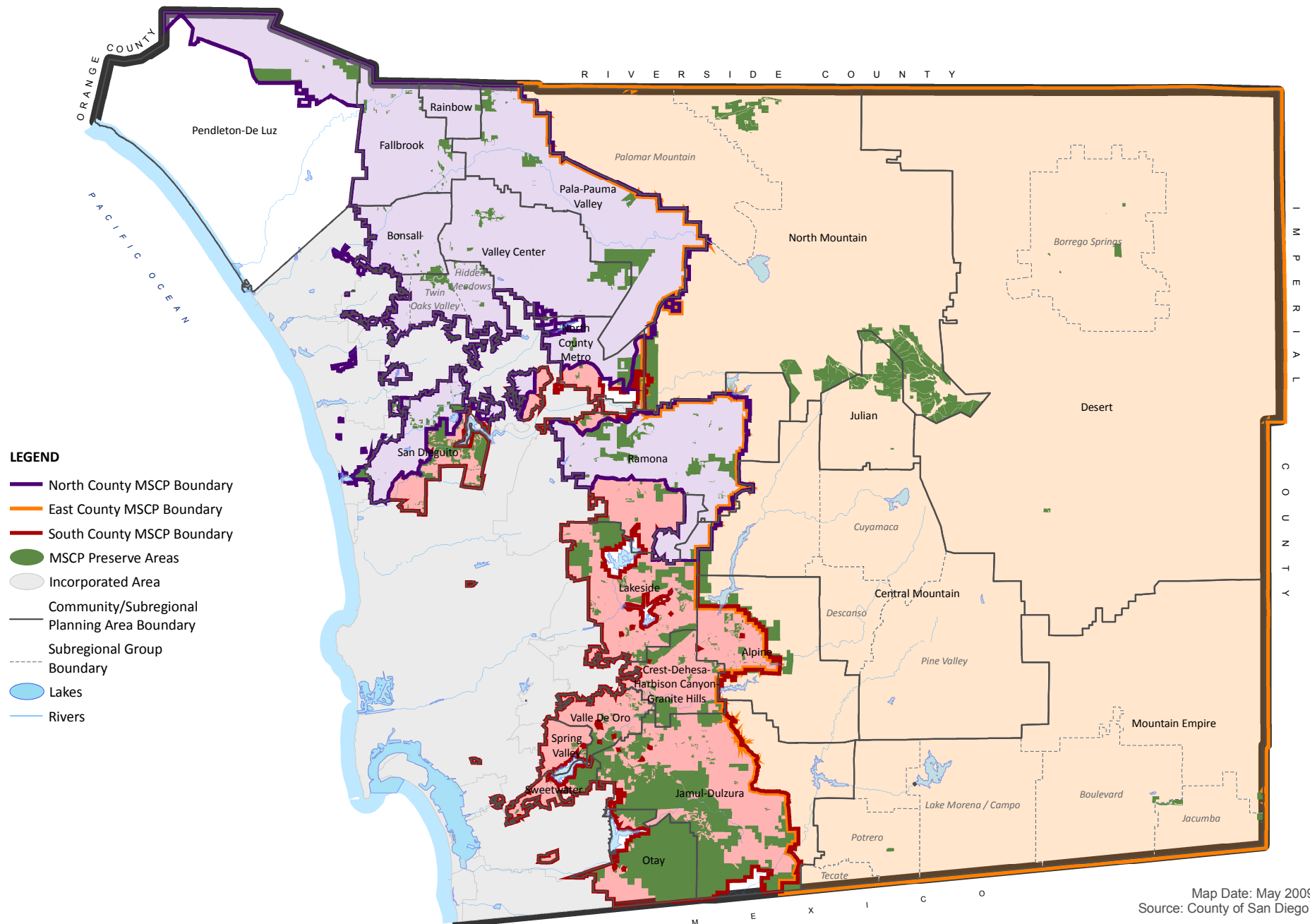
Waterways and their associated riparian vegetation provide important habitat values for wildlife, including several rare species of birds. Moreover, wetlands provide important water quality functions such as pollutant removal, floodwater retention, and greenhouse gas reduction. Valuable wetland resources in the County have been reduced from past development such that they must be protected, along with adjacent upland habitats, to maintain their functions and values.

Protecting the region's resources requires coordination and cooperation with other governmental and non-governmental entities, such as SANDAG, adjacent jurisdictions, California Department of Fish and Game, U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service, U.S. Army Corps of Engineers, U.S. Environmental Protection Agency, California Regional Water Quality Control Board, California Coastal Commission, and various conservation organizations.

WILDLIFE CORRIDORS AND HABITAT LINKAGES

Significant portions of the County are publicly owned, including areas designated as open space preserves and parks, National Forests, and State Parks. The County strives to work harmoniously with all such entities to achieve common goals. Important wildlife corridors and linkages have been identified to provide connections between areas of undeveloped lands, especially to significant public lands. Species that are well-distributed across their ranges are less susceptible to extinction than species confined to small portions of their range. Therefore, maintaining large, inter-connected blocks of habitat containing sizable and diverse populations of sensitive species is superior to a fragmented landscape with undersized populations. Figure C-1 (Habitat Conservation Programs) identifies existing preserve areas, along with areas where a connected system of preserves will be established as additional easements are recorded for open space and/or lands are acquired for public benefit.

² <http://www.sdnhm.org/research/botany/sdplants/preface.html>



HABITAT CONSERVATION PROGRAMS

San Diego County General Plan



Figure C-1

GOALS AND POLICIES

Wildlife corridors and linkages function better when they support sufficient native habitat conducive for wildlife movement. Linkages are landscape level, regional connections between core habitat areas. They consist of a variety of upland and riparian habitat types which provide resources for year-around foraging, nesting, and local dispersal. Corridors are more local movement paths for species that typically follow naturally occurring paths.



Escondido Creek serves as a wildlife corridor in the San Dieguito Community Planning Area

The San Diego region is an important part of the Pacific Flyway, one of the major migration routes for birds between Alaska and Central and South America. Some migrant birds use parts of the County as winter habitat or as stopover sites for resting and feeding. Stopover

sites are just as critical to bird conservation as breeding habitat. Many spring migrants coming north from the Gulf of California or along the west coast of mainland Mexico use the San Diego region, with its comparatively low mountains, as a corridor for crossing the mountains to reach the Pacific coast.

Local migration of birds and other wildlife is also important. For example, in the San Diego region, western bluebirds breed in the mountains but migrate to the coastal lowlands and other warmer regions for the winter. Many of the larger mammals in the County, such as mountain lions, mule deer, and bobcats, move between blocks of habitat as part of their daily routine searching for food, water, and shelter. Inter-connected habitats are also important to prevent isolation of populations of plants and animals.

GOALS AND POLICIES

GOAL COS-1

Inter-Connected Preserve System. A regionally managed, inter-connected preserve system that embodies the regional biological diversity of San Diego County.

Policies

COS-1.1 Coordinated Preserve System. Identify and develop a coordinated biological preserve system that includes Pre-Approved Mitigation Areas, Biological Resource Core Areas, wildlife corridors, and linkages to allow wildlife to travel throughout their habitat ranges.

COS-1.2 Minimize Impacts. Prohibit private development within established preserves. Minimize impacts within established preserves when the construction of public infrastructure is unavoidable.

COS-1.3 Management. Monitor, manage, and maintain the regional preserve system facilitating the survival of native species and the preservation of healthy populations of rare, threatened, or endangered species.



Gnatcatcher



- COS-1.4 Collaboration with Other Jurisdictions.** Collaborate with other jurisdictions and trustee agencies to achieve well-defined common resource preservation and management goals.
- COS-1.5 Regional Funding.** Collaborate with other jurisdictions and federal, state, and local agencies to identify regional, long-term funding mechanisms that achieve common resource management goals.
- COS-1.6 Assemblage of Preserve Systems.** Support the proactive assemblage of biological preserve systems to protect biological resources and to facilitate development through mitigation banking opportunities.
- COS-1.7 Preserve System Funding.** Provide adequate funding for assemblage, management, maintenance, and monitoring through coordination with other jurisdictions and agencies.
- COS-1.8 Multiple-Resource Preservation Areas.** Support the acquisition of large tracts of land that have multiple resource preservation benefits, such as biology, hydrology, cultural, aesthetics, and community character. Establish funding mechanisms to serve as an alternative when mitigation requirements would not result in the acquisition of large tracts of land.
- COS-1.9 Invasive Species.** Require new development adjacent to biological preserves to use non-invasive plants in landscaping. Encourage the removal of invasive plants within preserves.
- COS-1.10 Public Involvement.** Ensure an open, transparent, and inclusive decision-making process by involving the public throughout the course of planning and implementation of habitat conservation plans and resource management plans.
- COS-1.11 Volunteer Preserve Monitor.** Encourage the formation of volunteer preserve managers that are incorporated into each community planning group to supplement professional enforcement staff.

GOAL COS-2

Sustainability of the Natural Environment. Sustainable ecosystems with long-term viability to maintain natural processes, sensitive lands, and sensitive as well as common species, coupled with sustainable growth and development.

Policies

- COS-2.1 Protection, Restoration and Enhancement.** Protect and enhance natural wildlife habitat outside of preserves as development occurs according to the underlying land use designation. Limit the degradation of regionally important natural habitats within the Semi-Rural and Rural Lands regional categories, as well as within Village lands where appropriate. *The preservation of existing native plants and the planting of a variety of native (genetically locally adapted) or compatible non-native, non-invasive plant species enhance wildlife habitat areas.*
- COS-2.2 Habitat Protection through Site Design.** Require development to be sited in the least biologically sensitive areas and minimize the loss of natural habitat through site design.

GOAL COS-3

Protection and Enhancement of Wetlands. Wetlands that are restored and enhanced and protected from adverse impacts.

Policies

COS-3.1 Wetland Protection. Require development to preserve existing natural wetland areas and associated transitional riparian and upland buffers and retain opportunities for enhancement.

COS-3.2 Minimize Impacts of Development. Require development projects to:

- Mitigate any unavoidable losses of wetlands, including its habitat functions and values; and
- Protect wetlands, including vernal pools, from a variety of discharges and activities, such as dredging or adding fill material, exposure to pollutants such as nutrients, hydromodification, land and vegetation clearing, and the introduction of invasive species.

Water Resources

CONTEXT

The County relies upon a safe and reliable supply of this most basic necessity for its quality of life and economic prosperity. Not only do the County’s clean water resources provide drinking water, but they also sustain the County’s rich natural environment. Water resources may be classified as surface water, which collects in streams, rivers, lakes, reservoirs and groundwater, which resides in subsurface aquifers.

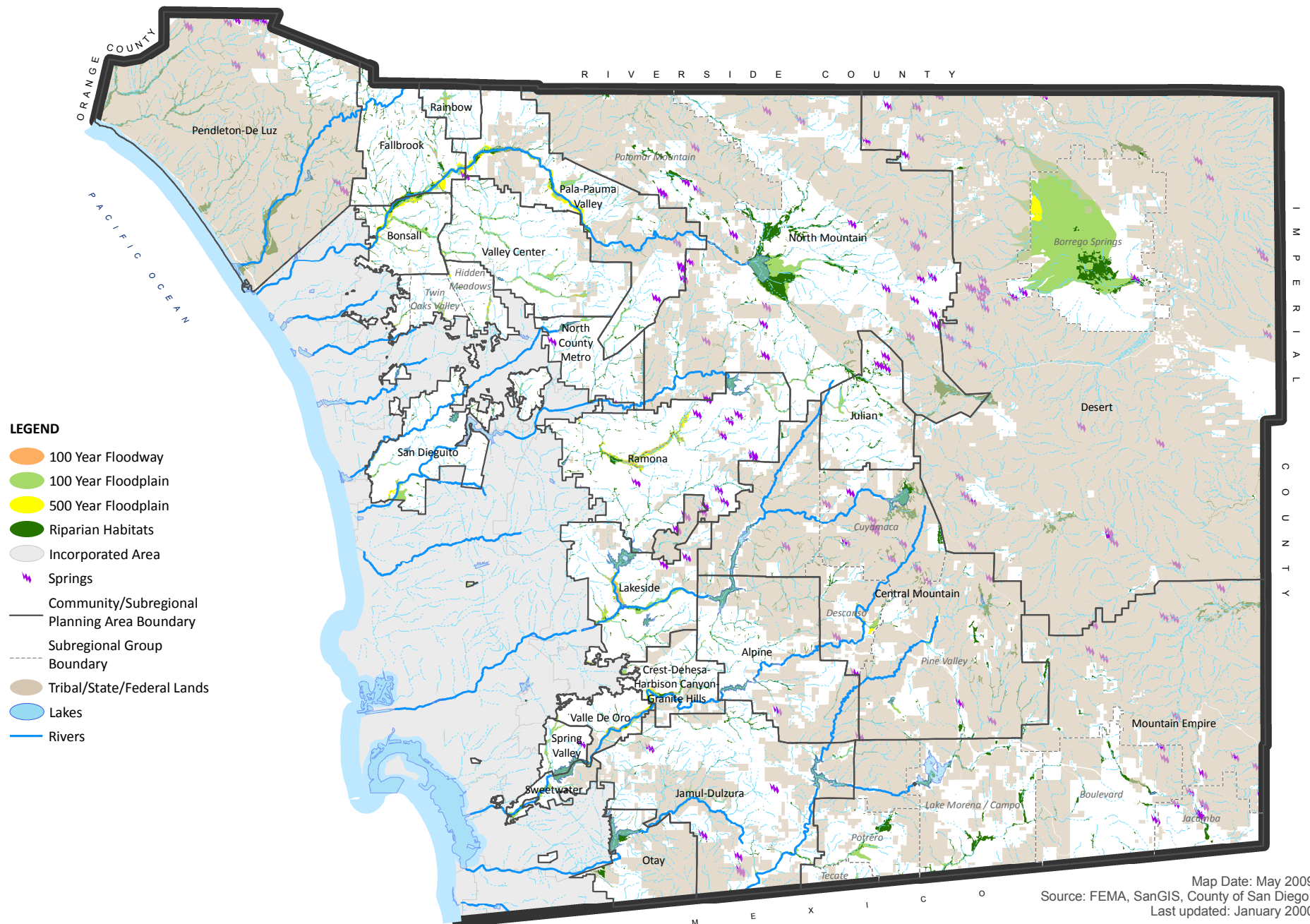
While surface water can drain through the County’s watersheds, it can also be infiltrated into the subsurface saturated zone to become groundwater, a resource that many residents of the unincorporated County depend upon. Aquifers are recharged at varying rates depending upon a number of factors, primarily the amount and frequency of rainfall. On average, the County’s coastal areas see less than ten inches of rain per year, the mountain peaks in excess of 40 inches, and the deserts less than three inches. Not only must the County have sufficient quantities of groundwater, but the water must also be of a sufficient quality. Figure C-2 (Floodwater Accommodation) identifies the rivers, creeks, streams, flood corridors, riparian habitats, and land that may accommodate floodwater for purposes of groundwater recharge and stormwater management.

