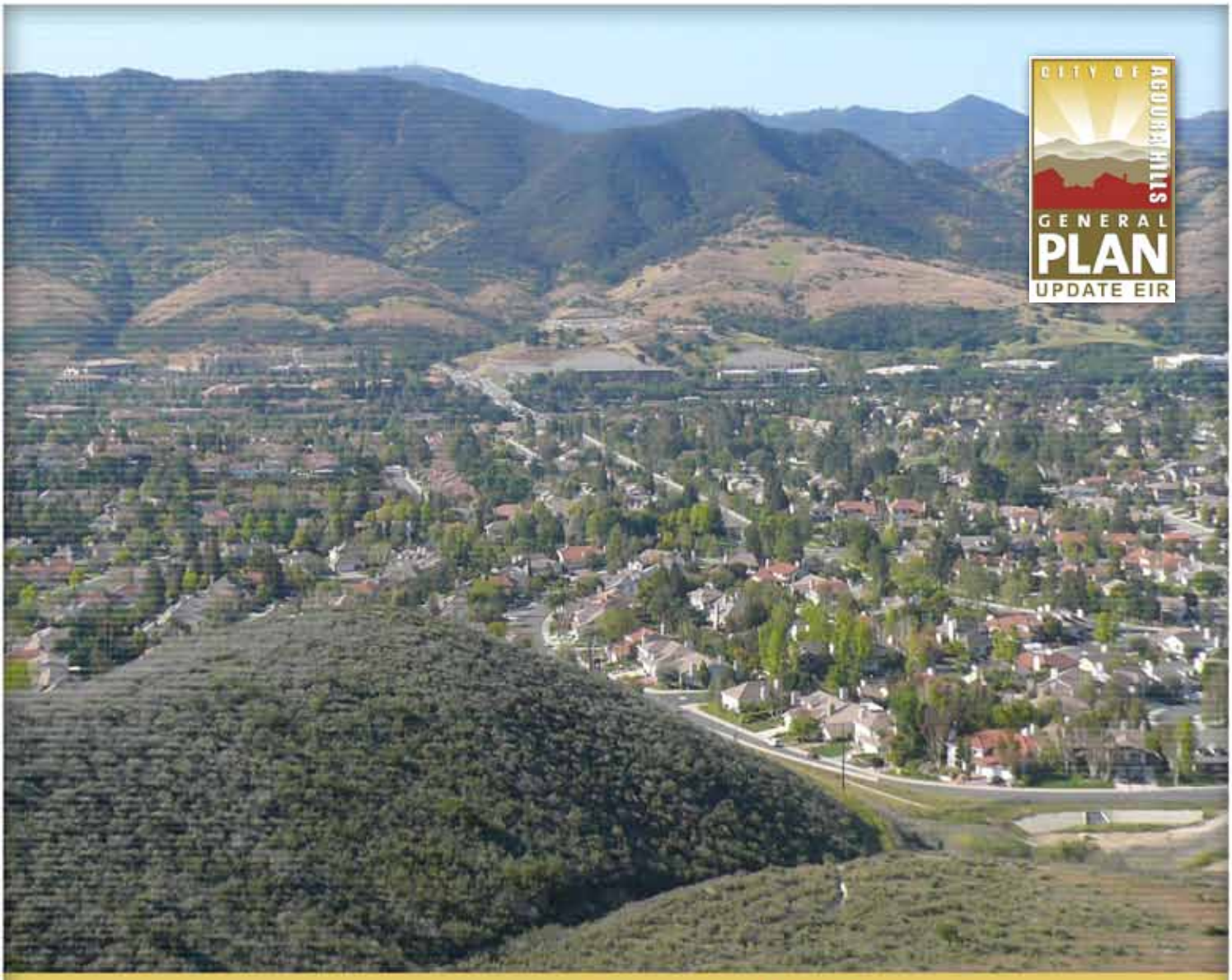

City of AGOURA HILLS

GENERAL PLAN 2035 EIR

VOLUME I: FINAL EIR FEBRUARY 2010

CITY OF AGOURA HILLS
GENERAL PLAN 2035

Environmental Impact Report

SCH No. 2009051013

Volume I: Final EIR

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CHAPTER 1 Introduction

This Environmental Impact Report (EIR) examines the potential effects of the proposed General Plan Update for the City of Agoura Hills (proposed project). The City of Agoura Hills is the lead agency for this project. The background for the General Plan Update and the legal basis for preparing an EIR are described below.

1.1 PURPOSE AND LEGAL AUTHORITY

The current General Plan for the City of Agoura Hills contains eleven elements which were adopted in 1993. The City is proposing a focused update of the Land Use, Circulation, and Noise Elements of the existing General Plan (1993). Refinement and consolidation of the remainder of the existing Elements will take place in concert with the focused update. This will require review and recommendation by the Planning Commission and the discretionary adoption of the plan by the City Council of Agoura Hills. Adoption of the General Plan Update is considered a project under the *California Environmental Quality Act* (CEQA) and is, therefore, subject to CEQA requirements. In accordance with Section 15121 of the CEQA Guidelines, the purpose of this EIR is to serve as an informational document that:

> …will inform public agency decision-makers and the public generally of the significant environmental effects of a project, identify possible ways to minimize the significant effects, and describe reasonable alternatives to the project.

The EIR must also disclose significant environmental impacts that cannot be avoided, growth inducing impacts, effects not found to be significant, and significant cumulative impacts of all past, present, and reasonably anticipated future projects.

This EIR has been prepared as a Program EIR pursuant to Section 15168 of the CEQA Guidelines. A Program EIR is an EIR that is prepared on a series of actions that can be characterized as one large project. As stated in the CEQA Guidelines, the use of a Program EIR can provide the following advantages:

1. Provide an occasion for a more exhaustive consideration of effects and alternatives than would be practical in an EIR on an individual action;
2. Ensure consideration of cumulative impacts that might be slighted in a case-by-case analysis;
3. Avoid duplicative reconsideration of basic policy considerations;
4. Allow the Lead Agency to consider broad policy alternatives and program wide mitigation measures at an early time when the agency has greater flexibility to deal with basic problems or cumulative impacts;
5. Allow reduction in paperwork.

This EIR will review the existing conditions of the City of Agoura Hills, analyze potential environmental impacts from implementation of the General Plan Update, identify policies from the General Plan Update that serve to reduce and minimize impacts, and identify mitigation measures, if necessary, to

reduce potentially significant impacts of the General Plan Update. As the EIR does not focus on any specific development projects within the City, subsequent activities in the City that involve individual projects must be examined in light of the Program EIR to determine whether any additional environmental review is necessary. If it is determined that an individual project would result in adverse impacts on the environment, an additional environmental document would then be required.

In accordance with Section 15166 of the CEQA Guidelines, an EIR is being prepared to satisfy the necessary requirements for a General Plan Update. The EIR provides a general overview of the existing physical conditions, demographics, and trends in the City and assesses the physical environmental impacts resulting from implementation of the General Plan Update.

The purpose of this report is to serve as an informational document for the public and City of Agoura Hills decision-makers. The process will culminate with Planning Commission and City Council hearings to consider certification of a Final EIR (FEIR) and a decision on whether or not to approve the General Plan Update. This EIR also is intended to serve as a resource to inform and support the City's future consideration of other, less significant and more specific General Plan and/or Zoning Amendments that arise from time to time.

1.2 SCOPE OF THE EIR

This EIR addresses the potential environmental effects of implementation of the proposed General Plan Update within Agoura Hills. As the proposed General Plan Update is a comprehensive plan that outlines the future potential for growth and development within the City, the scope of the EIR includes an examination of all environmental issues that are considered in Appendix G of the 2009 CEQA Guidelines. In addition, the environmental issues analyzed in this document will also include those areas determined to be potentially significant by the Notice of Preparation (NOP), responses to the NOP, and City staff. The NOP and comment letters received during the NOP review period are included in Appendix A of this EIR. The NOP identified that the EIR would address potential impacts to the following issue areas associated with implementation of the proposed General Plan Update:

- Aesthetics and Visual Resources
- Biological Resources
- Air Quality
- Agricultural Resources
- Mineral Resources
- Climate Change/Green-House Gases
- Cultural and Historic Resources
- Geology and Soils
- Hazards and Hazardous Materials
- Hydrology and Water Quality
- Land Use and Planning
- Noise
- Population and Housing
- Public Services, including
  - Fire Protection

  - > Police Protection
  - > Schools
  - > Parks
  - > Other public facilities
- Recreation
- Transportation/Traffic
- Utilities and Service Systems, including
  - > Sewer
  - > Solid Waste
  - > Water Supply
  - > Electricity
  - > Natural Gas
- Mandatory Findings of Significance

In accordance with Section 15128 (Effects Not Found to Be Significant) of the CEQA Guidelines, Chapter 5 (Other CEQA Considerations) of this EIR provides reasons why some environmental impacts related to Agricultural Resources and Mineral Resources were not considered significant and, therefore, are not analyzed further in this EIR.

In preparing the EIR, pertinent policies of the General Plan Update were evaluated for their ability to reduce impacts resulting from the General Plan Update. Regional and local agencies that regulate and provide services to the City were also contacted for information. A list of references and persons consulted are provided at the end of each chapter.

Chapter 6 (Alternatives) of the EIR was prepared in accordance with Section 15126.6 of the CEQA Guidelines, which requires an evaluation of a reasonable range of alternatives, including the No Project Alternative. It also identifies the "environmentally superior" alternative among the alternatives assessed.

1.2.1 Environmental Setting/Definition of the Baseline

According to Section 15125 of the CEQA Guidelines, an EIR must include a description of the existing physical environmental conditions in the vicinity of the project to provide the "baseline condition" against which project-related impacts are compared. Normally, the baseline condition is the physical condition that exists when the Notice of Preparation (NOP) is published. The NOP for the General Plan Update EIR was published April 30, 2009. The CEQA Guidelines recognize that the date for establishing an environmental baseline cannot be rigid. Because physical environmental conditions may vary over a range of time periods, the use of environmental baselines that differ from the date of the NOP is reasonable and appropriate when doing so results in a more accurate or conservative environmental analysis.

The baseline year (2009) is used for all impact areas analyzed in this EIR to determine impacts. For analytical purposes, impacts associated with implementation of the General Plan Update are derived from the environmental setting of 2009. This EIR presents and analyzes the proposed allowable growth scenario within the City from 2009 through a planning horizon of 2035. This proposed allowable growth

is less than that allowed under both the existing General Plan (1993) and the maximum growth that would be allowed by the zoning proposed under the General Plan Update. As a practical matter, actual development in any city or county is substantially less than the entitlement or theoretical limit of development because of building and zoning restrictions as well as several economic factors and market forces.

1.2.2 Plan Comparison

This EIR evaluates the potential impacts of the proposed land use changes and associated growth potential compared to the existing setting/baseline conditions, as described above. In some cases, the existing General Plan (1993) growth potential is also discussed to provide additional information to the reader of the differences or changes between the existing General Plan (1993) and the proposed General Plan Update. However, the impact analysis presented in this EIR is not a comparison of the existing General Plan (1993) to the proposed General Plan Update but rather a comparison of existing conditions to the proposed General Plan Update.

1.3 INTENDED USE OF THE EIR

This EIR has been prepared to analyze potentially significant environmental impacts associated with future development resulting from implementation of the proposed General Plan Update, and also addresses appropriate and feasible mitigation measures or project alternatives that would minimize or eliminate these impacts. Additionally, this EIR will provide the primary source of environmental information for the City of Agoura Hills, which is the Lead Agency, to use when considering the proposed General Plan Update.

This EIR is intended to provide decision-makers and the public with information that enables them to intelligently consider the environmental consequences of the proposed action. This EIR identifies significant or potentially significant environmental effects, as well as ways in which those impacts can be reduced to less-than-significant levels, whether through the imposition of mitigation measures or through the implementation of specific alternatives to the project. In a practical sense, this document functions as a technique for fact-finding, allowing concerned citizens and agency staff an opportunity to collectively review and evaluate baseline conditions and project impacts through a process of full disclosure.

1.4 LEAD, RESPONSIBLE, AND TRUSTEE AGENCIES

Per the CEQA Guidelines, this EIR defines lead, responsible, and trustee agencies. The City of Agoura Hills is the lead agency for the project because it holds principal responsibility for approving the project. A responsible agency refers to a public agency other than the lead agency that has discretionary approval over the project. The proposed General Plan Update is a planning document for the City of Agoura Hills to utilize moving forward. As such, the General Plan Update does not address a specific or proposed development plan, and no responsible agencies are identified at this time. Subsequent development projects will be subject to discretionary approval by the City and, depending on the development proposal, other public agencies. In addition to the City of Agoura Hills, future projects within the City

may require approval from the Regional Water Quality Control Board (RWQCB) regarding water quality and quantity, as well as potential discharges into surface waters; California Department of Fish and Game (CDFG) regarding biological resources; California Department of Transportation (Caltrans) regarding the Ventura Freeway (US-101) and other roadways within the City that are under the maintenance of the state; U.S. Army Corps of Engineers (USACE) regarding waters of the US and wetlands.

A trustee agency is a state agency having jurisdiction by law over natural resources affected by a project, which are held in trust for the people of the state. As discussed above, the General Plan Update is a planning document for the City of Agoura Hills and does not address a specific or proposed development plan. As such, no trustee agencies are identified at this time. However, in relation to future development within the City, trustee agencies may include the California Department of Fish and Game (CDFG) regarding biological resources, U.S. Army Corps of Engineers (USACE) regarding waters of the US and wetlands, and the Air Quality Management District regarding issues of air quality and associated permitting.

1.5 ENVIRONMENTAL REVIEW PROCESS

This EIR has been prepared to meet all of the substantive and procedural requirements of CEQA of 1970 (California Public Resources Code Section 21000 et seq.), California CEQA Guidelines (California Code of Regulations, Title 14, Section 15000 et seq.), and the rules, regulations and procedures for the implementation of CEQA as adopted by the City of Agoura Hills. Accordingly, as discussed above, the City of Agoura Hills has been identified as the Lead Agency for this project, taking responsibility for conducting the environmental review and approving or denying the project.

The General Plan Update will serve as a comprehensive document that will guide future potential growth and development within the City. The Lead Agency has determined that an EIR for the General Plan Update would best serve the City if it contains a comprehensive examination of all environmental issues that are contained in Appendix G of the 2009 CEQA Guidelines with the exception of Agricultural Resources and Mineral Resources. The EIR analyzes all aspects of the General Plan Update to determine whether any aspect of the project, either individually or cumulatively, may cause a significant effect on the environment with regards to the environmental issues listed above in Section 1.2.

The City filed a Notice of Preparation (NOP), included in Appendix A, with the California Office of Planning and Research (OPR) as an indication that an EIR would be prepared. In turn, the NOP was distributed to involved public agencies and interested parties for a 30-day public review period beginning April 30, 2009. The purpose of the public review period was to solicit comments on the scope and content of the environmental analysis to be included in the EIR. The City received eleven comment letters on the NOP, which are included in Appendix A of this EIR. Agencies or interested persons who did not respond during the public review period of the NOP will have an opportunity to comment during the public review period for this EIR, as well as at subsequent hearings on the General Plan Update. In addition to the filing of the NOP, the City held a Public Scoping meeting on May 21, 2009 to encourage and solicit comments from the general public on the proposed General Plan Update. Approximately five people attended this meeting and provided comment.

Moving forward, this EIR will be distributed to affected agencies, surrounding cities, involved public agencies, and interested parties for a 45-day review period in accordance with Section 15087 of the CEQA Guidelines. During the 45-day public review period, this EIR is available for general public review on the City's website (http://www.ci.agoura-hills.ca.us) and at the following locations:

City of Agoura Hills, Planning Counter
30001 Ladyface Court
Agoura Hills, CA 91301
(818) 597-7310

Agoura Hills Library
29901 Ladyface Court
Agoura Hills, CA 91301
(818) 889-2278

Interested parties may provide comments on the EIR in written form. Comments should be addressed to the City of Agoura Hills to the following address:

Allison Cook, Principal Planner
Planning Department
City of Agoura Hills
30001 Ladyface Court
Agoura Hills, CA 91301
Telephone: 818-597-7310
Email: acook@ci.agoura-hills.ca.us

Upon completion of the 45-day public review period, written responses to all comments raised with respect to environmental issues discussed in the EIR will be prepared and incorporated into the Final EIR (FEIR). Furthermore, written responses to comments received from any public agencies will be made available to these agencies at least 10 days prior to the public hearing during which the certification of the FEIR will be considered. These comments, and their responses, will be included in the FEIR for consideration by the City of Agoura Hills Planning Commission and City Council, as well as any other public decision-makers.

According to *Public Resources Code* (PRC) Section 21081, the Lead Agency must make specific Findings of Fact ("Findings") before approving the FEIR, when the EIR identifies significant environmental impacts that may result from a project. The purpose of the Findings is to establish the link between the contents of the FEIR and the action of the Lead Agency with regard to approval or rejection of the project. Prior to approval of a project, one of three findings must be made:

- Changes or alterations have been required in, or incorporated into, the project that avoid or substantially lessen the significant environmental effect as identified in the FEIR.
- Such changes or alterations are within the responsibility and jurisdiction of another public agency and not the agency making the finding. Such changes have been adopted by such other agency or can and should be adopted by such other agency.
- Specific economic, legal, social, technological, or other considerations, including provision of employment opportunities for highly trained workers, make infeasible the mitigation measures or project alternatives identified in the FEIR.

Additionally, according to PRC Section 21081.6, for projects in which significant impacts will be avoided by mitigation measures, the Lead Agency must include a mitigation monitoring program (MMP) as part

of the FEIR. The purpose of the MMP is to ensure compliance with required mitigation during implementation of the project.

However, environmental impacts may not always be mitigated to a less-than-significant level. When this occurs, impacts are considered significant and unavoidable. If a public agency approves a project that has significant and unavoidable impacts, the agency shall state in writing the specific reasons for approving the project, based on the FEIR and any other information in the public record. This is termed a "Statement of Overriding Considerations" and is used to explain the specific reasons why the benefits of a proposed project make its unavoidable environmental effects acceptable. The statement is prepared, if required, after the FEIR has been completed, yet before action to approve the project has been taken. Ultimately, the lead agency must certify the FEIR, prior to approving a specific project. In the case at hand, the City of Agoura Hills (as the lead agency), would need to certify the FEIR prior to approving the General Plan Update.

1.6 AREAS OF CONTROVERSY AND ISSUES TO BE RESOLVED

During the environmental review process, NOP comment letters were received from various parties which raised issues of concern. These comment letters, and verbal comments received at the public scoping meeting (Appendix A) were used to determine areas of potential controversy and issues to be resolved. These issues are discussed within the technical sections of this document, and summarized below.

- Traffic impacts to local, county, and state facilities
- Impacts to trails and recreational facilities
- Jobs/Housing ratio must be balanced to reduce traffic impacts
- Tribal consultation per SB18
- Impacts to population and housing
- Impacts to air quality

1.7 DOCUMENT ORGANIZATION

This EIR has been designed for easy use and reference. To help the reader locate information of particular interest, a brief summary of the contents of each section of the EIR is provided. References are contained at the end of each respective chapter. The following chapters are contained within the EIR:

- **Chapter 1: Introduction**—This chapter describes the purpose, approach, intended use, and scope of the EIR, a summary of the environmental and public review process, agencies relevant to the proposed project, the availability of the EIR, documents incorporated by reference, and a brief outline of this document's organization.
- **Chapter 2: Executive Summary**—This chapter contains a summary of the proposed project, as well as a summary of environmental impacts, proposed mitigation, level of significance after mitigation, and unavoidable impacts.
- **Chapter 3: Project Description**—This chapter provides a detailed description of the General Plan Update, including a description of the project location, environmental setting and regulations, project background, project objectives, and project characteristics.

- **Chapter 4: Environmental Analysis**—This chapter describes and evaluates the environmental issue areas, applicable environmental thresholds, environmental impacts (both short-term and long-term), policy considerations related to the particular environmental issue area under analysis, mitigation measures capable of minimizing environmental harm, and a discussion of cumulative impacts. Where additional actions must be taken to ensure consistency with environmental policies, recommendations are made, as appropriate.
- **Chapter 5: Other CEQA Considerations**—This chapter provides analysis, as required by CEQA, regarding impacts that would result from the General Plan Update, including effects found not to be significant, growth-inducing impacts, significant irreversible change to the environment, and significant and unavoidable impacts.
- **Chapter 6: Project Alternatives**—This chapter analyzes feasible alternatives to the General Plan Update, including No Build, No Project/Existing General Plan, and a Reduced Density Alternative.
- **Chapter 7: Report Preparers**—This chapter identifies all individuals responsible for the preparation of this EIR.

CHAPTER 2 Executive Summary

This section summarizes the characteristics of the proposed City of Agoura Hills General Plan Update, the environmental impacts, mitigation measures, and impacts associated with the proposed project.

2.1 INTRODUCTION

This Program EIR discusses the environmental impacts associated with implementation of the proposed General Plan Update for the City of Agoura Hills. A complete description of the General Plan Update is provided in Chapter 3 (Project Description) of this document, and a summary of the General Plan Update components is provided below. This Program EIR provides a discussion of impacts by issue area and provides mitigation measures, where appropriate. Specific issue areas discussed in this document include the following:

- Aesthetics and Visual Resources
- Biological Resources
- Air Quality
- Agricultural Resources
- Mineral Resources
- Climate Change/Green-House Gases
- Cultural and Historic Resources
- Geology and Soils
- Hazards and Hazardous Materials
- Hydrology and Water Quality
- Land Use and Planning
- Noise
- Population and Housing
- Public Services, including
  - > Fire Protection
  - > Police Protection
  - > Schools
  - > Parks
  - > Other public facilities
- Recreation
- Transportation/Traffic
- Utilities and Service Systems, including
  - > Sewer
  - > Solid Waste
  - > Water Supply
  - > Electricity
  - > Natural Gas
- Mandatory Findings of Significance

Discussions of these issue areas are provided in Sections 4.1 through 4.15 of this document. An analysis of alternatives to the General Plan Update and long-term implications resulting from implementation of the plan are also provided. According to the Government Code, there is no requirement that economic or social issues be included as elements to a General Plan. As the EIR is concerned with physical environmental impacts resulting from implementation of the proposed General Plan Update, economic and social impacts not related or resulting from environmental impacts were excluded from this document.

