

CITY OF AGOURA HILLS
HOUSING ELEMENT

Final
Initial Study and Negative Declaration



City of Agoura Hills

October 2008

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Final Initial Study and Negative Declaration

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October 2008

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Figure 1 – Regional Location

Figure 2 – Vacant Residential Sites

INTRODUCTION

This Initial Study and Negative Declaration (IS/ND) addresses the potential environmental effects resulting from the City of Agoura Hills 2008-2014 Housing Element, one of the seven State-mandated elements of the City's General Plan. The Housing Element identifies and assesses existing and projected housing needs; provides an inventory of constraints and resources relevant to meeting these needs; and sets forth the City's housing program strategy for the 2008-2014 period.

LEGAL AUTHORITY AND FINDINGS

This Initial Study/ Negative Declaration has been prepared in accordance with the CEQA Guidelines and relevant provisions of the California Environmental Quality Act (CEQA) of 1970, as amended.

Initial Study. Section 15063(c) of the CEQA Guidelines defines an Initial Study as the proper preliminary method of analyzing the potential environmental consequences of a project. The purposes of the Initial Study are:

- (1) To provide the Lead Agency with the necessary information to decide whether to prepare an Environmental Impact Report (EIR) or a Mitigated Negative Declaration (MND);
- (2) To enable the Lead Agency to modify a project, mitigating adverse impacts, thus avoiding the need to prepare an EIR; and
- (3) To provide sufficient technical analysis of the environmental effects of a project to permit a judgment based on the record as a whole, that the environmental effects of a project have been adequately mitigated.

Negative Declaration or Mitigated Negative Declaration. Section 15070 of the CEQA Guidelines states that a public agency shall prepare a Negative Declaration or Mitigated Negative Declaration for a project subject to CEQA when:

- (a) The Initial Study shows that there is no substantial evidence, in light of the whole record before the agency, that the project may have a significant effect on the environment; or
- (b) The Initial Study identifies potentially significant effects but:
 1. Revisions in the project plans or proposals made by, or agreed to by, the applicant before a proposed Mitigated Negative Declaration and Initial Study are released for public review would avoid the effects or mitigate the effects to a point where clearly no significant effects would occur; and
 2. There is no substantial evidence, in light of the whole record before the agency, that the project as revised may have a significant effect on the environment.

An IS/ND may be used to satisfy the requirements of CEQA when the physical effects of the proposed project are anticipated to have no significant unmitigable effects on the environment. As discussed further in subsequent sections of this document, implementation of the proposed project would not result in any significant effects on the environment.

IMPACT ANALYSIS AND SIGNIFICANCE CLASSIFICATION

The following sections of this IS/ND provide discussions of the possible environmental effects of the proposed project for specific issue areas that have been identified in the CEQA Initial Study Checklist. For each issue area, potential effects are discussed and evaluated.

A "significant effect" is defined by Section 15382 of the CEQA Guidelines as "a substantial, or potentially substantial, adverse change in any of the physical conditions within the area affected by a project, including land, air, water, minerals, flora, fauna, ambient noise, and objects of historic or aesthetic significance." According to the CEQA Guidelines, "an economic or social change by itself shall not be considered a significant effect on the environment, but may be considered in determining whether the physical change is significant."

The following information applies to the Initial Study Checklist:

- (1) A brief explanation is required for all answers except "No Impact" answers that are adequately supported by the information sources a lead agency cites in the parentheses following each question. A "No Impact" answer is adequately supported if the referenced information sources show that the impact simply does not apply to projects like the one involved (e.g., the project falls outside a fault rupture zone). A "No Impact" answer should be explained where it is based on project-specific factors as well as general standards (e.g., the project will not expose sensitive receptors to pollutants, based on a project-specific screening analysis).
- (2) All answers must take account of the whole action involved, including off site as well as on site, cumulative as well as project-level, indirect as well as direct, and construction as well as operational impacts.
- (3) Once the lead agency has determined that a particular physical impact may occur, then the checklist answers must indicate whether the impact is potentially significant, less than significant with mitigation, or less than significant. "Potentially Significant Impact" is appropriate if there is substantial evidence that an effect may be significant. If there are one or more "Potentially Significant Impact" entries when the determination is made, and EIR is required.
- (4) "Negative Declaration: Less Than Significant With Mitigation Incorporated" applies where the incorporation of mitigation measures has reduced an effect from "Potentially Significant Impact" to a "Less Than Significant Impact." The lead agency must describe the mitigation measures, and briefly explain how they reduce the effect to a less than significant level.
- (5) Earlier analyses may be used where, pursuant to the tiering, Program EIR, or other CEQA process, an effect has been adequately analyzed in an earlier EIR or negative declaration. Section 15063(c)(3)(D) In this case, a brief discussion should identify the following:
 - a) Earlier Analysis Used. Identify and state where they are available for review.
- (6) Impacts Adequately Addressed. Identify which effects from the above checklist were within the scope of and adequately analyzed in an earlier document pursuant to applicable legal standards, and state whether such effects were addressed by mitigation measures based on the earlier analysis.
 - (a) Mitigation Measures. For effects that are "Less than Significant with Mitigation Measures Incorporated," describe the mitigation measures that were incorporated or refined from the earlier document and the extent to which they address site-specific conditions for the project.
 - (b) Lead agencies are encouraged to incorporate into the checklist references to information sources for potential impacts (e.g., general plans, zoning ordinances). Reference to a previously prepared or outside document should, where appropriate, include a reference to the page or pages where the statement is substantiated.
- (7) Supporting Information Sources: A source list should be attached, and other sources used or individuals contacted should be cited in the discussion.
- (8) This is only a suggested form, and lead agencies are free to use different formats; however, lead agencies should normally address the questions from this checklist that are relevant to a project's environmental effects in whatever format is selected.
- (9) The explanation of each issue should identify:
 - (a) The significance criteria or threshold, if any, used to evaluate each question; and
 - (b) The mitigation measure identified, if any, to reduce the impact to less than significant.