Watersheds facilitate the collection and transportation of sediments and pollutants that can degrade water quality and damage downstream environments. Lakes and reservoirs capture flows from many of these watersheds. Watershed management relates to sustaining watersheds at an acceptable level of quality, contributing to resource surface and subsurface quality, and maintaining groundwater supplies.

The County of San Diego is divided into two hydrologic regions—the Colorado Hydrologic Region (CHR) which drains in an easterly direction into the Salton Sea and the San Diego Hydrologic Region (SDHR) which drains in a westerly direction toward the Pacific Ocean and encompasses most of the County, parts of southwestern Riverside County and southwestern Orange County. The watersheds, areas into which surface run-off, streams, creeks, and rivers drain, in the County of San Diego are shown on Figure C-3 (Watersheds).



Lake Jennings



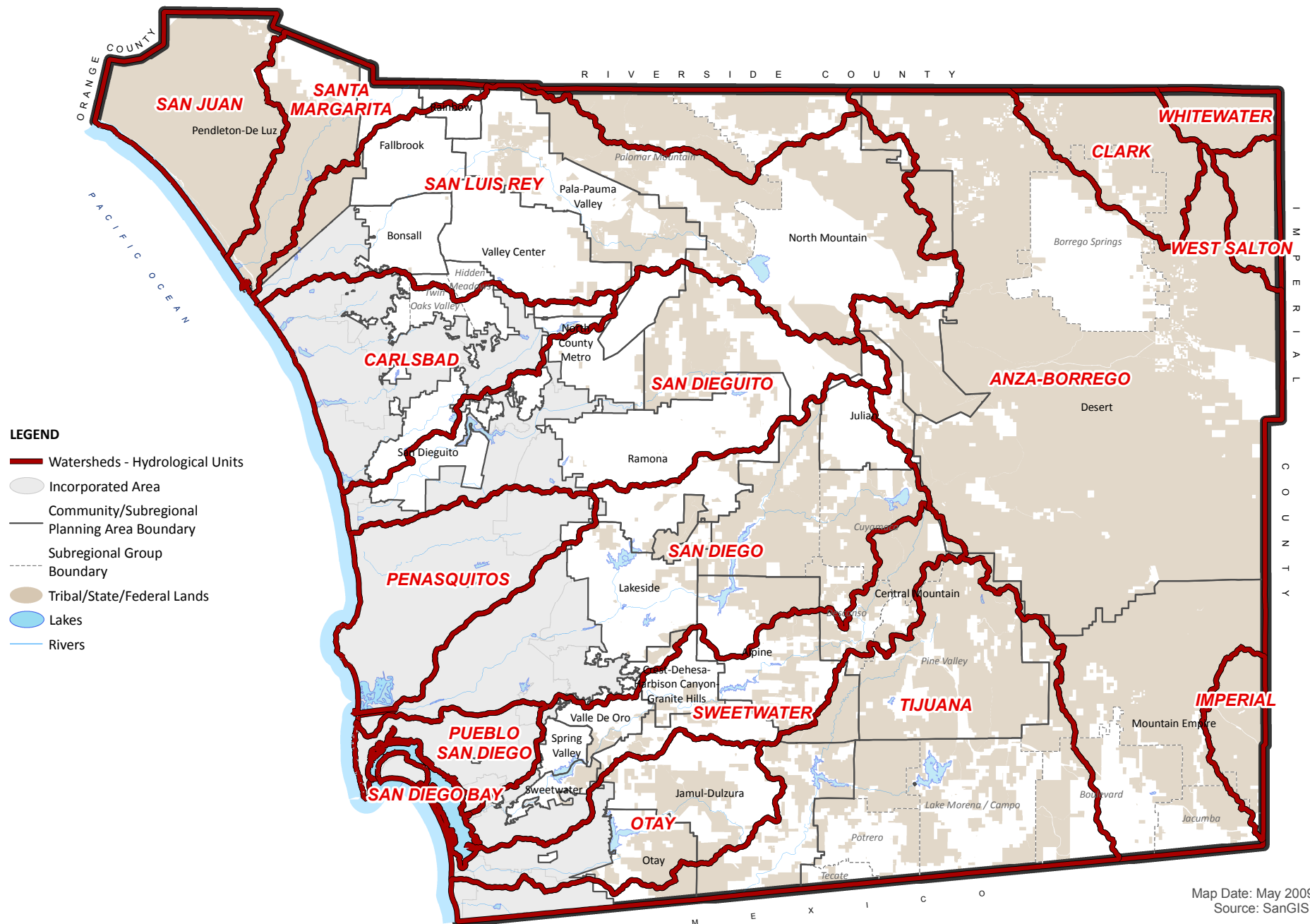
LEGEND

- 100 Year Floodway
- 100 Year Floodplain
- 500 Year Floodplain
- Riparian Habitats
- Incorporated Area
- Springs
- Community/Subregional Planning Area Boundary
- Subregional Group Boundary
- Tribal/State/Federal Lands
- Lakes
- Rivers

Map Date: May 2009
 Source: FEMA, SanGIS, County of San Diego¹
 Last updated: January 2000



FLOODWATER ACCOMMODATION



WATERSHEDS



Groundwater aquifers and local surface water reservoirs are of great importance to providing an adequate water supply for communities that are not served by imported water. It is critical to protect the water quality found in the local drinking water reservoirs and aquifers to ensure a continual source of drinking water, as well as increasing local supplies through recycling and conservation efforts. Imported supplies also help to replenish local groundwater basins. The City of San Diego has seven water reservoirs in the unincorporated County that are crucial to protecting habitat. These reservoirs include Barrett, El Capitan, Hodges, Morena, Otay, San Vicente, and Sutherland.

The Metropolitan Water District of Southern California imports water from the Colorado River and Northern California. This water is distributed to water purveyors in San Diego County. The Metropolitan Water District (MWD) sets the targets for lowering demands and securing the necessary supplies in the Integrated Resources Plan (IRP). The so-called “Preferred Resource Mix” is identified based on extensive technical modeling, IRP workgroups, and stakeholder involvement. The 2004 MWD IRP assumed that new local efforts—both increasing supplies and lowering demands—would meet the needs of population growth. Given the challenges facing imported supplies, it is widely expected that the 2009 IRP will have an even greater focus on control of demand through recycling and conservation efforts. (For additional information on water supply and how agencies are planning to meet future demands, refer to the Land Use Element, Community Services and Infrastructure section.)

GOALS AND POLICIES

GOAL COS-4

Water Management. A balanced and regionally integrated water management approach to achieve the long-term viability of the County’s water quality and supply.

COS-4.1 Water Conservation. Require development to reduce the waste of potable water through use of efficient technologies and conservation efforts that minimize the County’s dependence on imported water and conserve groundwater resources.

COS-4.2 Drought-Efficient Landscaping. Require efficient irrigation systems and in new development encourage the use of native plant species and non-invasive drought tolerant/low water use plants in landscaping.

COS-4.3 Stormwater Filtration. Maximize stormwater filtration and/or infiltration in areas that are not subject to high groundwater by maximizing the natural drainage patterns and the retention of natural vegetation and other pervious surfaces. This policy shall not apply in areas with high groundwater, where raising the water table could cause septic system failures, moisture damage to building slabs, and/or other problems.

COS-4.4 Groundwater Contamination. Require land uses with a high potential to contaminate groundwater to take appropriate measures to protect water supply sources.

Potential sources of groundwater contamination include, but are not limited to, landfills, fertilizer, pesticide, manure storage and sales, petroleum product storage tanks, manufacturing plants, and on-site wastewater treatment systems.

COS-4.5 Recycled Water. Promote the use of recycled water and gray water systems where feasible.

GOAL COS-5

Protection and Maintenance of Water Resources. Protection and maintenance of local reservoirs, watersheds, aquifer-recharge areas, and natural drainage systems to maintain high-quality water resources.

Water conservation is also addressed in Goal COS-19 in the “Air Quality, Climate Change, and Energy” section below.

Policies

COS-5.1 Impact to Floodways and Floodplains. Restrict development in floodways and floodplains in accordance with policies in the Flood Hazards section of the Safety Element.

Development in floodways and floodplains has the potential to alter natural hydrologic flow and cause soil erosion and increased stormwater runoff—including loss of wetland and health issues related to surface and groundwater contamination.

COS-5.2 Impervious Surfaces. Require development to minimize the use of directly connected impervious surfaces and to retain stormwater run-off caused from the development footprint at or near the site of generation.

Impervious surface area impairs groundwater recharge and contributes to stormwater runoff and heat retention.

COS-5.3 Downslope Protection. Require development to be appropriately sited and to incorporate measures to retain natural flow regimes, thereby protecting downslope areas from erosion, capturing runoff to adequately allow for filtration and/or infiltration, and protecting downstream biological resources.

COS-5.4 Invasive Species. Encourage the removal of invasive species to restore natural drainage systems, habitats, and natural hydrologic regimes of watercourses.

COS-5.5 Impacts of Development to Water Quality. Require development projects to avoid impacts to the water quality in local reservoirs, groundwater resources, and recharge areas, watersheds, and other local water sources.

Protecting reservoir water quality requires that the quality of the water entering the reservoirs is maintained or improved. Pollutants of high concern are nutrients and related algae, total organic carbon, and total dissolved solids.



Agricultural Resources

CONTEXT

The County of San Diego is the only major urban county with a farm gate value³ consistently ranked among the top ten agricultural counties (ranked eight for several years) in California.⁴ The County has the fourth highest number of farms of any county in the country and third highest number of farms of any county in California.⁵ Agriculture is the fifth largest component of the County’s economy.⁶ Agriculture in the County provides an array of economic, environmental, and social benefits that contribute to the quality of life in the region. Agriculture also provides a valuable open space resource and plays a critical role in regional wildlife conservation by providing usable open space corridors and habitat for some species.



Agricultural uses in Julian

The resources that support the County’s agriculture are unique. Unlike other jurisdictions across the nation, farming in San Diego is dependent upon the region’s unusual microclimates and often has very little relationship to the quality of the soils. Much of the County’s climate supports a year-round growing season that facilitates successful small farms and crop diversification producing over 200 agricultural commodities including high value specialty crops, nursery products, and a variety of fruits. Only six percent of the San Diego region’s soils are classified as prime agricultural soils. The small percentage of prime soils, the small farm size, and the high value of agriculture in the region highlights the uniqueness of farming in the County.



Agriculture is the fifth largest industry in San Diego County

A number of issues create pressures and stresses for the ongoing success of agriculture. These include conflicts associated with the urban/agricultural interface, land use pressures, water quality issues, and the high economic cost of operation. In addition, agricultural resources are particularly important in riverbeds, but face conflicts with aggregate resource extraction and wildlife corridor protection. These, among other

³ The farm gate value of a cultivated product in agriculture or aquaculture is the net value of the product when it leaves the farm, after marketing costs have been subtracted. Since many farms do not have significant marketing costs, it is often understood as the price of the product at which it is sold by the farm (the farm gate price). The farm gate value is typically lower than the retail price consumers pay in a store as it does not include costs for shipping, handling, storage, marketing and profit margins of the involved companies.

⁴ Source: USDA National Agricultural Statistics Service, Summary of California County Agricultural Commissioners’ Reports, 2004-2005.

⁵ Source: USDA National Agricultural Statistics Service, Census of Agriculture, 2002.

⁶ Source: San Diego Regional Chamber of Commerce, 2006.

GOALS AND POLICIES

issues, have increased the economic and social pressures faced by San Diego’s farmers and represent a challenge to the future success of the County’s agricultural industry.

GOALS AND POLICIES

GOAL COS-6

Sustainable Agricultural Industry. A viable and long-term agricultural industry and sustainable agricultural land uses in the County of San Diego that serve as a beneficial resource and contributor to the County’s rural character and open space network.

Policies

COS-6.1 Economic Diversity. Support the economic competitiveness of agriculture and encourage the diversification of potential sources of farm income, including value added products, agricultural tourism, roadside stands, organic farming, and farmers markets.

COS-6.2 Protection of Agricultural Operations. Protect existing agricultural operations from encroachment of incompatible land uses by doing the following:

- Limiting the ability of new development to take actions to limit existing agricultural uses by informing and educating new projects as to the potential impacts from agricultural operations
- Encouraging new or expanded agricultural land uses to provide a buffer of non-intensive agriculture or other appropriate uses (e.g., landscape screening) between intensive uses and adjacent non-agricultural land uses
- Allowing for agricultural uses in agricultural areas and designing development and lots in a manner that facilitates continued agricultural use within the development.
- Requiring development to minimize potential conflicts with adjacent agricultural operations through the incorporation of adequate buffers, setbacks, and project design measures to protect surrounding agriculture
- Supporting local and State right-to-farm regulations
- Retain or facilitate large and contiguous agricultural operations by consolidation of development during the subdivision process

Discourage development that is potentially incompatible with intensive agricultural uses, including schools and civic buildings where the public gather, daycare facilities under private institutional use, private institutional uses (e.g., private hospitals or rest homes), residential densities higher than two dwelling units per acre, and offices and retail commercial.