2.2 PROJECT DESCRIPTION

The existing General Plan (1993) for the City of Agoura Hills contains eleven elements. The City is proposing a focused update of the Land Use, Circulation, and Noise Elements of this existing General Plan (1993). Refinement of the existing Elements and consolidation into four new "super elements" will take place in concert with the focused update. The "super elements" include:

- Community Conservation and Development
  - > Land Use & Urban Form
  - > Economic Development
  - > Historic and Cultural Resources
- Infrastructure and Community Services
  - > Mobility
  - > Utility Infrastructure
  - > Community Services
- Natural Resources
  - > Open Space
  - > Visual Resources
  - > Biological Resources
  - > Water
  - > Mineral Resources
  - > Energy Conservation
- Community Safety
  - > Flood Hazards
  - > Geological and Seismic Hazards
  - > Wildland and Urban Fire Hazards
  - > Crime Prevention and Protection
  - > Hazardous Materials
  - > Emergency Preparedness
  - > Noise
- Implementation Plan

Areas of potential change and transition were identified by the General Plan Advisory Committee (GPAC) and City staff as a means to focus growth and change in areas that were in need of revitalization. The ten-member GPAC was appointed by the City Council to assure ongoing community involvement in the update process. The GPAC met throughout the process to provide feedback to City staff and the consultants, and was instrumental in the development of the updated General Plan. Twelve community

Subareas and districts were identified as areas of transition and the General Plan Update includes goals that express specific intentions for use, design, and character that uniquely apply to and differentiate each area.

The General Plan's goals, policies, and implementation program define a roadmap to sustain and nurture the qualities and character that contribute to Agoura Hills' identity as a special community in a unique natural environment. Underlying these objectives is the vision below, which is reflected in goals throughout the General Plan Update, and which represents the community's aspirations for its future.

> Agoura Hills is a special place surrounded by the Santa Monica Mountains where oak trees and rolling hills abound. Here we seek to preserve our city's best qualities while striving to create a better community. The future Agoura Hills is an attractive city of growing sophistication that chooses to retain its small town look and feel. The city remains a safe place, where people live, work, play, and move about in an economically viable and environmentally sustainable community. Sensitive growth and economic development are means of perpetuating our quality of life. These are balanced with resource conservation, as the city's semi-rural ranching past, rich history and unique neighborhoods are respected, and open spaces and surrounding hillsides are preserved. Agoura Hills is a place where its citizens have opportunities to engage in their community through recreation, social and civic activities, schools, and neighborhood organizations.

2.3 CLASSIFICATION OF ENVIRONMENTAL IMPACTS

Potential environmental impacts have been classified in the following categories:

- **Significant and Unavoidable; Class I**—Constitutes a substantial adverse change to existing environmental conditions that cannot be fully mitigated by implementation of all feasible mitigation measures, or by the selection of an environmentally superior project alternative.
- **Less Than Significant, with or without Mitigation Measures; Class II**—This class includes impacts that will not be adverse to the environment that may or may not require mitigation to reach this level. For example, an impact that may be adverse, but does not exceed the threshold levels before or after implementation of mitigation measures. For circumstances where an impact does not exceed a threshold, mitigation measures may be suggested, if readily available, to further reduce environmental effects. Additionally, this class includes impacts that constitute a substantial adverse change to existing environmental conditions that can be mitigated to less-than-significant levels by implementation of feasible mitigation measures.
- **No Impact; Class III**—Results in no substantial adverse change to existing environmental conditions.
- **Beneficial; Class IV**—An effect that would reduce existing environmental problems or adverse conditions.

2.4 SYNOPSIS OF ALTERNATIVES

As required by Section 15126.6(a) of the CEQA Guidelines and recent court cases, an EIR must:

> Describe a range of reasonable alternatives to the project, or to the location of the project, which would feasibly attain most of the basic objectives of the project but would avoid or substantially

> lessen any of the significant effects of the project, and evaluate the comparative merits of the alternatives.

Further, Section 15126.6(b) of the CEQA Guidelines state:

> The discussion of alternatives shall focus on alternatives to the project or its location which are capable of avoiding or substantially lessening any significant effects of the project, even if these alternatives would impede to some degree the attainment of the project objectives, or would be more costly.

2.4.1 Alternatives Evaluated

Alternatives evaluated in this EIR include the following:

- **Alternative 1: No Build (Zero Growth under Existing General Plan)**—Under Alternative 1, development under the proposed General Plan Update would not occur. This alternative assumes that there would be no growth within the City across the planning horizon (2035). Existing land uses would remain however, effectively, land uses and growth associated with the existing General Plan (1993) would become obsolete.
- **Alternative 2: No Project/Existing General Plan (1993) Buildout**—Under Alternative 2, development proposed within the General Plan Update would not occur. This is the "No Project" alternative, because no legislative changes would be required, and the 1993 General Plan would continue to be in effect. However, in contrast to Alternative 1 where no growth would take place, Alternative 2 assumes that growth programmed by the existing General Plan (1993) would occur. It is assumed that the buildout would occur by 2035.
- **Alternative 3: Reduced Density**—Under Alternative 3, growth assumed under the General Plan Update would be reduced in certain areas in an effort to reduce impacts to the environment. As proposed, the General Plan Update identified significant impacts to traffic throughout the City. These impacts can be divided into two categories: (1) locations where existing conditions are below acceptable levels and would continue to be so in the future regardless of implementation of development associated with the General Plan Update and (2) locations where existing conditions are free-flow and above acceptable levels that would be made worse (and considered significant) by implementation of development associated with the General Plan Update. Where a nexus could be identified between development proposed under the General Plan Update (Scenario 2 discussed above), density was reduced by approximately 25 percent. This included Traffic Analysis Zones (TAZs) 6, 8, 10, and 12, with the exception of the following, which were not reduced: (1) residential areas outside of Subarea 5 and (2) the Agoura Village Specific Plan. It is assumed that land uses as proposed under the General Plan Update would remain for Alternative 3.

In an effort to reduce impacts identified for a proposed project, an Alternative Location or Site alternative is typically analyzed. However, in this case, the project is Citywide, thereby making an alternative location impossible.

The CEQA Guidelines require that an environmentally superior alternative be identified. The Reduced Density alternative is considered the environmentally superior alternative.

2.5 SUMMARY OF IMPACTS AND MITIGATION MEASURES

Pursuant to Section 15123(b)(1) of the CEQA Guidelines, Table 2-1 (Summary of Impacts and Mitigation Measures) contains a summary of less than significant, potentially significant, or significant and unavoidable environmental impacts associated with the proposed General Plan Update, mitigation measures that would reduce or avoid those effects, and the level of significance of the impacts following the implementation of mitigation measures.

Table 2-1 Summary of Impacts and Mitigation Measures

KEY: LTS = Less Than Significant PS = Potentially Significant SU = Significant and Unavoidable

Impact	*Significance Before Mitigation*	*Mitigation Measures*	*Significance After Mitigation*
Aesthetics			
There are no effects found to result in a less-than-significant impact or significant impact with respect to aesthetics.			
Air Quality			
Impact 4.2 1 Operation activities under the General Plan Update could expose sensitive receptors to substantial pollutant concentrations. However, this would be a ***less-than-significant*** (Class II) impact for ongoing operations.	LTS	None	LTS
Impact 4.2 2 Implementation of the General Plan Update would provide new sources of regional air emissions that would conflict with or obstruct implementation of the Air Quality Management Plan. This is a ***significant and unavoidable*** impact (Class I).	PS	None	SU
Impact 4.2 3 Implementation of the General Plan Update would result in construction and operational emissions that could contribute substantially to an existing or projected air quality violation. This is ***a significant and unavoidable*** impact (Class I).	PS	**MM4.2-1** The City shall require future development within City limits to implement the following measures to the extent feasible: <u>Fugitive Dust Control Measures</u> ■ Water trucks shall be used during construction to keep all areas of vehicle movements damp enough to prevent dust from leaving the site. At a minimum, this will require twice-daily applications (once in late morning and once at the end of the workday). Increased watering is required whenever wind speed exceeds 15 mph. Grading shall be suspended if wind gusts exceed 25 mph. ■ The amount of disturbed area shall be minimized and onsite vehicle speeds shall be limited to 15 mph or less. ■ If importation, exportation and stockpiling of fill material is involved, earth with 5% or greater silt content that is stockpiled for more than two days shall be covered, kept moist, or treated with earth binders to prevent dust generation. Trucks transporting material shall be tarped from the point of origin or shall maintain at least two feet of freeboard. ■ After clearing, grading, earth moving, or excavation is completed, the disturbed area shall be treated by watering, revegetation, or by spreading earth binders until the area is paved or otherwise developed. ■ All material transported off-site shall be securely covered to prevent	SU

Table 2-1 Summary of Impacts and Mitigation Measures

KEY: LTS = Less Than Significant PS = Potentially Significant SU = Significant and Unavoidable

Impact	*Significance Before Mitigation*	*Mitigation Measures*	*Significance After Mitigation*
		excessive amounts of dust. <u>NOx Control Measures</u> ■ When feasible, electricity from temporary power poles on site shall be utilized rather than temporary diesel or gasoline generators. ■ When feasible, on site mobile equipment shall be fueled by methanol or natural gas (to replace diesel-fueled equipment), or, propane or butane (to replace gasoline-fueled equipment). ■ Aqueous Diesel Fuel or biodiesel (B20 with retarded fuel injection timing), if available, shall be used in diesel fueled vehicles when methanol or natural gas alternatives are not available. <u>VOC Control Measures</u> ■ Low VOC architectural and asphalt coatings shall be used on site and shall comply with AQMD Rule 1113-Architectural Coatings. <u>Other Ozone Precursor Control Measures</u> ■ Equipment engines should be maintained in good condition and in proper tune as per manufacturer's specifications. ■ Schedule construction periods to occur over a longer time period (i.e., lengthen from 60 days to 90 days) during the smog season so as to minimize the number of vehicles and equipment operating simultaneously. ■ Use new technologies to control ozone precursor emissions as they become readily available.	
Impact 4.2 4 Implementation of the General Plan Update would result in a cumulatively considerable net increase of criteria pollutants for which the region is in nonattainment under an applicable federal or state ambient air quality standard. This is a ***significant and unavoidable*** impact (Class I).	PS	None	SU
Impact 4.2 5 Construction under the General Plan Update could expose sensitive receptors to substantial pollutant concentrations. This is a ***significant and unavoidable*** impact (Class I) for construction activities, and a ***less-than-significant*** (Class II) impact for ongoing operations.	SU, LTS	None	SU, LTS

Table 2-1 Summary of Impacts and Mitigation Measures

KEY: LTS = Less Than Significant PS = Potentially Significant SU = Significant and Unavoidable

Impact	*Significance Before Mitigation*	*Mitigation Measures*	*Significance After Mitigation*
Biological Resources			
Impact 4.3-1 Development under the General Plan Update could result in direct and indirect impacts to special status species; however, these impacts would be reduced to less-than-significant levels through the implementation of the General Plan goals and policies and compliance with relevant local, state, and federal regulations. This is a ***less-than-significant*** (Class II) impact.	LTS	None	LTS
Impact 4.3-2 Development under the General Plan Update could result in direct and indirect impacts to riparian habitat and other sensitive natural communities; however, these impacts would be reduced to less-than-significant levels through the implementation of the General Plan Update goals and policies and compliance with relevant local, state, and federal regulations. This is a ***less-than-significant*** (Class II) impact.	LTS	None	LTS
Impact 4.3-3 Development under the General Plan Update could result in direct and indirect impacts to wetlands; however, these impacts would be reduced to less-than-significant levels through the implementation of the General Plan Update goals and policies and compliance with relevant local, state, and federal regulations. Therefore, impacts would be ***less than significant*** (Class II).	LTS	None	LTS
Impact 4.3-4 Development under the General Plan Update could interfere substantially with the movement of native resident and migratory wildlife species, established wildlife corridors, and impede the use of native wildlife nursery sites; however, these impacts would be reduced to less-than-significant levels through the implementation of the General Plan Update goals and policies and compliance with relevant local, state, and federal regulations. This is a ***less-than-significant*** (Class II) impact.	LTS	None	LTS
Impact 4.3-5 Development under the General Plan Update could conflict with local policies and ordinances protecting biological resources, including oak trees and existing SEAs; however, these impacts would be reduced to less-than-significant levels through the implementation of the General Plan Update goals and policies and compliance with relevant local, state, and federal regulations. This is a ***less-than-significant*** (Class II) impact.	LTS	None	LTS

Table 2-1 Summary of Impacts and Mitigation Measures

KEY: LTS = Less Than Significant PS = Potentially Significant SU = Significant and Unavoidable

Impact	*Significance Before Mitigation*	*Mitigation Measures*	*Significance After Mitigation*
Cultural Resources			
Impact 4.4-1 Construction activities associated with implementation of the General Plan Update could cause a substantial adverse change in the significance of an archaeological resource pursuant to Section 15064.5 of the CEQA Guidelines. However, with implementation of the General Plan Update goals and policies, as well as compliance with relevant local, state, and federal regulations, these changes would result in a ***less-than-significant*** (Class II) impact.	LTS	None	LTS
Impact 4.4-2 Construction activities associated with implementation of the General Plan Update could disturb any human remains, including those interred outside of formal cemeteries. However, with implementation of the General Plan Update goals and policies, as well as compliance with local, state, and federal regulations, these activities would result in a ***less-than-significant*** (Class II) impact.	LTS	None	LTS
Impact 4.4-3 Implementation of the General Plan Update could cause a substantial adverse change in the significance of a historical resource. This is a ***significant and unavoidable*** *(Class I) impact.*	PS	None	SU
Geology and Soils			
Impact 4.5-1 Future development under the General Plan Update would not expose people and/or structures to potentially substantial adverse effects, including the risk of loss, injury, or death, involving fault rupture, strong seismic groundshaking and/or seismic-related ground failure, including liquefaction. Although seismic groundshaking would occur during major earthquakes, typical of the region, compliance with applicable state and City regulations, and the General Plan Update goals and policies would reduce the potential impacts of vibration and associated ground failures to ***less-than-significant*** levels in the City (Class II).	LTS	None	LTS
Impact 4.5-2 Implementation of the General Plan Update would not result in substantial soil erosion and the loss of topsoil, as future development in the City would comply with applicable state and City regulations and General Plan Update goals and policies. This is a ***less-than-significant*** impact (Class II).	LTS	None	LTS
Impact 4.5-3 Implementation of the General Plan Update could be located on a geologic unit or soil that is unstable or would become unstable and potentially result in on- or off-site landslides, lateral spreading, subsidence, or collapse. Adherence to the General Plan Update goals and policies and City, state, and federal regulations would result in a ***less-than-significant*** impact (Class II).	LTS	None	LTS

Table 2-1 Summary of Impacts and Mitigation Measures

KEY: LTS = Less Than Significant PS = Potentially Significant SU = Significant and Unavoidable

Impact	*Significance Before Mitigation*	*Mitigation Measures*	*Significance After Mitigation*
Impact 4.5-4 Implementation of the General Plan Update could be located on expansive soils, as defined in Table 18-1-B, but would not create substantial risk to people and structures. Adherence to General Plan goals and policies, and City, state, and federal regulations would result in a ***less-than-significant*** impact (Class II).	LTS	None	LTS
Hazards and Hazardous Materials			
Impact 4.6-1 Implementation of the General Plan Update could result in an increase in the overall routine transport, use, storage, and disposal of hazardous materials within the City. However, with the implementation of the General Plan Update goals and policies, and compliance with local, state, and federal regulations, hazards related to the routine transport, use, storage, or disposal of hazardous materials would be a ***less-than-significant*** impact (Class II).	LTS	None	LTS
Impact 4.6-2 Implementation of the General Plan Update could result in a hazard to the public or the environment through reasonably foreseeable upset and accident conditions involving the release of hazardous materials to the environment. However, with the implementation of the General Plan Update goals and policies, and compliance with local, state, and federal regulations, hazards related to the accidental release of hazardous material into the environment would be a ***less-than-significant*** impact (Class II).	LTS	None	LTS
Impact 4.6-3 Implementation of the General Plan Update has the potential to emit hazardous emissions or handle hazardous or acutely hazardous materials, substances, or waste within ¼ mile of an existing or proposed school. However, adherence to local, state, and federal regulations, as well as the General Plan Update goals and policies would result in a ***less-than-significant*** impact (Class II).	LTS	None	LTS
Impact 4.6-4 Implementation of the General Plan Update could place uses on a site that is included in a list of hazardous materials sites compiled pursuant to Government Code Section 65962.5; however, it would not result in a significant hazard to the public or the environment, since projects would need to adhere to General Plan Update goals and policies, as well as local, state and federal requirements for remediation and cleanup. This is a ***less-than-significant*** impact (Class II).	LTS	None	LTS

Table 2-1 Summary of Impacts and Mitigation Measures

KEY: LTS = Less Than Significant PS = Potentially Significant SU = Significant and Unavoidable

Impact	*Significance Before Mitigation*	*Mitigation Measures*	*Significance After Mitigation*
Impact 4.6-5 Implementation of the General Plan Update could expose people or structures to the risk of loss, injury, or death involving wildland fires; however, with the implementation of the fire hazard policies in the Community Safety Chapter of the General Plan Update, this impact would be ***less than significant*** (Class II).	LTS	None	LTS
Hydrology and Water Quality			
Impact 4.7-1 Development under the General Plan Update could result in an increase in pollutants in stormwater and wastewater. However, with compliance with General Plan Update policies and local, state, and federal regulations, violation of water quality standards and waste discharge requirements would not be violated. Impacts would be considered ***less than significant*** (Class II).	LTS	None	LTS
Impact 4.7-2 Development of the General Plan Update could create additional impervious surfaces, which could interfere with groundwater recharge. However, development would not substantially deplete groundwater supplies or interfere substantially with groundwater recharge, given the anticipated minimal effects from construction and development on the groundwater basin and adherence to General Plan Update policies. Therefore, impacts would be ***less than significant*** (Class II).	LTS	None	LTS
Impact 4.7-3 Development under the General Plan Update could alter the existing drainage pattern of portions of the City and potentially result in erosion and siltation. However, adherence to General Plan Update policies and local, state, and federal regulations would reduce impacts to ***less-than-significant*** (Class II) levels.	LTS	None	LTS
Impact 4.7-4 Development under the General Plan Update could alter the existing drainage pattern of the City and potentially result in increased downstream flooding through the addition of impervious surfaces, exceeding the capacity of existing or planned stormwater drainage systems, or providing substantial additional sources of polluted runoff. However, adherence to General Plan Update policies and local, state, and federal regulations would reduce impacts to ***less-than-significant*** (Class II) levels.	LTS	None	LTS
Impact 4.7-5 Increases in stormwater runoff could require expansion of existing or construction of new storm drain facilities, the construction of which could result in significant environmental effects. However, compliance with General Plan Update policies and local, state, and federal regulations, would reduce impacts to a ***less-than-significant*** (Class II) level**.**	LTS	None	LTS

Table 2-1 Summary of Impacts and Mitigation Measures

KEY: LTS = Less Than Significant PS = Potentially Significant SU = Significant and Unavoidable

Impact	*Significance Before Mitigation*	*Mitigation Measures*	*Significance After Mitigation*
Impact 4.7-6 Development under the General Plan Update could place housing within a 100-year flood zone. However, adherence to General Plan Update policies and local, state, and federal regulations would reduce impacts to ***less-than-significant*** (Class II) levels.	LTS	None	LTS
Impact 4.7-7 Development under the General Plan Update could place structures within a 100-year flood zone, but not in a manner that would substantially impede or redirect flows. Adherence to General Plan Update policies and local, state, and federal regulations would reduce impacts to ***less-than-significant*** (Class II) levels.	LTS	None	LTS
Impact 4.7-8 Development under the General Plan Update could expose people and structures to flood risks. However, adherence to General Plan Update policies and local, state, and federal regulations would reduce impacts to ***less-than-significant*** (Class II) levels.	LTS	None	LTS
Land Use			
Impact 4.8-1 Implementation of the General Plan Update would not physically divide an established community as the General Plan Update provides for strategic growth to preserve existing neighborhoods and focus new development in areas that are currently vacant or underutilized. This is a ***less-than-significant*** (Class II) impact.	LTS	None	LTS
Noise			
Impact 4.9-1 Construction activities associated with the General Plan Update would generate noise levels that exceed the noise standards established by the City of Agoura Hills Noise Standards. However, this impact would be temporary and subject to the requirements of the City Municipal Code. This is a ***less-than-significant*** (Class II) impact.	LTS	None	LTS
Impact 4.9-2 Operation of the General Plan Update would generate and expose sensitive receptors on- or off-site to excessive groundborne vibration or groundborne noise levels. This is a ***less-than-significant*** (Class II) impact.	LTS	None	LTS
Impact 4.9-3 Operation of the proposed project would generate increased local traffic volumes that would cause a permanent increase in ambient noise levels in the project vicinity. However, the proposed project will result in a ***less-than-significant*** (Class II) impact.	LTS	None	LTS

Table 2-1 Summary of Impacts and Mitigation Measures

KEY: LTS = Less Than Significant PS = Potentially Significant SU = Significant and Unavoidable

Impact	*Significance Before Mitigation*	*Mitigation Measures*	*Significance After Mitigation*
Impact 4.9-4 Construction activities associated with the proposed project would result in a temporary or periodic increase in ambient noise levels. This is a ***less-than-significant*** (Class II) impact.	LTS	None	LTS
Impact 4.9-5 Operation of the General Plan Update would result in temporary or periodic increases in ambient noise levels. This is a ***less-than-significant*** (Class II) impact.	LTS	None	LTS
Impact 4.9-6 Implementation of the General Plan Update would generate noise levels that exceed the noise standards established by the City of Agoura Hills Noise Regulations. This is a ***significant and unavoidable*** (Class I) impact.	PS	None	SU
Impact 4.9-7 Construction activities associated with the General Plan Update could generate or expose persons or structures to excessive groundborne vibration. This is a ***significant and unavoidable*** (Class I) impact.	PS	None	SU
Population and Housing			
Impact 4.10-1 Implementation of the General Plan Update would induce growth in the City, both directly and indirectly. However, the extent of this growth is not considered to be substantial in light of the existing infrastructure and the proposed plan for growth under the General Plan Update. Therefore, the proposed project will result in a ***less-than-significant*** (Class II) impact.	LTS	None	LTS
Public Services			
There are no effects found to result in a less-than-significant impact or significant impact with respect to public services.			
Recreation			
Impact 4.12-1 Implementation of the General Plan Update could result in increased use of existing parks or recreational facilities that could accelerate physical deterioration of those facilities. However, this impact would be ***less than significant*** (Class II).	LTS	None	LTS
Impact 4.12-2 Implementation of the General Plan Update could lead to development of new parks and recreational facilities to maintain acceptable service ratios. The proposed project could result in adverse physical impacts associated with the provision of these facilities. However, with implementation of goals and policies of the General Plan Update, this impact would be ***less than significant*** (Class II).	LTS	None	LTS