INITIAL STUDY CHECKLIST

Project Title: City of Agoura Hills 2008-2014 Housing Element

Lead Agency Name and Address: City of Agoura Hills
30001 Ladyface Court
Agoura Hills, California 91301

Contact Person and Phone Number: Allison Cook – Senior Planner, City of Agoura Hills
(818) 597-7310

Project Location: Citywide (Figure 1)

Project Sponsor's Name and Address: City of Agoura Hills
30001 Ladyface Court
Agoura Hills, CA 93101

General Plan and Zoning Designations: All designations Citywide

Project Description: The Housing Element is one of the seven State-mandated elements of the City's General Plan and must be updated pursuant to California Government Code Section 65588 for the 2008-2014 planning period. While Agoura Hills is in the midst of a comprehensive update of its General Plan, due to the more immediate timeline requirements for the Housing Element, this element has been prepared in advance of the balance of the General Plan, which is anticipated to be completed in 2009.

The Housing Element identifies and assesses projected housing needs and provides an inventory of constraints and resources relevant to meeting these needs. Components of the Housing Element include: a housing needs assessment with population and household characteristics; identification of constraints to providing housing; an inventory of available sites for the provision of housing for all economic segments of the community; and a statement of goals, policies and programs for meeting the City's housing needs. The Element's goals focus on:

- 1) Conserving and improving the condition of the existing housing stock;
- 2) Assisting in the development of affordable housing;
- 3) Providing adequate sites to achieve a diversity of housing;
- 4) Removing governmental constraints, as necessary; and
- 5) Promoting equal housing opportunity.

Agoura Hills has an identified regional housing growth need, or "regional housing needs assessment" (RHNA) of 109 units for the 2008-2014 planning period. The Housing Element illustrates that under current General Plan and zoning designations, as well as the Agoura Village Specific Plan (AVSP), the City has an estimated additional capacity for 357 residential units that can potentially be developed on vacant and underutilized sites that allow residential uses. Therefore, Agoura Hills has sufficient capacity to accommodate the overall RHNA allocation, and there is no need to change any General Plan or zoning designations to accommodate its housing growth needs. Agoura Hills plans to fulfill its RHNA allocation through a combination of development on vacant residentially zoned sites (Figure 2), and on vacant and underdeveloped mixed-use sites within the AVSP.

Analysis in this document is limited to the review of potential environmental impacts resulting from the adoption of the Housing Element, including the Element's consistency with the City's existing General Plan. The Housing Element is a policy document, and no specific development proposal is part of the Element. The environmental effects of any future development projects would need to undergo separate and specific CEQA review as they are proposed, beyond this current document.

Surrounding Land Uses: Citywide

Site Description and Environmental Setting: Citywide

Other Public Agencies Whose Approval Is Required: None

Entitlements: Adoption of the Housing Element.

ENVIRONMENTAL FACTORS AFFECTED

The environmental factors checked below would be potentially affected by this project, involving at least one impact that could be lessened to a level of insignificance through incorporation of mitigation.


- | | | |
|--|--|---|
| <input type="checkbox"/> Aesthetics | <input type="checkbox"/> Air Quality | <input type="checkbox"/> Biological Resources |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Cultural Resources | <input type="checkbox"/> Geology/Soils | <input type="checkbox"/> Hazards/Hazardous Materials |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Hydrology/Water Quality | <input type="checkbox"/> Noise | <input type="checkbox"/> Land Use/Planning |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Public Services | <input type="checkbox"/> Population/Housing | <input type="checkbox"/> Recreation |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Transportation/Traffic | <input type="checkbox"/> Utilities and Service Systems | <input type="checkbox"/> Mandatory Findings of Significance |

DETERMINATION

On the basis of this initial evaluation:

I find that the proposed project COULD NOT have a significant effect on the environment, and a NEGATIVE DECLARATION will be prepared.	X
I find that although the proposed project could have a significant effect on the environment, there will not be a significant effect in this case because revisions in the project have been made by or agreed to by the project proponent. A MITIGATED NEGATIVE DECLARATION will be prepared.	
I find that the proposed project MAY have a significant effect on the environment, and an ENVIRONMENTAL IMPACT REPORT is required.	
I find that the proposed project MAY have a "potential significant impact" or "potentially significant unless mitigated" impact on the environment, but at least one effect (1) has been adequately analyzed in an earlier document pursuant to applicable legal standards, and (2) has been addressed by mitigation measures based on the earlier analysis as described on attached sheets. An ENVIRONMENTAL IMPACT REPORT is required, but it must analyze only the effects that remain to be addressed.	
I find that although the proposed project could have a significant effect on the environment, because all potentially significant effects (a) have been analyzed in an earlier EIR or NEGATIVE DECLARATION pursuant to applicable standards and (b) have been avoided or mitigated pursuant to an earlier EIR or NEGATIVE DECLARATION , including revisions or mitigation measures that are imposed upon the proposed project, nothing further is required.	

Report Preparer:



 Allison Cook
 Senior Planner
 City of Agoura Hills

October 1, 2008

 Date

EVALUATION OF ENVIRONMENTAL IMPACTS

Issues and Supporting Information	Potentially Significant Impact	Less Than Significant Impact with Mitigation Measures	Less Than Significant Impact	No Impact
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(1) LAND USE AND PLANNING. Would the project:

a) Physically divide an established community?				X
b) Conflict with an applicable land use plan, policy or regulation of an agency with jurisdiction over the project (including, but not limited to the general plan, specific plan, local coastal program, or zoning ordinance) adopted for the purpose of avoiding or mitigating an environmental effect?				X
c) Conflict with any applicable habitat conservation plan or natural communities conservation plan?				X

Discussion:

- a) The City of Agoura Hills is essentially a built out community with well-established residential neighborhoods. A large portion of the remaining vacant lands are restricted to open space uses. As described in Section IV of the Housing Element, the City plans on fulfilling its RHNA with a variety of methods, including: vacant sites located in residential zones; vacant sites located within the Open Space-Restricted zone (located primarily in Old Agoura and Indian Hills), which allows limited residential use; and vacant and partially developed commercial use sites located within the Agoura Village Specific Plan area where mixed uses are allowed. Adoption of the Housing Element would not physically divide an established community since the Element does not propose any land use changes or rezoning of land for residential uses, nor does it involve any specific development proposal. The Housing Element includes policies aimed at maintaining and enhancing the quality of existing housing and neighborhoods (refer to Housing Element Goal 1 and associated policies). Any future proposal for residential development would be analyzed specifically pursuant to CEQA, separate from this Negative Declaration (ND). Therefore, the project would result in **no impact**.
- b) The updated Housing Element is consistent with the other elements of Agoura Hills' existing General Plan as well as the City's Municipal Code. In particular, the Element supports many of the goals and policies in the Land Use Element, including Policy 1.1 (full range of housing styles, locations and densities) and Goal 2 (maintain and enhance community identity and development quality). The City is currently undergoing a comprehensive update of its General Plan, with the underlying theme to create a more sustainable community for existing and future residents, including mixed-use developments and green building techniques. This theme of sustainability has also been integrated within the updated Housing Element. Should the General Plan update result in any changes in residential land use or other changes impacting the Housing Element, the City would amend the Housing Element to provide consistency. Therefore, there would be **no impact** from adoption of the Housing Element.
- c) Agoura Hills is not part of any habitat conservation plans or natural communities conservation plans nor is it in the vicinity of such plans and so the project would result in **no impact**.

Issues and Supporting Information	Potentially Significant Impact	Less Than Significant Impact with Mitigation Measures	Less Than Significant Impact	No Impact
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(2) **BIOLOGICAL RESOURCES.** Would the project:

a) Have a substantial adverse effect, either directly or through habitat modifications, on any species identified as a candidate, sensitive, or special status species in local or regional plans, policies, or regulations, or by the California Department of Fish and Game or U. S. Fish and Wildlife Service?				X
b) Have a substantially adverse effect on any riparian habitat or other sensitive natural community identified in local or regional plans, policies, regulations or by the California Department of Fish and Game or U. S. Fish and Wildlife Service?				X
c) Have a substantial adverse effect on federally protected wetlands as defined by Section 404 of the Clean Water Act (including, but not limited to, marsh, vernal pool, coastal, etc.) through direct removal, filling, hydrological interruption, or other means?				X
d) Interfere substantially with the movement of any resident or migratory fish or wildlife species or with established native resident migratory wildlife corridors, or impede the use of native wildlife nursery sites?				X
e) Conflict with any local policies or ordinances protecting biological resources, such as a tree preservation policy or ordinance?				X
f) Conflict with the provisions of an adopted Habitat Conservation Plan, Natural Conservation Community Plan, other approved local, regional, or state habitat conservation plan?				X
g) Result in damage to, loss of, or removal of native oak trees or other locally identified specimen trees of significance?				X

Discussion:

- a) – c) As described in Agoura Hills' 1992 General Plan Master Environmental Assessment (MEA) developed in support of the General Plan, the City contains several sensitive plant communities, plant species and animal species. Any future residential projects proposed would be analyzed separately under CEQA and specific impacts to the sites identified and any needed mitigation measures or conditions of approval would be identified at that time. Therefore, there would be **no impact**.
- d) Please see the discussion in Items a) – c) above. The 1992 General Plan MEA identifies important wildlife corridors in Agoura Hills, located in the southeastern portion of the City (please refer to MEA, Figure 6-2). Because the Housing Element is not a physical development, it does not have the potential to interfere with the movement of fish or wildlife. Any future residential projects would be considered separate projects under CEQA and would undergo individual environmental review as they are proposed. Any needed mitigation measures or conditions of approval would be identified at that time. Therefore, there would be **no impact**.
- e), g) Oak trees are considered an important resource within Agoura Hills, and are protected by the City's Oak Tree Preservation Ordinance. As described above, the Housing Element is a policy document and any future proposal to develop the residential sites discussed in the Element would be a separate project under

CEQA and would undergo individual environmental review for potential oak tree impacts on a site-specific basis. Any needed mitigation measures or conditions of approval would be identified at that time, including compliance with the City's Oak Tree Preservation Ordinance and applicable mitigation measures. Therefore, there would be **no impact**.

- f) There are no Habitat Conservation Plans (HCPs), Natural Communities Conservation Plans (NCCPs) or other conservation plans in the City; therefore, **no impact** would occur.

Issues and Supporting Information	Potentially Significant Impact	Less Than Significant Impact with Mitigation Measures	Less Than Significant Impact	No Impact
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(3) **AIR QUALITY.** Where available, the significance criteria established by the applicable air quality management or air pollution control district may be relied upon to make the following determinations. Would the project:

a) Conflict with or obstruct implementation of the applicable air quality plan?				x
b) Violate any air quality standard or contribute substantially to an existing or projected air quality violation?				x
c) Result in a cumulatively considerable net increase of any criteria pollutant for which the project region is in non-attainment under an applicable federal or state ambient air quality standard (including releasing emissions which exceed quantitative thresholds for ozone precursors)?				x
d) Expose sensitive receptors to substantial pollutant concentrations?				x
e) Create objectionable odors affecting a substantial number of people?				x

Discussion:

a)-e) The City of Agoura Hills is located within the South Coast Air Basin, and is governed by the South Coast Air Quality Management District (SCAQMD). The City has many efforts underway to help reduce air quality pollution in the City, including greenhouse gases. The City is currently undergoing a comprehensive update of its General Plan. A key theme that permeates the General Plan is to create a more sustainable community for existing and future residents. The Plan addresses sustainable land use, sustainable site design and development, and "green" buildings that reduce energy and water consumption, toxic and chemical pollution and waste. As part of the implementation of the General Plan, Agoura Hills anticipates adopting a local green building program. Policy 2.10 in the Housing Element calls for the City to "Encourage use of sustainable and green building design in new and existing housing." Program 11 – Sustainability and Green Building – calls for the City to adopt a local green building program, and to develop educational materials on green building and provide to homeowners and builders in Agoura Hills.