The agriculturally rich Pala-Pauma Valley



Agriculture in semi-rural area near Ramona



COS-6.3 Compatibility with Recreation and Open Space. Encourage siting recreational and open space uses and multi-use trails that are compatible with agriculture adjacent to the agricultural lands when planning for development adjacent to agricultural land uses.

Recreational and open space uses can serve as an effective buffer between agriculture and development that is potentially incompatible with agriculture uses.

COS-6.4 Conservation Easements. Support the acquisition or voluntary dedication of agriculture conservation easements and programs that preserve agricultural lands.

In addition to their economic value, agricultural lands provide the added benefit of serving as habitat areas for sensitive animal species.

COS-6.5 Best Management Practices. Encourage best management practices in agriculture and animal operations to protect watersheds, reduce GHG emissions, conserve energy and water, and utilize alternative energy sources, including wind and solar power.

Cultural Resources

CONTEXT

Our cultural past has helped shape our present community and will continue to create our future. Archaeological and historic resources, known collectively as cultural resources, are the tangible or intangible remains left by ancestral people who made and used them. Cultural resources, found throughout the County of San Diego, are irreplaceable reminders of the County’s prehistoric and historic past that continues to have value for communities today. These resources can provide clues to prehistoric and historic human behaviors, and provide scientific, religious, and other valuable educational information about our cultural past. In addition, these resources such as sacred places and traditional cultural properties continue to influence and have value for the County’s living tribal people. The cultural environment encompasses both the built (post-1769) and the archaeological environments, which include both prehistoric and historic archaeological sites. Cultural resources are found throughout the County and include not only physical evidence of the past such as Native American rock shelters, and pictographs but the intangible evidence such as traditional cultural lands and sacred sites. Examples of historic cultural resources (the built environment) include homes, barns, bridges, fountains, and silos. In 2008, the County of San Diego had more than 23,000 recorded cultural resource sites and this number continues to grow.

GOALS AND POLICIES

GOAL COS-7

Protection and Preservation of Archaeological Resources. Protection and preservation of the County’s important archeological resources for their cultural importance to local communities, as well as their research and educational potential.



One of the historical sites listed on the San Diego County Historic Property Listing, the Somers-Linden Farmhouse was constructed between 1891 and 1892.

GOALS AND POLICIES

Policies

- COS-7.1 Archaeological Protection.** Preserve important archaeological resources from loss or destruction and require development to include appropriate mitigation to protect the quality and integrity of these resources.

The importance of archaeological resources must be evaluated from the perspective of the affected community, including local tribes, in addition to the definitions contained in the California Public Resources Code. Input from the affected community on the importance of cultural resources through the consultation process is important in determining what resources should be preserved and what constitutes appropriate mitigation.

- COS-7.2 Open Space Easements.** Require development to avoid archeological resources whenever possible. If complete avoidance is not possible, require development to fully mitigate impacts to archaeological resources.

Avoidance of archaeological resources is normally achieved through the design of the development project in conjunction with the use of open space easements that protect the resources. If complete avoidance is not possible, other forms of mitigation, including data recovery excavations and the incorporation of archaeological features into the project design on a case-by-case basis may be appropriate. The determination of what constitutes adequate mitigation should be based on meaningful consultation with the affected community, including local tribes.

- COS-7.3 Archaeological Collections.** Require the appropriate treatment and preservation of archaeological collections in a culturally appropriate manner

The determination of what constitutes appropriate treatment and preservation of archaeological collections should be based on existing federal curation standards in combination with consultation with the affected community, such as the tribes. Many collections should be placed in a local collections curation facility that meets federal standards per 36 CFR Part 79. The proper storage and treatment of these collections should also be based on consultation with the affected community, such as the tribes. In addition, existing federal and state law governs the treatment of certain cultural items and human remains, requires consultation, and in some circumstances, repatriation. The County is committed to conduct an inventory of collections it holds or are held by cultural resources consulting firms.

- COS-7.4 Consultation with Affected Communities.** Require consultation with affected communities, including local tribes to determine the appropriate treatment of cultural resources.

Consultation should take place with the affected communities concerning the appropriate treatment of cultural resources, including archaeological sites, sacred places, traditional cultural properties, historical buildings and objects, artifacts, human remains, and other items. The County is required by law, Senate Bill 18 Protection of Traditional Tribal Cultural Places (SB-18), to consult with the appropriate tribes for projects that may result in major land use decisions including General Plans, General Plan Amendments, Specific Plans and Specific Plan Amendment. In addition to these types of permits, it is County policy to consult with the appropriate tribes on all other projects that contain or are likely to contain, archaeological resources. Consultation may also include active participation by the tribes as monitors in the survey, testing, excavation, and grading phases of the project.

- COS-7.5 Treatment of Human Remains.** Require human remains be treated with the utmost dignity and respect and that the disposition and handling of human remains will be done in consultation with the Most Likely Descendant (MLD) and under the requirements of Federal, State and County Regulations.

Human remains, including ancestral Native American remains, should be left undisturbed and preserved in place whenever possible. For most development permits, this is required by the County's Resource Protection



Ordinance. In the event that human remains are discovered during any phase of an archaeological investigation, the requirements of State and local laws and ordinances, including notification of and consultation with appropriate tribal members, must be followed in determining what constitutes appropriate treatment of those remains.



Alpine Women's Club is located in the former Alpine Hall built in 1899

COS-7.6 Cultural Resource Data Management.

Coordinate with public agencies, tribes, and institutions in order to build and maintain a central database that includes a notation whether collections from each site are being curated, and if so, where, along with the nature and location of cultural resources throughout the County of San Diego.

This database should be accessible to all qualified individuals while maintaining the confidentiality of the location and nature of sensitive cultural resources, such as archaeological sites. The County maintains a partnership with the local repository of the database, the South Coastal Information Center at San Diego State University, which provides direct access by qualified County personnel to the database so that the information it contains may be used to design development projects to avoid cultural resources at an early point in the process.

GOAL COS-8

Protection and Conservation of the Historical Built Environment. Protection, conservation, use, and enjoyment of the County's important historic resources.

Policies

COS-8.1 Preservation and Adaptive Reuse. Encourage the preservation and/or adaptive reuse of historic sites, structures, and landscapes as a means of protecting important historic resources as part of the discretionary application process, and encourage the preservation of historic structures identified during the ministerial application process.

Historic buildings, objects, trails, landscapes and districts are important parts of the multi-cultural heritage of San Diego County and should be preserved for the future enjoyment and education of the County's diverse populations. Preservation and adaptive reuse of these resources should be encouraged during the planning process and an emphasis should be placed on incentives for preservation, such as the Mills Act property tax program, in addition to restrictions on development, where appropriate.

COS-8.2 Education and Interpretation. Encourage and promote the development of educational and interpretive programs that focus on the rich multicultural heritage of the County of San Diego.

The County should continue to develop educational and interpretive programs that focus on the history of San Diego County, including but not limited to the important historical resources located on County parks, such as the Adobe at Rancho Penasquitos and Rancho Guajome. Such programs should be for residents and visitors of all ages from all communities and should include docent and self-guided tours, interpretive signage, kiosks, informational pamphlets, books and other audio-visual materials.

Paleontological Resources and Unique Geological Features

CONTEXT

PALEONTOLOGICAL RESOURCES

Paleontological resources are the fossilized remains and/or traces of prehistoric life—both plant and animal—as well as sedimentary formations in which they occur and the locations where they may be collected. Fossils are generally older than 10,000 years, a temporal boundary marking the end of the glacial Pleistocene Epoch and the beginning of the warmer Holocene Epoch in which we live today. For planning purposes, paleontological resources exclude human remains, which are considered cultural resources.

In the San Diego region, fossils typically occur in undisturbed sedimentary rock layers beneath the soil and sometimes may be found in surface outcrops. These fossils are limited and non-renewable. They are considered unique and worthy of preservation when they contain a unique or unusual assemblage of fossil organisms, provide paleo-biological information, provide insight to prehistoric life, or are the best example of its kind in the region.

The County can be divided into three distinct geomorphic regions—the Coastal Plain, the Peninsular Ranges, and the Salton Trough (the desert). Each region is characterized by different climatic, topographic, biological, and geologic settings. Correspondingly, each region contains geologic deposits that are associated with particular types of fossils, some of which are unique within the context of California and even the United States. Since fossils form in sedimentary rocks, most of the fossils in the San Diego region are in the Coastal Plain and Salton Trough strata. In the plutonic Peninsular Ranges, fossils occur only in valleys and other environments where material eroded from the mountains was transported down hill and deposited.

UNIQUE GEOLOGICAL RESOURCES

The San Diego region has a rich geologic history. Unique geological features are those that are locally or regionally unique in the context of the geologic history of California. They may include particular rocks or strata that explain or result from geologic processes that have affected the County and that lend themselves to scientific study.

The present landforms that characterize the San Diego region are the result of a series of geologic events spanning millions of years. These events include intrusive emplacement of magma, regional volcanism, large-scale erosion, river- and ocean-derived sedimentation, local faulting and uplift, and hydrothermal processes. The scale of some of the resulting unique geologic features, such as entire rock formations, can be much larger than the scale of other natural resources in the County. The conservation/preservation of these large-scale features is not necessarily needed or desired, as long as examples of them remain represented in the County. The County defines a “unique geologic feature” as a site that exhibits distinctive characteristics, is exclusive to the region, or provides a key piece of geologic information important in the study of geology or geologic history. Examples may include unique rock outcrops (e.g., natural bridge), type localities of named geologic formations (e.g., type locality of Scripps Formation in the sea cliffs north of Scripps Institute of Oceanography), information-rich geologic exposures (e.g., cliff face exposing faulted sedimentary layers), or unique landform (e.g., Round Mountain in Jacumba Valley, which represents a volcanic plug).



GOALS AND POLICIES

GOAL COS-9

Educational and Scientific Uses. Paleontological resources and unique geologic features conserved for educational and/or scientific purposes.

Policies

COS-9.1 Preservation. Require the salvage and preservation of unique paleontological resources when exposed to the elements during excavation or grading activities or other development processes.

COS-9.2 Impacts of Development. Require development to minimize impacts to unique geological features from human related destruction, damage, or loss.

Mineral Resources

CONTEXT

Mineral resources are vital to community development and economic prosperity and also support recreational, educational, and scientific pursuits. The County's supply of accessible mineral resources is finite and exhaustible. Management of the remaining mineral deposits is important to ensure adequate resources are available to support the economic prosperity of future generations of County citizens.

MINERAL RESOURCES OF SAN DIEGO COUNTY

The State Geologist has classified certain areas of the County as underlain by significant mineral deposits. These areas are identified as Mineral Resource Zone 2 (MRZ-2) on the maps prepared by the California Geological Survey (Figure C-4 [Mineral Resource Zones]). Some of these areas have also been designated by the State Mining and Geology Board as containing mineral resources of "statewide or regional significance."

The term "mineral resource" refers to a concentration or occurrence of a naturally occurring material in such form or amount that economic extraction of a commodity is currently potentially feasible. In San Diego County, there are three general categories of important mineral resources, including construction materials, industrial and chemical mineral materials, and metallic and rare materials. Although mineral resources of all types are economically important, the continued availability of construction aggregate for the development of roads, homes, buildings, and other infrastructure is essential to the economy of the County. While the County is underlain by vast quantities of mineral deposits from which aggregate can be produced, urban development has encroached upon many existing and potential future mining sites. This development and other non-compatible land uses has reduced or eliminated access to many of the local important mineral deposits.

Two mineral classification reports have been completed for San Diego County; these include (1) Mineral Land Classification: Aggregate Materials in the Western San Diego County Production-Consumption Region⁷ and (2) Update of Mineral Land Classification: Aggregate Materials in the Western San Diego County Production-

⁷ Kohler, S.L. & Miller, R.V. (1982). California Department of Conservation, Special Report 153

GOALS AND POLICIES

Consumption Region.⁸ The latter 1996 report concluded that aggregate reserves significantly decreased since the 1982 study and that Portland cement concrete (PCC)-grade aggregate reserves within Western San Diego County were enough to supply the demand for 20 years (until 2016). The report further concluded it was unlikely all identified resources would be mined as access to resources could be substantially restricted by competing conservation measures, such as the MSCP program.