Table 2-1 Summary of Impacts and Mitigation Measures

KEY: LTS = Less Than Significant PS = Potentially Significant SU = Significant and Unavoidable

Impact	*Significance Before Mitigation*	*Mitigation Measures*	*Significance After Mitigation*
Transportation/Traffic			
Impact 4.13-1 Implementation of the proposed General Plan Update could result in the potential intensification of existing uses that could result in increased hazards due to a design feature (e.g., sharp curves or dangerous intersections) or incompatible uses. However, implementation of the General Plan Update policies and compliance with existing regulations would ensure that this impact remains ***less than significant*** *(Class II)*.	LTS	None	LTS
Impact 4.13-2 Implementation of the General Plan Update would not result in an impact that would result in inadequate emergency access. Therefore, the proposed project will result in a ***less-than-significant*** (Class II) impact.	LTS	None	LTS
Impact 4.13-3 Implementation of the General Plan Update would not result in an impact that would result in an inadequate parking capacity. This is a ***less-than-significant*** (Class II) impact.	LTS	None	LTS
Impact 4.13-4 Implementation of the General Plan Update would not exceed, either individually or cumulatively, a level of service standard established by the County CMP Agency for designated roadways and/or highways, and would result in a ***less-than-significant*** (Class II) impact.	LTS	None	LTS
Impact 4.13-5 Implementation of the General Plan Update would result in an increase in traffic that is substantial in relation to the existing traffic load and capacity of the street system with respect to the number of vehicle trips or congestion along roadways. This is a potentially significant impact. As there is no feasible mitigation available to reduce this impact to a less-than-significant level, this impact is considered a ***significant and unavoidable*** (Class I) impact.	PS	None	SU
Utilities and Service Systems			
Impact 4.14-1 Implementation of the General Plan Update would not require or result in the construction of new water treatment facilities or expansion of existing facilities, the construction of which could cause significant environmental impacts. This is a ***less-than-significant*** (Class II) impact.	LTS	None	LTS
Impact 4.14-2 Existing water supply entitlements and resources are sufficient to serve the implementation of the General Plan Update. New or expanded entitlements are not needed. This is a ***less-than-significant*** (Class II) impact.	LTS	None	LTS

Table 2-1 Summary of Impacts and Mitigation Measures

KEY: LTS = Less Than Significant PS = Potentially Significant SU = Significant and Unavoidable

Impact	*Significance Before Mitigation*	*Mitigation Measures*	*Significance After Mitigation*
Impact 4.14-3 Implementation of the General Plan Update would not exceed wastewater treatment requirements of the Regional Water Quality Control Board. This is a ***less-than-significant*** (Class II) impact.	LTS	None	LTS
Impact 4.14-4 Implementation of the General Plan Update would not require or result in the construction of new wastewater treatment facilities or expansion of existing facilities, the construction of which could cause significant environmental effects, and would not would result in a determination by the wastewater treatment provider which serves or may serve the project that it does not have adequate capacity to serve the project's projected demand in addition to the provider's existing commitments. This is a ***less-than-significant*** (Class II) impact.	LTS	None	LTS
Impact 4.14-5 Implementation of the General Plan Update would result in the project being served by a landfill with sufficient permitted capacity to accommodate the project's solid waste disposal needs. This is a ***less-than-significant*** (Class II) impact.	LTS	None	LTS
Impact 4.14-6 Implementation of the General Plan Update would comply with applicable federal, state, and local statutes and regulations related to solid waste. This is a ***less-than-significant*** (Class II) impact.	LTS	None	LTS
Impact 4.14-7 Implementation of the General Plan Update would not require or result in the construction of new energy production or transmission facilities, or expansion of existing facilities, the construction of which could cause a significant environmental impact. This is a ***less-than-significant*** (Class II) impact.	LTS	None	LTS
Climate Change			
Impact 4.15-1 Implementation of the General Plan Update would not substantially contribute to GHG emissions in the State of California and would not conflict with any applicable plan, policy or regulation of an agency adopted for the purpose of reducing the emissions of GHGs. This is a ***less-than-significant*** (Class II) impact.	LTS	None	LTS

CHAPTER 3 Project Description

3.1 INTRODUCTION

This project description is intended to serve as the description of the project's technical, economic, and environmental characteristics (CEQA Guidelines Section 15124[c]). As described further below, the proposed Land Use Plan for the General Plan Update identifies the preliminary land use classifications for citywide development. During development of the Land Use Plan, areas of change and transition were identified by GPAC and City staff as a means to focus growth and change in areas that were in need of revitalization. Twelve community Subareas and districts were identified as areas of transition and the General Plan Update includes goals that express specific intentions for use, design, and character that uniquely apply to and differentiate each area, as well as addressing the City as a whole.

3.2 PROJECT APPLICANT

City of Agoura Hills
30001 Ladyface Court
Agoura Hills, CA 91301

3.3 ENVIRONMENTAL SETTING

3.3.1 Location

Located in the foothills of the Santa Monica Mountains on the western edge of Los Angeles County in the Conejo Valley, the City of Agoura Hills is characterized by rolling hills and a blend of semi-rural and suburban development. The City, which encompasses nearly 7 square miles (approximately 4,366 acres), straddles the Ventura Freeway and is situated approximately 36 miles west of downtown Los Angeles as shown in Figure 3-1 (Regional Location). Generally, Agoura Hills is bordered by Westlake Village to the west, Thousand Oaks to the northwest, Ventura County to the north, Calabasas and unincorporated areas of Los Angeles County to the east, and unincorporated areas of Los Angeles County to the south.

3.3.2 Regional Setting

Regional access to the City is provided by one main freeway, the 101 Freeway. The 101 Freeway runs east/west through Agoura Hills and provides the majority of traffic traveling to and from the City. In addition, the 23 Freeway runs north from the 101 west of Agoura Hills as it enters Thousand Oaks. The 101 continues east through the City of Los Angeles intersecting State Route 27, the 405 Freeway, State Route 170, and State Route 134. Freeway exits to Agoura Hills from the 101 Freeway include Liberty Canyon Road, Chesebro Road/Palo Comado Canyon Road, Kanan Road, and Reyes Adobe Road from east to west. Local access within the City is provided by Chesebro Road, Kanan Road, and Reyes Adobe

Road in the north/south direction and Agoura Road and Thousand Oaks Boulevard in the east/west direction.

Topography of the City of Agoura Hills is generally hilly, supporting major ridgelines to both the north (Simi Hills) and south (Santa Monica Mountains). The most prominent of these ridgelines is Ladyface Mountain. Large populations of wildlife and vegetation are supported on these hillsides as well as the canyons created by the identified ridgelines.

In general, established land use patterns in the City of Agoura Hills have focused commercial development along the Ventura Freeway (US-101) corridor. Single-family residential neighborhoods have been nestled within the hills to the north of the Freeway. The Old Agoura portion of town is a more rural area providing larger lots and development that promotes the historical attributes of the area that helped to shape what is the City of Agoura Hills today.

3.3.3 General City Characteristics

The majority of Agoura Hills consists of stable, attractive neighborhoods and places that the community desires to protect and enhance. The small-town, suburban feel of the community, the natural beauty of its hillsides and open spaces, the quality schools and public services, and the perceived safety of the City create a quality of life that attracts many residents to Agoura Hills. Large office buildings appropriately located along the US-101 corridor provide a considerable number of job opportunities for local residents. Additionally, the City supports a number of manufacturing and light industrial uses.

The last General Plan Update undertaken by the City of Agoura Hills was approved in 1993. There have been modest increases in the size of the City's population since the last General Plan update, and the community's concerns regarding protection of the natural environment remain high, as well as the desire for sustainable growth and development in Agoura Hills. A commitment to the conservation of natural resources ensures the ongoing availability of finite resources, such as a safe water supply, clean air, scenic vistas, and energy resources. This assurance contributes to the well-being of the community and strengthens the vitality of the local and regional economic base.

Basic land use patterns are well established in the City with residential neighborhoods fully developed and limited opportunities for infill development remaining. Two specific plans have been adopted within the City, including the Ladyface Mountain Specific Plan and the Agoura Village Specific Plan. Development of these Specific Plans and infill and reuse of other vacant or underutilized properties along Agoura Road represent the majority of potential new development and redevelopment in the community over the next 25 years as the General Plan Update is implemented.

The Planning Area (for this document) includes all areas within the existing City boundaries.

CITY of AGOURA HILLS
General Plan Update EIR

REGIONAL LOCATION

Legend

- City of Agoura Hills
- County Boundary
- Regional Park
- US Forest Service Land
- Lake or Reservoir
- River or Stream
- Interstate or Highway

Source: City of Agoura Hills, January 2007
Date Revised: July 7, 2009
D21377_Agoura_Hills\regional_location.mxd

Miles
0 1.25 2.5 5 7.5

Figure 3-1

3.4 GENERAL PLAN

3.4.1 General Plan Background

The City of Agoura Hills is regulated by objectives and policies put forth in the General Plan. The General Plan is a state-required legal document (Government Code Section 65300) that provides guidance to decision makers regarding the conservation of resources and the future physical form and character of development for the city. It is the official statement of the jurisdiction regarding the extent and types of development of land and infrastructure that will achieve the community's physical, economic, social, and environmental goals. The General Plan expresses the City's goals and articulates the City's intentions with respect to the rights and expectations of the general public, property owners, community interest groups, prospective investors, and business interests. Although the General Plan consists of individual sections, or "elements," that address a specific area of concern, it also embodies a comprehensive and integrated planning approach for the jurisdiction.

Under state law, each General Plan must contain seven elements:

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

It is important to note that all land use regulations, capital improvements, and other City actions pertaining to the physical development of the City must be consistent with the adopted General Plan.

3.4.2 Existing General Plan

The existing General Plan in the City of Agoura Hills was adopted in 1993. Table 3-1 (Elements of the Existing General Plan [1993]) includes a list of the eleven elements in the existing Agoura Hills General Plan, plus the Housing Element which was updated more recently.

As discussed below, the proposed General Plan Update includes a focused update of the Land Use, Circulation, and Noise Elements. Refinement of the remaining Elements and consolidation into four new "super elements" will take place with the focused update.

3.4.3 General Plan Update

The City is proposing a focused update of only the Land Use, Circulation, and Noise Elements of the existing General Plan (1993). Policies within the remaining eight Elements were refined and consolidated into four new "super elements" to ensure consistency with the overall intent of the General Plan Update.

Table 3-1 Elements of the Existing General Plan (1993)

Current Elements	*Date of Adoption/Update*
Land Use	1993
Circulation	1993
Open Space and Conservation	1993
Parks and Recreation	1993
Noise	1993
Public Safety	1993
Seismic Safety	1993
Scenic Highways	1993
Public Facilities, Utilities, and Services	1993
Community Design	1993
Economic Development	1993
Housing	2008 (City); 2009 (State)

The exception is the Housing Element, which was updated separately, and approved by the City in 2008, and the State in January 2009. The proposed "super elements" include:

- Community Conservation and Development
  - > Land Use & Urban Form
  - > Economic Development
  - > Historic and Cultural Resources
- Infrastructure and Community Services
  - > Mobility
  - > Utility Infrastructure
  - > Community Services
- Natural Resources
  - > Open Space
  - > Visual Resources
  - > Biological Resources
  - > Water
  - > Mineral Resources
  - > Energy Conservation
- Community Safety
  - > Flood Hazards
  - > Geological and Seismic Hazards
  - > Wildland and Urban Fire Hazards
  - > Crime Prevention and Protection
  - > Hazardous Materials
  - > Emergency Preparedness
  - > Noise
- Implementation Plan

The Land Use and Community Form Goals and Policies as well as Figure 3-2 (Land Use Diagram) are the most important components of the General Plan Update as they direct the future development and land use decisions within the City. The Land Use Diagram identifies graphically the land uses and their locations throughout the City. The Goals and Policies provide guidance on how to accommodate these land uses, as well as guidance on the landforms, community features, and design of potential development.

While the General Plan Update contains goals and policies regarding future land use and development addressed from a citywide perspective, much of the proposed land use changes are proposed for Subareas and districts that were identified during development of the General Plan Update, as discussed in depth later in this document. The twelve Subareas and districts cover approximately 1,131 acres or approximately 26 percent of the land area within the City. Accordingly, the EIR will address the impacts of the proposed General Plan Update policies in their entirety and, additionally, focus on those areas in which the most significant land use changes could occur.

3.4.4 Vision Statement

The General Plan Update is intended to guide the future development of the City of Agoura Hills and to provide guidance to decision makers as they consider proposals for new development and site reuse through the year 2035. Furthermore, the General Plan Update seeks to update the existing General Plan (1993) to be consistent with existing State planning laws which require the regular update of General Plans and other growth regulations that affect land use policy. The General Plan's goals, policies, and implementation programs define a roadmap to sustain and nurture the qualities and character that contribute to Agoura Hills' identity as a special community in a unique natural environment. Underlying these objectives is the vision statement set forth below, which is reflected in goals throughout the General Plan, and which represents the community's aspirations for its future:

> Agoura Hills is a special place surrounded by the Santa Monica Mountains where oak trees and rolling hills abound. Here we seek to preserve our city's best qualities while striving to create a better community. The future Agoura Hills is an attractive city of growing sophistication that chooses to retain its small town look and feel. The city remains a safe place, where people live, work, play, and move about in an economically viable and environmentally sustainable community. Sensitive growth and economic development are means of perpetuating our quality of life. These are balanced with resource conservation, as the city's semi-rural ranching past, rich history and unique neighborhoods are respected, and open spaces and surrounding hillsides are preserved. Agoura Hills is a place where its citizens have opportunities to engage in their community through recreation, social and civic activities, schools, and neighborhood organizations.

3.5 PROJECT CHARACTERISTICS

3.5.1 Introduction

The City of Agoura Hills was incorporated from Los Angeles County in 1982. The current land uses and layout were codified as the existing General Plan in 1993. Existing land uses by major use are identified in Section 3.4.1 (Existing Land Uses) below. Table 3-2 (Existing Land Uses) identifies existing uses and

the amount of space within the City dedicated to such use. The potential land use changes proposed by the General Plan Update are described in Section 3.4.2 (Proposed Land Uses) below. Table 3-4 (Proposed General Plan Land Uses) identifies the proposed uses and the amount of space within the City to be dedicated to such use. The General Plan Update introduces three new land use categories to the Planning Area—Commercial Shopping Center/Mixed Use (CS-MU), Neighborhood Commercial (NC), and Planned Development (PD).

Development Assumptions

The proposed General Plan Update provides for the development of approximately 116 single-family residential dwelling units, 413 multifamily residential, 625,794 square feet of retail/service, 1,098,291 square feet of office/business park, and 273,445 square feet of business park/manufacturing uses through the year 2035. The actual development patterns may occur differently than anticipated in this document due to market forces. For example, the pace of development may be faster or slower than anticipated by the analysis, or it could not occur at all.

3.5.2 Existing Land Uses

For planning and zoning purposes, land uses in the City of Agoura Hills are divided into five general categories.

- **Residential**—Residential uses include both single-family and multiple-family housing developed at varying densities
- **Commercial/Office**—Commercial uses include businesses which offer goods for sale to the public (retail), service uses, shopping centers, professional offices, and commercial recreation (i.e., golf courses). This category also includes hotel uses.
- **Industrial/Business Parks**—Larger-scale businesses involved in research and development, light manufacturing, and distribution. Retail and office uses that support the manufacturing/distribution.
- **Public Facilities**—Public Facilities uses include government buildings, libraries, schools, and other public institutions. Uses in this category support the civic and cultural needs of residents.
- **Parks/Recreation/Open Space**—This category includes both public and private recreational facilities and local and regional parks.

A breakdown of existing uses within the City is provided in Table 3-2 (Existing Land Uses). It is important to note that this is a comprehensive list of uses currently "on the ground" within the City and differs from the acreage available within each land use designation under the existing General Plan (1993). The amount of detail provided in the land use category breakdown in Table 3-2 (Existing Land Uses) is greater than typically included in a General Plan. However, this is provided for greater specificity and clarity as to existing conditions within the City.

CITY of AGOURA HILLS
General Plan Update EIR

LAND USE DIAGRAM

Legend

- Residential Very Low Density (0.2-1.0 du/ac) (RV)
- Residential Low Density (1-2 du/ac) (RL)
- Residential Single Family (2-6 du/ac) (RS)
- Residential Medium Density (6-15 du/ac) (RM)
- Residential High Density (15-20 du/ac) (HDR)
- Commercial Neighborhood Center (CN)
- Commercial Shopping Center (CS)
- Commercial Shopping Center/ Mixed Use (CS-MU)
- Commercial Retail Service (CRS)
- Commerical Recreation (CR)
- Business Park – Office Retail (BP-OR)
- Business Park-Manufacturing (BP-M)
- Planned Development District (PD)
- Public Facility (PF)
- Local Park (P)
- Open Space – Restricted (OS-R)
- Open Space – Deed Restricted (OS-DR)
- City Limits
- County Boundary
- Streams
- Open Water

Source: City of Agoura Hills, January 2007
D21377_Agoura_Hills\GPLU_Update.mxd

Miles
0 0.125 0.25 0.5 0.75

PBS&J

Figure 3-2

Table 3-2 Existing Land Uses			
Existing Land Use	*Land Use Code*	*Acreage*	*Percentage of City Area*
Commercial/Office			
Commercial Retail/Service	CRS	48.9	1.1
Commercial Shopping Center	CS	58.0	1.3
Restaurant	R	6.3	0.1
Office	O	49.3	1.1
Hotel	H	12.6	0.3
Industrial/Business Parks			
Business Park Manufacturing	BPM	69.5	1.6
Business Park Office	BPO	76.0	1.7
Commercial— Auto Related	CAR	10.8	0.2
Residential			
High Density-Residential (15–20 du/ac)	HDR	60.7	1.4
Medium Density-Residential (6–15 du/ac)	MDR	167.3	3.8
Single Family-Residential (2–6 du/ac)	SFR	1,019.8	23.4
Low Density-Residential (1–2 du/ac)	LDR	140.7	3.2
Very Low-Residential (<2 du/ac)	VLR	281.8	6.5
Public Facilities			
Drainage, floodplain, watercourse	D	37.7	0.9
Government Office	G	7.2	0.2
School	SH	81.1	1.9
Religious Institution	RI	119.7	2.7
Utility	U	12.5	0.3
Open Space			
Open Space	OS	497.5	11.6
Local Park	P	73.5	1.0
Permanent Open Space	POS	748.9	17.6
Private Recreation	PR	81.3	1.9
Vacant	V	708.7	16.2
Total (rounded to the nearest tenth)		***4,366.2***	***100.0***

Additionally, it is important to note that existing development (square footage) is less than that allowed under the existing General Plan (1993) indicating that the City is not currently at full buildout as allowed for in the existing General Plan (1993). Table 3-3 (Existing General Plan [1993] Land Uses) demonstrates the buildout level currently allowed within the City. This information is provided for reference only as all environmental analysis will be conducted based on existing physical conditions, rather than what would be allowed under the existing General Plan (1993).

Table 3-3 Existing General Plan (1993) Land Uses			
Existing Land Use	*Land Use Code*	*Acreage*	*Percentage of City Area*
Commercial/Office			
Commercial Retail/Service	CRS	99.5	2.3
Commercial Shopping Center	CS	37.0	0.8
Commercial Recreation	CR	27.9	0.6
Industrial/Business Parks			
Business Park - Manufacturing	BP-M	162.8	3.7
Business Park—Office Retail	BP-OR	89.6	2.1
Residential			
High Density-Residential (15-20 du/ac)	HDR	47.3	1.1
Medium Density-Residential (6-15 du/ac)	RM	155.4	3.6
Single Family-Residential (2-6 du/ac)	RS	1,068.9	24.5
Low Density-Residential (1-2 du/ac)	RL	156.7	3.6
Very Low-Residential (<2 du/ac)	RV	243.1	5.6
Rural Residential	RR	12.9	0.3
Specific Plan	SP	817.4	18.7
Public Facilities			
Open Water	OW	15.1	0.3
Public Facility	PF	90.1	2.1
Open Space			
Restricted Open Space	OS/R	972.3	22.3
Open Space/Deed Restricted	OS/R/DR	318.6	7.3
Local Park	P	51.6	1.2
Total (rounded to the nearest tenth)		***4,366.2***	***100.0***

3.5.3 Proposed Land Uses

Consistent with state legislation, the General Plan Update goals and policies guide development of Agoura Hills' built environment through the year 2035. These are based on and distill the policies from all General Plan elements into a set of coordinated actions that manage how existing neighborhoods, commercial centers, business districts, and open spaces will be conserved and how growth will be managed to protect the qualities that distinguish the City. As such, the Community Conservation and Development goals and policies serve as the central organizing element for the General Plan as a whole. Policies for the conservation of natural resources, as specified by the Natural Resources Chapter, and protection of residents from the risks of hazards, as specified by the Community Safety Chapter, are reflected in its distribution and densities of uses. Land use capacities reflect Agoura Hills' intentions for economic development, jobs generation, and fiscal balance. These are correlated with the provision of adequate housing to meet the needs of existing and future residents, as specified by the Housing Element, as well as the provision of transportation and utility infrastructure and community parks and

other services, as specified by the Infrastructure and Community Services Chapter. Implicitly, the Community Conservation and Development Chapter serves as the central point for decisions regarding how the City of Agoura Hills will evolve and mature over the next 25 years.

As Agoura Hills is approaching the maximum level of development desired by the collective City, the land use policies focus on how population and employment growth can be managed to preserve the qualities that distinguish the City's neighborhoods, business districts, and open spaces. These policies recognize that most of the City will be conserved for the existing types and densities of land uses and provides direction for the long-term maintenance of these conditions. Policies provide for re-use of economically underperforming properties and obsolete development, conversion of uses in response to market demand, and more intense use of land in limited, defined areas. Changes focus on enhancing the quality of life with reduced need for automobile trips and increased walkability, connectivity among neighborhoods and districts, and the completion of cohesive and well-defined districts.

The City's commercial corridors and districts are well established and mostly built out. However, they are subject to change as economic pressures and opportunities spark new development to replace aging structures and underperforming uses. Policies of the General Plan Update are intended to ensure that these changes complement their surroundings and embody the characteristics that are valued by the residents of Agoura Hills. Development intended to help the City accommodate its fair share of regional residential growth is expected to occur as part of mixed use projects located in certain traditionally commercial and/or transitioning multifamily areas.