Mixed-use development is one of the strategies identified in the Housing Element to meet the City's residential growth needs (refer to Section IV, Housing Resources, and Policies 3.2 and 3.3). This type of development is seen as a potential way to reduce air pollution, as it places people near jobs, retail and other services and promotes the use of alternative transportation and pedestrian linkages.

Through both the General Plan Update efforts described above, currently underway, Policy 2.10 and Program 11 of the Housing Element, and the use of mixed use development as a development strategy in the Housing Element, the Housing Element would be compatible with efforts to reduce greenhouse gas emissions per AB 32 (California Global Warming Solutions Act of 2006); SB 97 (2007), which amends the CEQA statute regarding greenhouse gas emissions; and the Governor's Executive Order S-3-05 regarding climate change.

No land use changes or rezoning are required for the City to meet its RHNA allocation. The Housing Element is a policy document and does not include any particular development proposal. Any future proposal to develop the residential sites discussed in the Element would be considered a separate project under CEQA and air quality and greenhouse gas impacts assessed on a site-specific basis. Any needed mitigation measures or conditions of approval related to air quality and greenhouse gases would be identified at that time, including applicable SCAQMD standards and climate change analysis standards in effect at that time. Therefore, adoption of the Housing Element would have **no impact** on air quality and greenhouse gas emissions.

Issues and Supporting Information	Potentially Significant Impact	Less Than Significant Impact with Mitigation Measures	Less Than Significant Impact	No Impact
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(4) CULTURAL RESOURCES. Would the project:

a) Cause a substantial adverse change in the significance of a historical resource as defined in Section 15064.5?				x
b) Cause a substantial adverse change in the significance of an archaeological resource pursuant to Section 15064.5?				x
c) Directly or indirectly destroy a unique paleontological resource or site, or unique geologic feature?				x
d) Disturb any human remains, including those interred outside of formal cemeteries?				x
e) Result in physical disruption of an identified sacred place or other ethnographically documented location of significance to native Californians?				x

Discussion:

- a)-e) The Agoura Hills' 1992 General Plan Master Environmental Assessment (MEA) describes the prehistory, archaeological, ethnographic and historical background of the city. The Reyes Adobe is the principal historic site of interest (General Plan MEA pg. 19-6).

The Housing Element is a policy document and no physical development is proposed at this time. Any future proposal to develop the residential sites discussed in the Element would be a separate project under CEQA and would undergo individual environmental review. This includes evaluating any potential impacts to historical, archaeological or paleontological resources, human remains or identified sacred places. Any needed mitigation measures or conditions of approval would be identified at that time. Therefore, **no impact** would occur to cultural resources.

Issues and Supporting Information	Potentially Significant Impact	Less Than Significant Impact with Mitigation Measures	Less Than Significant Impact	No Impact
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(5) GEOLOGY AND SOILS. Would the project:

a) Expose people or structures to potential substantial adverse effects, including the risk of loss, injury or death involving:				
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(i) Rupture of a known earthquake fault, as delineated on the most recent Alquist-Priolo Earthquake Fault Zoning Map issued by the State Geologist for the area, or based on other substantial evidence of a known fault? Refer to Division of Mines and Geology Special Publication 42.				X
(ii) Strong seismic ground shaking?				X
(iii) Seismic-related ground failure, including liquefaction?				X
(iv) Landslides?				X
b) Result in substantial soil erosion or the loss of topsoil?				X
c) Be located on a geologic unit or soil that is unstable, or that would become unstable as a result of the project, and potentially result in on- or off-site landslide, lateral spreading, subsidence, liquefaction or collapse?				X
d) Be located on expansive soil, as defined in Table 18-a-B of the Uniform Building Code (1994), creating substantial risks to life or property?				X
e) Have soils incapable of adequately supporting the use of septic tanks or alternative wastewater disposal systems where sewers are not available for the disposal of waste water?				X

Discussion:

a)-e) As described in the General Plan MEA, Agoura Hills contains numerous significant topographic features, including Ladyface Mountain, Strawberry Hill, Lindero Canyon, Medea Creek, Palo Comado Canyon and several intervening hills and ridgelines (pg. 3-1). Given this varying topography, geological hazards are a concern for development in the City. Agoura Hills has many regulations and standards in place to help minimize potential impacts.

Per the City's General Plan MEA, there are no active or inactive faults within Agoura Hills, rendering potential hazards from fault rupture remote. However, there are several active and/or potentially active faults in the surrounding region that could produce ground shaking in the area. Other geologic hazards present in the City include liquefaction, landslides, expansive soils and slope instability. The City has in place numerous planning, building and engineering regulations to ensure development is sensitive to local geologic hazards, including:

- Hillside Management Ordinance - Protects the public health and safety with regard to slope stability.
- Geologic Hazard Overlay District - The purpose of the hazard overlay district (GH) is to protect life and property in the City from the hazards of geological conditions and to establish requirements for the level of geological consideration that must be incorporated into development proposals prior to design and construction.
- Grading Ordinance –Establishes development regulations designed to protect residents from geologic hazards and destruction of property.
- All residential developments in the City require the submittal of soil reports for review by City consultants. Additionally, for hillside development, review of geology reports is necessary. This ensures that the grading is done to minimize cuts, fills and retaining walls, and it minimizes the chances of geologic problems.
- As part of the City's local amendments to the California Building Code, Agoura Hills requires: 1) increased setbacks from the top and toe of the slope for mudslide and landslide protection, and 2) larger building footings and sinking deeper into the soil to minimize impacts from expansive soils.