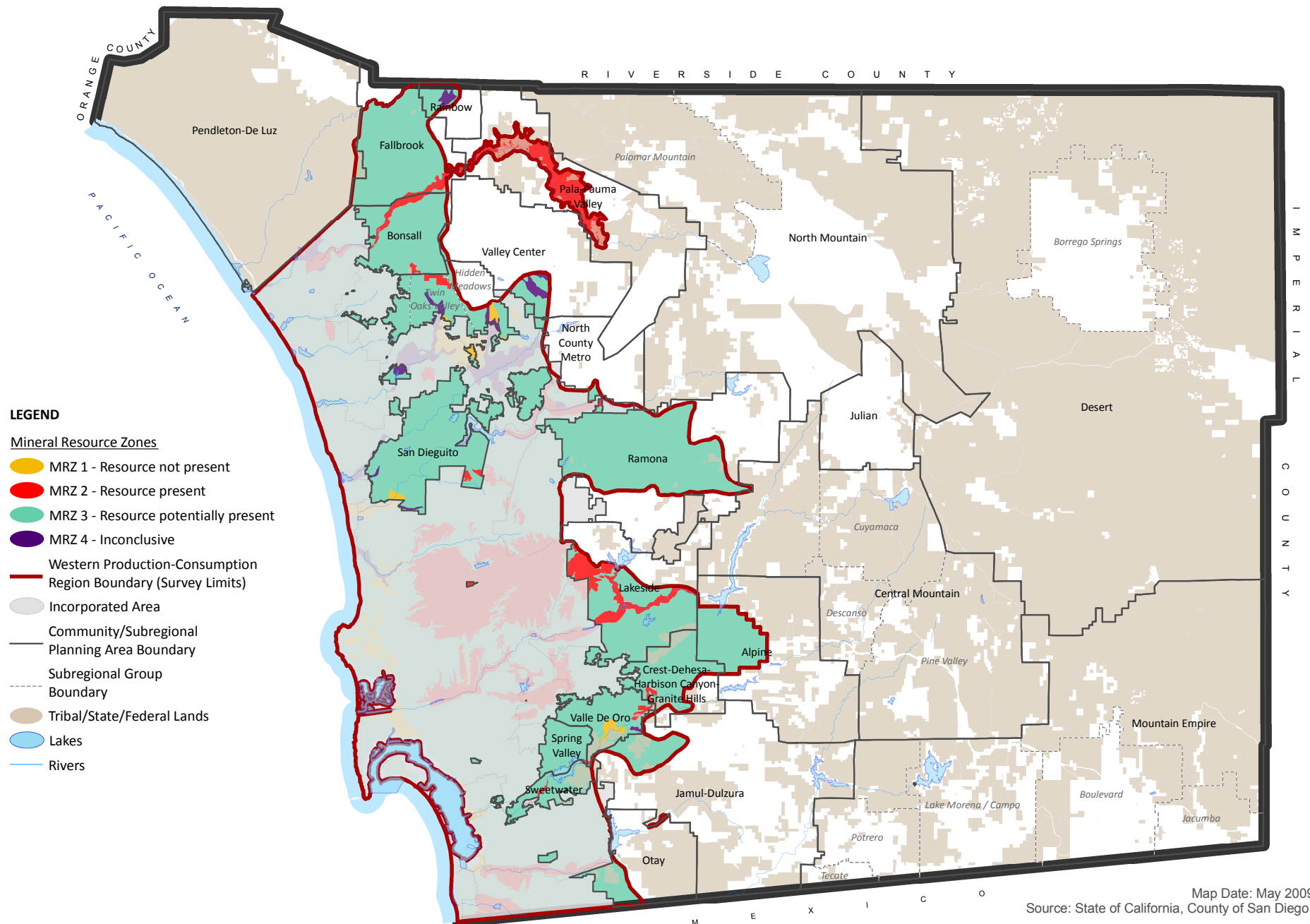
As a result, few new mining sites have been recently permitted in the County and the aggregate production rate from existing local mining sites has not kept pace with demand. The total permitted aggregate resources as of January 2006 were 198 million tons, a 28 percent decrease from January 2001.⁹ The permitted aggregate resources represent only 17 percent of the 50-year estimated demand (year 2006 to 2056) of 1,164 million tons. To meet demand, substantial volumes of aggregate are being imported from quarries located outside of San Diego County. Due to increased transportation costs, the price for aggregate in the County is among the highest in the State of California. The total permitted area of local mining facilities contains less than a 50-year supply of aggregate for the County. Thus, maintaining access to mineral resources, especially the remaining undeveloped MRZ-2 classified lands, is important for the future economic activity of the County.

PERMITTING AND RECLAMATION OF MINING SITES

In order for a new mining site to be operated, the *California Surface Mining and Reclamation Act (SMARA)* requires that a permit is granted by the local lead agency (the County), and a Reclamation Plan prepared

⁸ Davis, James F. (1996). California Department of Conservation, DMG Open-File Report 96-04

⁹ California Geological Survey (2006), Map Sheet 52 – Aggregate Availability in California



Map Date: May 2009
 Source: State of California, County of San Diego¹



MINERAL RESOURCE ZONES

GOALS AND POLICIES

consistent with the minimum standards for reclamation listed in Article 9, Section 3700 et seq. of the State Mining and Geology Board reclamation regulations. The Reclamation Plan is subject to approval by the County in coordination with the California Department of Conservation.

RECYCLING OF CONSTRUCTION MATERIALS

Although not a mining activity, the recycling of construction materials collected from demolished buildings, roadways, or other facilities can incrementally increase the local availability (i.e. production rate) of construction materials and extend the lifespan of existing mining operations. (Recycling also extends the lifespan of local landfills.)

GOALS AND POLICIES

The goals and policies listed below are intended to achieve the following:

- Assure an adequate supply of mineral resources to support the economic activity projected to occur under the County General Plan.
- Comply with the requirements of the SMARA with regard to the conservation of mineral resources, and the permitting and reclamation of mining sites.

GOAL COS-10

Protection of Mineral Resources. The long-term production of mineral materials adequate to meet the local County average annual demand, while maintaining permitted reserves equivalent to a 50-year supply, using operational techniques and site reclamation methods consistent with SMARA standards such that adverse effects on surrounding land uses, public health, and the environment are minimized.

Policies

COS-10.1 Siting of Development. Encourage the conservation (i.e., protection from incompatible land uses) of areas designated as having substantial potential for mineral extraction. Discourage development that would substantially preclude the future development of mining facilities in these areas. Design development or uses to minimize the potential conflict with existing or potential future mining facilities. For purposes of this policy, incompatible land uses are defined by SMARA Section 3675.

COS-10.2 Protection of State-Classified or Designated Lands. Discourage development or the establishment of other incompatible land uses on or adjacent to areas classified or designated by the State of California as having important mineral resources (MRZ-2), as well as potential mineral lands identified by other government agencies. The potential for the extraction of substantial mineral resources from lands classified by the State of California as areas that contain mineral resources (MRZ-3) shall be considered by the County in making land use decisions.

COS-10.3 Road Access. Prohibit development from restricting road access to existing mining facilities, areas classified MRZ-2 or MRZ-3 by the State Geologist, or areas identified in the County Zoning Ordinance for potential extractive use in accordance with SMARA section 2764.a.



- COS-10.4 Compatible Land Uses.** Discourage the development of land uses that are not compatible with the retention of mining or recreational access to non-aggregate mineral deposits. *See Policy COS-10.1 for a definition of incompatible land uses.*
- COS-10.5 Reclamation Plans.** Require all mining projects to be conducted in accordance with a reclamation plan that meets the minimum reclamation standards required by the California *Surface Mining and Reclamation Act* and the associated State Mining and Geology Board regulations. Require the reclamation plan to include a phasing plan that provides for the completion of the surface mining on each segment of the mined lands so that the reclamation can be initiated at the earliest possible time on those portions of the mined lands that will not be subject to further disturbance by the surface mining operation.
- COS-10.6 Conservation of Construction Aggregate.** Encourage the continued operation of existing mining facilities and streamline the permitting of new mining facilities consistent with the goal to establish permitted aggregate resources that are sufficient to satisfy 50 years of County demand.
- COS-10.7 Recycling of Debris.** Encourage the installation and operation of construction and demolition (C&D) debris recycling facilities as an accessory use at permitted (or otherwise authorized) mining facilities to increase the supply of available mineral resources.
- COS-10.8 New Mining Facilities.** Develop specific permit types and procedures for the authorization of new mining facilities that recognize the inherent physical effects of mining operations and the public necessity for available mineral resources adequate to meet local demand, in accordance with PRC Section 2762.
- COS-10.9 Overlay Zones.** Provide zoning overlays for MRZ-2 designated lands and a 1,300-foot-wide buffer area adjacent to such lands. Within these overlay zones, the potential effects of proposed land use actions on potential future extraction of mineral resources shall be considered by the decision-makers.

Visual Resources

CONTEXT

Visual resources are diverse in nature. They are found both within the natural environment and the built, or human-made, environment. Visual resources can be valued both objectively and subjectively based on their quality, uniqueness, prominence, relationship to community identity, and economic contributions, such as to land values and tourism. Visual resources are important from an aesthetic perspective when, based on the characteristics summarized above; they are identified as containing significant scenic value.

While existing visual resources can be preserved or enhanced, the urban growth anticipated by this General Plan provides opportunities to identify or even create new visual resources, both within existing communities and in new growth areas. Goals and policies in this section emphasize the protection of scenic corridors and dark skies within the natural environment and the recognition and enhancement of community character within the built environment.

LANDSCAPE/SETTING

The landscape of the San Diego region is rich in natural open space, unique topographic resources, and scenic vistas. These natural features contribute greatly to the overall quality of the existing visual setting experienced by viewers within the County. Urban land uses are focused in the western third of the County, while the eastern two-thirds are largely undeveloped with mountains and desert dominating the landscape. The County of San Diego has three distinctive geographic regions, listed from west to east:

- Low-lying Coastal Plain
- Mountainous Peninsular Range
- Desert Salton (Imperial) Basin

The diversity of these regions provides San Diego County residents and visitors with an array of natural vistas and scenic environments that provide a unique aesthetic collection from the ocean to the desert.

Throughout these three distinctive geographic provinces are vast amounts of publicly owned lands that provide open space and visual relief from the human-made environment. Examples include the Marine Corps Base Camp Pendleton on the Coastal Plain in northern San Diego County; the Cleveland National Forest in the Peninsular Range; and Anza-Borrego Desert State Park in the Salton (Imperial) Basin. In addition to these examples of large expanses of open space, County parks, habitat preserves, reservoirs, and undeveloped lands contribute to the County's open space lands and overall aesthetic resource value.

Aesthetic value is not limited to open space and rural lands, but also can be demonstrated through architectural design, or in historic structures and districts, streetscapes, and manufactured landscapes. Within the "developed" environment, scenic features can include built uses such as structures of historic significance or architectural merit, open but developed areas such as expansive agricultural fields or groves, and the individual form and character of a unique neighborhood or community. These valuable aesthetic elements of the human-made environment can be found throughout the County. A well-known example is the historic gold-mining community of Julian.

SCENIC CORRIDORS

A highway corridor generally includes the land adjacent to and visible from the vehicular right-of-way. The dimension of the corridor is usually identified using a motorist's line of vision and may include viewshed, extending to the horizon. A "scenic highway" can pertain to any freeway, highway, road, or other vehicular right-of-way along a corridor with considerable natural or otherwise scenic landscape.

State Scenic Highways are those highways that are either officially designated by Caltrans or are eligible for designation. This statewide system of scenic highways is part of the Master Plan of State Highways Eligible for Official State Designation as Scenic Highways. A highway may be designated as "scenic" depending upon how much of the natural landscape can be seen by travelers, the aesthetic quality of the landscape, and the extent to which development intrudes upon the traveler's enjoyment of the view.

A highway's status changes from "eligible" to "officially designated" when the local jurisdiction adopts a scenic corridor protection program, applies to Caltrans for scenic highway approval, and receives notification from Caltrans that the highway has been designated as an official State Scenic Highway. Two County routes have been designated State Scenic Highways; these include (1) State Route 78 through the Anza-Borrego



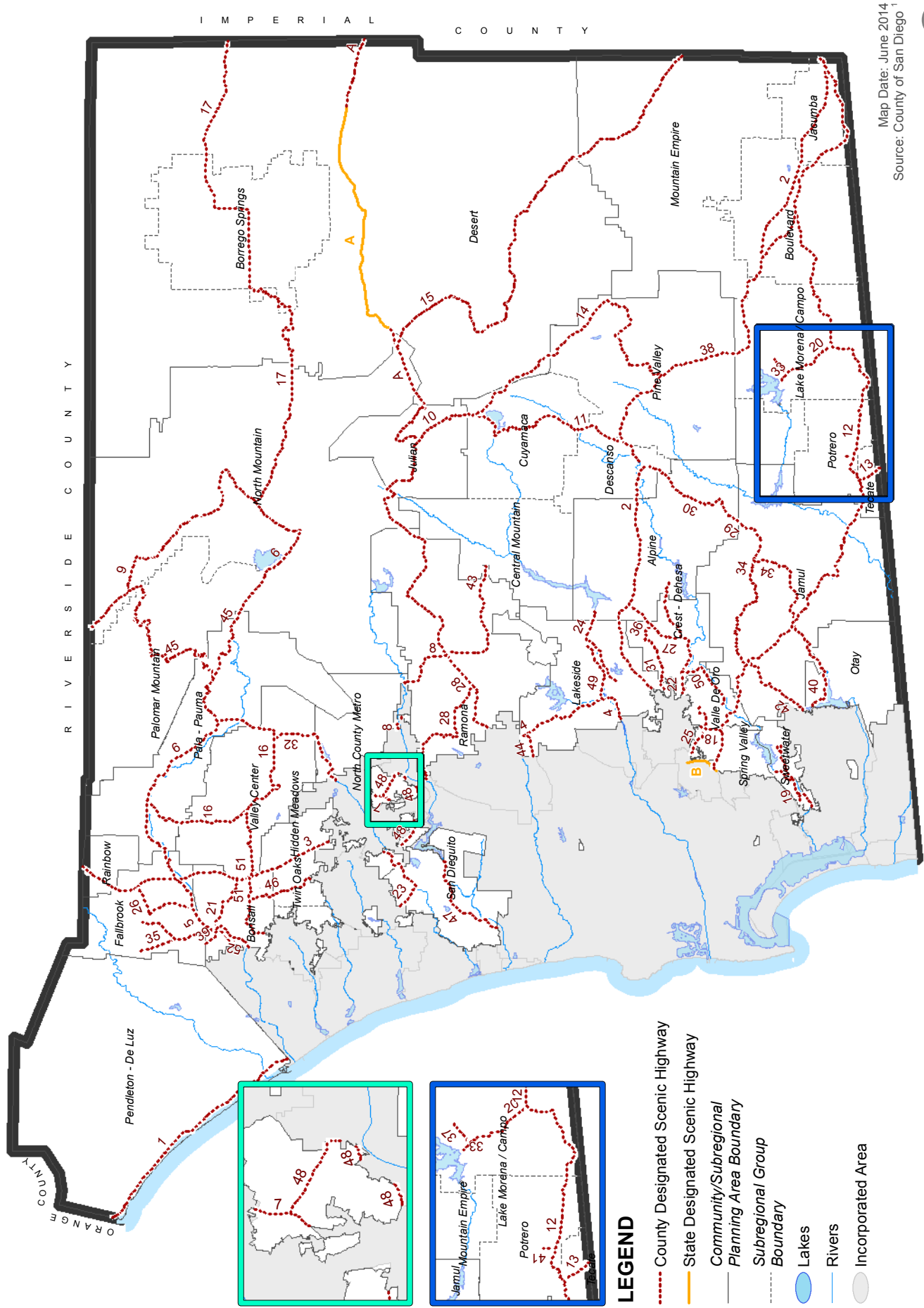
CHAPTER 5 CONSERVATION AND OPEN SPACE ELEMENT

Desert State Park (18.2-mile segment) and (2) State Route 125 from State Route 94 in Spring Valley to Interstate 8 in La Mesa (two miles of this segment are in the unincorporated County). In addition, Sunrise Highway (S1) is a National Scenic Byway that runs north from Old Highway 80 to State Route 79 through the Cleveland National Forest. Roads within the unincorporated County included in the Scenic Highway system are shown on Figure C-5 (Scenic Highways) and in Table COS-1 (County Scenic Highway System).