To accommodate and direct the remaining growth and future reuse of property within the City, three additional land use categories are being introduced—Commercial Shopping Center/Mixed Use (CS-MU), Neighborhood Commercial (NC), and Planned Development (PD). Lands designated as Planned Development (PD) include properties previously considered under an adopted Specific Plan, most prominently the Ladyface Mountain Specific Plan and the Agoura Village Specific Plan. Commercial Shopping Center—Mixed Use (CS-MU) will be used to promote the development of a "village-like" environment where residents can live in close proximity to commercial services and offices. This would include the retail and office uses permitted in the Commercial—Shopping Center (CS) category, with the addition of housing units on the upper floors of buildings containing ground level nonresidential uses. The Neighborhood Commercial (NC) designation would continue to allow the uses that currently exist, but would ensure that commercial centers retain the scale and density of development, as well as types of uses, that are compatible with existing residential uses.

A breakdown of land uses in the proposed General Plan Update is provided in Table 3-4 (Proposed General Plan Land Uses).

Table 3-5 (Summary of Existing and Proposed Land Uses by General Land Use Category) summarizes the land uses in both the existing and proposed General Plans for easy comparison.

Table 3-4 Proposed General Plan Land Uses			
Proposed Land Use	*Land Use Code*	*Acreage*	*Percentage of City Area*
Business Park Manufacturing	BP-M	129.6	3.0
Business Park Office Retail	BP-OR	78.8	1.8
Commercial Recreation	CR	27.9	0.6
Commercial Retail/Service	CRS	102.3	2.3
Commercial Shopping Center	CS	8.5	0.2
Commercial Shopping Center—Mixed Use	CS-MU	26.0	0.6
Neighborhood Commercial	NC	2.4	>0.1
Open Space/Deed Restricted	OS/R/D	304.2	7.1
Restricted Open Space	OS/R	1,000.5	23.3
Open Water	OW	15.1	0.3
Local Park	P	73.5	1.1
Planned Development	PD	850.5	19.5
Public Facility	PF	90.1	2.1
High Density-Residential (15-20 du/ac)	HDR	47.3	1.1
Medium Density-Residential (6-15 du/ac)	RM	140.1	3.2
Low Density-Residential (1-2 du/ac)	RL	156.7	3.6
Very Low-Residential (<2 du/ac)	RV	243.0	5.6
Single Family-Residential (2-6 du/ac)	RS	1,068.6	24.5
Total (rounded to the nearest tenth)		***4,365.2***	***100.0***

Table 3-5 Summary of Existing and Proposed Land Uses by General Land Use Category									
General Plan	*Single Family (du)*	*Multifamily (du)*	*Retail / Service (sf)*	*Office/ Business Park (sf)*	*Business Park / Manufacturing (sf)*	*School (enrollment)*	*Hotel (rooms)*	*Institutional (sf)*	*Commercial Recreation (sf)*
Existing	5,312	2,298	1,225,113	2,333,157	844,681	4,189	519	92.011	22,000
Proposed	5,428	2,711	1,850,907	3,431,448	1,118,126	4,189	519	92,011	22,000
Difference	***116***	***413***	***625,794***	***1,098,291***	***273,445***	***0***	***0***	***0***	***0***

Subareas and Districts

During preparation of the General Plan Update, areas of conservation and transition were identified by the General Plan Advisory Committee (GPAC) as a means to maintain and enhance the character and quality of life in existing neighborhoods and areas that would not be subject to change. This would help to focus growth and change in the community to areas that were in need of revitalization to accomplish

economic, fiscal or community service objectives consistent with a vision for long-term growth. At the outset of the General Plan Update, twelve study areas were identified as areas of transition and detailed study went into land uses that would support long-term growth in these areas (Figure 3-3 [Community Subareas]). The General Plan Update includes goals and policies that express specific intentions for use, design, character, and implementation that uniquely apply to and differentiate the individual Subareas. These supplement and do not supersede the general goals and policies presented for the City in its entirety.

A general description of each of the Subareas is provided below. Subareas that have been identified as a potential area of change are denoted in bold. The only Subareas for which a change in land use is proposed are 5 and 8.

- **Area 1: Commercial Recreation/Golf Course**—Currently, this area is designated by the existing General Plan (1993) as Commercial Recreation and is utilized as a golf course. The community has expressed concern regarding use of this property should the golf course cease operation. However, since the County approved a development density transfer from the golf course property to the adjoining development, in the event that the golf course operation ceases the golf course property would be preserved as active or passive open space with continued commercial recreation uses allowed. The General Plan Update contains policies that support the continued open space use of the golf course, as a visual amenity and a recreational asset for the community. The General Plan land use designation of Commercial Recreation would not change.
- **Area 2: Neighborhood Commercial/Thousand Oaks Boulevard and Lake Lindero Drive**—This area is currently designated as Commercial Shopping Center by the existing General Plan (1993) and is utilized as such. The retail centers at this location currently provide local-serving commercial and service uses but are outdated and are suitable for redevelopment and redesign. The General Plan Update includes polices for improved property design, neighborhood compatibility, and streetscape improvements for the area. However, no change to the current Commercial Shopping Center land use designation would occur.
- **Area 3: Business Park District/West of Reyes Adobe Road**—This area is developed with office and business parks and is designated as Business Park—Manufacturing by the existing General Plan (1993). This area is located within the City's redevelopment project area. The General Plan Update includes policies that encourage the development of ancillary uses that would support existing businesses such as retail and restaurants. Additional policies require new development to be cohesively designed to minimize the need for employees to travel off-site. The General Plan land use designation of Business Park—Manufacturing would not change.
- **Area 4: Planned Development District/Ladyface Mountain Specific Plan**—This area is currently undeveloped and is designated as part of the Ladyface Mountain Specific Plan. The Specific Plan proposes a mix of business park, office, commercial, limited retail, and open space uses. Goals and policies within the General Plan Update support the Ladyface Mountain Specific Plan to create an economically viable business park, office, open space, and commercial use that is designed to reflect the natural setting, while incorporating diverse uses that minimize the need for employees to travel off site.

  The General Plan land use designation would change to Planned Development. This change reflects the land use designations within the Ladyface Mountain Specific Plan, and no changes to the Ladyface Mountain Specific Plan are proposed.

- **Area 5: North side of Agoura Road/West of Kanan Road**—This area is currently developed with a fragmented mixture of industrial, auto service, storage, building supply and retail uses and is designated as Business Park—Manufacturing by the existing General Plan (1993). Properties within this area are challenged by a continued lack of proper maintenance, vacant parcels, awkward lot configurations, and non-conforming uses. However, opportunities for redevelopment exist due to high freeway visibility and large lot sizes.

  The General Plan Update goals and policies encourage cohesive and integrated redevelopment of this area supporting the re-use and transformation of the existing fragmented uses and buildings into a well-planned and designed center. New land uses permitted as part of the General Plan Update would include a mix of retail, office, commercial recreation, entertainment, and residential land uses to revitalize the area and also complement nearby areas such as Agoura Village. Housing units would be permitted upon the adoption of a regulatory document (e.g., specific plan) in the future.

  The General Plan Land Use designation would change from Business Park—Manufacturing to Planned Development.

- **Area 6: Kanan Road, south of the freeway interchange**—This area is designated as Commercial—Retail Service in the existing General Plan (1993) and is developed with retail, restaurants, freeway-oriented commercial, and business park manufacturing uses. Development in this area is challenged by multiple property owners as well as non-conforming lot sizes and uses. However, the area has high visibility from the freeway and is considered to be part of the 'freeway gateway' due to its location. This area is part of the City's redevelopment project area and is adjacent to the Agoura Village Specific Plan.

  The General Plan Update would encourage existing development to meet current City standards, including contemporary City standards for building materials and colors, signage, lighting, and landscaping. Policies also encourage the installation of signage, monuments, street trees, plantings, lighting, paving materials, art, and other improvements in the public right of way to establish a distinct identity for the area. However, no change to the Commercial—Retail Service General Plan land use designation would occur.

- **Area 7: Planned Development District/Agoura Village Specific Plan**—Area 7 is currently partially undeveloped and is designated as part of the Agoura Village Specific Plan. A cornerstone of the Plan is achieving diversity and character through a mixed-use village environment, including both a horizontal and vertical mix of residential, commercial, office and entertainment uses. The General Plan Update supports transformation of the area into a pedestrian-oriented village containing a mix of retail, restaurants, entertainment, hotel, housing and complementary uses.

  The General Plan land use designation would change from Specific Plan to Planned Development. Future development would be managed in accordance with the land use and development standards specified by the Agoura Village Specific Plan. No changes to the Agoura Village Specific Plan are proposed.

- **Area 8: Kanan Road/Thousand Oaks Boulevard**—Area 8 is currently designated as Commercial—Shopping Center by the existing General Plan (1993) and is considered to be the largest contiguous commercial area within the City. This area consists primarily of three existing shopping centers, typical of the older style, automobile oriented design that struggle to provide attention to pedestrian linkages and appropriate transitions to adjacent residential uses. The intent for the General Plan Update is to continue to have this area serve as a shopping center, but add the

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COMMUNITY SUBAREAS

Legend

- (#) District/Subarea
- Residential Very Low Density (0.2-1.0 du/ac) (RV)
- Residential Low Density (1-2 du/ac) (RL)
- Residential Single Family (2-6 du/ac) (RS)
- Residential Medium Density (6-15 du/ac) (RM)
- Residential High Density (15-20 du/ac) (HDR)
- Commercial Neighborhood Center (CN)
- Commercial Shopping Center (CS)
- Commercial Shopping Center/ Mixed Use (CS-MU)
- Commercial Retail Service (CRS)
- Commerical Recreation (CR)
- Business Park – Office Retail (BP-OR)
- Business Park-Manufacturing (BP-M)
- Planned Development District (PD)
- Public Facility (PF)
- Local Park (P)
- Open Space – Restricted (OS-R)
- Open Space – Deed Restricted (OS-DR)
- City Limits
- County Boundary
- Streams
- Open Water

Source: City of Agoura Hills, January 2007
D21377_Agoura_Hills\EIR_Comm_Districts_Subareas.mxd

Miles
0 0.125 0.25 0.5 0.75

Figure 3.3

option of residential units on the upper floors of commercial buildings and add pedestrian amenities and greater connections to adjacent uses.

The General Plan land use designation would change from Commercial Shopping Center to Commercial Shopping Center/Mixed-Use.

- **Area 9: Town and Country Townhomes/Thousand Oaks Boulevard and Kanan Road**—This area is currently developed with older style multifamily residential development and has a corresponding Medium Density Residential designation within the existing General Plan (1993). As a whole, this area is in need of rehabilitation, maintenance, and linkages to adjacent commercial areas (primarily along Kanan Road). Existing issues that have been identified in this area can be addressed through Municipal Code and policy enforcement. The General Plan Update contains policies to encourage property and streetscape maintenance and improvements.

  No change is proposed to the current Medium Density Residential General Plan land use designation.

- **Area 10: Freeway Corridor Commercial Services District**—Area 10 is currently developed with retail, restaurants, auto uses, day care facilities, and office uses and is designated as Commercial Retail/Service by the existing General Plan (1993). The contents of this area consist of an eclectic mix of uses and ages of buildings. This area is challenged by limited access to the freeway and few opportunities for new development, consisting of a few vacant lots and storage uses.

  No change in the current Commercial Retail/Service land use is proposed. However, goals and policies within the General Plan Update encourage the re-use of properties with non-conforming uses, streetscape improvements, and the overall visual enhancement of this area.

- **Area 11: Old Agoura Business Center**—Area 11 is designated by the existing General Plan (1993) as Business Park Office Retail and is located at the commercial center of Old Agoura. The current mix of older commercial and retail uses creates an old town character that respects the historic culture of this area as the beginnings of what is now Agoura Hills.

  Two distinct areas make up the old town center: (1) The Agoura Road Corridor with characteristics, including street tree canopies, two-lane roads, no curb, gutter, or sidewalk, no street lights, small-scale buildings set close to the street, and eclectic building style and (2) The Dorothy Drive Corridor, including older character uses, but with curb, gutter, and sidewalk.

  No change in the current land use designation is proposed. Goals and policies within the General Plan Update promote the re-use of underutilized properties that reflect the historic qualities of Old Agoura Hill's character and require the development of design guidelines for buildings, streetscape, and signage to improve the overall visual enhancement of this area.

- **Area 12: Hillside Neighborhoods (Indian Hills and Southeast Ridge Areas)**—Area 12 is developed generally with low density residential uses and open space and is designated as Restricted Open Space in the existing General Plan (1993). Lands adjacent to Agoura Road are developed with single-family residential uses. The southerly portion of this area is characterized by natural hillsides that present challenges for development. However, this hillside is entitled with recorded lots, many of which are required to be combined under the Municipal Code. Special attention will need to be given to the Significant Ecological Area (SEA) designation within this area.

  No change in the current Restricted Open Space land use is proposed. The goals and policies within the General Plan Update encourage future development to be low density and designed to reflect the area's hillside topography natural landscapes.

Traffic Analysis Zones

As part of the overall General Plan Update, a traffic analysis was prepared to identify locations (primarily street segments) that would be operationally deficient as a result of growth anticipated by the General Plan Update. Separate from the community Subareas utilized for land use analysis purposes, traffic analysis zones (TAZs) were developed to analyze the potential traffic impacts. Figure 3-4 (Transportation Analysis Zone [TAZ] Map) identifies the location and boundaries of each of the TAZs. Table 3-6 (Existing and Proposed General Plan Buildout by TAZ) identifies the amount of development (square feet) per TAZ under the existing and proposed General Plans.

Existing Specific Plans

As discussed above, one of the new land use categories proposed under the General Plan Update is Planned Development (PD). As defined in the proposed General Plan Update, the Planned Development (PD) category applies to areas in which a specific plan, master plan, design guidelines, and/or other regulatory document is required to guide the *(a)* integration of multiple buildings and/or a mix of land uses into a distinct and cohesive district and/or *(b)* location and design of development to respond to localized site constraints such as topography, natural resources, and drainage. By statute, such plans are required to be consistent with, and are intended to prescribe greater detail than, the General Plan. Permissible densities and cumulative development yield shall be specified by the individual specific plan. Within the proposed General Plan Update, the PD land use designation has been identified in two locations that have already undergone adoption of a specific plan—the Agoura Village Specific Plan area and the Ladyface Mountain Specific Plan area. A third area immediately north of the Agoura Village Specific Plan and west of Kanan Road (Subarea 5) is designated as PD with the intent for a specific plan, master plan, or other regulatory document to guide the integrated development of housing with retail, office, entertainment, and comparable uses as a pedestrian-oriented village.

For purposes of this analysis, it is assumed that the regulations within the specific plans will be adhered with regard to permissible future development. It is assumed that development allowed within these Subareas will not exceed that identified in the Specific Plans, respectively. Similarly, it is assumed that the environmental documentation prepared for each adopted specific plan is the program-level environmental analysis of record for these areas. It is assumed that development proposed in these areas will be restricted to the development envelope set forth in the respective documents that was subsequently analyzed in an EIR. Accordingly, development within these two Subareas would be compliant with the identified type, size and location of development previously established and the environmental analysis previously prepared. This EIR will analyze as appropriate, and at a programmatic level, development within these Subareas using the previously certified Program EIRs for the specific plan areas. However, future development proposed within the Agoura Village Specific Plan and Ladyface Mountain Specific Plan that is not compliant with these plans and/or environmental assumptions and analysis will be required to prepare additional, project-level environmental analysis.

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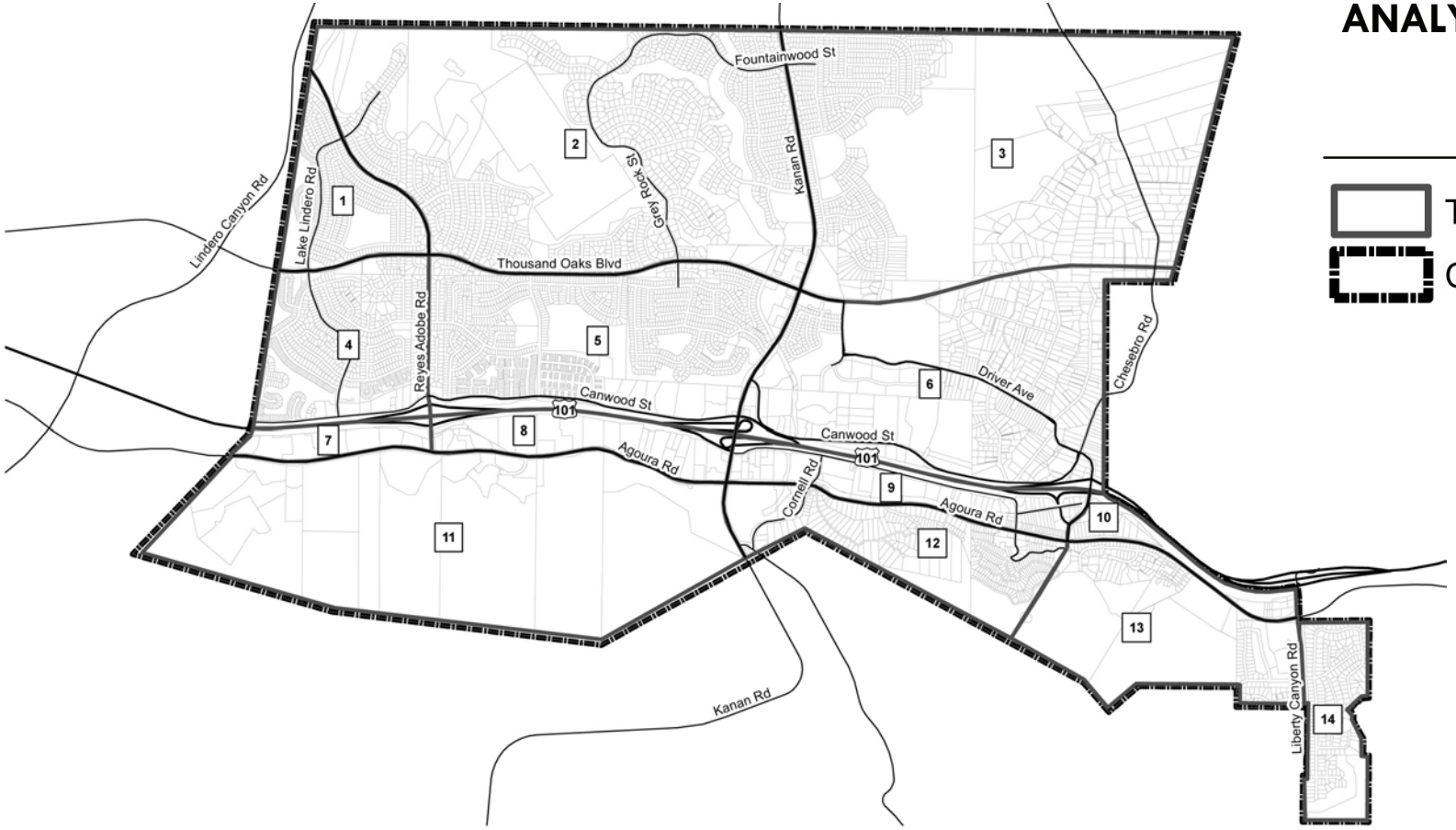
TRANSPORTATION ANALYSIS ZONE (TAZ) MAP



TAZs

City Boundary

Source: City of Agoura Hills General Plan Master Environmental Assessment Data Base, 1992.

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PBS&J

Figure 3-4

Table 3-6 Existing and Proposed General Plan Buildout by TAZ

TAZ	SA	GP	Residential		Non-Residential						
			SFR (du)	MFR (du)	Retail/Service (sf)	Office/ Business Park (sf)	Business Park/ Manufacturing (sf)	School (enroll)	Hotel (rooms)	Inst. (sf)	Comm Rec (sf)
1	Includes SA1 (Lake Lindero)	Ex	459	0	9,712	0	0	1,045	0	0	9,000
		Prop	459	0	9,853	0	0	1,045	0	0	9,000
		Diff	0	0	141	0	0	0	0	0	0
2	SA7 (Ralph's Shopping Center)	Ex	1,307	126	166,231	0	0	905	0	0	0
		Prop	1,307	148	194,806	0	0	905	0	0	0
		Diff	0	22	28,575	0	0	0	0	0	0
3	Incl SA8 (NEC of TO Blvd & Kanan Rd)	Ex	858	226	0	0	0	191	0	0	13,000
		Prop	881	226	0	0	0	191	0	0	13,000
		Diff	23	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
4	Incl SA2 (Lake Lindero to TO Blvd)	Ex	742	72	90,486	118,233	0	0	0	5,920	0
		Prop	742	72	99,953	118,233	0	0	0	5,920	0
		Diff	0	0	9,467	0	0	0	0	0	0
5	SA7 Vons	Ex	1,069	369	120,730	302,267	0	0	0	12,500	0
		Prop	1,069	391	174,649	461,851	0	0	0	12,500	0
		Diff	0	22	53,919	159,584	0	0	0	0	0
6		Ex	362	1,066	218,761	71,339	645,905	2,048	125	0	0
		Prop	376	1,066	486,774	83,375	851,370	2,048	125	0	0
		Diff	14	0	268,013	12,036	205,465	0	0	0	0
7		Ex	0	0	2,160	571,192	0	0	94	0	0
		Prop	0	0	22,600	604,184	0	0	94	0	0
		Diff	0	0	20,440	32,992	0	0	0	0	0
8	Incl SA5 (north side of Agoura Rd, west of Kanan Rd)	Ex	0	0	224,139	544,926	174,594	0	0	11,476	0
		Prop	0	76	276,036	697,954	196,456	0	0	11,476	0
		Diff	0	76	51,897	153,028	21,862	0	0	0	0

Table 3-6 Existing and Proposed General Plan Buildout by TAZ

TAZ	SA	GP	Residential		Non-Residential						
			SFR (du)	MFR (du)	Retail/Service (sf)	Office/ Business Park (sf)	Business Park/ Manufacturing (sf)	School (enroll)	Hotel (rooms)	Inst. (sf)	Comm Rec (sf)
9	Incl SA6, 9, & 10 (Kanan Rd, south of Fwy)	Ex	0	0	392,894	351,743	24,182	0	0	0	0
		Prop	0	19	409,486	423,282	70,300	0	0	0	0
		Diff	0	19	16,592	71,539	46,118	0	0	0	0
10		Ex	0	0	0	194,938	0	0	0	0	0
		Prop	0	0	0	365,780	0	0	0	0	0
		Diff	0	0	0	170,842	0	0	0	0	0
11	Incl SA4 (south side of Agoura Rd, west of Reyes Adobe Rd)	Ex	0	178	0	99,624	0	0	300	62,115	0
		Prop	0	290	61,250	442,555	0	0	300	62,115	0
		Diff	0	112	61,250	342,931	0	0	0	0	0
12	Incl SA11 & 12 (south of Agoura Rd)	Ex	64	10	0	78,895	0	0	0	0	0
		Prop	117	172	115,500	234,234	0	0	0	0	0
		Diff	53	162	115,500	155,339	0	0	0	0	0
13		Ex	218	251	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
		Prop	244	251	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
		Diff	26	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
14		Ex	233	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
		Prop	233	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
		Diff	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
		Ex	***5,312***	***2,298***	***1,225,113***	***2,333,157***	***844,681***	***4,189***	***519***	***92,011***	***22,000***
	Total	***Prop***	***5,428***	***2,711***	***1,850,907***	***3,431,448***	***1,118,126***	***4,189***	***519***	***92,011***	***22,000***
		Diff	***116***	***413***	***625,794***	***1,098,291***	***273,445***	***0***	***0***	***0***	***0***

3.5.4 Public Actions and Approvals Required

The City is the lead agency with the authority to carry out or approve the proposed project. The City's project approvals include certification of the EIR for the proposed project, approval of the General Plan Update, and adoption of Findings of Fact, a Statement of Overriding Considerations (as necessary), and Mitigation Monitoring Program.