The Housing Element includes identified potential sites and policies to accommodate all new housing developments within existing residential and specific plan areas where housing is allowed and does not call for land use or zoning designation changes. Any potential impacts related to geologic hazards, including the potential for liquefaction, erosion, subsidence or expansive soils, would be analyzed under CEQA as

individual development projects are proposed. Any needed mitigation measures or conditions of approval would be identified at that time, including compliance with the City's building code and engineering requirements mentioned above. Therefore, adoption of the Housing Element would have **no impact** on geology and soils.

Issues and Supporting Information	Potentially Significant Impact	Less Than Significant Impact with Mitigation Measures	Less Than Significant Impact	No Impact
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(6) HAZARDS AND HAZARDOUS MATERIALS. Would the project:

a) Create a significant hazard to the public or the environment through the routine transport, use or disposal of hazardous materials?				X
b) Create a significant hazard to the public or the environment through reasonably foreseeable upset and accident conditions involving the likely release of hazardous materials into the environment?				X
c) Emit hazardous emissions or handle hazardous or acutely hazardous materials, substances, or waste within one-quarter mile of an existing or proposed school?				X
d) Be located on a site which is included on a list of hazardous materials sites compiled pursuant to Government Code Section 65962.5 and, as a result, would it create a significant hazard to the public or the environment?				X
e) For a project located within an airport land use plan or, where such a plan has not been adopted, within two miles of a public airport or public use airport, would the project result in a safety hazard for people residing or working in the project area?				X
f) For a project within the vicinity of a private airstrip, would the project result in a safety hazard for people residing or working in the project area?				X
g) Impair implementation of, or physically interfere with an adopted emergency response plan or emergency evacuation plan?				X
h) Expose people or structures to a significant risk of loss, injury or death involving wildland fires, including where wildlands are adjacent to urbanized areas or where residences are intermixed with wild lands?				X

Discussion:

a)-d) The Agoura Hills Housing Element is a policy document that includes goals, policies and programs to meet the existing and projected housing needs of the City. While residential uses do not generate, emit or transport substantial hazardous materials, new residences will likely increase the amount of household hazardous waste generated in the City. Agoura Hills participates in regular collection and disposal programs for household hazardous waste administered by the Los Angeles County Fire Department at which residents can discard hazardous waste. In addition, Agoura Hills residents will soon be able to have their Household Hazardous Waste (HHW) and Electronic Waste (E-Waste) items collected from their homes by scheduling an at home pickup.

The majority of sites discussed in the Housing Element for future residential development are vacant and have never been built upon, and therefore do not have residual contamination from previous uses. As a specific development project is proposed, any potential impacts related to hazardous materials would be

analyzed under CEQA in conjunction with the approval of a particular project. Any needed mitigation measures or conditions of approval would be identified at that time. Therefore, adoption of the Housing Element would have **no impact**.

- e)-f) There are no airports or airstrips in the vicinity of the City of Agoura Hills. Therefore, adoption of the Housing Element would result in **no impact**.
- g) The Housing Element is a policy document that does not include any specific development proposal. As specific development projects are proposed, they would be analyzed under separate CEQA review to ensure that they do not conflict with emergency plans. Any impacts would be assessed at that time. Therefore, adoption of the Housing Element would result in **no impact**.
- h) Due to the topography and open space areas in and around the City, some residential areas are located in an urban/wildland interface. Many tools are in place to minimize the potential risk of wildland fires, including standard fire protection measures, the City's Hillside Management Ordinance and the City's local amendments to the California Building Code requiring fire retardant roof materials and non-combustible exterior materials. The Housing Element does not require any change in zoning or land use to meet the RHNA, and future residential development would be accommodated under currently designated residential areas. Moreover, the Housing Element is a policy document and does not include any development proposal. Any future residential developments proposed in these urban/wildland interface areas would be analyzed under separate CEQA review. Therefore, adoption of the Housing Element would result in **no impact**.

Issues and Supporting Information	Potentially Significant Impact	Less Than Significant Impact with Mitigation Measures	Less Than Significant Impact	No Impact
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(7) HYDROLOGY AND WATER QUALITY. Would the project:

a) Violate any water quality standards or waste discharge requirements?				x
b) Substantially degrade groundwater supplies or interfere substantially with groundwater recharge such that there would be a net deficit in aquifer volume or a lowering of the local groundwater table level (e.g., the production rate of pre-existing nearby wells would drop to a level which would not support existing land uses or planned uses for which permits have been granted)?				x
c) Substantially alter the existing drainage pattern of the site or area, including through the alteration of the course of a stream or river, or substantially increase the rate or amount of surface runoff in a manner which would result in flooding on- or off site?				x
d) Create or contribute runoff which would exceed the capacity of existing or planned stormwater drainage systems or provide substantial additional sources of polluted runoff?				x
e) Otherwise substantially degrade water quality?				x
f) Place housing within a 100-year floodplain, as mapped on a federal Flood Hazard Boundary or Flood Insurance Rate Map or other flood hazard delineation map?				x
g) Place within a 100-year flood hazard area structures which would impede or redirect flood flows?				x
h) Expose people or structures to a significant risk of loss, injury or death involving flooding, including flooding as a result of the failure of a levee or dam?				x

i) Inundation by seiche, tsunami, or mudflow?				X
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Discussion:

a-e) As described in Agoura Hills' 1992 General Plan Master Environmental Assessment (MEA), water supplies for the City are imported from the Metropolitan Water District of Southern California (MWD) and local groundwater sources are not used for domestic purposes (page 5-4). There are four drainage areas in the City – West, Central, South and East – that are served by several creeks and canyons including Lindero Canyon, Medea Creek, Palo Comado Canyon and Cheeseboro Canyon (General Plan MEA page 5-1).

Any future development on vacant land would increase the amount of impervious surfaces, potentially resulting in storm water quality impacts. The City of Agoura Hills is a co-permittee of the Los Angeles County Municipal Storm Water National Pollutant Discharge Elimination System (NPDES) Permit No. CAS004001 issued by the Los Angeles Regional Water Quality Control Board (LARWQCB). The purpose of this permit is to govern non-point discharges associated with storm water drainage. Regulations under this permit include preparation of a Storm Water Pollution Prevention Plan (SWPPP), which lists a series of measures and best management practices to be employed during construction to prevent storm water runoff pollution. In addition, a Standard Urban Storm Water Mitigation Plan (SUSMP) must be prepared to address post construction best management practices to reduce the potential for pollutants to enter the storm drain system.