Table COS-1 County Scenic Highway System		
Map Ref.	Route	Segment
A	State Route 78	Wynola Road east to Imperial County line (excluding portion in Anza-Borrego Desert State Park)
B	State Route 125	State Route 94 to Interstate 8
1	Interstate 5	Oceanside city limits north to Orange County line
2	Interstate 8	El Cajon city limits to Imperial County line
3	Interstate 15	Escondido city limits north to Riverside County line
4	State Route 67	Santee city limits to State Route 78 (excluding portion in city of Poway)
5	State Route 76	Oceanside city limits east to Interstate 15
6	State Route 76	Interstate 15 east to State Route 79
7	Bear Valley Parkway and State Route 78	Escondido city limits southeast to Via Rancho Parkway
8	State Route 78	Via Rancho Parkway to State Route 79 (excluding portion within city of San Diego)
9	State Route 79	Riverside County line to State Route 76
10	State Route 79	State Route 78 (Wynona) south to Old Highway 80
11	State Route 79	Interstate 8 north to Sunrise Highway
12	State Route 94	State Route 125 to Interstate 8
13	State Route 188 (Tecate Road)	U.S. / Mexican Border north to State Route 94
14	Sunrise Highway (S1)	State Route 79 south to Old Highway 80
15	Old Overland Stage Route (S2)	Imperial County line north to State Route 78
16	Lilac Road and Valley Center Road (S6)	State Route 76 to State Route 76
17	San Felipe Road, Montezuma Valley Road, Pal Canyon Road, Peg Leg Road, and Borrego Salton Seaway (S22)	State Route 79 east to Imperial County line
18	Avocado Boulevard	State Route 94 to El Cajon city limits
19	Bonita, San Miguel, Guajolote, and Sweetwater River Roads	Interstate 805 north to State Route 94 (excluding portion within city of Chula Vista)
20	Buckman Springs Road	Lake Morena Drive to State Route 94
21	Camino Del Rey	State Route 76 to its terminus at Old Highway 395
22	Dehesa Road	El Cajon city limits to Tavern Road
23	Elfin Forest Road / Harmony Grove Road	San Marcos city limits to Escondido city limits
24	El Monte Road	El Capitan Reservoir to Lake Jennings Park Road

GOALS AND POLICIES

Table COS-1 County Scenic Highway System		
Map Ref.	Route	Segment
25	Fuerte Drive	Interstate 8 to Chase Ave.
26	Gird, Reche, Live Oak Park, and Mission Roads	State Route 76 north and east to Interstate 15
27	Harbison Canyon Road	Arnold Way to Dehesa Road
28	Highland Valley Road	San Diego city limits to State Route 67
29	Honey Springs Road	State Route 94 north to Lyons Valley Road
30	Japatul Road	Lyons Valley Road to Interstate 8
31	La Cresta Road	Greenfield Drive to La Cresta Boulevard
32	Lake Wohlford Road	Valley Center Road east (Escondido city limits) to Valley Center Road (excluding portion within city of Escondido)
33	Lake Morena Drive	Buckman Springs Road north to Morena Lake
34	Lyons Valley Road	State Route 94 to Cleveland National Forest
35	Mission and Green Canyon Roads	State Route 76 north and east to Reche Road
36	Mountain View Road/Francis Drive	La Cresta Boulevard to Harbison Canyon Road
37	Oak Drive	Lake Morena Drive north to Buckman Springs Road
38	Old Highway 80	State Route 79 (Pine Valley) to Interstate 8 (Jacumba)
39	Olive Hill Road	State Route 76 to planning area boundary
40	Otay Lakes Road	Chula Vista city limits to State Route 94
41	Potrero Valley Road	State Route 94 to Potrero County Park
42	Proctor Valley Road	Chula Vista city limits to State Route 94
43	San Vicente and Ramona Oaks Roads	State Route 78 to Cleveland National Forest
44	Scripps Poway Parkway	Poway city limits to State Route 67
45	South Grade Road, Canfield Rd/Highway to the Stars, Palomar Divide Road, and Oak Grove Truck Trail	State Route 76 to State Route 78
46	Twin Oaks Valley Road	Gopher Canyon Road to San Marcos city limits
47	Via de la Valle, Paseo Delicias, and Del Dios Highway	San Diego city limits east to Via Rancho Parkway
48	Via Rancho Parkway (San Pasqual Road)	Del Dios Highway to State Route 78 (excluding portions in cities of Escondido and San Diego)
49	Willow and El Monte Roads	State Route 67 to southern end of El Capitan Reservoir
50	Willow Glen Drive	Jamacha Road to Dehesa Road
51	Vista Way, Gopher Canyon, and Old Castle Roads	Vista city limits north and east to Lilac Road
52	Old River Road	State Route 76 to Camino Del Rey



SCENIC HIGHWAYS

San Diego County General Plan

LEGEND

- County Designated Scenic Highway
- State Designated Scenic Highway
- Community/Subregional Planning Area Boundary
- - - Subregional Group Boundary
- Lakes
- Rivers
- Incorporated Area

Map Date: June 2014
Source: County of San Diego¹

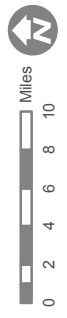


Figure C-5

GOALS AND POLICIES

ASTRONOMICAL DARK SKIES

Astronomical research has contributed to a greater understanding of our solar system, supported advances in space travel, improved telecommunication systems, advanced weather forecasting, and provided insight to energy production. The maintenance of dark skies in San Diego County is vital to the two world-class observatories that depend on them for astronomical research. The five criteria for a high-quality site include: (1) Elevation over 5,000 feet above sea level; (2) clear, cloud-free night sky; (3) proximity to the Pacific Ocean; (4) distance from urban areas; and (5) freedom from nearby sources of light, dust, and smoke. Sites in the United States that meet these criteria are found only in west Texas, central New Mexico, Arizona, the central California coast, and the San Diego region.

The two sites in the County of San Diego, which meet all of the above criteria, include Palomar and Mount Laguna Observatories. The maintenance of dark skies in the County is vital to their operation and the astronomical research carried out at these facilities. Palomar Observatory, located 5,500 feet at the top of Palomar Mountain in northern San Diego County near Palomar Mountain State Park, is privately owned and operated by the California Institute of Technology (Caltech) and is used to support some of California's and the United States' premier scientific research programs. San Diego State University (SDSU) and the University of Illinois operate the Mount Laguna Observatory jointly. Located at an altitude of 6,100 feet on the eastern edge of the Cleveland National Forest near the Anza-Borrego State Park, 45 miles east of downtown San Diego, the Mount Laguna Observatory is one of the County's best astronomical research and education facilities.

GOALS AND POLICIES

GOAL COS-11

Preservation of Scenic Resources. Preservation of scenic resources, including vistas of important natural and unique features, where visual impacts of development are minimized.

Policies

COS-11.1 Protection of Scenic Resources. Require the protection of scenic highways, corridors, regionally significant scenic vistas, and natural features, including prominent ridgelines, dominant landforms, reservoirs, and scenic landscapes.

COS-11.2 Scenic Resource Connections. Promote the connection of regionally significant natural features, designated historic landmarks, and points of regional historic, visual, and cultural interest via designated scenic corridors, such as scenic highways and regional trails.

COS-11.3 Development Siting and Design. Require development within visually sensitive areas to minimize visual impacts and to preserve unique or special visual features, particularly in rural areas, through the following:

- Creative site planning
- Integration of natural features into the project
- Appropriate scale, materials, and design to complement the surrounding natural landscape
- Minimal disturbance of topography

Potential measures for promoting scenic compatibility may include limiting or avoiding soundwalls, placing utilities underground, minimizing grading, and providing scenic vista points.



- Clustering of development so as to preserve a balance of open space vistas, natural features, and community character.
- Creation of contiguous open space networks

COS-11.4 Collaboration with Agencies and Jurisdictions. Coordinate with adjacent federal and State agencies, local jurisdictions, and tribal governments to protect scenic resources and corridors that extend beyond the County’s land use authority, but are important to the welfare of County residents.

COS-11.5 Collaboration with Private and Public Agencies. Coordinate with the California Public Utilities Commission, power companies, and other public agencies to avoid siting energy generation, transmission facilities, and other public improvements in locations that impact visually sensitive areas, whenever feasible. Require the design of public improvements within visually sensitive areas to blend into the landscape.

COS-11.6 Billboards. Prohibit new billboards and other forms of large-scale advertising and signage within scenic corridors. Encourage the removal of existing billboards and other forms of large-scale advertising and signage along State and County scenic highway corridors.

COS-11.7 Underground Utilities. Require new development to place utilities underground and encourage “undergrounding” in existing development to maintain viewsheds, reduce hazards associated with hanging lines and utility poles, and to keep pace with current and future technologies.

The concept of “undergrounding” in the initial phases of a project not only increases the aesthetic value of the surrounding viewshed, but can also reduce costs in the long run since less infrastructure is exposed to the elements.

GOAL COS-12

Preservation of Ridgelines and Hillsides. Ridgelines and steep hillsides that are preserved for their character and scenic value.

Policies

COS-12.1 Hillside and Ridgeline Development Density. Protect undeveloped ridgelines and steep hillsides by maintaining semi-rural or rural designations on these areas.

COS-12.2 Development Location on Ridges. Require development to preserve the physical features by being located down and away from ridgelines so that structures are not silhouetted against the sky.

GOAL COS-13

Dark Skies. Preserved dark skies that contribute to rural character and are necessary for the local observatories.

Policies

COS-13.1 Restrict Light and Glare. Restrict outdoor light and glare from development projects in Semi-Rural and Rural Lands and designated rural communities to retain the quality of night skies by minimizing light pollution.

GOALS AND POLICIES

COS-13.2 Palomar and Mount Laguna. Minimize, to the maximum extent feasible, the impact of development on the dark skies surrounding Palomar and Mount Laguna observatories to maintain dark skies which are vital to these two world-class observatories by restricting exterior light sources within the impact areas of the observatories.

COS-13.3 Collaboration to Retain Night Skies. Coordinate with adjacent federal and State agencies, local jurisdictions, and tribal governments to retain the quality of night skies by minimizing light pollution.

Air Quality, Climate Change, and Energy

CONTEXT

There is a strong correlation between land use planning, transportation system planning, and the emission of air quality pollutants, greenhouse gases (GHG) that contribute to global climate change (GCC) and criteria pollutants that degrade air quality within a region. The primary opportunities to reduce air quality pollutants and GHG emissions are in the urbanized areas of the County where there are land use patterns that can best support the increased use of transit and pedestrian activities since most GHGs and air pollutants result from mobile source emissions. The unincorporated County can also be a part of the solution by producing development patterns that contribute to reducing the dependence on the automobile and by promoting development with lower energy demands.

The development of sustainable communities contributes to both the reduction in overall air pollutants as well as solving the larger challenges associated with GCC. A holistic approach to achieving sustainable communities requires the integration of a regionwide multi-modal transportation system with a significant reduction in the reliance on single-occupant motor vehicles, along with buildings that consume less through design and efficient building materials.

AIR QUALITY

The boundaries of the San Diego Air Basin are contiguous with the political boundaries of San Diego County, including the incorporated cities, and encompass approximately 4,260 square miles. The County is divided by the Laguna Mountain Range with peaks that exceed 6,000 feet, which runs approximately parallel to the coast about 45 miles inland and separates the coastal area from the desert. To the north of the County are the Santa Ana Mountains which run along the Orange County coast, turning east to join with the Laguna Mountains near the San Diego-Orange County border.

Air pollutant emission sources in the San Diego Air Basin are typically grouped into two categories: stationary and mobile sources. Mobile source emissions can be attributed to vehicles and transportation related activities. Stationary sources can be further divided into two major subcategories: point and area sources. Point source emissions originate from manufacturing and industrial processes. Area source emissions are generated from residential heaters, small engines, and other consumer products. They are widely distributed and may have a cumulative effect.

According to readings from the ten monitoring stations operated by San Diego APCD, the County has experienced substantial improvement in ambient ozone levels. The number of days above the Federal one-



hour ozone standard has decreased from 39 days in 1990 to zero days in 2005, while the number of days above the more stringent State standard has decreased from 139 days in 1990 to 16 days in 2005. However, in 2004, the County of San Diego was designated a basic non-attainment area for the new eight-hour ozone standard.

Transportation is California's largest source of carbon dioxide, with passenger vehicles and light duty trucks creating more than 46 percent of total climate change emissions.¹⁰ Toxic air contaminants (TAC) include pollutants known or suspected to cause cancer or other adverse health effects such as respiratory irritation or reproductive effects. The regulatory structure for TAC is different than for criteria pollutants. In San Diego County, motor vehicles and natural sources are key contributors of TAC, emitting more than 27 million pounds; while industrial, commercial, and government facilities emit more than three million pounds of TAC. Since 1989, emissions from industrial and commercial sources reduced by approximately 75 percent. Prioritizing and reducing these emissions further will require a continued, cooperative effort by the public, industry, environmental groups, the California Air Resources Board (ARB), and the California Air Pollution Control District (APCD).