The General Plan Update is a policy and framework document regarding future development within the City of Agoura Hills and does not include any specific development project. As such, the General Plan Update as the "Project" under CEQA does not require discretionary approval from Responsible or Trustee Agencies. However, in the future as development is proposed in accordance with the General Plan Update, there may be projects that, in addition to approval by the City, may need federal, regional, and/or state Responsible and Trustee agencies discretionary approval over specific aspects of a proposed project. Agencies that may have discretionary approval could include, but are not necessarily limited to:

- Regional Water Quality Control Board (RWQCB) regarding water quality and quantity, as well as potential discharges into surface waters
- California Department of Fish and Game (CDFG) regarding biological resources
- California Department of Transportation (Caltrans) regarding the US-101 and other roadways within the City that are under the maintenance of the state
- U.S. Army Corps of Engineers (USACE) regarding waters of the US and wetlands
- Air Quality Management District regarding issues of air quality and associated permitting

Other agencies may use the EIR in exercising their duties even if they do not have discretionary permit approval authority over all or parts of the General Plan Update (or implementation of individual projects developed as a result of the General Plan Update).

All projects that are proposed in the future under the General Plan Update will be required to obtain all necessary discretionary actions and environmental clearance, separate from this General Plan Update.

CHAPTER 4 Environmental Analysis

INTRODUCTION TO THE ANALYSIS

Sections 4.1 through 4.15 of this EIR chapter contain a discussion of the potential environmental impacts of implementation of the General Plan Update, including information related to existing site conditions, analyses of the type and magnitude of project-related and cumulative environmental impacts, and feasible mitigation measures that could reduce or avoid environmental impacts.

Format of the Environmental Analysis

Each environmental resource section in Chapter 4 contains the following headings and related discussions.

Environmental Setting

An EIR must include a description of the existing physical environmental conditions to provide the "baseline condition" that may be subject to change as a result of implementation of the proposed General Plan Update. This section provides the context against which project-related impacts are compared (CEQA Guidelines Section 15125).

Regulatory Framework

The Regulatory Framework provides a summary of regulations, plans, policies, and laws that are relevant to each environmental issue area. Federal, state, regional, and local regulations that are designed to ensure protection of resources, public and private property, and the local population have been reviewed and incorporated as appropriate.

Thresholds of Significance

Thresholds of significance are criteria used to determine whether potential environmental effects are significant. This subsection defines the type, amount, and/or extent of impact that would be considered a significant adverse change in the environment. Some thresholds (such as air quality, traffic, and noise) are quantitative, while others, such as visual quality, are qualitative. The thresholds are intended to assist the reader in understanding how and why the EIR reaches a conclusion that an impact is significant or less than significant.

Thresholds of Significance used for the evaluation of impacts include those thresholds presented in Appendix G of the 2009 CEQA Guidelines. The City of Agoura Hills relies on these thresholds as appropriate for evaluation of the significance of impacts within the City.

Thresholds of significance are provided both in the "Thresholds of Significance" section and immediately before the relevant impact analysis for ease of correlation.

Project Impacts and Mitigation Measures

This section is further divided into the following subsections, as described below.

Effects Not Found to Be Significant

Certain impacts are determined to be "Effects Not Found to Be Significant" under Section 15128 of the CEQA Guidelines. This section of the CEQA Guidelines requires that an EIR contain a brief statement indicating the reasons that various possible significant effects of a project are determined not to be significant and, therefore, are not discussed in detail in the EIR.

Project Impacts and Mitigation Measures

This subsection describes the potential environmental impacts of the proposed project and, based on the thresholds of significance, determines whether the environmental impacts would be considered significant and unavoidable or less than significant. Each impact is summarized in an "impact statement" that is separately numbered, followed by a more detailed discussion of the potential impacts and the significance of each impact before mitigation. Impact numbers and statements are not provided for Effects Not Found to Be Significant.

Each impact area under consideration is also listed with a statement of the significance determination for the environmental effect as follows:

- **Significant and Unavoidable; Class I**—Constitutes a substantial adverse change to existing environmental conditions that cannot be fully mitigated by implementation of all feasible mitigation measures, or by the selection of an environmentally superior project alternative.
- **Less Than Significant, with or without Mitigation Measures; Class II**—This class includes impacts that will not be adverse to the environment that may or may not require mitigation to reach this level. For example, this includes an impact that may be adverse, but does not exceed the threshold levels before or after implementation of mitigation measures. For circumstances where an impact does not exceed a threshold, mitigation measures may be suggested, if readily available, to further reduce environmental effects. Additionally, this class includes impacts that constitute a substantial adverse change to existing environmental conditions that can be mitigated to less-than-significant levels by implementation of feasible mitigation measures.
- **No Impact; Class III**—Results in no adverse change to existing environmental conditions.
- **Beneficial; Class IV**—An effect that would reduce existing environmental problems or adverse conditions.

A "significant impact" 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 the project including land, air, water, minerals, flora, fauna, ambient noise, and objects of historic or aesthetic

significance. 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."

When appropriate, following each environmental impact discussion, recommended mitigation measures and residual effects or the level of significance after implementation of mitigation measures is discussed. Additionally references to appropriate goals and policies of the proposed General Plan Update are provided.

Cumulative Impacts

Following the discussion of the Thresholds of Significance for each project-related impact, a cumulative impact discussion is provided. However, a cumulative impact analysis is only provided for those thresholds that result in a less-than-significant or significant and unavoidable impact. A cumulative impact analysis is not provided for Effects Found Not to Be Significant, which result in no project-related impacts.

4.1 AESTHETICS

This section of the EIR analyzes the potential environmental effects on aesthetic and visual impacts from implementation of the General Plan Update. Data for this section were taken from the City of Agoura Hills Municipal Code, Agoura Village Specific Plan, City of Agoura Hills General Plan Update (2009), and photographic documentation of the City.

No comment letters addressing aesthetics were received in response to the Notice of Preparation (NOP) circulated for the General Plan Update. Full bibliographic entries for all reference materials are provided in Section 4.1.5 (References) of this section.

4.1.1 Environmental Setting

Definitions of Visual Resources

"Aesthetic value" refers to the perception of the natural beauty of an area, as well as the elements that create or enhance its visual quality. While aesthetic value is subjective, it is typically included as a criterion for evaluating those elements that contribute to the quality that distinguishes an area. Most communities identify scenic resources as an important asset, although what is considered "scenic" may vary according to its environmental setting.

"Scenic resources" can include natural open spaces, topographic formations, and landscapes. These are resources that can be maintained and enhanced to promote a positive image of an area. Many people associate natural landforms and landscapes such as oak woodlands, hillsides, ridgelines, and distinctive rock outcroppings with scenic resources. Scenic resources can also include urban open spaces, cultivated landscapes, and aspects of the built environment. Examples of these would include parks, trails, cultural resources including historic buildings and landscapes, and architectural features.

"Viewsheds" constitute the range of vision in which scenic resources may be observed. They are defined by physical features that frame the boundaries or context of one or more scenic resources. A region's topography can lend aesthetic value through the creation of view corridors of ridgelines and mountains and through the visual backdrop created by mountains and hillsides. Viewsheds and scenic vistas may include views of a range of resources, whether natural or man-made, and are also considered important scenic resources for preservation.

Existing Conditions

The City of Agoura Hills is located on the eastern end of the Conejo Valley, in the foothills of the Santa Monica Mountains on the western edge of Los Angeles County, and is known for its distinctive neighborhoods, ancient oak trees, dramatic scenic vistas, and array of recreation resources. The Santa Monica Mountains National Recreation Area wraps around the City to the north and south, extending to the eastern boundary. The foothills of the Santa Monica Mountains shape the topography of the

southern and eastern portions of the City while the Simi Hills provide a backdrop to the north. Prominent ridgelines to the south, east, and northwest form the City's natural skyline.

Hillsides

Situated within the Santa Monica Mountains, the City of Agoura Hills has many hillsides within its jurisdiction; however, six primary ridgelines dominate the community's landscape. These ridgelines remain generally undeveloped; however, some construction has occurred at the base of the hillsides. The ridgelines identified below have slopes greater than 25 percent and are the primary topographical features viewed from the Ventura Freeway corridor or major arterials within Agoura Hills.

Primary Ridgelines

Ladyface Mountain between Kanan Road and the western City limits on the southern border of Agoura Hills reaches a peak elevation of 2,036 feet. One ridgeline in the northwestern portion of the community is situated above Thousand Oaks Boulevard and west of Kanan Road, and two others are located in the northeastern corner of Agoura Hills. Several ridgelines in the southeast corner of Agoura Hills between Kanan and Liberty Canyon Roads create the City's southern boundary. Outside of the City's boundaries to the northeast, a ridgeline is situated within unincorporated Los Angeles County, in the Santa Monica Mountains National Recreation Area.

Secondary Ridgelines

A number of secondary ridgelines are located in Agoura Hills. These ridgelines, while important visual form-giving and space-defining features, are of lesser significance than primary ridgelines, because views of these features are partially blocked or the surrounding areas have been developed with urban land uses. Topographical features within Agoura Hills create important viewsheds in the community, and development should be limited within these areas as outlined in the City's Hillside Development Ordinance.

Views and Vistas

The massive volcanic structure of Ladyface Mountain within the Santa Monica Mountains provides a backdrop to the City as viewed from the freeway corridor and other arterials. Other important scenic resources include Strawberry Hill, the Morrison Ranch Hills, Palo Comado Hills, and the higher, more distant, Simi Hills to the north.

Agoura Hills is known as the "Gateway to the Santa Monica Mountains National Recreation Area." The trailhead for the Zuma Ridge or Simi-to-Sea Trail that connects the national parklands both north and south of the freeway is within close proximity to the Ventura Freeway and City arterials. These hills are framed by panoramic vistas, oak trees, and backdrops of picturesque canyons and hillsides.

Scenic Corridors/Roads

Scenic corridors provide an opportunity for the public to take advantage of the aesthetic value of the natural environment. Scenic corridors can help carry the feeling of rural character throughout the City, both by providing views of open and rural areas from a variety of locations, and by carrying rural design themes along the roadway and parkway landscaping of the scenic highway itself. Caltrans has officially designated US Highway 101 an Eligible State Scenic Highway from Topanga Canyon Boulevard to State Route 33 in Ventura.

The following roadways are valuable scenic resources in the community and are recognized as scenic roadways by the City:

- Reyes Adobe Road (from Thousand Oaks Boulevard to Agoura Road)
- Thousand Oaks Boulevard. (from westerly City limits to its eastern terminus just beyond Carell Avenue)
- Agoura Road (from westerly City limits to easterly City limits)
- Kanan Road (from Agoura Road south to the City limits)

Reyes Adobe Road provides scenic vistas to the north and south along the roadway, including prominent views of Ladyface Mountain. Single-family residential uses predominate along Reyes Adobe Road, with commercial nodes at Agoura Road and Canwood Street. The landscape theme is varied as the areas between the residential walls and the sidewalk along most of this corridor are owned by private individuals.

Kanan Road is a north/south roadway and overall provides scenic vistas to the north and south along the roadway, including prominent views of Ladyface Mountain to the south and views of the Santa Monica Mountains to the north. The roadway contains a landscaped median north of the Ventura Freeway. South of Agoura Road, it is currently a two-lane road through undeveloped areas with no landscaping. This southerly segment serves as a scenic entry at the southerly City limits.

Thousand Oaks Boulevard runs in an east/west direction though the northern residential sections of the community providing vistas from key high locations near Strawberry Hill and Reyes Adobe Road. From these high points, one looks out over the developed area of the City to the backdrop of mountains and foothills. Thousand Oaks Boulevard has a landscaping of suburban character and a City landscaped median. Adjacent uses along Thousand Oaks Boulevard are predominantly residential with commercial nodes at Lake Lindero Drive and Kanan Road.

Agoura Road runs in an east/west direction along the southern section of the community, along the base of the Santa Monica Mountain foothills. The view along Agoura Road is characterized by close-in foothill views to the south, with occasional vistas beyond the City to the north with the backdrop of rolling hills and the higher, more distant Simi Hills. Through the old commercial district of the City near Chesebro Road, Agoura Road is lined with large mature oak trees. An open rectangular concrete drainage channel carries the Chesebro Canyon Wash along the north side of Agoura Road from Medea Creek

beyond Waring Place. Generally, Agoura Road east of Kanan Road is a two-lane arterial developed to rural standards without curb and gutter.

Curb, gutters and sidewalk requirements have been established by the Agoura Village Specific Plan for portions of Agoura Road in that Plan area (from just east of Cornell Road to just west of Kanan Road). As part of this plan, Agoura Road will remain two lanes through the Plan area, generally from Cornell Road to Kanan Road. Portions of Agoura Road west of Kanan Road are four lanes. From Kanan Road westerly to the City limits, the roadway in its entirety will eventually become a four-lane arterial.

In general, land to the south of Agoura Road is undeveloped or developed with scattered hillside residential units. Between Agoura Road and the Ventura Freeway (US-101) are older commercial uses and more recently developed research and development parks and office buildings with surface parking. Between Cornell Road and Kanan Road, Agoura Road runs through the Agoura Village Specific Plan area, forming the primary backbone of the proposed mixed-use development village.

West of Reyes Adobe Road, the south side of Agoura Road is primarily vacant until just before the westerly City limits. However, these parcels are expected to be developed in the future pursuant to the Ladyface Mountain Specific Plan.

Landscaped medians are located along portions of Agoura Road, west of Kanan Road. The Agoura Village Specific Plan establishes guidelines for median landscaping along the segment between Cornell Road and portions of Kanan Road, while the Ladyface Mountain Specific Plan provides standards for the portion west of Kanan Road to the westerly City limits.

The following roadways offer some scenic elements, although not to the extent of the four highlighted above:

US-101/Ventura Freeway is listed as an Eligible State Scenic Highway by the California Department of Transportation. This eligible portion of US-101 traverses rugged, undeveloped hillsides in northwestern Los Angeles County and southern Ventura County into fertile farmland near Camarillo.

Canwood Street parallels US-101 to the north and offers views of the Santa Monica Mountains and Simi Hills. In addition, the street is not as densely developed in the eastern half of the City.

Roadside Drive parallels US-101 to the south and is located north of Agoura Road. Roadside Drive offers views of the Santa Monica Mountains and the Simi Hills.

Driver Avenue is an east/west roadway that runs through predominantly residential areas and adjacent to Agoura High School.

Light and Glare

Due to the low-density residential character of the City, significant ambient light from urban uses is not as prevalent in the City compared to other cities throughout Los Angeles County. However, similar to other developed areas, the sources of light and glare that do exist include glass building facades,

streetlights, parking lot lighting, security and way-finding lighting at existing non-residential uses, and automobile headlights. The areas with the heaviest amount of light and glare in the City are generally the commercial centers at Kanan Road/US-101 and the other freeway interchanges, and areas located south of US-101 Highway, west of Kanan Road, within the office and business park developments.

4.1.2 Regulatory Framework

Federal

No existing federal regulations pertain to the visual resources within the General Plan Update area.

State

Caltrans Scenic Highway Program

The California Department of Transportation (Caltrans) defines a scenic highway as any freeway, highway, road, or other public right-of-way, that traverses an area of exceptional scenic quality. Suitability for designation as a State Scenic Highway is based on vividness, intactness, and unity. Although there are no officially designated state scenic highways within the City, the US-101 Highway is identified as an eligible scenic highway.[1]

Local

City of Agoura Hills Municipal Code

Various sections within the City's Zoning Code, including but not limited to, Section 9393.15 (Lighting) of Chapter 3 (Commercial Districts), Part 10 (Special Commercial Use Standards) and Section 9312.3(Y) of Chapter 3 (Commercial Districts), Part 2 (Commercial Use Tables) of the City's Zoning Code require that lighting fixtures be located so as to shield direct rays from adjoining properties. Luminaries shall be of a low level, indirect diffused type and shall not exceed the height of the building. Lighting shall be arranged so as not to produce a glare on other properties in the vicinity and the source of light shall not be visible from an adjacent property or a public street.

Section 9652.5 of Chapter 6 (Regulatory Provisions), Part 2 (Special Regulations) of the Municipal Code requires the retention of trees and other vegetation to stabilize hillsides, retain moisture, prevent erosion, and enhance the natural scenic beauty, and, when necessary, may require additional landscaping to promote the above.

[1] Caltrans State Scenic Highway Mapping System: http://www.dot.ca.gov/hq/LandArch/scenic_highways/index.htm (accessed July 10, 2009).

4.1.3 Project Impacts and Mitigation

Analytic Method

A qualitative assessment of visual impacts was prepared by evaluating the nature and magnitude of changes in the visual character of the City, and particularly identified community Subareas (refer to Figure 3-3 [Community Subareas]), due to the proposed project, including the visual compatibility of future land uses and adjacent uses. It is important to note that an assessment of visual impacts is not a quantitative analysis, but rather qualitative and can be largely subjective.

A significant impact would occur if the proposed project were to introduce land uses, structures, or elements inconsistent with existing patterns of development, thereby degrading the visual character or quality of the site, creating substantial sources of light or glare, or where documented and important scenic resources or scenic vistas would be damaged or destroyed.

Light and glare impacts are considered for the City as a whole, except where noted. The primary sources of new impacts of this type would be exterior lighting associated with new development permitted by the General Plan Update. A significant impact would occur should the proposed project create a new, substantial source of light or glare, impacting sensitive receptors, such as adjacent residential uses.

Thresholds of Significance

For purposes of this EIR, implementation of the General Plan Update would have a significant impact if it would do any of the following:

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

As this is a Program level EIR and is to be used as a regulatory tool, site-specific aesthetic analyses have not been completed. As specific development projects are proposed in the future, analysis of aesthetic impacts on a case-by-case basis will be completed.

Effects Not Found to Be Significant

Threshold	Would the proposed project substantially damage scenic resources, including, but not limited to, trees, rock outcroppings, and historic buildings within a state scenic highway?

Development under the proposed General Plan Update would not result in a substantial damage to scenic resources, including, but not limited to, trees, rock outcroppings, and historic buildings within a state scenic highway. Therefore, *no impact* would result (Class III).

Currently, there are no officially designated scenic highways within the City of Agoura Hills. However, a portion of the US-101 Highway, which includes the length of the City, is identified as eligible for the state scenic highway designation. A state scenic highway changes from "eligible" to "officially designated" when the local jurisdiction adopts a scenic corridor protection program, applies to Caltrans for scenic highway approval, receives notification from Caltrans for scenic highway approval, and must also adopt ordinances to preserve the scenic quality of the corridor or document that such regulation already exists in local codes. Past efforts on the part of the City to receive official state designation for US-101 through the City have not been successful. If in the future the City decides to pursue these actions, it would also be required to take actions to preserve the views within the corridor. These procedures are beyond the scope of the proposed General Plan Update. Policy LU-12.2 (Freeway Corridor) of the proposed General Plan Update promotes the development of commercial centers within the freeway corridor with appropriate access and visibility in an aesthetically pleasing manner. Furthermore, Policy LU-16.2 (Development Form and Architecture) requires a unified redevelopment of the parcels, including appropriate mass, height, and elevation with particular sensitivity to views along the freeway corridor. Policy LU-29.3 (District Identity) encourages working with property owners along the freeway corridor to improvement the visual character of this corridor. Consequently, because no scenic highways are currently designated within the City, implementation of the proposed General Plan Update would have ***no impact*** (Class III).

Analyses of road segments within the City that contain scenic views are included below.

Threshold	Would the proposed project have a substantial adverse effect on a scenic vista?

Implementation of the General Plan Update would not have a substantial adverse effect on a scenic vista. Therefore, *no impact* would occur (Class III).

The topographic and natural resources in the City provide local viewsheds for residents within their neighborhoods, as well as persons traveling through the City along U.S. Highway 101 and other road segments. As discussed previously, the highly visible Ladyface Mountain within the Santa Monica Mountains provides a backdrop to the City as viewed from along the freeway corridor and other arterials. Other important scenic resources include Strawberry Hill, the Morrison Ranch Hills, Palo Comado Hills, and the higher more distant Simi Hills to the north. The following local road segments are valuable scenic resources in the community that provide scenic views of these hillsides and ridgelines:

- Reyes Adobe Road from Thousand Oaks Boulevard to Agoura Road
- Thousand Oaks Boulevard. (from westerly City limits to its eastern terminus just beyond Carell Avenue)
- Agoura Road from westerly City limits to easterly City limits
- Kanan Road (from Agoura Road south to the City limits)

Thousand Oaks Boulevard and Agoura Road generally provide the most scenic views of the mountains located in the northern and southern boundaries of the City limits. In addition, Reyes Adobe Road provides similar views while traveling north or south, rather than parallel to the mountains. More specifically, Reyes Adobe Road provides scenic vistas to the north and south along the roadway axis, including prominent views of Ladyface Mountain. Thousand Oaks Boulevard runs though the northern residential sections of the community. It provides vistas from key high locations near Strawberry Hill and Reyes Adobe Road. From these high points, one looks out over the developed area of the City to the backdrop of mountains and foothills. Agoura Road runs along the southern section of the community, along the base of the Santa Monica Mountain foothills. The view along Agoura Road is characterized by close-in foothill views to the south, with occasional vistas beyond the City to the north with the backdrop of the rolling hills and the higher, more distant Simi Hills. The segment of Kanan Road south of Agoura Road to the City limits provides excellent views of Ladyface Mountain. South of Agoura Road, it is currently a two-lane road through undeveloped areas with no landscaping. This segment serves as a scenic entry at the southerly City limits.