The Agoura Hills Housing Element is a policy document that includes goals, policies and programs to meet the existing and projected housing needs of the City. The Housing Element does not include changing any existing land use designations or zoning designations to allow residential uses, nor does it include any specific development proposals. Any potential impacts related to water quality or drainage systems for individual projects would be analyzed under CEQA as they are proposed. Any needed mitigation measures or conditions of approval would be identified at that time, including compliance with the City's NPDES permit mentioned above. Therefore, adoption of the Housing Element would result in **no impact**.

f-i) The City's MEA identifies four designated floodways that flow through Agoura Hills – Liberty Canyon, Lindero Canyon, Palo Comado Canyon and Medea Creek (page 11-12). The Housing Element does not include changing any existing land use designations or zoning designations to allow residential uses, nor does it include any specific development proposals. Any potential impacts related to flooding or mudflows from possible future residential development described in the Housing Element would be analyzed separately under CEQA as the projects are proposed. Due to the City's inland location, the City does not have a high susceptibility to seiches or tsunamis. Therefore, adoption of the Housing Element would result in **no impact**.

Issues and Supporting Information	Potentially Significant Impact	Less Than Significant Impact with Mitigation Measures	Less Than Significant Impact	No Impact
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(8) AESTHETICS. Would the project:

a) Have a substantial adverse affect on a scenic vista?				X
b) Substantially damage scenic resources including, but not limited to trees, rock outcroppings, and historic buildings within a state scenic highway?				X
c) Substantially degrade the existing visual character or quality of the project site and its surroundings?				X
d) Create a new source of substantial light or glare which would adversely affect day or nighttime views in the area?				X

e) Significantly impact any existing streetscape or public space which has been designed to provide areas of public assembly and congregation?				x
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Discussion:

- a) The City's General Plan Scenic Highways Element identifies Local Scenic Highways, County Scenic Highways, and areas eligible for state scenic highway designation. Many of the City's residential areas provide excellent vistas of Ladyface Mountain and the ridgelines along the south side of the City. The City's Grading Ordinance includes a number of grading criteria in order to maintain consistency with, and ensure the implementation of, the policies in the Scenic Highways Element. Nonetheless, the Housing Element is a policy document, and does not include any specific development proposal. Any potential impacts related to scenic vistas from future residential development described in the Housing Element would be analyzed separately under CEQA as each project is proposed. Therefore, adoption of the Housing Element would result in **no impact**.
- b-e) The Agoura Hills Housing Element is a policy document that includes goals, policies and programs to meet the existing and projected housing needs of the City, and does not include any specific development proposal. The Element calls for maintaining and enhancing the quality of existing housing and residential neighborhoods (Goal 1). Any new residential development would need to be consistent with General Plan and Specific Plan policies and City Codes and guidelines. As future residential projects are proposed, they would be analyzed under separate CEQA review to ensure that they do not substantially damage scenic resources, degrade the existing visual character or quality of the project site, create a new source of substantial light or glare or impact any existing streetscape or public space. Therefore, adoption of the Housing Element would result in **no impact**.

Issues and Supporting Information	Potentially Significant Impact	Less Than Significant Impact with Mitigation Measures	Less Than Significant Impact	No Impact
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(9) NOISE. Would the project result in:

a) Exposure of persons to, or generation of, noise levels in excess of standards established in the local general plan or noise ordinance, or applicable standards of other agencies?				X
b) Exposure of persons to or generation of excessive groundborne vibration or groundborne noise levels?				X
c) A substantial permanent increase in ambient noise levels in the project vicinity above levels existing without the project?				X
d) A substantial, temporary or periodic increase in ambient noise levels in the project vicinity above levels existing without the project?				X
e) For a project located within an airport land use plan or, where such a plan has not been adopted, within two miles of a public airport or public use airport, would the project expose people residing or working in the project area to excessive noise levels?				X
f) For a project within the vicinity of a private airstrip, would the project expose people residing or working in the project area to excessive noise levels?				X

Discussion:

- a-d) Noise level (or volume) is generally measured in decibels (dB) using the A-weighted sound pressure level (dBA). For the most sensitive uses, such as single-family residential, 60 dBA Day-Night average level (Ldn) is the maximum normally acceptable exterior level. Ldn is the time average of all A-weighted levels for a 24-hour period, with a 10 dB upward adjustment added to those noise levels occurring between 10:00

PM and 7:00 AM to account for the general increased sensitivity of people to nighttime noise levels. The Community Noise Equivalent Level (CNEL) is similar to the Ldn except that it adds 5 dB to evening noise levels (7:00 PM to 10:00 PM). The City of Agoura Hills utilizes the CNEL for measuring noise levels. Sensitive noise receptors include residential units, libraries, hospitals and nursing homes.

The City's General Plan Noise Element and Noise Ordinance set noise standards for Agoura Hills. In addition, the Department of Housing and Urban Development (HUD) has established mandatory noise guidelines for residential construction. New residential development cannot be exposed to outdoor ambient noise levels in excess of 65 dBA (CNEL or Ldn) and sufficient insulation must be provided to reduce interior ambient levels to 45 dBA.

Agoura Hills has an identified regional housing growth need (RHNA) of 109 units for the 2008-2014 planning period. The Housing Element illustrates that, under current General Plan and zoning designations, the City has an estimated additional capacity for 357 residential units that can be developed on vacant and underutilized sites. Some of these residential parcels are located along the Ventura Freeway corridor and are exposed to noise levels of 65 CNEL and above. However, sound attenuation techniques, including freeway soundwalls, double pane windows and building orientation can all be utilized to reduce noise to acceptable levels for residential development.