CLIMATE CHANGE

The natural “greenhouse effect” allows the earth to remain warm and sustain life. GHGs trap the sun's heat in the atmosphere, like a blanket, and help determine our climate. The amount of GHGs in the atmosphere is being drastically altered by human activity. The onset of the industrial revolution and the increased consumption of fossil fuels (wood, coal, gasoline, etc.) have substantially increased atmospheric levels of GHGs. Temperatures rise as atmospheric concentrations of GHGs (such as carbon dioxide, methane, nitrous oxide, and hydrofluorocarbons) increase. Over time, this rise in temperatures results in climate change. GHGs have been at the center of the widely contested political, economic, and scientific debate surrounding GCC.

State legislation *California Global Warming Solutions Act of 2006* requires that the State’s global warming emissions be reduced to 1990 levels by year 2020. Through more efficient land use patterns, promoting a variety of modes of transportation, and encouraging new and existing development to implement a variety of energy efficient, energy conserving and renewable technologies and practices, the County is supporting the legislation and providing the mechanism for reduced emissions throughout the region.

Human activities produce GHGs. For example, burning fossil fuels such as oil, coal, and natural gas for energy to power automobiles, homes, and factories put carbon dioxide into the air. While carbon dioxide is the GHG emitted in the largest quantity, other GHGs such as methane, nitrous oxide, and fluorocarbons also contribute to the problem. In California, carbon dioxide accounts for approximately 84 percent of all the GHGs, while methane makes up approximately eight percent, and nitrous oxide and hydrofluorocarbons contribute an additional six percent and two percent, respectively.

The principal sources of carbon dioxide in the atmosphere are fossil fuel combustion and wildland fires. Agriculture is a major source of both methane and nitrous oxide, with additional methane coming primarily from landfills. Cars also emit methane and nitrous oxide. In California, more than half of fossil fuel emissions of carbon dioxide are related in some way to transportation. Fossil fuels account for 98 percent of carbon dioxide emissions, with a two percent contribution from several industrial processes that produce carbon

¹⁰ University of San Diego, September 2008

GOALS AND POLICIES

dioxide as a by-product.¹¹ Buildings contribute to 40 percent of GHGs worldwide, though this is likely to be less in the County due to the rural characteristics of many areas.

Countywide, over a million tons of organic materials are disposed of in landfills annually, with approximately 200,000 tons disposed from the unincorporated County. Currently operating and closed landfills are significant sources of GHG emissions. An estimated 50 million cubic feet of methane and carbon dioxide are released daily from both closed and active County landfills, but other more potentially impactful greenhouse emissions are also released such as volatile organic carbon gases. Emissions result from the decomposition of organic materials in the anaerobic condition present in landfills.

Although methane recovery systems are placed on closed landfills, the majority of the methane generated by anaerobic decomposition occurs either prior to the recovery system's placement or is not captured by this system. Sequestering carbon through composting stabilizes the carbon in the soil materials, resulting in a very slow release of carbon dioxide and effectively prevents the formation of methane, which is 24 times more retentive of atmospheric heat than carbon dioxide. Capturing methane by anaerobic digestion of agricultural manures and burning the gas for the production of electricity on the farm is also very effective in reducing methane emissions.

ENERGY & SUSTAINABLE DEVELOPMENT

San Diego Gas & Electric (SDG&E) is a regulated public utility that provides electric service to 3.4 million customers within a 4,100-square-mile service area that encompasses 25 cities throughout San Diego and southern Orange Counties. In 2003, the three key energy agencies in California—the California Energy Commission (CEC), the California Power Authority (CPA), and the California Public Utilities Commission (CPUC)—came together to adopt an Energy Action Plan that identifies joint goals for California's energy future and sets forth a commitment to achieve these goals through specific actions. In 2008, an Energy Action Plan Status Update was released to incorporate the CEC's 2007 Integrated Energy Policy Report (IEPR), reflecting the passage of Assembly Bill 32, the California Global Warming Act of 2006. The IEPR includes advanced policies, intended to enable California to meet its energy needs in a carbon-constrained world. The report also provides a comprehensive set of recommended actions to achieve these policies. SDG&E's Long Term Resource Plan (LTRP) sets forth a strategy of mixed resources to ensure long-term, reliable, and affordable power in the region, as established by the CPUC. The CPUC regulates energy issues related to supply, delivery, rates, and tariffs for all SDG&E customers in the County.

Population is the primary driver of increasing demand for new housing. From the 1980s to the 1990s, the rate of growth of population diminished, however, electricity consumption grew by 29 percent, and natural gas consumption grew by 36 percent. In 2001, with the electricity crisis, there was a significant drop in per capita consumption of energy. SANDAG has projected that the population of the San Diego region will grow 38 percent by 2030, resulting in nearly four million people. Therefore, the demand for energy will also rise as this new population seeks ways to cool/heat and light their homes and power their cars.

¹¹ AB 1493 (Pavley) Briefing Package prepared by the California Environmental Protection Agency at <http://www.climatechange.ca.gov/background/index.html>



Energy and water are inextricably linked, especially in Southern California, where moving imported water around the State requires large amounts of energy. For example, the California State Water Project uses more energy than any single user. Therefore, reducing water use can save significant amounts of energy.

Energy efficiency, a key to meeting long-term energy needs, implies using less energy to perform the same function. Conserving energy or “doing without”, and using energy more efficiently by doing the same task with less energy, are methods where the County can promote to extend the supply of energy, with minimal to no adverse impacts. Installing lighting that uses less electricity, installing additional insulation to reduce heating and cooling requirements, and switching to a vehicle with better gas mileage are energy efficiency measures. Conservation connotes “doing without” in order to save energy rather than using less energy to do the same thing. For example, turning off lights, turning down the air conditioner, and making fewer vehicle trips are all conservation measures.

Renewable sources include everything from small rooftop solar photovoltaic applications to larger renewable developments such as the Kumeyaay Wind project. While the large projects can supply energy to many thousands of homes, they generally require new transmission lines, which can result in land use and aesthetic impacts, along with an increased risk of wildfires. San Diego County depends on fossil fuels and natural gas to generate a large portion of its energy and power. These resources are non-renewable, and can be polluting. It is likely that non-renewable resources will become a more scarce and costly method of producing energy in the future. Other sources of energy can be derived from technologies such as methane recovery at landfills, roof-top solar panels and solar farms, wind turbines, bio-fuels, and rarer projects such as those that harness geothermal or tidal energy. These technologies are renewable, and can supplement existing non-renewable sources, extending the supply of non-renewable fuels and offering an alternative to polluting energy sources.

GOALS AND POLICIES

GOAL COS-14

Sustainable Land Development. Land use development techniques and patterns that reduce emissions of criteria pollutants and GHGs through minimized transportation and energy demands, while protecting public health and contributing to a more sustainable environment. [See also Goal LU-6]

Policies

COS-14.1 Land Use Development Form. Require that development be located and designed to reduce vehicular trips (and associated air pollution) by utilizing compact regional and community-level development patterns while maintaining community character.

COS-14.2 Villages and Rural Villages. Incorporate a mixture of uses within Villages and Rural Villages that encourage people to walk, bicycle, or use public transit to reduce air pollution and GHG emissions.

COS-14.3 Sustainable Development. Require design of residential subdivisions and nonresidential development through “green” and sustainable land development practices to conserve energy, water, open space, and natural resources.

GOALS AND POLICIES

- COS-14.4 Sustainable Technology and Projects.** Require technologies and projects that contribute to the conservation of resources in a sustainable manner, that are compatible with community character, and that increase the self-sufficiency of individual communities, residents, and businesses.
- COS-14.5 Building Siting and Orientation in Subdivisions.** Require that buildings be located and oriented in new subdivisions and multi-structure non-residential projects to maximize passive solar heating during cool seasons, minimize heat gains during hot periods, enhance natural ventilation, and promote the effective use of daylight.
- COS-14.6 Solar Access for Infill Development.** Require that property setbacks and building massing of new construction located within existing developed areas maintain an envelope that maximizes solar access to the extent feasible.
- COS-14.7 Alternative Energy Sources for Development Projects.** Encourage development projects that use energy recovery, photovoltaic, and wind energy .
- COS-14.8 Minimize Air Pollution.** Minimize land use conflicts that expose people to significant amounts of air pollutants.
- COS-14.9 Significant Producers of Air Pollutants.** Require projects that generate potentially significant levels of air pollutants and/or GHGs such as quarries, landfill operations, or large land development projects to incorporate renewable energy, and the best available control technologies and practices into the project design.

The recovered methane from landfills can be pumped through turbines to generate power. This provides a mutual benefit by generating energy and reducing the amount of CO2 and methane being released from landfills. Other uses for closed facilities include photovoltaic (solar) panels, wind, and microturbines, as appropriate for the area they would be located in.

- COS-14.10 Low-Emission Construction Vehicles and Equipment.** Require County contractors and encourage other developers to use low-emission construction vehicles and equipment to improve air quality and reduce GHG emissions.

- COS-14.11 Native Vegetation.** Require development to minimize the vegetation management of native vegetation while ensuring sufficient clearing is provided for fire control.

Plants use photosynthesis to remove carbon from the atmosphere by incorporating it into biomass and releasing oxygen into the atmosphere.

- COS-14.12 Heat Island Effect.** Require that development be located and designed to minimize the “heat island” effect as appropriate to the location and density of development, incorporating such elements as cool roofs, cool pavements, and strategically placed shade trees.

Heat islands formed as urbanized areas replace natural land cover with pavement, buildings, and other infrastructure, resulting in significantly higher average temperatures than the rural areas surrounding them.

- COS-14.13 Incentives for Sustainable and Low GHG Development.** Provide incentives such as expedited project review and entitlement processing for developers that maximize use of sustainable and low GHG land development practices in exceedance of State and local standards.

Additional goals and policies that relate to land use development are contained in the Land Use Element.



GOAL COS-15

Sustainable Architecture and Buildings. Building design and construction techniques that reduce emissions of criteria pollutants and GHGs, while protecting public health and contributing to a more sustainable environment.



Solar panels in Alpine

Policies

COS-15.1 Design and Construction of New Buildings. Require that new buildings be designed and constructed in accordance with “green building” programs that incorporate techniques and materials that maximize energy efficiency, incorporate the use of sustainable resources and recycled materials, and reduce emissions of GHGs and toxic air contaminants.

Green building programs include the Leadership in Energy and Environmental Design (LEED) standards set by the U.S. Green Building Council, the Green Point Rated system standards set by Builditgreen.org, or equivalent programs.

COS-15.2 Upgrade of Existing Buildings. Promote and, as appropriate, develop standards for the retrofit of existing buildings to incorporate design elements, heating and cooling, water, energy, and other elements that improve their environmental sustainability and reduce GHG.

COS-15.3 Green Building Programs. Require all new County facilities and the renovation and expansion of existing County buildings to meet identified “green building” programs that demonstrate energy efficiency, energy conservation, and renewable technologies.

COS-15.4 Title 24 Energy Standards. Require development to minimize energy impacts from new buildings in accordance with or exceeding Title 24 energy standards.

COS-15.5 Energy Efficiency Audits. Encourage energy conservation and efficiency in existing development through energy efficiency audits and adoption of energy saving measures resulting from the audits.

Energy-efficiency audits include checking, repairing, and readjusting heating, ventilation, and air conditioning, lighting, water heating equipment, insulation, and weather proofing.

COS-15.6 Design and Construction Methods. Require development design and construction methods to minimize impacts to air quality.

GOAL COS-16

Sustainable Mobility. Transportation and mobility systems that contribute to environmental and human sustainability and minimize GHG and other air pollutant emissions.

GOALS AND POLICIES

Policies

- COS-16.1 Alternative Transportation Modes.** Work with SANDAG and local transportation agencies to expand opportunities for transit use. Support the development of alternative transportation modes, as provided by Mobility Element policies.
- COS-16.2 Single-Occupancy Vehicles.** Support transportation management programs that reduce the use of single-occupancy vehicles.
- COS-16.3 Low-Emissions Vehicles and Equipment.** Require County operations and encourage private development to provide incentives (such as priority parking) for the use of low- and zero-emission vehicles and equipment to improve air quality and reduce GHG emissions. [Refer also to Policy M-9.3 (Preferred Parking) in the Mobility Element.]
- COS-16.4 Alternative Fuel Sources.** Explore the potential of developing alternative fuel stations at maintenance yards and other County facilities for the municipal fleet and general public.
- COS-16.5 Transit-Center Development.** Encourage compact development patterns along major transit routes.

The Mobility Element contains additional goals and policies that relate to alternate modes of travel and Transportation Demand Management.

GOAL COS-17

Sustainable Solid Waste Management. Perform solid waste management in a manner that protects natural resources from pollutants while providing sufficient, long term capacity through vigorous reduction, reuse, recycling, and composting programs.

Policies

- COS-17.1 Reduction of Solid Waste Materials.** Reduce greenhouse gas emissions and future landfill capacity needs through reduction, reuse, or recycling of all types of solid waste that is generated. Divert solid waste from landfills in compliance with State law.
- COS-17.2 Construction and Demolition Waste.** Require recycling, reduction and reuse of construction and demolition debris.
- COS-17.3 Landfill Waste Management.** Require landfills to use waste management and disposal techniques and practices to meet all applicable environmental standards.
- COS-17.4 Composting.** Encourage composting throughout the County and minimize the amount of organic materials disposed at landfills.
- COS-17.5 Methane Recapture.** Promote efficient methods for methane recapture in landfills and the use of composting facilities and anaerobic digesters and other sustainable strategies to reduce the release of GHG emissions from waste disposal or management sites and to generate additional energy such as electricity.



On the line at the recycling plant



COS-17.6 Recycling Containers. Require that all new land development projects include space for recycling containers.

COS-17.7 Material Recovery Program. Improve the County’s rate of recycling by expanding solid waste recycling programs for residential and non-residential uses.

COS-17.8 Education. Continue programs to educate industry and the public regarding the need and methods for waste reduction, recycling, and reuse.

GOAL COS-18

Sustainable Energy. Energy systems that reduce consumption of non-renewable resources and reduce GHG and other air pollutant emissions while minimizing impacts to natural resources and communities.