Thousand Oaks Boulevard and Agoura Road provide the most direct east/west local thoroughfares within the City (excepting the US Highway 101). As such, a majority of the community Subareas are located along these two corridors in areas where the existing uses could be enhanced. The proposed General Plan Update focuses on how growth can be strategically accommodated within these particular community Subareas to preserve the distinguishing and valued qualities of the community (such as the residential character of existing neighborhoods) while providing new housing, jobs, and services that will complement existing uses and bring visual improvement and/or increased density to underutilized areas.

Existing City Code requirements and development standards, together with the policies proposed in the General Plan Update, would impose conditions upon new development, requiring enhancement of the surrounding streetscape, and limiting adverse visual impacts on adjacent uses. Although future development could result in taller structures than currently exist within the Subareas, it is unlikely that taller structures would block or obscure an existing scenic vista due to the siting requirements of new development. For example, Policy LU-3.1 (Scenic and Natural Areas) would provide for the preservation of significant scenic areas and corridors and Policy LU-3.7 (Public Viewsheds) would preserve vistas of the community from public use areas whenever possible. In addition, Policy LU-3.6 (Development Respect for Environmental Setting) encourages development to be located and designed to respect the natural environmental setting and preserve public views, including scenic hillside areas. Policy NR-1.1 (Open Space Preservation) would preserve open space lands as an aesthetic visual resource, and Policy NR-2.4 (Location and Design of Developments) would ensure a quality visual experience along the entire length of the scenic roads through protection and enhancement of views and development of appropriate landscaping. Moreover, Policy NR-3.1 (Development along Scenic Roads) would preserve

the hillside backdrop and natural landforms visible from the scenic roads in their present state to the extent possible. With the implementation of these and other General Plan policies, the General Plan Update would not result in a substantial adverse effect on a scenic vista and so would result in ***no impact*** (Class III). No mitigation is required.

Threshold	Would the proposed project substantially degrade the existing visual character or quality of the site and its surroundings?

Implementation of the General Plan Update would not substantially change the visual character or quality of the City. Therefore, the General Plan Update would result in *no impact* (Class III).

The City of Agoura Hills is characterized by a mix of natural and built environments, with hillsides and mountains framing the City to the north and south. The proposed General Plan Update would allow an increase in development of existing uses within specific areas of the City. Additionally, within Subareas 5 and 8, a new mixed-use land use category would be permitted. Most of the Subareas are programmed for no change to existing uses. Within Subarea 10 (the eastern portion of which is also known as Old Agoura), no change in the existing land use designations is proposed; however, the intent of the proposed project is to enhance the old town character of the area.

The increased development intensity (compared to existing conditions) could indirectly impact existing residential neighborhoods by increasing potential building heights adjacent to residential structures and encouraging the redevelopment of underutilized sites that are either vacant or characterized by low-rise development. Redevelopment areas potentially affected by the General Plan Update generally contain structures that are in poor condition with building facades that are faded and in poor repair, sparse or under-maintained landscaping, dated or incongruent architecture, and buildings that are vacant and obsolete. While new development might alter the existing visual quality, such alteration is more likely to be perceived as an improvement rather than as an adverse impact.

Mixed-use development, which combines residential, office and/or commercial uses on one site or in one building, is a relatively new development concept for the City of Agoura Hills. The General Plan Update would permit and encourage mixed-use development in two Subareas. Subarea 5 is currently developed with a wide assortment of underperforming uses, while Subarea 8 is developed with three older shopping centers. Mixed-use developments tend to complement and supplement adjacent uses. Although mixed-use developments could represent a change to the existing visual setting of these areas, the community character and the associated aesthetics of urban infill development could be enhanced by these new uses.

The proposed goals and policies of the General Plan Update would require new development and redevelopment to progress in a manner that creates and preserves a high quality, sustainable and coherent environment. Focusing infill development on underutilized properties would foster architectural quality and variety, as well as ensure landscape/open space buffers on the City fringe, that would preserve the open visual character of the City as a whole.

The proposed General Plan Update includes policies that would ensure new developments visually complement and enhance existing uses. For example, Policy LU-4.5 (Development Compatibility) requires that infill development incorporate design elements with buffers and transitions in density, scale, and mass to assure compatibility with adjacent uses. Development would be encouraged to be of human scale per Policy LU-4.6 (Building Scale and Design), and Policy LU-4.4 (Concentration of Development Density) would focus the highest densities of development along the freeway corridor. Additionally, Policy LU-7.2 (Housing Character and Design) requires that new and renovated housing within existing single- and multi-family neighborhoods be located and designed to maintain their distinguishing characteristics and qualities, including prevailing lot sizes; building form, scale, massing, and relationship to street frontages; architectural design; landscape; property setbacks; and comparable elements. Further, Policy NR-2.4 (Location and Design of Developments) requires development within visually sensitive areas to minimize impacts to scenic resources and to preserve unique or special visual features, particularly in hillside areas, through creative site planning, integration of natural features into the project, use of appropriate scale, materials, and design to complement the surrounding natural landscape, clustering of development so as to preserve open space vistas and natural features, and more.

New and renovated buildings would embody architectural characteristics that maintain the desired human scale, rhythm, and character that are appropriate for each of the Subareas due to the extensive design review process in the City. With the goal of preserving the considerable amounts of open space within the City, the proposed General Plan Update would consolidate future development within key areas of the City that are presently underperforming or that can accommodate the anticipated increased housing and population density. Also worth noting is that the proposed project actually allows less overall development than the current General Plan. On a plan-to-comparison, the potential increase in development under the proposed project would result in a less substantial overall visual impact than is currently permitted simply due to a reduced growth potential. In general, while portions of the project area would change and intensify, goals and policies of the proposed General Plan Update would ensure that future development includes proper site planning, unique architecture, preservation of important natural resources, and high-quality building materials.

In general, future development would serve to improve the aesthetic character of the Subareas and enhance the overall identity of the City, as a majority of the new development could occur adjacent to the US-101 Highway. Policy LU-29.3 (District Identity) requires the overall visual enhancement of the freeway corridor. Although future development could result in taller buildings compared to existing uses, the overall changes that are proposed would be designed to create visually attractive and compatible uses. Consequently, future development that would be permitted under the proposed project would not substantially degrade the existing visual character or quality of the City. Rather, implementation of the proposed goals and policies would ultimately improve the aesthetic image of the City and reduce the existing "visual weaknesses" that are present. In general, the proposed General Plan Update would provide development opportunities that would complement and enhance the City's existing visual character. Therefore, with incorporation of General Plan Update policies, the proposed project would not substantially degrade the existing visual character or quality of the City. Therefore, the General Plan Update would result in ***no impact*** (Class III).

Threshold	Would the proposed project create a new source of substantial light and glare that would adversely affect day or nighttime views?

Implementation of the General Plan Update would not create a new source of substantial light and glare that would adversely affect day or nighttime views. Therefore, *no impact* would occur (Class III).

As discussed above, implementation of the proposed General Plan Update would allow for organic, general growth; an increase in development intensity within Subareas 5 and 8; and would allow a new mixed-use development category in these same two Subareas. New development would generally be located in areas that are already developed. Therefore, most new development or redevelopment would not necessarily create new sources of light; however, some existing light sources could be amplified depending on the ultimate increase in development on particular sites due to exterior building illumination and parking lots or structures, as well as glare from reflective building surfaces or the headlights of vehicular traffic.

Light and glare effects of new development would have the greatest impact upon undeveloped lands and residential uses. Because implementation of the proposed project would primarily result in the intensification and reuse of existing sites, the majority of new development would not be located adjacent to large pieces of undeveloped lands that have not already been considered for development (i.e., Agoura Village Specific Plan and Ladyface Mountain Specific Plan). A majority of the proposed growth is generally separated from existing single-family residential uses. There could be, however, construction of new commercial uses next to residential uses, such as the mixed-uses proposed in Subareas 5 and 8. As a result, amplified sources of light or glare could affect day or nighttime views of adjacent sensitive land uses.

Interior and exterior lighting, as well as headlights of vehicular traffic associated with proposed commercial uses could have adverse effects on the adjacent residential uses. However, these particular Subareas are already developed with existing ambient lighting, and these adjacent uses already coexist; thus, implementation of this new land use designation would represent a continuation of existing lighting conditions and impacts would be substantially similar to existing conditions.

A majority of the new development made possible by the proposed General Plan Update would be located in areas that commonly experience at least minimal impacts from existing light sources. While adjacent residential areas are already impacted by light and glare from commercial sources, more intense uses, especially if they result in increases in building heights adjacent to residential uses, could intensify existing, potentially adverse light and glare impacts. Policy LU-13.3 (Buffering Adjoining Residential Areas) would ensure that commercial uses adjoining residential neighborhoods or in mixed residential and commercial developments are designed to be compatible and minimize impacts through techniques such as the use of low intensity directional lighting and screening to minimize light spillover and glare onto residential neighborhoods and to preserve a natural twilight environment at night. In addition, Policy LU-3.8 (Night Sky) would preserve view of the night sky through control of outdoor lighting, which would also help to control potential lighting impacts to adjacent sensitive uses. Existing Municipal Code regulations for various commercial uses require that lighting fixtures be located so as to shield

direct rays from adjoining properties. In addition, Section 9677.7 (Architectural Review Procedure)[2] requires a review of general architectural considerations, including the appropriateness of sign design and exterior lighting. Therefore, with incorporation of the proposed General Plan Update policies, the proposed project would not create a new source of substantial light and/or glare that would adversely affect day or nighttime views. The General Plan Update would therefore result in ***no impact*** (Class III).

Less-Than-Significant Impacts

There are no less-than-significant impacts related to aesthetics from implementation of the General Plan Update.

Significant and Unavoidable Impacts

There are no significant and unavoidable impacts related to aesthetics from implementation of the General Plan Update.

Cumulative Impacts

The geographic context for cumulative visual impacts that would occur under the proposed General Plan Update is the City of Agoura Hills and those areas in the immediate vicinity of the City boundaries which are visible from or have a clear view of the City, including the Santa Monica Mountains National Recreation Area to the north and Westlake Village to the west. However, the primary contributor to potential visual changes in and surrounding the City *is* the proposed project. There are no other individual projects that are currently planned or in process that would represent such a significant portion of the visual changes that could occur in the immediate vicinity. Cumulative impacts are only addressed for those thresholds that have a project-related impact, whether it is less than significant, significant, or significant and unavoidable. If "no impact" occurs, no cumulative analysis is provided for that threshold. The proposed project was determined to have no adverse impact on aesthetics, scenic vistas, visual quality and character, as well as light and glare. Therefore, the proposed project's contribution to adverse impacts to these resources would not be cumulatively considerable and the proposed project would have ***no cumulative impact*** (Class III).

Mitigation Measures

With implementation of policies within the General Plan Update, all impacts will be reduced to less-than-significant levels. No mitigation measures are necessary.

Final Level of Significance

With the implementation of the General Plan Update policies and application of all local, state, and federal regulations pertaining to aesthetics, the proposed project would result in ***no impact*** (Class III). The proposed project would result in ***no cumulative impact*** (Class III).

[2] Zoning Code (Article IX), Regulatory Provisions (Chapter 6)

4.1.4 Draft General Plan Goals and Policies

The aesthetic-related goals and policies that are applicable to the proposed project are identified below.

Chapter 2 (Community Conservation and Development)

Growth and Change

Goal LU-1 **Growth and Change.** Sustainable growth and change through orderly and well-planned development that provides for the needs of existing and future residents and businesses, ensures the effective and equitable provision of public services, and makes efficient use of land and infrastructure.

Policy LU-1.2 **Development Locations.** Prioritize future growth as infill of existing developed areas re-using and, where appropriate, increasing the intensity of development on vacant and underutilized properties, in lieu of expanded development outward into natural areas and open spaces. Allow for growth on the immediate periphery of existing development in limited designated areas, where this is guided by standards to assure seamless integration and connectivity with adjoining areas and open spaces.

Citywide Land Use and Urban Design

Goal LU-3 **City of Open Spaces.** Open space lands that are preserved to maintain the visual quality of the City and provide recreational opportunities, protect the public from safety hazards, and conserve natural resources.

Policy LU-3.1 **Scenic and Natural Areas.** Provide for the preservation of significant scenic areas and corridors, significant plant and animal habitat and riparian areas, and physiographic features within the City.

Policy LU-3.2 **Hillsides.** Preserve ridgelines, natural slopes, and bluffs as open space, minimize hillside erosion, and complement natural landforms through sensitive grading techniques in hillside areas.

Policy LU-3.3 **Open Spaces and Greenbelts.** Provide a network of open spaces and greenbelts with pedestrian access where appropriate.

Policy LU-3.4 **Tree Preservation.** Continue to sustain oak trees, which are an integral part of the City's character, and consider the protection of other valuable tree species.

Policy LU-3.6 **Development Respect for Environmental Setting.** Encourage development to be located and designed to respect Agoura Hills' natural environmental setting and preserve public views, including scenic hillside areas. Regulate building height and location to avoid obtrusive breaks in the natural skyline.

Policy LU-3.7 **Public Viewsheds.** Whenever possible, preserve vistas of the community from public use areas.

Policy LU-3.8 **Night Sky.** Preserve view of the night sky through control of outdoor lighting.

Goal LU-4 **City Form and Structure.** Structure and form of development that respects Agoura Hills' natural setting; maintains distinct and interconnected places for residents to live, shop, work, and play; and is more compact to reduce automobile dependence.

Policy LU-4.1 **Primary Contributor to Urban Form.** Locate and design development to respect Agoura Hills' environmental setting, focusing development on lowland areas and configured to respect hillside slopes, topographic contours, and drainage corridors.

Policy LU-4.2 **Connected Open Space Network.** Maintain and, where incomplete, develop a citywide network of open spaces that is connected to and provides access for all neighborhoods and districts incorporating greenbelts, drainage corridors, parklands, bicycle and pedestrian paths, equestrian trails, and natural open spaces.

Policy LU-4.3 **Organization of Places.** Maintain a development pattern of distinct residential neighborhoods oriented around parks, schools, and community meeting facilities that are connected with neighborhood-serving businesses and business park/employment uses in centers and along the freeway corridor.

Policy LU-4.4 **Concentration of Development Density.** Focus the highest densities of development along the freeway corridor facilitating access to and from regional transportation systems.

Policy LU-4.5 **Development Compatibility.** Require that infill development incorporates design elements with buffers and transitions in density, scale, and mass to assure compatibility with adjacent uses.

Policy LU-4.6 **Building Scale and Design.** Encourage development of buildings and exterior spaces that are of human scale and encourage pedestrian activity, and discourage structures that do not relate to exterior spaces and designs that do not consider such features.

Policy LU-4.7 **Building Relationship to Public Places.** Require buildings to be oriented to and actively engage the public realm through such features as location, incorporation of windows, avoidance of blank walls, and articulation of building elevations fronting sidewalks and public spaces, and location of parking to their rear or side.

Policy LU-4.9 **Integration of Open Space Areas with Development.** Incorporate sufficient open areas in development projects to

maintain a sense of openness, such as paths, sidewalks, gathering areas, and/or passive and active recreation.

Policy LU-4.10 **Community Identity.** Provide enhanced paving, entry monuments, and other special design features at key entry points to the City.

Goal LU-5 **City Sustained and Renewed.** Development and land use practices that sustain natural environmental resources, the economy, and societal well-being for use by future generations, which, in turn, reduce greenhouse gas emissions and impacts on climate change.

Policy LU-5.5 **Revitalization of Obsolete and Underused Properties.** Encourage the use of redevelopment tools such as tax increment financing, consolidation of small parcels and joint public-private partnerships, and other tools to facilitate revitalization of the Ventura Freeway corridor.

Policy LU-5.6 **Building Rehabilitation.** Encourage the rehabilitation of existing commercial facades and signage that are deteriorated or inconsistent with the intended character and quality of the City.

Land Use Categories, Standards, and Guidelines

Goal LU-7 **Livable and Quality Neighborhoods.** Neighborhoods that provide a variety of housing types, densities, and design, and a mix of uses and services that support the needs of their residents.

Policy LU-7.1 **Neighborhood Conservation.** Maintain the uses, densities, character, amenities, and quality of Agoura Hills' residential neighborhoods, recognizing their contribution to the City's identity, economic value, and quality of life for residents.

Policy LU-7.2 **Housing Character and Design.** Require that new and renovated housing within existing single- and multi-family neighborhoods be located and designed to maintain their distinguishing characteristics and qualities, including prevailing lot sizes; building form, scale, massing, and relationship to street frontages; architectural design; landscape; property setbacks; and comparable elements. Continue to implement the City's *Architectural Design Standards and Guidelines* to ensure that residential units are designed to sustain the high level of architectural design quality and the character of the existing land forms that characterize the Agoura Hills neighborhoods, in consideration of the following principles as identified in the *Standards and Guidelines*:

- Harmony with the natural land forms and native vegetation
- Response to the local climate (through proper building orientation, appropriate glazing, use of overhangs, shading devices, native vegetation, etc.)

- Reflection of the highest standards of adjacent buildings and the neighborhood style[s], proportions, colors, and materials

Policy LU-7.7 **Environmental Setting.** Protect and enhance the unique features of Agoura Hills' residential neighborhoods that have contributed to a high-quality aesthetic environment, including the preservation of scenic and visual resources, a quality built environment, open space resources, and attractive streetscapes.

Policy LU-7.10 **Neighborhood Transitions.** Regulate the design and setback of housing in areas where differing housing product and density abut one another to assure smooth transitions in scale, form, and character.

Goal LU-13 **Well-Designed and Attractive Districts.** Retail centers and corridors that are well-designed and attractive, providing a positive experience for visitors and community residents, and fostering business activity.

Policy LU-13.1 **Enhanced Design Character.** Encourage renovation, infill, and redevelopment of existing commercial centers and corridors to improve architectural design (e.g., façade improvements), reduce the visual prominence of parking lots, make centers more pedestrian friendly, reduce visual clutter associated with signage, and enhance the definition and character of the street frontage and associated streetscape.

Policy LU-13.3 **Buffering Adjoining Residential Areas.** Ensure commercial uses adjoining residential neighborhoods or in mixed residential and commercial developments be designed to be compatible and minimize impacts through such techniques as:

- Incorporation of landscape, decorative walls, enclosed trash containers, and/or comparable buffering and/or screening elements
- Attractive architectural treatment of elevations facing the residential uses
- Use of low intensity directional lighting and screening to minimize light spillover and glare onto residential neighborhoods and to preserve a natural twilight environment at night
- Location of automobile and truck access and unloading areas to prevent impacts on residential traffic and privacy

Goal LU-19 **Maintenance of Open Spaces.** Open space lands that provide an attractive environmental setting for Agoura Hills and visual relief from development, protect the viability of natural resources and habitat, offer passive recreational opportunities for residents and visitors, and protect residents from the risks of natural hazards.

Policy LU-19.4 **Conserve Natural Hillsides.** Encourage the conservation of natural hillsides in new and existing development in the City's hillside areas, including limitations on density and building scale; maintenance of an appropriate distance from hillsides, ridgelines, creek beds, and other environmental resources; prevention of erosion; preservation of viewsheds; and protection of the natural contours of the land. Encourage cluster developments in sensitive areas to preserve and reduce the impact to natural lands.

Community Subareas and Districts

Goal LU-29 **Community-Serving Commercial District.** A distinct and unified district exhibiting a high level of visual quality that maintains a diversity of community-serving uses.

Policy LU-29.3 **District Identity.** Work with property owners to improve properties for the visual enhancement of the freeway corridor.

Chapter 3 (Infrastructure and Community Services)

Telecommunication

Goal U-6 **Telecommunication System.** Quality communication systems that meet the demands of new and existing developments in the City.

Policy U-6.2 **Design and Siting of Utilities.** Require that the installation of telecommunications infrastructure, such as cellular sites and towers, be designed in a manner to minimize visual impacts on the surrounding environment and neighborhood, and to be as unobtrusive as possible.

Chapter 4 (Natural Resources)

Open Space

Goal NR-1 **Open Space System.** Preservation of open space to sustain natural ecosystems and visual resources that contribute to the quality of life and character of Agoura Hills.

Policy NR-1.1 **Open Space Preservation.** Continue efforts to acquire and preserve open space lands for purposes of recreation, habitat protection and enhancement, resource conservation, flood hazard management, public safety, aesthetic visual resource, and overall community benefit.

Policy NR-1.2 **New Development.** Require new development to create a transition area between open space resources and development to minimize the impacts affecting these resources.

Policy NR-1.3 **Slope Preservation.** Require that uses involving grading or other alteration of land maintain the natural topographic character and ensure that downstream properties and watercourses are not adversely affected by siltation or runoff.

Visual Resources

Goal NR-2 **Visual Resources.** Preservation of significant visual resources as important quality of life amenities for residents, and as assets for commerce, recreation, and tourism.

Policy NR-2.1 **Maintenance of Natural Topography.** Require development to be located and designed to maintain the visual quality of hills, ridgelines, canyons, significant rock outcroppings, and open space areas surrounding the City and locate and design buildings to minimize alteration of natural topography.

Policy NR-2.2 **Trails, Recreation Areas, and Viewing Areas.** Provide public trails, recreation areas, and viewing areas near significant visual resources, where appropriate.

Policy NR-2.3 **Protect Ridgelines.** Maintain the community's primary and secondary ridgelines.

Policy NR-2.4 **Location and Design of Developments.** Require development within visually sensitive areas to minimize impacts to scenic resources and to preserve unique or special visual features, particularly in hillside 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
- Clustering of development so as to preserve open space vistas and natural features
- Minimal disturbance of topography
- Creation of contiguous open space networks

Goal NR-3 **Scenic Roads.** Maintenance and enhancement of the visual quality of City roads that have valuable scenic resources in order to create a special awareness of the environmental character and natural and man-made resources of the community.

Policy NR-3.1 **Development along Scenic Roads.** Ensure a quality visual experience along the entire length of the scenic roads through protection and enhancement of views and development of appropriate landscaping.