The Housing Element is a policy document, and does not identify any specific development projects. As development projects are proposed, they would be analyzed separately under CEQA as part of project specific environmental review. The site-specific noise conditions, including temporary increases in noise levels due to construction and possible groundborne vibrations, would be assessed at that time. Any needed mitigation measures or conditions of approval would be identified during the individual project or plan review, including compliance with the General Plan Noise Element and the City's Noise Ordinance. Therefore, adoption of the Housing Element would result in **no impact**.

- e),f) There are no airports or airstrips in the vicinity of the City of Agoura Hills. Therefore, adoption of the Housing Element would result in **no impact**.

Issues and Supporting Information	Potentially Significant Impact	Less Than Significant Impact with Mitigation Measures	Less Than Significant Impact	No Impact
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(10) POPULATION AND HOUSING. Would the project:

a) Result in direct or indirect population related growth inducement impacts (significantly expand employment opportunities, remove policy impediments to growth, or contribute to potential extensions of growth inducing infrastructure)?				x
b) Displace substantial numbers of existing housing, necessitating the construction of replacement housing elsewhere?				x

Discussion:

- a) As described in the draft Housing Element (Section IV, Housing Resources), the Element is one of the seven state-mandated elements of the City's General Plan and must be updated pursuant to California Government Code Section 65588 for the 2008-2014 planning period. Agoura Hills has an identified regional housing growth need (RHNA) of 109 units for the 2008-2014 planning period. The Element also illustrates that, under current General Plan and zoning designations, the City has an estimated additional capacity for 357 residential units that can be developed on vacant and underutilized sites. As future residential development projects are proposed, they would each be analyzed individually pursuant to CEQA

for potential impacts to population and housing. Therefore, adoption of the Housing Element, which is a policy document, would result in **no impacts** on direct or indirect population related growth inducement.

- b) Since the Housing Element is a policy document, its adoption would not displace substantial numbers of housing or people. Agoura Hills plans to fulfill its RHNA allocation mostly through development on vacant parcels. The single underutilized parcel included in the Element's sites inventory currently contains a variety of commercial uses. Future development proposals on these vacant and underutilized sites would be analyzed separately under CEQA, but since the sites are vacant and/or occupied by non-residential uses, it is likely that no existing housing would be displaced. Therefore, no housing would be displaced as a result of adopting the Housing Element and **no impact** would occur.

Issues and Supporting Information	Potentially Significant Impact	Less Than Significant Impact with Mitigation Measures	Less Than Significant Impact	No Impact
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(11) PUBLIC SERVICES. Would the project result in substantial adverse physical impacts associated with the provision of new or physically altered government facilities, the need for new or physically altered government facilities, the construction of which could cause significant environmental impacts, in order to maintain acceptable service ratios, response times or other performance objectives for any of the public services?

a) Fire protection				X
b) Police protection				X
c) Schools				X
d) Parks				X
e) Other public facilities				X

Discussion:

- a-e) Public services in Agoura Hills are provided by the Los Angeles County Fire Department (LACFD), Los Angeles County Sheriff's Department (LACSD), Las Virgenes Unified School District and the City's Community Services Department. The City's General Plan includes goals and policies to ensure that adequate public services are available to meet the City's residences and businesses. This includes Goal 5 in the Land Use Element, which calls for new development to be coordinated with the availability of public services (page II-21).

The Agoura Hills Housing Element addresses the City's residential growth needs (RHNA) of 109 units for the 2008-2014 planning period. The Element also illustrates that, under current General Plan and zoning designations and in the Agoura Village Specific Plan, the City has an estimated additional capacity for 357 residential units that can be developed on vacant and underutilized sites. No land use or zoning designation changes are required as part of the Element. As individual development projects are proposed in the future, the specific environmental effects of the future developments, including impacts on public services, would be evaluated pursuant to CEQA. Any needed mitigation measures or conditions of approval would be identified at that time in order to ensure adequate public services. Therefore, adoption of the Housing Element would result in **no impacts**.

Issues and Supporting Information	Potentially Significant Impact	Less Than Significant Impact with Mitigation Measures	Less Than Significant Impact	No Impact
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(12) RECREATION. Would the project:

a) Increase the use of existing neighborhood or regional parks or other recreational facilities such that substantial physical deterioration of the facility would occur or be accelerated?				X
b) Does the project include recreational facilities or require the construction or expansion of recreational facilities which might have an adverse physical effect on the environment?				X

Discussion:

- a),b) As described in Agoura Hills' 1992 General Plan Master Environmental Assessment (MEA), numerous recreational facilities and trails are located in Agoura Hills, including parks, hiking trails, equestrian trails, bike paths and the City's Recreation Center. The City's Park Master Plan establishes a standard of 8 acres of park/open space per 1,000 people (MEA, page 18-4). Of this, three acres per 1,000 persons includes local park and recreation space, and the remaining 5 acres per 1,000 is designated as open space. Any future proposal for residential development discussed in the Housing Element would be analyzed separately under CEQA as part of project specific environmental review. The impacts on existing parks/recreational facilities or impacts from new or expanded facilities would be assessed at that time. Any needed mitigation measures or conditions of approval would be identified during the individual project or plan review, including compliance with the City's Park Master Plan. Therefore, adoption of the Housing Element would result in **no impact**.

Issues and Supporting Information	Potentially Significant Impact	Less Than Significant Impact with Mitigation Measures	Less Than Significant Impact	No Impact
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(13) TRANSPORTATION/TRAFFIC. Would the project:

a) Cause an increase in traffic which is substantial in relation to the existing traffic load and capacity of the street system (i.e., result in a substantial increase in either the number of vehicle trips, the volume to capacity ratio on roads, or congestion at intersections)?				X
b) Exceed, either individually or cumulatively, a level of service standard established by the county congestion management agency for designated roads or highways?				X
c) Result in a change in air traffic patterns, including either an increase in traffic levels or a change in location that results in substantial safety risks?				X
d) Substantially increase hazards related to existing intersections or roadway design features (e.g., sharp curves or dangerous intersections), or to incompatible uses (e.g., residential traffic conflicts with farm equipment)?				X
e) Result in inadequate secondary or emergency access?				X
f) Result in inadequate parking capacity?				X

Discussion:

a, b, d-f) The City's existing street network includes arterial and local streets as well as U.S. Highway 101 (Ventura Freeway). The General Plan's Land Use Element calls for new development to be coordinated with the availability of infrastructure (Land Use Goal 5).