Policies

COS-18.1 Alternate Energy Systems Design. Work with San Diego Gas and Electric and non-utility developers to facilitate the development of alternative energy systems that are located and designed to maintain the character of their setting.

COS-18.2 Energy Generation from Waste. Encourage use of methane sequestration and other sustainable strategies to produce energy and/or reduce GHG emissions from waste disposal or management sites.

COS-18.3 Alternate Energy Systems Impacts. Require alternative energy system operators to properly design and maintain these systems to minimize adverse impacts to the environment.

GOAL COS-19

Sustainable Water Supply. Conservation of limited water supply supporting all uses including urban, rural, commercial, industrial, and agricultural uses.

Policies

COS-19.1 Sustainable Development Practices. Require land development, building design, landscaping, and operational practices that minimize water consumption.

COS-19.2 Recycled Water in New Development. Require the use of recycled water in development wherever feasible. Restrict the use of recycled water when it increases salt loading in reservoirs.

A permit is required from the County Department of Environmental Health for the use of recycled water.¹²

GOAL COS-20

Governance and Administration. Reduction of local GHG emissions contributing to climate change that meet or exceed requirements of the Global Warming Solutions Act of 2006.

¹² CPC Title 24, Part 5, California Administrative Code, Appendix G

GOALS AND POLICIES

Policies

- COS-20.1 Climate Change Action Plan.** Prepare, maintain, and implement a climate change action plan with a baseline inventory of GHG emissions from all sources; GHG emissions reduction targets and deadlines, and enforceable GHG emissions reduction measures.
- COS-20.2 GHG Monitoring and Implementation.** Establish and maintain a program to monitor GHG emissions attributable to development, transportation, infrastructure, and municipal operations and periodically review the effectiveness of and revise existing programs as necessary to achieve GHG emission reduction objectives.
- COS-20.3 Regional Collaboration.** Coordinate air quality planning efforts with federal and State agencies, SANDAG, and other jurisdictions.
- COS-20.4 Public Education.** Continue to provide materials and programs that educate and provide technical assistance to the public, development professionals, schools, and other parties regarding the importance and approaches for sustainable development and reduction of GHG emissions.

Parks and Recreation

CONTEXT

This section identifies how the County of San Diego intends to meet the public need for parks and recreation opportunities. This section also identifies how the County intends to meet open space needs including building out the inter-connected preserve system (refer to Goal COS-1) and meeting General Plan goals and County strategic initiatives. The Mobility Element addresses the regional trail network, which further enhances and augments public recreational opportunities and experiences throughout the San Diego region. It should be noted that there are a wide range of park and recreation opportunities within the San Diego region provided by cities, state entities, federal entities, special districts, school districts, and private non-profit organizations in addition to those provided by the County:

- **Local Parks**—Local parks range in acreage depending on the uses and community or neighborhood they serve, and may be associated with joint use facilities such as schools. Typically, local parks contain recreation areas such as a community center, athletic fields, or facilities of special interest to the community. Smaller local parks may be located within or near town centers, where they can be used as common recreation and gathering areas by the community.



The Valle de Oro Community Park is located to the south of the City of El Cajon and to the east of the city of La Mesa.

- **Regional Parks**—Regional parks serve County residents and visitors and are often larger than 200 acres, although smaller facilities may be appropriate for specific sites of regional interest. Regional parks include a variety of passive and active recreational uses and may include an interpretive center. Most regional parks contain open space,



Most regional parks contain open space, natural resources, cultural resources, and multi-use trails. Most regional parks also contain a local park element by serving as the recreation outlet for a community.

- **Trails**—Trails provide recreational opportunities and allow for enjoyment by the public of parks and open space preserves. Trails provide connection between recreation uses. The County Trail Program is addressed in detail in the Community Trails Master Plan.
- **Recreation Facilities**—Recreational facilities include community centers, teen centers and gymnasiums and are operated and maintained by County staff, volunteers, and service contracts.
- **Preserves**—Preserves include areas of environmental significance and beauty. The dual purpose of preserves is to protect biological, cultural, and historical resources, as well as community character, and to make these resources available for public recreation opportunities. However, typically only minimal improvements such as trails, parking, and restroom facilities are found in preserves. Some preserves may also provide interpretive or educational amenities. Preserves vary in size depending on the resources being protected, and public access can be limited according to the sensitivity of the resources (*see also Goal COS-1 and related policies in the Biological Resources section*).

Open space in the County is provided by cities, the County, State entities, federal entities, special districts, private non-profit organizations, and land owners as part of the development process. The primary objective of open space within the MSCP preserve system is biological conservation. Open space may also be dedicated / preserved to meet other objectives such as preservation of cultural resources or avoidance of steep slopes. However, open space in general allows for the overall vision



Grasslands being preserved as open space in Ramona

of this General Plan, along with the achievement of the County’s strategic initiatives, to be met. Other land uses, such as passive recreational opportunities, may be appropriate within open space areas depending on the sensitivity of the resources being protected. In addition to the Park and Recreation goals and policies concerning Open Space, see also goals and policies under the Biological Resources and Cultural Resources sections in this Element.

Existing sources of funding for park acquisition and development include federal, state, and local funds, donations, and through developer exactions. The Park Lands Dedication Ordinance (PLDO) provides funding for local park active recreation. The PLDO specifies that new subdivisions are required to dedicate active park land or pay a fee in-lieu of dedication, or a combination of both, at a level of three acres per 1,000 population. State law allows for up to five acres per 1,000 population if the current active park acreage exceeds the three-acre level. These fees may also be used to provide recreational services in regional parks for local community residents. The County also participates in agreements that establish partnerships with other public and private agencies (typically with non-profit organizations) to develop, operate, and maintain recreation facilities on land typically owned by those agencies. Existing sources of funding for open space land acquisition that will ultimately build out the MSCP preserve include local, state and federal funds and donations.

GOALS AND POLICIES

GOAL COS-21

Park and Recreational Facilities. Park and recreation facilities that enhance the quality of life and meet the diverse active and passive recreational needs of County residents and visitors, protect natural resources, and foster an awareness of local history, with approximately ten acres of local parks and 15 acres of regional parks provided for every 1,000 persons in the unincorporated County.



The historic Rancho Guajome Adobe, Guajome County Park

Policies

- COS-21.1 Diversity of Users and Services.** Provide parks and recreation facilities that create opportunities for a broad range of recreational experiences to serve user interests.
- COS-21.2 Location of Parks.** Locate new local parks and recreation facilities near other community-oriented public facilities such as schools, libraries, and recreation centers where feasible, so that they may function as the “heart” of a community.
- COS-21.3 Park Design.** Design parks that reflect community character and identity, incorporate local natural and cultural landscapes and features, and consider the surrounding land uses and urban form and cultural and historic resources.
- COS-21.4 Regional Parks.** Require new regional parks to allow for a broad range of recreational activities and preserve special or unique natural or cultural features when present.
- COS-21.5 Connections to Trails and Networks.** Connect public parks to trails and pathways and other pedestrian or bicycle networks where feasible to provide linkages and connectivity between recreational uses.

GOAL COS-22

Park and Recreational Services. High-quality parks and recreation programs that promote the health and well-being of County residents while meeting the needs of a diverse and growing population.

Policies

- COS-22.1 Variety of Recreational Programs.** Provide and promote a variety of high quality active and passive recreation programs that meet the needs of and benefit County residents.



Lakeside Community Center



GOAL COS-23

Recreational Opportunities in Preserves. Acquisition, monitoring, and management of valuable natural and cultural resources where public recreational opportunities are compatible with the preservation of those resources.

Policies

COS-23.1 Public Access. Provide public access to natural and cultural (where allowed) resources through effective planning that conserves the County’s native wildlife, enhances and restores a continuous network of connected natural habitat and protects water resources.

COS-23.2 Regional Coordination. Coordinate the planning, acquisition, protection, development, and management of open space among governmental agencies and private organizations to maximize opportunities to link regional open space lands.

COS-23.3 Public Safety Involvement. Coordinate with public safety agencies to address safety concerns when planning the acquisition and management of open space.



Agua Caliente County Park

GOAL COS-24

Park and Recreation Funding. Adequate funding for acquisition, development, maintenance, management, and operation of parks, recreation facilities, and preserves.

Policies

COS-24.1 Park and Recreation Contributions. Require development to provide fair-share contributions toward parks and recreation facilities and trails consistent with local, state, and federal law.



Patriot Park in 4-S Ranch

COS-24.2 Funding Opportunities. Maximize funding opportunities for the following:

- The acquisition, expansion, and development of parks, recreation facilities, preserves, and trails
- The operation, maintenance, and management of parks, recreation facilities, preserves, and trails



COUNTY OF SAN DIEGO

6th CYCLE HOUSING ELEMENT UPDATE County of San Diego General Plan





6th CYCLE HOUSING ELEMENT UPDATE

County of San Diego General Plan

Prepared for:

County of San Diego

LAND USE AND ENVIRONMENT GROUP

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1 INTRODUCTION

The 5th Cycle Housing Element for the 2013-2021 planning period was adopted by the County of San Diego's Board of Supervisors on April 24, 2013, and subsequently certified by the California Department of Housing and Community Development (State HCD). The County then updated the Housing Element on March 24, 2017, as required by state law.¹

This Housing Element represents the 6th Cycle update covering from April 15, 2021, through April 15, 2029, and retains the goals, policies, and relevant implementation programs previously approved in the 2017 update. Significant revisions have been limited to the Background Report, which contains updated statistics and analyses based on data from the 2010 US Census and the American Community Survey and a revised Sites Inventory to meet the Regional Housing Needs Assessment (RHNA).

¹ The County of San Diego was required to conduct a four-year update to the 2013 Housing Element due to the delayed update of the 4th Cycle Housing Element due in 2009.



2 COMMUNITY OUTREACH

2.1 OVERVIEW

The County of San Diego is required to update the Housing Element of its General Plan no later than August 13, 2021. As a part of the update process, both County procedures and state law (Government Code 65583(C)(7)) require the County to conduct meaningful engagement and obtain public participation of all economic segments of the community.

In order to receive community input on important housing issues facing communities in the Unincorporated Areas, the County made an online survey available from November 2020 to May 11, 2021. Additionally, the County held three online public workshops via Zoom and solicited input from the local development community and affordable housing advocates in small focus groups. Additional focus group meetings with business and development industry representatives, environmental groups representatives, and community-based organizations were held in March and April 2021.

Also, the County hosted six virtual public workshops about the updates to the Safety Element and new Environmental Justice Element. During these workshops, the Housing Element update was presented, providing community members additional opportunity for comment and feedback. The input from all engagement activities was evaluated and integrated into the Draft 6th Cycle Housing Element.

To announce upcoming webinars and other key project milestones, GovDelivery email announcements were sent to registered subscribers. As of February 2021, the County sent multiple GovDelivery announcements to 29,144 people of which 6,749 people opened the emailed announcement. Hard copy flyers were mailed in January 2021 to 9,988 property owners and residents within the County communities announcing outreach events. To reach additional community members, including those without internet access, staff delivered project flyers to 10 community gathering points, such as pharmacies, grocery stores, and coffee shops.

In March 2021, before the release of the Draft Housing Element for public review, email announcements in English, Spanish, and Arabic were delivered to over 29,000 registered email subscribers to announce the public review period and upcoming public webinars.

Two subsequent versions of the Housing Element were also made available for public review. These revisions addressed comments received from stakeholders, a member of the public, and State HCD. The May 27, 2021 version of the Housing Element modified the Site Inventory (Appendix 6-G and Appendix 6-H) and incorporated additional analysis related to fair



housing, housing constraints, non-vacant sites, and small sites. The June 24, 2021 version of the Housing Element included additional fair housing analysis and revisions to the Implementation Plan programs.

Two workshops were conducted with the Board of Supervisors to discuss the Housing Element update. In addition to GovDelivery announcements, these workshops were announced in the County's Health and Human Services Agency (HHS) Instagram and Twitter feed.

2.2 SUMMARY OF ENGAGEMENT ACTIVITIES

SURVEY

County staff published a survey in November 2020 with contextual questions based on whether the respondent was a renter, homeowner, and/or landlord. The questions for homeowners asked about annual expenditures on home repairs or improvements and barriers to accessory dwelling unit (ADU) construction. Questions for renters asked about the type of rental housing and the property's condition/ maintenance. Questions for rental property owners asked about the types of property, annual maintenance expenditures, and the ease of obtaining County permits.

The survey concluded with general questions about the types of housing and housing programs that should be prioritized in the County's Housing Element, along with an open-ended comment form to obtain input on anything that was not asked about in the survey.

As of April 22, 2021, 114 respondents had filled out the survey. Approximately 35 percent live in North County, 19 percent live in East County, 40 percent live in an incorporated City, 3 percent in the Backcountry, and 3 percent outside of San Diego County. About 61 percent of the respondents own their home, 31 percent rent, and the remaining 8 percent neither own nor rent their home.

Many survey respondents expressed that it was difficult to find affordable homes in the unincorporated County and indicated that housing choices were primarily limited by monthly costs. Common themes expressed in the responses indicated preferences to:

- Allow additional housing on a single lot
- Provide additional homeless support services; ensure that information about resources is readily accessible and easy to interpret
- Consider the existing infrastructure conditions and local community input on new housing development



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- Preserve existing parks and open space; focus development in existing community nodes
- Provide housing options that suit the needs of young adults
- Incentivize the provision of lower-income and moderate-income units
- Limit new housing and ADU construction

FOCUS GROUP MEETINGS

In November 2020, the County held two “focus group” meetings with members of the San Diego development community and affordable housing advocates. At each meeting, members of the County team gave a brief presentation discussing the general scope and extent of the Housing Element Update and major components of the effort: the adequate sites inventory, housing programs, and housing constraints. The County then facilitated a guided discussion and obtained input about community housing needs, development constraints, and potential policy changes/programs to improve housing access in the unincorporated areas.