Policy NR-3.2 **View Protection.** Preserve the hillside backdrop and natural landforms visible from the scenic roads in their present state to the extent possible.

Biological Resources

Goal NR-4 **Natural Areas.** Protection and enhancement of open space resources, other natural areas, and significant wildlife and vegetation in the City as an integral component of a sustainable environment.

Policy NR-4.2 **Conserve Natural Resources.** Continue to enforce the ordinances for new and existing development in the City's hillside areas, such that development maintains an appropriate distance from ridgelines, creek and natural drainage beds and banks, oak trees, and other environmental resources, to prevent erosion, preserve viewsheds, and protect the natural contours and resources of the land.

Policy NR-4.5 **Open Space Preservation.** Place a high priority on acquiring and preserving open space lands for purposes of recreation, habitat preservation and enhancement, resource conservation, flood hazard management, public safety purposes, and overall community benefits.

Policy NR-4.6 **Connected Open Space System.** Ensure that new development does not create barriers or impede the connection of the City's open space systems.

Policy NR-4.8 **Open Space and Activity Centers.** Link open space to activity centers, parks, other open space, and scenic routes to help define urban form and beautify the City.

4.1.5 References

Agoura Hills, City of. 2009. *Agoura Hills General Plan*.

4.2 AIR QUALITY

This section evaluates the potential impacts on air quality resulting from the General Plan Update, including the potential for the General Plan Update to conflict with or obstruct implementation of the applicable air quality plan, to violate an air quality standard or contribute substantially to an existing or projected air quality violation, to result in a cumulatively considerable net increase of any criteria pollutant for which the project region is in nonattainment, expose sensitive receptors to substantial pollutant concentrations, or create objectionable odors that would affect a substantial number of people. Data for this section was taken from the *Traffic Study for Agoura Hills General Plan Update* study prepared by Fehr & Peers (Appendix B), South Coast Air Quality Management District's (SCAQMD) *CEQA Air Quality Handbook,* and other relevant documents related to air quality. Full bibliographic entries for all reference materials are provided in Section 4.2.5 (References) of this section. Climate change is addressed separately in Section 4.15 (Climate Change) of this DEIR.

Three comment letters associated with air quality were received in response to the April 30, 2009 Notice of Preparation (NOP) circulated for the General Plan Update. The SCAQMD recommended methods of analysis of the potential air quality impacts associated with the proposed project. The second comment letter was received from Southern California Association of Governments (SCAG) requesting an analysis of consistency with existing SCAG policies. The final letter was submitted by the Ventura County Air Pollution Control District stating that they do not have comments to submit on the project.

4.2.1 Environmental Setting

Climate

The City of Agoura Hills is located within the South Coast Air Basin (Basin), so named because its geographical formation is that of a basin, with the surrounding mountains trapping the air and its pollutants in the valleys or basins below. This area includes all of Orange County and the non-desert portions of Los Angeles, San Bernardino, and Riverside Counties. Bounded by the Pacific Ocean to the west and the San Gabriel, San Bernardino, and San Jacinto Mountains to the north and east, the South Coast Air Basin is an area of high air pollution potential. The regional climate within the Basin is considered semi-arid and is characterized by warm summers, mild winters, infrequent seasonal rainfall, moderate daytime onshore breezes, and moderate humidity (WRCC 2008a). Air quality within the Basin is primarily influenced by a wide range of emissions sources—such as dense population centers, heavy vehicular traffic, and industry.

The City of Agoura Hills is located in Los Angeles County, which is in the western coastal portion of the Basin. The nearest climate monitoring station is located in the City of Canoga Park, which is approximately 9 miles northeast of the City of Agoura Hills (WRCC 2008a). The annual average high temperature in the City is 80.4°F, although temperatures can occasionally exceed 100°F (WRCC 2008b). The annual average low temperature in the City is 47.3°F (WRCC 2008b). Typically the hottest and coldest months in the City are in August and January, respectively. The majority of annual rainfall in the

City occurs between November and April. Summer rainfall is minimal and generally limited to scattered thundershowers in coastal regions (WRCC 2008a).

Air Quality Background

Air pollutant emissions within the basin are generated from stationary, mobile, and natural sources. Stationary sources can be divided into two major subcategories: point and area sources. Point sources occur at an identified location and are usually associated with manufacturing and industry. Examples are boilers or combustion equipment that produce electricity or generate heat. In addition, construction activities such as excavation and grading are considered point source emissions because they are confined to the limits of a particular construction site. Area sources are widely distributed and produce many small emissions. Examples of area sources include residential and commercial water heaters, painting operations, portable generators, lawn mowers, agricultural fields, landfills, and consumer products such as barbeque lighter fluid and hair spray. Mobile sources refer to emissions from on- and off-road motor vehicles, including tailpipe and evaporative emissions. On-road sources may be legally operated on roadways and highways. Off-road sources include aircraft, trains, and construction vehicles. Mobile sources account for the majority of the air pollutant emissions within the air basin. Air pollutants can also be generated by the natural environment, such as when fine dust particles are pulled off the ground surface and suspended in the air during high winds.

Ambient Air Quality Standards

Both the federal and state governments have established ambient air quality standards for outdoor concentrations of various pollutants in order to protect public health. The national and state ambient air quality standards have been set at levels whose concentrations could be generally harmful to human health and welfare and to protect the most sensitive persons from illness or discomfort with a margin of safety. Applicable ambient air quality standards are identified later in this section under Thresholds of Significance. The SCAQMD is responsible for bringing air quality within the Basin into conformity with the federal and state standards.

The criteria pollutants for which federal and state standards have been promulgated and that are most relevant to air quality planning and regulation in the Basin are ozone, carbon monoxide, fine suspended particulate matter, sulfur dioxide, and lead. In addition, toxic air contaminants (TACs) are of concern in the Basin. Each of these is briefly described below. Table 4.2-1 (Ambient Air Quality Standards Applicable in California) identifies the current federal and State ambient air quality standards.

- **Ozone (O_3)** is a gas that is formed when volatile organic compounds (VOCs) and nitrogen oxides (NO_X), both byproducts of internal combustion engine exhaust, undergo slow photochemical reactions in the presence of sunlight. Ozone concentrations are generally highest during the summer months when direct sunlight, light wind, and warm temperature conditions are favorable to the formation of this pollutant.

Table 4.2-1 Ambient Air Quality Standards Applicable In California

Pollutant	Symbol	Averaging Time	Standard, as ppm*		Standard, as µg/m³**		Violation Criteria	
			State	Federal	State	Federal	California	National
Ozone	0_3	1 hour	0.09	0.12	—	—	If equaled or exceeded	If exceeded on more than 3 days in 3 years
		8 hours	0.07	0.08	—	—	If equaled or exceeded	If exceeded on more than 3 days in 3 years
Carbon Monoxide	CO	8 hours	9.0	9	—	—	If exceeded	If exceeded on more than one day per year
		1 hour	20	35	—	—	If exceeded	If exceeded on more than one day per year
Nitrogen Dioxide	NO_2	Annual arithmetic mean	—	0.053	—	—	—	If exceeded
		1 hour	0.25	—	—	—	If equaled or exceeded	—
Sulfur Dioxide	SO_2	Annual arithmetic mean	—	0.03	—	—	—	If exceeded
		24 hours	0.04	0.14	—	—	If exceeded	If exceeded on more than one day per year
		1 hour	0.25	—	—	—	If exceeded	—
Hydrogen Sulfide	H_2S	1 hour	0.03	—	—	—	If equaled or exceeded	—
Vinyl Chloride	C_2H_3Cl	24 hours	0.01	—	—	—	If equaled or exceeded	—
Particulate Matter (10 microns or less)	PM_{10}	Annual arithmetic mean	—	—	20	—	If exceeded	—
		24 hours	-	—	50	150	If exceeded	If exceeded on more than one day per year
Particulate Matter (2.5 microns or less)	$PM_{2.5}$	Annual arithmetic mean	—	—	12	151	If exceeded	If exceeded
		24 hours	—	—	—	352	—	If exceeded on more than one day per year
Sulfate Particles	SO_4	24 hours	—	—	25	—	If equaled or exceeded	—
Lead Particles	Pb	Calendar quarter	—	—	—	1.5	—	If exceeded on more than one day per year
		30 days	—	—	1.5	—	If equaled or exceeded	—
		Cancer potential valve	—	—	1.2x10.5	—	If equaled or exceeded	—

All standards are based on measurements at 25 degrees Celsius and 1 atmosphere pressure. National standards shown are the primary (health effects) standards. The California 24-hour standard for SO_2 applies only when state 0_3 or PM_{10} standards are being violated concurrently.

* ppm = parts per million by volume

** µg/m³ = micrograms per cubic meter

- **Carbon Monoxide (CO)** is a colorless, odorless gas produced by the incomplete combustion of fuels. CO concentrations tend to be the highest during the winter morning, with little to no wind, when surface-based inversions trap the pollutant at ground levels. Because CO is emitted directly from internal combustion engines, unlike ozone, motor vehicles operating at slow speeds are the primary source of CO in the Basin. The highest ambient CO concentrations are generally found near congested transportation corridors and intersections.
- **Respirable Particulate Matter (PM_{10}) and Fine Particulate Matter ($PM_{2.5}$)** consists of extremely small, suspended particles or droplets 10 microns and 2.5 microns or smaller in diameter, respectively. Some sources of particulate matter, like pollen and windstorms, are naturally occurring. However, in populated areas, most particulate matter is caused by road dust, diesel soot, combustion products, abrasion of tires and brakes, and construction activities.
- **Nitrogen dioxide (NO_2)** is a nitrogen dioxide compound that is produced by the combustion of fossil fuels, such as in internal combustion engines (both gasoline and diesel powered), as well as point sources, especially power plants. Of the seven types of nitrogen oxide compounds (collectively known as NO_x), NO_2 is the most abundant in the atmosphere. As ambient concentrations of NO_2 are related to traffic density, commuters in heavy traffic may be exposed to higher concentrations of NO_2 than those indicated by regional monitors.
- **Sulfur dioxide (SO_2)** is a colorless gas or liquid. It enters the atmosphere as a pollutant mainly as a result of burning high sulfur-content fuel oils and coal and from chemical processes occurring at chemical plants and refineries. When sulfur dioxide oxidizes in the atmosphere, it forms sulfates (SO_4). Collectively, these pollutants are referred to as sulfur oxides (SO_X).
- **Lead (Pb)** occurs in the atmosphere as particulate matter. The combustion of leaded gasoline is the primary source of airborne lead in the Basin. The use of leaded gasoline is no longer permitted for on road motor vehicles, so the majority of such combustion emissions are associated with off-road vehicles such as racecars. Other sources of lead include the manufacturing and recycling of batteries, paint, ink, ceramics, ammunition, and the use of secondary lead smelters.
- **Toxic Air Contaminants (TACs)** refer to a diverse group of air pollutants that are capable of causing chronic (i.e., of long duration) and acute (i.e., severe but of short duration) adverse effects on human health. They include both organic and inorganic chemical substances that may be emitted from a variety of common sources including gasoline stations, motor vehicles, dry cleaners, industrial operations, painting operations, and research and teaching facilities. Toxic air contaminants are different than "criteria" pollutants in that ambient air quality standards have not been established for them, largely because there are hundreds of air toxics and their effects on health tend to be local rather than regional. TACs primarily are concentrated within ¼ mile of the emissions source, and accepted practice is to analyze TACs when receptors are located within this ¼-mile radius.

State standards have been promulgated for other criteria air pollutants, including SO_4, hydrogen sulfide, Pb, and visibility-reducing particles. California also recognizes vinyl chloride as a TAC with an undetermined threshold level of exposure for adverse health effects. Vinyl chloride and hydrogen sulfide emissions are generally generated from mining, milling, refining, smelting, landfills, sewer plants, cement manufacturing, or the manufacturing or decomposition of organic matter. California standards for sulfate- and visibility-reducing particles are not exceeded anywhere in the Basin. Pb is typically only emitted during demolition of structures expected to include Pb-based paint and materials.

Health Effects of Air Pollutants

Ozone

Individuals exercising outdoors, and children and people with preexisting lung diseases, such as asthma or chronic pulmonary lung disease, are considered to be the most susceptible sub-groups for ozone effects. Short-term exposures (lasting for a few hours) to ozone at levels typically observed in Southern California can result in breathing pattern changes, reduction of breathing capacity, increased susceptibility to infections, inflammation of the lung tissue, and some immunological changes. Elevated ozone levels are associated with increased school absences. In recent years, a correlation between elevated ambient ozone levels and increases in daily hospital admission rates, as well as mortality, has also been reported. An increased risk for asthma has been found in children who participate in multiple sports and live in high ozone communities.

Ozone exposure under exercising conditions is known to increase the severity of the above-mentioned observed responses. Animal studies suggest that exposure to a combination of pollutants that include ozone may be more toxic than exposure to ozone alone. Although lung volume and resistance changes observed after a single exposure diminish with repeated exposures, biochemical and cellular changes appear to persist, which can lead to subsequent lung structural changes.

Carbon Monoxide

Individuals with a deficient blood supply to the heart are the most susceptible to the adverse effects of CO exposure. The effects observed include earlier onset of chest pain with exercise, and electrocardiograph changes indicative of worsening oxygen supply to the heart.

Inhaled CO has no direct toxic effect on the lungs, but exerts its effect on tissues by interfering with oxygen transport and competing with oxygen to combine with hemoglobin present in the blood to form carboxyhemoglobin (COHb). Hence, conditions with an increased demand for oxygen supply can be adversely affected by exposure to CO. Individuals most at risk include patients with diseases involving heart and blood vessels, fetuses, and patients with chronic hypoxemia (oxygen deficiency) as seen in high altitudes.

Reduction in birth weight and impaired neurobehavioral development have been observed in animals chronically exposed to CO, resulting in COHb levels similar to those observed in smokers. Recent studies have found increased risks for adverse birth outcomes with exposure to elevated CO levels. These include pre-term births and heart abnormalities.

Particulate Matter

A consistent correlation between elevated ambient fine particulate matter (PM_{10} and $PM_{2.5}$) levels and an increase in mortality rates, respiratory infections, number and severity of asthma attacks and the number of hospital admissions has been observed in different parts of the United States and various areas around the world. In recent years, some studies have reported an association between long-term exposure to air

pollution dominated by fine particles and increased mortality, reduction in life-span, and an increased mortality from lung cancer.

Daily fluctuations in $PM_{2.5}$ concentration levels have also been related to hospital admissions for acute respiratory conditions in children, to school and kindergarten absences, to a decrease in respiratory lung volumes in normal children and to increased medication use in children and adults with asthma. Recent studies show lung function growth in children is reduced with long-term exposure to particulate matter.

The elderly, people with pre-existing respiratory or cardiovascular disease, and children appear to be more susceptible to the effects of high levels of PM_{10} and $PM_{2.5}$.

Nitrogen Dioxide

Population-based studies suggest that an increase in acute respiratory illness, including infections and respiratory symptoms in children (not infants), is associated with long-term exposures to NO_2 at levels found in homes with gas stoves, which are higher than ambient levels found in Southern California. Increase in resistance to air flow and airway contraction is observed after short-term exposure to NO_2 in healthy subjects. Larger decreases in lung functions are observed in individuals with asthma or chronic obstructive pulmonary disease (e.g., chronic bronchitis, emphysema) than in healthy individuals, indicating a greater susceptibility of these subgroups.

In animals, exposure to levels of NO_2 considerably higher than ambient concentrations results in increased susceptibility to infections, possibly due to the observed changes in cells involved in maintaining immune functions. The severity of lung tissue damage associated with high levels of ozone exposure increases when animals are exposed to a combination of ozone and NO_2.

Sulfur Dioxide

A few minutes of exposure to low levels of SO_2 can result in airway constriction in some asthmatics, all of whom are sensitive to its effects. In asthmatics, increase in resistance to airflow, as well as reduction in breathing capacity leading to severe breathing difficulties, are observed after acute exposure to SO_2. In contrast, healthy individuals do not exhibit similar acute responses even after exposure to higher concentrations of SO_2.

Some population-based studies indicate that the mortality and morbidity effects associated with fine particles show a similar association with ambient SO_2 levels. In these studies, efforts to separate the effects of SO_2 from those of fine particles have not been successful. It is not clear whether the two pollutants act synergistically or if one pollutant alone is the predominant factor.

Lead

Fetuses, infants, and children are more sensitive than others to the adverse effects of Pb exposure. Exposure to low levels of Pb can adversely affect the development and function of the central nervous system, leading to learning disorders, distractibility, inability to follow simple commands, and lower intelligence quotient. In adults, increased Pb levels are associated with increased blood pressure.

Pb poisoning can cause anemia, lethargy, seizures, and death; although it appears that there are no direct effects of Pb on the respiratory system. Pb can be stored in the bone from early age environmental exposure, and elevated Pb levels in the blood can occur due to breakdown of bone tissue during pregnancy, hyperthyroidism (increased secretion of hormones from the thyroid gland) and osteoporosis (breakdown of bony tissue). Fetuses and breast-fed babies can be exposed to higher levels of Pb because of previous environmental Pb exposure of their mothers.

Toxic Air Contaminant Emissions

TACs are airborne substances that are capable of causing chronic (i.e., of long duration) and acute (i.e., severe but of short duration) adverse effects on human health. They include both organic and inorganic chemical substances that may be emitted from a variety of common sources including gasoline stations, motor vehicles, dry cleaners, industrial operations, painting operations, and research and teaching facilities. TACs are different from the "criteria" pollutants previously discussed in that ambient air quality standards have not been established for them.

One TAC of particular concern within the Basin is Diesel Particulate Matter (DPM). DPM is a known carcinogen that has been found to account for approximately 70 percent of the excess cancer occurrences due to all TACs within the Basin (SCAQMD 2008b). Diesel engines tend to produce a much higher ratio of fine particulates than other types of internal combustion engines. The fine particles that make up DPM tend to penetrate deep into the lungs and the rough surfaces of these particles makes it easy for them to bind with other toxins within the exhaust, thus increasing the hazards of particle inhalation. The California Air Resources Board (California ARB) Scientific Review Panel found that over forty known TACs typically bind to fine particulates within diesel exhaust (California ARB 1998). One particular problem in trying to derive a threshold level of exposure for DPM is the fact that the total known carcinogenic level based upon cohort studies of rail-yard workers cannot be explained by the addition of each individual TAC that is bound to DPM. There may be a synergetic effect that is occurring either due to the combined effect of the various TACs bound to DPM, or by the delivery method to the lungs associated with the fine particulates, or both circumstances contributing to the synergetic effect. A long-term exposure to DPM is known to lead to chronic, serious health problems including cardiovascular disease, cardiopulmonary disease, and lung cancer

Odors

The science of odor as a health concern is still new. Merely identifying the hundreds of reactive organic gases (ROGs) that cause odors poses a big challenge. Offensive odors, such as methane (CH_4) can potentially affect human health in several ways. First, odorant compounds can irritate the eye, nose, and throat, which can reduce respiratory volume. Second, the ROGs that cause odors can stimulate sensory nerves to cause neurochemical changes that might influence health, for instance, by compromising the immune system. Finally, unpleasant odors can trigger memories or attitudes linked to unpleasant odors, causing cognitive and emotional effects such as stress.

Existing Regional Air Quality

Measurements of ambient concentrations of the criteria pollutants are used by the United States Environmental Protection Agency (U.S. EPA) and the California Air Resources Board (ARB) to assess and classify the air quality of each air basin, county, or, in some cases, a specific urbanized area. The classification is determined by comparing actual monitoring data with national and state standards. If a pollutant concentration in an area is lower than the standard, the area is classified as being in "attainment" in that area. If the pollutant exceeds the standard, the area is classified as a "nonattainment" area. If there are not enough data available to determine whether the standard is exceeded in an area, the area is designated "unclassified."

The entire Basin is designated as a national and state-level nonattainment area for ozone, $PM_{2.5}$, and PM_{10}. The basin is a national-level nonattainment area for CO. However, regional air quality throughout the Basin has improved substantially over the 1980s, 1990s, and most of this decade, even as substantial growth has occurred.

The SCAQMD divides the Basin into thirty-eight source receptor areas (SRAs) in which thirty-two monitoring stations operate to monitor the various concentrations of air pollutants in the region. The City of Agoura Hills is located within SRA 6, which covers the West San Fernando Valley Los Angeles County area. California ARB also collects ambient air quality data through a network of air monitoring stations throughout the state. The data are summarized annually and published in California ARB's *California Air Quality Data Summaries*. The Reseda monitoring station is the nearest monitoring station to the project site, and is approximately 13 miles northeast of project site. Of the air pollutants discussed previously, only ambient concentrations of ozone, CO, NO_2, and $PM_{2.5}$ are monitored in SRA 6. Measurements for SO_2, and PM_{10}, were taken in SRA 7, as these pollutants are not measured in SRA 6. The SRA 7 monitoring station is located in the City of Burbank which covers East San Fernando Valley Los Angeles.

Table 4.2-2 (Summary of Ambient Air Quality in the West San Fernando Valley Los Angeles County Area) identifies the national and state ambient air quality standards for relevant air pollutants, along with the ambient pollutant concentrations that have been measured at nearby monitoring stations through the period from 2005 to 2007.

According to the air quality data shown in Table 4.2-2 (Summary of Ambient Air Quality in the West San Fernando Valley Los Angeles County Area), the national 1-hour ozone standard and the state 1-hour ozone standard were exceeded over the three-year period 2005–2007 in SRA 6. The national 8-hour ozone standard also exceeded over the three-year period 2005–2007 in SRA 6. No national or state standards for CO, NO_2, or SO_2 have been exceeded over the three-year period 2005–2007 within SRA 6. State PM_{10} levels were found to be above the threshold 26 times between 2005 and 2007, while federal levels for $PM_{2.5}$ exceeded thresholds levels established by the U.S. EPA approximately one time in 2006 and in 2007.