As described in Section 3, Air Quality, above, the City is undergoing a comprehensive General Plan Update that emphasizes sustainable land uses and alternative transportation. A majority of the sites included in the Housing Element residential lands inventory are located in the Agoura Village Specific Plan, which also emphasizes a mix of uses and transportation options.

The Agoura Hills Housing Element is a policy document that includes goals, policies and programs to meet the existing and projected housing needs of the City. The Element identifies policies and potential sites to accommodate all new housing developments within existing residential and specific plan areas and does not call for land use or zoning designation changes. The Housing Element does not include any specific development proposal. Any potential impacts related to increases in the existing traffic load, level of service standards, hazards due to design features, emergency access and parking capacity would be analyzed as future residential projects and are subject to separate CEQA review. Any needed mitigation measures or conditions of approval would be identified during the individual project or plan review. Therefore, adoption of the Housing Element would result in **no impact**.

c) There are no airports or airfields in the vicinity of Agoura Hills, so the proposal would result in **no impacts**.

Issues and Supporting Information	Potentially Significant Impact	Less Than Significant Impact with Mitigation Measures	Less Than Significant Impact	No Impact
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(14) UTILITIES AND SERVICE SYSTEMS. Would the project:

a) Exceed wastewater treatment requirements of the applicable Regional Water Quality Control Board?				X
b) Require or result in construction of new water or wastewater treatment facilities or expansion of existing facilities, the construction of which could cause significant environmental effects?				X
c) Require or result in the construction of new storm water drainage facilities or expansion of existing facilities, the construction of which could cause significant environmental effects?				X
d) Have sufficient water supplies available to serve the project from existing entitlements and resources, or are new or expanded entitlements needed?				X
e) Result in a determination by the wastewater treatment provider which serves or may serve the project that it has adequate capacity to serve the project's projected demand in addition to the provider's existing commitments?				X
f) Be served by a landfill with sufficient permitted capacity to accommodate the project's solid waste disposal needs?				X
g) Comply with federal, state, and local statutes and regulations related to solid waste?				X

Discussion:

- a- e) The Las Virgenes Municipal Water District (LVMWD) provides all water and wastewater service to the City of Agoura Hills. Please refer to Section 7, Hydrology and Water Quality, of this document regarding storm drainage.

The City's General Plan includes goals and policies to ensure that adequate utility systems are available to meet the City's residences and businesses. This includes Goal 5 in the Land Use Element, which calls for new development to be coordinated with the availability of infrastructure (page II-21). As described in Section 3, Air Quality, above, the City is undergoing a comprehensive General Plan Update that emphasizes sustainable land uses, site design and development that maximizes the use of existing infrastructure, and reduces energy and water consumption. The Housing Element reflects this overall theme with Policy 2.10 and Program # 11 that addresses sustainability and green building.

The Agoura Hills Housing Element addresses the City's RHNA of 109 units for the 2008-2014 planning period. No land use or zoning designation changes are required as part of the Element to meet the RHNA. The Housing Element is a policy document, and does not identify any development proposals. The specific environmental effects to utility and service systems of future residential development that may be proposed in the Housing Element policies and programs would be evaluated as individual project proposals or plans are submitted. Any needed mitigation measures or conditions of approval would be identified at that time. Therefore, adoption of the Housing Element would result in **no impacts**.

Issues and Supporting Information	Potentially Significant Impact	Less Than Significant Impact with Mitigation Measures	Less Than Significant Impact	No Impact
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(15) MANDATORY FINDINGS OF SIGNIFICANCE.

a) Does the project have the potential to degrade the quality of the environment, substantially reduce the habitat of a fish or wildlife species, cause a fish or wildlife population to drop below self-sustaining levels, threaten to eliminate a plant or animal community, reduce the number or restrict the range of a rare or endangered plant or animal, or eliminate important examples of the major periods of California history or prehistory?				x
b) Does the project have impacts that are individually limited, but cumulatively considerable? ("Cumulatively considerable" means that the incremental effects of a project are considerable when viewed in connection with the effects of the past projects, the effects of other current projects, and the effects of probable future projects)?				x
c) Does the project have environmental effects which will cause substantial adverse effects on human beings, either directly or indirectly?				x

Discussion:

- a-c) As described throughout this document, the Housing Element is one of the elements of Agoura Hills' General Plan, and must be updated pursuant to California Government Code Section 65588 for the 2008-2014 planning period. The Housing Element identifies and assesses projected housing needs and provides an inventory of constraints and resources relevant to meeting these needs.

The City's RHNA for the 2008-2014 planning period is 109 units. The Element illustrates that, under current General Plan and zoning designations and the AVSP, the City has an estimated additional capacity for 357 residential units that can be developed on vacant and underutilized sites where residential use is currently allowed. No land use or zoning designation changes are required as part of the Element. The Housing Element does not include any specific development proposal for residential units. All environmental effects of future residential development would be evaluated as individual project proposals or plans are submitted to the City for consideration, pursuant to CEQA. Therefore, adoption of the Housing Element would not degrade the quality of the environment, result in cumulatively considerable impacts or cause substantial adverse effects on human beings.

REFERENCES

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Agoura Hills, City of. *Inclusionary Housing Zoning Ordinance Amendment Draft Initial Study and Negative Declaration (08-ZOA-002)*. May 2008.

Agoura Hills, City of. *Ordinance Number 07-350 – Adoption of the 2007 California Construction Codes*. Adopted by the Agoura Hills City Council on January 9, 2008.