Housing Advocates

Housing advocates from the San Diego Housing Federation and Interfaith Community Services attended the focus group meeting. Primary topics of the discussion included affordable housing financing, HCDS Voucher allocation, RHNA inventory site selection, and recent changes to state law. The advocates expressed support for continuing the local gap financing program through the HOME partnership and discussed the value and importance of this funding source for affordable housing projects. The advocates also discussed the County’s administration of HUD vouchers and that the vouchers should also be prioritized in incorporated cities, rather than targeted towards unincorporated areas of the County. The group discussed some of the challenges associated with combining and managing different affordable housing funding sources, including the application requirements for County funding. Finally, the group discussed RHNA site selection. The advocates noted that the County would need to consider AFFH and the Climate Action Plan (CAP) when choosing sites. The advocates encouraged locating sites for lower income households near transit, jobs, and other amenities.

Housing Development Community

An economist, market analyst and consultant, and strategic advisor to the real estate development community from London Moeder Associates participated in the focus group meeting. The group discussed regional development patterns, development constraints, and inclusionary housing. The representative stated that complying with the California Environmental Quality Act (CEQA) and the CAP are large burdens and constraints for developers in the



unincorporated County. He also believes additional lands outside of the currently designated “Villages” should be allowed higher residential densities, as the existing zoning and General Plan create significant constraints and make the construction of new housing financially difficult. The representative suggested the designation of a “transportation corridor” along the I-15, which could allow for higher density housing with access to regional transit and job centers. He also stated that requiring high percentages of a project for lower income households (e.g., 20 percent of the total units) makes it difficult for smaller housing projects to be financially viable, and that only larger developments could accommodate these requirements. The meeting concluded with the group discussing the increase of remote work, and that future housing locations and desired amenities have and may permanently change in response to telecommuting and COVID-19.

Additional Focus Group Meetings

In March and April 2021, the County conducted additional focus group meetings with business development and real estate organizations, environmental organizations, and community-based organizations. Five meetings were conducted with these groups. During these meetings, County staff discussed the housing element components and requirements, goals and policies, implementation program, as well as options for the Housing Element Sites Inventory.

The Business Development and Real Estate Interest Group meeting included members of the Pacific Southwest Realtors Association, San Diego Regional Economic Development Corporation, San Diego Regional Chamber of Commerce, and the San Diego Building Owners and Managers Association. The Environmental Interest Group focus meeting included members of the Nature Conservancy, Sunrise Movement, Tree San Diego, Say San Diego, American Lung Association, and the San Diego Food Assistance Alliance. Finally, three Community-Based Focus Groups were formed with organizations located in the northern region of the County, eastern region of the County, and the southern region of the County. The Lakeside Community Focus Group, Spring Valley Community Focus Group, and North County Community Focus Group included members of local organizations active in the community, including the Spring Valley Community Alliance, Heaven’s Windows, the El Cajon and Lemon Grove Collaboratives, and the Education Compact of Escondido.

- 3/16/2021 – Business Development and Real Estate Interest Group
- 3/16/2021 – Environmental Interest Group
- 3/16/2021 – North County Community Focus Group
- 3/19/2021 – Spring Valley Community Focus Group



- 4/01/2021 – Lakeside Community Focus Group

WORKSHOPS

The project team conducted three public workshops about the Housing Element Update. Due to the COVID-19 pandemic, all of the workshops were held remotely via Zoom webinar. The County also offered translation services in Spanish and Arabic at the public webinars per public request. Request for translation services was received through the webinar registration or by comments received during the webinars. Additionally, the County provided Spanish and Arabic translations for the March 2021 webinar announcements and project flyer.

Participants were allowed to provide comments and questions through the Q&A tool, as well as complete interactive polls. Most webinar attendees lived and/or owned single-family homes in North or East County, or in an incorporated City. General comments by attendees included support for subsidized sanitary sewer connections and information about certain environmental constraints, such as fire risk, slopes, and floodplains. Commenters indicated a desire that new housing be consistent with the County's CAP, and that new projects should be compatible with the existing community.

COMMUNITY PLANNING AND SPONSOR GROUPS

Community interests within the unincorporated County are represented by Community Planning Groups (CPG) and Community Sponsor Groups (CSG). CPG members are elected while CSG members are appointed. The purpose of these groups is to advise County Planning & Development Services, Planning Commission, and Board of Supervisors on land use-related issues.

The 26 CPG/CSGs represent a broad cross section of the community and are established for the North County communities of Fallbrook, Rainbow, San Dieguito, and Valley Center; the East County communities of Alpine, Crest/Dehesa, Jamul/Dulzura, Lakeside, Ramona, Spring Valley, Sweetwater, and Valle de Oro; and the backcountry communities of Boulevard, Campo/Lake Morena, Descanso, Julian, Pine Valley, and Potrero. CSGs serve the North County communities of Bonsall, Hidden Meadows, Pala-Pauma, and Twin Oaks Valley, along with the backcountry communities of Borrego Springs, Cuyamaca, Jacumba, and Tecate.

Generally, CPG and CSG members represent a broad cross section of the community. Most of the groups consist of at least 15 members. Many CPGs and CSGs have subcommittees that are tasked with addressing housing-related issues. The CPGs and CSGs hold regularly scheduled public meetings which are advertised in local media (community newspapers) and on CPG/CSG websites (most CPGs and CSGs have websites hosted by the County of San Diego). In addition,



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meeting agendas and notices are posted on bulletin boards in community centers where meetings are held. Also, group rosters, meeting agendas, and minutes are posted on the County's website at <http://www.sdcountry.ca.gov/pds/CommunityGroups.html>.

These venues allow the County to provide outreach to a broad base of community members, including very low-, low- and moderate-income residents and those with special needs. Backcountry communities, in particular, have a high percentage of very low- and low-income families.

The Housing Element Update was presented during the November 7, 2020, and the March 13, 2021, Quarterly Training for the Community Planning and Sponsor Groups. During these meetings, County staff explained the purpose and scope of this Housing Element Update, and offered to provide additional presentations to each of the CPG/CSG during their monthly community meetings.

The County presented the Housing Element Update during the following CSG/CPG monthly meetings:

- 12/1/2020 – Bonsall CPG
- 1/5/2021 – Sweetwater CPG
- 1/7/2021 – Boulevard CPG
- 1/11/2021 – Valley Center CPG
- 1/25/2021 – Campo/Lake Morena CPG
- 2/25/2021 – Hidden Meadows CPG
- 3/16/2021 – Jacumba CSG
- 3/24/2021 – Twin Oaks Valley CPG
- 3/25/2021 – Hidden Meadows CPG
- 3/30/2021 – Spring Valley CPG
- 4/1/2021 – Ramona CPG
- 4/8/2021 – San Dieguito CPG
- 4/19/2021 – Fallbrook CPG
- 5/5/2021 – Lakeside CPG



OTHER ENGAGEMENT ACTIVITIES

Between fall 2020 and spring 2021, County staff attended several stakeholder group meetings. These meetings provided an opportunity for staff to engage in detailed discussions on how the Housing Element complies with state requirements and aligns with other General Plan Elements and County programs and services, and to hear from stakeholders and the community about their preferences and concerns regarding the Housing Element Sites Inventory.

- 11/19/2020 – Land Development Technical Working Group
- 1/19/2021 – San Diego Regional Chamber
- 11/20/2020 – Business Industry Association (BIA)
- 12/3/2020 – New Green Deal Alliance
- 12/17/2020 – San Diego Association of Realtors (SDAR)
- 1/19/2021 – San Diego Regional Chamber
- 1/21/2021 – Wildlife Habitat Collation
- 2/19/2021 – Building Industry Association (BIA)
- 2/19/2021 – Quarterly meeting with the Environmental Groups
- 2/19/2021 – HHSA’s Unincorporated Rural Communities Telebriefing
- 3/10/2021 – Lemon Grove Collaborative
- 3/11/2021 – Wildlife Agencies
- 4/14/2021 – Pacific Southwest Association of Realtors (PSAR)
- 5/4/2021 – Business for Good
- 5/13/2021 – Business Industry Association (BIA)
- 5/21/2021 – Quarterly meeting with the Environmental Groups
- 5/26/2021 – Age Well San Diego



2.3 OUTCOMES/POLICY IMPLICATIONS

KEY THEMES FROM ALL OUTREACH

- New housing should be planned near existing services and transit, and away from environmental constraints.
- The County should encourage a variety of housing types, including both multi-family and single-family unit options.
- The cost of homes is a significant constraint for housing choice in the unincorporated County.
- Many respondents felt that families, young adults, and persons experiencing homelessness face the greatest need for housing and related services.
- Facilitation of development of low- and moderate-income housing should be prioritized.
- Ensure that development applications are reviewed and permitted in a timely manner.

KEY POLICY IMPLICATIONS

In response to comments received during outreach efforts, the Housing Element was updated to reflect the input. The following actions were taken to incorporate the comments received as part of the public outreach:

Input Received: Comments provided by members of the public, as well as a letter received from the Climate Action Campaign (CAC), requested that housing be located within vehicle miles traveled (VMT) efficient areas, and outside environmentally constrained areas.

- **Actions Taken:** Considerations included fire and other environmental risks during the development of the Sites Inventory. Units located within very high fire hazard risk areas were screened out from the Sites Inventory. Additional actions taken included removing units located within floodways, steep slopes, and sensitive habitats. Regarding VMT, sites located outside VMT efficient areas that would be eligible for the By-Right Approval for Projects with 20 Percent Affordable Housing (details on this program are provided below) were also removed from the Sites Inventory. This will ensure that non-VMT efficient projects continue to provide mitigation for VMT impacts.

Input Received: Community members and the CAC requested that housing be located close to services, infrastructure, and amenities.



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- **Actions Taken:** All sites included in the Housing Element Sites Inventory are within the County Water Authority (CWA) boundary and have access to water and sewer systems. Also, all sites have access to transit and dry utilities (cable, internet). Other actions included identifying sites within high and moderate resource areas based on characteristics linked to critical life outcomes, such as educational attainment, earnings from employment, and economic mobility.

Input Received: Community members and the CAC requested that the County incentivize the provision of lower-income and moderate-income units and housing that meets the needs of special populations.

- **Actions Taken:** The Housing Element included programs intended to incentivize the development of affordable housing. The Expedited Permit Processing for Affordable Housing Projects will ensure that the projects that include an affordable housing component are given priority during the development process. Also, the development of a Low to Moderate-Income Inclusionary Ordinance will help increase affordable housing development. Finally, programs were included to continue incentivizing ADU development, including reducing permitting costs and developing an ADU Subsidy Program for special needs populations.

Input Received: The San Diego Housing Federation (SDHF) requested that the County consider implementing new state housing laws, including Density Bonus, and other bills focused on affordable housing. In addition, the SDHF discussed the need for local gap financing of affordable housing, and the need for the County to implement policies intended to provide diversity of building types and multifamily development.

- **Actions Taken:** The County is already implementing new state law and has updated all of its forms to be consistent with new Density Bonus, Accessory Dwelling Units, and Supportive Housing legislation. In addition, by the end of 2022, the County's Zoning Ordinance will be updated to reflect all recent changes to the state's housing laws. The Housing Element Implementation Plan includes several programs to ensure that a range of building types can be achieved in village areas. The Zoning Ordinance Cleanup program will review development designators to ensure that the densities established under the General Plan can be achieved and that designators facilitate development at the maximum density allowed under the General Plan. Finally, on April 6, 2021, the Board of Supervisors referred to Budget for consideration of the establishment of an additional \$25 million appropriation in order to expand funding for the Innovative Housing Trust Fund, which will provide local gap financing for the development of affordable housing.



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Input Received: The Boulevard Community Planning Group provided a comment letter expressing concerns regarding dilapidated housing and requested that resources be provided to facilitate rehabilitation and repairs.

- **Actions Taken:** The Housing Element will continue the existing Home Repair Program to assist homeowners in repairing and rehabilitating their homes. Also, the Proactive Housing Rehabilitation Program will help connect and inform homeowners of existing programs and resources available for housing rehabilitation and repair.

Input Received: Comments were received from the public regarding the County's Accessory Dwelling Unit (ADU) process identifying constraints to the process for ADUs that require Septic Layout approval.

- **Actions Taken:** The Housing Element included the Accessory Dwelling Unit (ADU) Efficiency Improvements program, which will investigate opportunities to create efficiencies during the review of ADU applications, such as increasing coordination between departments, preparing informational handouts, and setting up a consultation process for applicants that are on septic.

Input Received: Comments were received from the BIA and developers requesting that the County review regulatory requirements to facilitate housing development, such as expanding opportunities for ministerial review (e.g., only requiring a building permit as opposed to discretionary permit).

- **Actions Taken:** The Housing Element included programs to facilitate housing development and streamline the review of multifamily projects. The By-Right Approval for Projects with 20 Percent Affordable Housing will allow affordable housing projects that meet specific criteria to be developed ministerially. The Objective Standards Program will facilitate the development of housing while ensuring that projects deliver a high-quality design. The Zoning Ordinance Cleanups of Building Types and Development Designators will also evaluate the County's Zoning Ordinance to ensure that regulations are consistent with the densities established by the General Plan and are not acting as barriers to housing development.

Input Received: Comments were received from the BIA expressing concerns regarding the County's implementation of SB 743 through the VMT guidelines. Comments focused on the impacts that VMT mitigation may pose to the costs to develop housing.

- **Actions Taken:** County staff held monthly meetings with the BIA to discuss the development of the Housing Element and address any concerns. Meetings were held on



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June 30, 2021, April 16, 2021, May 13, 2021, and June 10, 2021. During these meetings, the County discussed concerns regarding the implementation of SB 743 and potential costs associated with VMT mitigation. On May 19, 2021, the Board of Supervisors directed staff to explore opportunities to address constraints associated with VMT mitigation requirements. The Board directed staff to explore 13 options and return to the Board for consideration by 2022. These actions were incorporated under the Addressing VMT Constraints program, which will be developed in collaboration with the BIA, the development industry, and other stakeholders.