Table 4.2-2 Summary of Ambient Air Quality in the West San Fernando Valley Los Angeles County Area

Air Pollutants Monitored Within SRA 6— Northwest Coastal Los Angeles County Area	*Year*		
	2005	*2006*	*2007*
Ozone (O_3)			
Maximum 1-hour concentration measured	0.138	0.16	0.129
Number of days exceeding national 0.12 ppm 1-hour standard	2	6	1
Number of days exceeding state 0.09 ppm 1-hour standard	30	32	21
Maximum 8-hour concentration measured	0.113	0.108	0.104
Number of days exceeding national 0.08 ppm 8-hour standard	12	17	8
Nitrogen Dioxide (NO_2)			
Maximum 1-hour concentration measured	0.09	0.07	0.08
Number of days exceeding state 0.25 ppm 1-hour standard	0	0	0
Annual average	0.0202	0.04	0.0186
Does measured annual average exceed national 0.0534 ppm annual average standard?	No	No	No
Carbon Monoxide (CO)			
Maximum 1-hour concentration measured	5	5	4
Number of days exceeding national 35.0 ppm 1-hour standard	0	0	0
Number of days exceeding state 20.0 ppm 1-hour standard	0	0	0
Maximum 8-hour concentration measured	3.5	3.4	2.8
Number of days exceeding national 9.5 ppm 8-hour standard	0	0	0
Number of days exceeding state 9.0 ppm 8-hour standard	0	0	0
Sulfur Dioxide (SO_2)			
Maximum 24-hour concentration measured	0.006	0.004	0.003
Number of days exceeding national 0.14 ppm 24-hour standard	0	0	0
Number of days exceeding state 0.04 ppm 24-hour standard	0	0	0
Respirable Particulate Matter (PM_{10})			
Maximum 24-hour concentration measured ($\mu g/m^3$)	92	71	109
Number of days exceeding the national 150 $\mu g/m^3$ 24-hour standard	0	0	0
Number of days exceeding the state 50 $\mu g/m^3$	5	10	11
Fine Particulate Matter ($PM_{2.5}$)			
Maximum 24-hour concentration measured ($\mu g/m^3$)	39.6	44.1	43.3
Number of days exceeding the national 65 $\mu g/m^3$ 24-hour standard	0	0	0
Number of days exceeding the national 35 $\mu g/m^3$ [a]	n/a	1	1

SOURCE: SCAQMD 2009, *Historic Data by Year*, http://www.aqmd.gov/smog/historicaldata.htm (accessed July 71, 2009).

SO_2 and PM_{10} concentrations are not measured in the SRA 6 monitoring station. SO_2 and PM_{10} levels were measured in SRA 7.

U.S. EPA has revised the federal 24-hour $PM_{2.5}$ standard from 65 $\mu g/m^3$ to 35 $\mu g/m^3$; effective December 17, 2006.

Sensitive Receptors

Federal and state ambient air quality standards have been set to protect the most sensitive persons from illness or discomfort. Residential areas, schools, playgrounds, childcare centers, athletic facilities, long-term health care facilities, rehabilitation centers, convalescent centers, and retirement homes are especially likely to include persons sensitive to air pollutants, and are therefore considered "sensitive receptors." Most of these land use types are present within the City.

Land Use Planning and Air Quality

Land use patterns and development density affect the amount of air pollutants that are generated in communities. Segregation of land uses within a community reduces the opportunities to walk, ride bicycles and use public transportation and increases the number of motor vehicle trips. Communities with low development densities have longer average trip distances and fewer opportunities for efficient public transportation services. The City of Agoura Hills has considerable amounts of open space land, and the General Plan Update reflects the desire to protect and preserve it. The community Subareas examine the feasibility of consolidating development into centers of mixed-uses to increase development potential while preserving and maintaining the existing single-family neighborhoods, commercial and office areas, as well as general quality of life within the City. The City of Agoura has a high potential for vehicle emissions and congestions as a result of employees and patrons traveling to and from the area for work and pleasure in single occupancy vehicles.

4.2.2 Regulatory Framework

Air quality within the Basin is addressed through the efforts of various federal, state, regional, and local government agencies. These agencies work jointly, as well as individually, to improve air quality through legislation, regulations, planning, policy-making, education, and a variety of programs. The agencies responsible for improving the air quality within the air basins are discussed below.

Federal

U.S. Environmental Protection Agency

The US EPA is responsible for setting and enforcing the National Ambient Air Quality Standards for atmospheric pollutants. It regulates emission sources that are under the exclusive authority of the federal government, such as aircraft, ships, and certain locomotives. The EPA also maintains jurisdiction over emissions sources outside state waters (outer continental shelf), and establishes various emissions standards for vehicles sold in states other than California.

As part of its enforcement responsibilities, the US EPA requires each state with federal nonattainment areas to prepare and submit a State Implementation Plan (SIP) that demonstrates the means to attain the federal standards. The SIP must integrate federal, state, and local plan components and regulations to identify specific measures to reduce pollution, using a combination of performance standards and market-based programs within the timeframe identified in the SIP.

Federal Clean Air Act

The federal *Clean Air Act* (CAA), as amended, establishes air quality standards for several pollutants. These standards are divided into primary standards and secondary standards. Primary standards are designed to protect public health, and secondary standards are intended to protect public welfare from effects such as visibility reduction, soiling, nuisance, and other forms of damage. The CAA requires that regional plans be prepared for non-attainment areas illustrating how the federal air quality standards could be met. The California ARB approved the most recent revision of the SIP in 1994, and submitted it to the U.S. EPA. The SIP, approved by the U.S. EPA in 1996, consists of a list of ROG and NO_x control measures for demonstrating future attainment of ozone standards. The steps to achieve attainment will continue to require significant emissions reductions in both stationary and mobile sources.

State

California Air Resources Board

California ARB, a part of the California Environmental Protection Agency, is responsible for the coordination and administration of both federal and state air pollution control programs within California. In this capacity, California ARB conducts research, sets California Ambient Air Quality Standards, compiles emission inventories, develops suggested control measures, provides oversight of local programs, and prepares the SIP. California ARB establishes emissions standards for motor vehicles sold in California, consumer products (such as hair spray, aerosol paints, and barbecue lighter fluid), and various types of commercial equipment. It also sets fuel specifications to further reduce vehicular emissions.

California Clean Air Act

The CCAA of 1988 requires non-attainment areas to achieve and maintain the state ambient air quality standards by the earliest practicable date and local air districts to develop plans for attaining the state ozone, carbon monoxide, sulfur dioxide, and nitrogen dioxide standards. The CCAA also requires that by the end of 1994 and once every three years thereafter, the air districts are to assess their progress toward attaining the air quality standards. The triennial assessment is to report the extent of air quality improvement and the amounts of emission reductions achieved from control measures for the preceding three-year period.

Air Toxics Hot Spots Information and Assessment Act

The *Air Toxics Hot Spots Information and Assessment Act of 1987* (AB 2588), California Health and Safety Code Section 44300 et seq., provides for the regulation of over 200 air toxics and is the primary air contaminant legislation in the state. Under the Act, local air districts may request that a facility account for its TAC emissions. Local air districts then prioritize facilities on the basis of emissions, and high priority designated facilities are required to submit a health risk assessment and communicate the results to the affected public. The TAC control strategy involves reviewing new sources to ensure compliance with required emission controls and limits, maintaining an inventory of existing sources of TACs, and

developing new rules and regulations to reduce TAC emissions. The purpose of AB 2588 is to identify and inventory toxic air emissions and to communicate the potential for adverse health effects to the public.

Assembly Bill 1807

AB 1807, enacted in September 1983, sets forth a procedure for the identification and control of TACs in California. The California ARB is responsible for the identification and control of TACs, except pesticide use. AB 1807 defines a TAC as an air pollutant that may cause or contribute to an increase in mortality or an increase in serious illness, or which may pose a present or potential hazard to human health. The California ARB prepares identification reports on candidate substances under consideration for listing as TACs. The reports and summaries describe the use of and the extent of emissions in California resulting in public exposure, together with their potential health effects.

In 1998, the California ARB identified diesel particulate matter as a toxic air contaminant under the AB 1807 program. Diesel particulate matter is emitted into the air via heavy-duty diesel trucks, construction equipment, and passenger cars. In October 2000, the California ARB released a report entitled Risk Reduction Plan to Reduce Particulate Matter Emissions from Diesel-Fueled Engines and Vehicles. This plan identifies diesel particulate matter as the predominant TAC in California and proposes methods for reducing diesel emissions.

Senate Bill 656

As a first step in the implementation of Senate Bill 656 (SB 656, Reducing Particulate Matter in California), the California ARB approved a list of the most readily available, feasible, and cost-effective control measures that can be employed by air districts to reduce particulate matter PM_{10} and $PM_{2.5}$ (collectively referred to as PM) in 2004. The list is based on rules, regulations, and programs existing in California as of January 1, 2004, for stationary, area-wide, and mobile sources. As a second step air districts must adopt implementation schedules for selected measures from the list. The implementation schedules will identify the appropriate subset of measures, and the dates for final adoption, implementation, and the sequencing of selected control measures. In developing the implementation schedules, each air district will prioritize measures based on the nature and severity of the PM problem in their area and cost-effectiveness. Consideration is also given to ongoing programs such as measures being adopted to meet national air quality standards or the state ozone planning process. The consideration and adoption of air district rules in their implementation schedules, coupled with California ARB's ongoing programs, will ensure continued progress in reducing public exposure to PM and attainment of the state and federal standards.

Regional

Southern California Association of Governments

The Southern California Association of Governments (SCAG) is a council of governments for Imperial, Los Angeles, Orange, Riverside, San Bernardino, and Ventura Counties. It is a regional planning agency

and serves as a forum for regional issues relating to transportation, the economy and community development, and the environment.

Although SCAG is not an air quality management agency, it is responsible for developing transportation, land use, and energy conservation measures that affect air quality. The organization also promotes using carpools, buses, trains, and other alternative forms of transportation throughout the region. SCAG's Regional Comprehensive Plan and Guide (RCPG) provide growth forecasts that are used in the development of air quality–related land use and transportation control strategies by the SCAQMD. The RCPG is a framework for decision-making for local governments, assisting them in meeting federal and state mandates for growth management, mobility, and environmental standards, while maintaining consistency with regional goals regarding growth and changes through the year 2015, and beyond. Policies within the RCPG include consideration of air quality, land use, transportation, and economic relationships by all levels of government.

SCAG adopted the current Regional Transportation Plan (RTP) in May of 2008. The RTP presents the transportation vision for the Southern California region through the year 2035 and provides long-term investment framework for addressing the region's transportation and related challenges. Air quality within the basin is a major issue that can be addressed through reducing congestion and enhancing coordination between land use and transportation decisions. The RTP identifies air quality mitigation policies to reduce noise related impacts within the region.

South Coast Air Quality Management District

SCAQMD is the agency principally responsible for comprehensive air pollution control in the Basin. To that end, the SCAQMD, a regional agency, works directly with SCAG, county transportation commissions, local governments, and cooperates actively with all federal and state government agencies. The SCAQMD develops rules and regulations, establishes permitting requirements, inspects emissions sources, and enforces such measures though educational programs or fines, when necessary.

SCAQMD is directly responsible for reducing emissions from stationary (area and point), mobile, and natural sources. It has responded to this requirement by preparing a series of Air Quality Management Plans (AQMPs). The most recent of these was adopted by the Governing Board of SCAQMD on June 1, 2007. This AQMP, referred to as the 2007 AQMP, was prepared to comply with the federal and state Clean Air Acts and amendments, to accommodate growth, to reduce the high pollutant levels in the Basin, to meet federal and state ambient air quality standards, and to minimize the fiscal impact that pollution control measures have on the local economy. It identifies the control measures that will be implemented to reduce major sources of pollutants. These planning efforts have substantially decreased the population's exposure to unhealthful levels of pollutants, even while substantial population growth has occurred within the Basin. As discussed on page ES-3 of the 2007 AQMP, the total number of days on which the Basin exceeds the federal 8-hour standard has decreased dramatically over the last two decades from about 150 days to less than 90, while Basin station-days (number of days a station location exceeded the standards) decreased by approximately 80 percent (SCAQMD 2008a).

Rule 403

Rule 403 requires development to implement best available control technology for the purposes of controlling fugitive dust emissions and is intended to reduce the amount of particulate matter entrained in the ambient air as a result of anthropogenic (man-made) fugitive dust sources by requiring actions to prevent, reduce, or mitigate fugitive dust emissions. Under Rule 403, the following must occur:

- No person shall cause or allow the emissions of fugitive dust from any active operation, open storage pile, or disturbed surface area such that:
  - > The dust remains visible in the atmosphere beyond the property line of the emission source; or
  - > The dust emission exceeds 20 percent opacity (as determined by the appropriate test method included in the Rule 403 Implementation Handbook), if the dust emission is the result of movement of a motorized vehicle.
- No person shall conduct active operations without utilizing the applicable best available control measures to minimize fugitive dust emissions from each fugitive dust source type within the active operation.

Local

Local jurisdictions, such as the City of Agoura Hills, have the shared responsibility to help develop and implement some of the control measures of the AQMP. Transportation-related strategies for congestion management, low emission vehicle infrastructure, and transit accessibility and non-transportation-related strategies for energy conservation can be encouraged by policies of local governments.

4.2.3 Project Impacts and Mitigation

Thresholds of Significance

The following thresholds of significance are based on Appendix G of the 2009 CEQA Guidelines. For the purposes of this EIR, implementation of the General Plan Update would have significant impact if it would do any of the following:

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

As stated previously, the SCAQMD is principally responsible for comprehensive air pollution control in the Basin and recommends that projects be evaluated in terms of air pollution control thresholds established by the SCAQMD and published in the *CEQA Air Quality Handbook*. These thresholds were

developed by the SCAQMD to provide quantifiable significance levels for comparison with projects. The City of Agoura Hills utilizes the SCAQMD's thresholds that are recommended at the time that development projects are proposed to assess the significance of quantifiable impacts. The following quantifiable thresholds are currently recommended by the SCAQMD and are used to determine the significance of air quality impacts associated with the General Plan Update.

Construction Emissions Thresholds

The SCAQMD currently recommends that projects with construction-related emissions that exceed any of the following emissions thresholds should be considered potentially significant. These thresholds apply to individual development projects only; they do not apply to cumulative development:

- 550 pounds per day of carbon monoxide (CO)
- 75 pounds per day of reactive organic gases (ROG)
- 100 pounds per day of nitrogen oxides (NO_X)
- 150 pounds per day of sulfur oxides (SO_X)
- 150 pounds per day of Respirable Particulate Matter (PM_{10})
- 55 pounds per day of Fine Particulate Matter ($PM_{2.5}$)

Operational Emissions Thresholds

The SCAQMD currently recommends that projects with operational emissions that exceed any of the following emissions thresholds should be considered potentially significant. These thresholds apply to individual development projects only; they do not apply to cumulative development:

- 550 pounds per day of CO
- 55 pounds per day of ROG
- 55 pounds per day of NO_X
- 150 pounds per day of SO_X
- 150 pounds per day of PM_{10}
- 55 pounds per day of $PM_{2.5}$

In order to assess cumulative impacts, the SCAQMD recommends that projects be evaluated to determine whether they would be consistent with 2007 AQMP performance standards and project-specific emissions thresholds. In the case of the proposed project, air pollutant emissions would be considered to be cumulatively considerable if the new sources of emissions exceed SCAQMD project-specific emissions thresholds.

Localized Significance Thresholds

Localized Significance Thresholds (LSTs) were developed in response to the SCAQMD Governing Board's Environmental Justice Enhancement Initiative (I-4). The LST methodology was provisionally adopted by the SCAQMD Governing Board in October 2003 and formally approved by SCAQMD's Mobile Source Committee in February 2005. LSTs represent the maximum emissions from a project that are not expected to cause or contribute to an exceedance of the most stringent applicable federal or state

ambient air quality standard, and are developed based on the ambient concentrations of that pollutant for each source receptor area and distance to the nearest sensitive receptor.

LSTs, which are voluntary, only apply to CO, NO_2, PM_{10}, and $PM_{2.5}$ emissions during construction at the discretion of the lead agency. Screening-level analysis of LSTs is only recommended for project sites that are 5 acres or less. The SCAQMD recommends that any project over 5 acres should perform air quality dispersion modeling to assess impacts to nearby sensitive receptors. Individual construction projects occurring as a result of the proposed project may cover areas greater than 5 acres. In the event that future projects under the proposed project cover areas greater than 5 acres, dispersion modeling would be required for CO, NO_X, PM_{10}, and $PM_{2.5}$ emissions during construction. NO_X to NO_2 conversion would be accounted for during the modeling to determine the maximum NO_2 concentrations at the nearest sensitive receptors. Dispersion modeling can be done on a voluntary basis by public agencies to determine whether or not a project may generate significant adverse localized air quality impacts. LSTs have been established by the SCAQMD only for construction of projects and do not apply to emissions during operation as localized concentration cannot be properly quantified during operation due to the variable locations of mobile sources, which make up the largest source of criteria air pollutants during operation of the proposed project. In addition, future development and infill project activities are unknown at this time and, therefore the LST analysis is not possible. Development projects resulting from implementation of the General Plan Update would be required to undergo environmental review, at which time LTS analysis would be applicable.

Because this is a Program EIR and is to be used as a regulatory tool, as specific development projects are proposed in the future, site-specific air quality technical reports would be prepared and separate air quality analyses would occur.

Effects Not Found to Be Significant

Threshold	Would the project create objectionable odors affecting a substantial number of people?

Implementation of the General Plan Update would not create objectionable odors that would affect a substantial number of people. Therefore, there would be *no impact* (Class III).

Construction activities occurring under the General Plan Update would generate airborne odors associated with the operation of construction vehicles (i.e., diesel exhaust) and the application of architectural coatings. However, these odors are not generally considered to be especially offensive. Emissions would occur during daytime hours only and would be isolated to the immediate vicinity of the construction site and activity. As such, they would not affect a substantial number of people as impacts related to these odors are limited to the number of people living and working nearby the source.

Potential operational airborne odors could result from cooking activities associated with residential and restaurant uses within the City. These odors would be similar to existing housing and food service uses throughout the City and would be confined to the immediate vicinity of the new buildings. Restaurants are also typically required to have ventilation systems that avoid substantial adverse odor impacts. The

other potential source of odors would be new trash receptacles within the community. The receptacles would be stored in areas and in containers as required by City Municipal Code, Article 5 (Sanitation and Health), Chapter 3 (Solid Waste) and be emptied on a regular basis, before potentially substantial odors have a chance to develop. Consequently, implementation of the General Plan Update would not create objectionable odors affecting a substantial number of people within the City, and there would be ***no impact*** (Class III).

Less-Than-Significant Impacts

Threshold	Would the project expose sensitive receptors to substantial pollutant concentrations?

Impact 4.2-1 **Operation activities under the General Plan Update could expose sensitive receptors to substantial pollutant concentrations. However, this would be a *less-than-significant* (Class II) impact for ongoing operations.**

Operation

SCAQMD recommends the use of CALINE4, a dispersion model for predicting CO concentrations that may result due to the operation of a project, as the preferred method of estimating pollutant concentrations at sensitive receptors near congested roadways and intersections. For each intersection analyzed, CALINE4 adds roadway-specific CO emissions calculated from peak-hour turning volumes to the existing ambient CO air concentrations. For this analysis, CO concentrations were calculated based on a simplified CALINE4 screening procedure developed by the Bay Area Air Quality Management District and utilized by SCAQMD. The simplified model is intended as a screening analysis in order to identify a potential CO hotspot and assumes worst-case conditions and provides a screening of maximum, worst-case CO concentrations.

The SCAQMD defines typical sensitive receptors as residences, schools, playgrounds, childcare centers, athletic facilities, long-term health care facilities, rehabilitation centers, convalescent centers, and retirement homes. When evaluating potential air quality impacts to sensitive receptors, the SCAQMD is primarily concerned with high localized concentrations of CO. Motor vehicles, and traffic-congested roadways and intersections are the primary source of high localized CO concentrations. Localized areas where ambient concentrations exceed federal and/or state standards for CO are termed CO "hotspots."

Implementation of the General Plan Update is not expected to expose existing or future sensitive uses within the City to substantial CO concentrations. Much of the area covered under the General Plan Update consists of commercial uses, which are not considered sensitive receptors. There are, however, residences and schools located within or in close proximity to some of the Subareas. As shown in Table 4.2-3 (Carbon Monoxide Concentrations at Selected Intersections at Buildout), based on CO modeling using the simplified CALINE4 methodology at the four most congested intersections at buildout, CO concentrations would be substantially below the national 35.0 ppm and state 20.0 ppm 1-hour ambient air quality standards, and the national and state 9.0 ppm 8-hour ambient air quality standards when growth envisioned under the General Plan Update occurs. Therefore, sensitive receptors

within the City would not be exposed to substantial pollutant concentrations, and the potential impacts of the General Plan Update would be less than significant. In addition, Policy M-4.6 (Energy Reduction) promotes the use of alternative energy sources to reduce greenhouse gas emissions within the City, including the use of low-emission vehicles in the City's fleet system; and Policy M-5.1 (Traffic Calming) would consider the application of traffic calming techniques, where needed, to minimize neighborhood intrusion by through traffic and promote the safety and livability of collector and local streets. Such General Plan Update policies would further reduce the exposure of sensitive receptors to substantial pollutant concentrations by increasing transit opportunities and requiring more low emission vehicles and alternative fuel stations within the City. Therefore, this impact would be ***less than significant*** (Class II), and no mitigation measures are required. (A discussion of exposure of pollutants to sensitive receptors during construction is found in Impact 4.2-5).

Table 4.2-3 Carbon Monoxide Concentrations at Selected Intersections at Buildout

Intersection	Carbon Monoxide Concentrations (ppm)			
	1-Hour Average Existing (2009)	1-Hour Average GP Update Buildout	8-Hour Average Existing (2009)	8-Hour Average GP Update Buildout
Reyes Adobe Road and Thousand Oaks Boulevard	4.8	4.2	3.4	2.9
Reyes Adobe Road and Agoura Road	4.6	4.2	3.2	2.9
Kanan Road and Thousand Oaks Boulevard	5.6	4.4	3.9	3.1
Kanan Road and Agoura Road	5.0	4.4	3.5	3.1

SOURCE: PBS&J, 2009; calculation sheets are provided in Appendix C (Air Quality)

All concentrations are measured at roadway edge. Because intersection volumes were not available, roadway volumes were halved for each segment to derive approach volumes and a 25 percent increase to each volume was applied to allow for turning movements from the perpendicular segments. This methodology was discussed with James Koizumi (SCAQMD) on July 15, 2009 (11:00 am).

National 1-hour standard is 35.0 parts per million. State 1-hour standard is 20.0 parts per million.

Federal 8-hour standard is 9.0 parts per million. State 8-hour standard is 9.0 parts per million.

Significant and Unavoidable Impacts

Threshold	Would the project conflict with or obstruct implementation of the applicable air quality plan?

Impact 4.2-2 **Implementation of the General Plan Update would provide new sources of regional air emissions that would conflict with or obstruct implementation of the Air Quality Management Plan. This is a *significant and unavoidable* impact (Class I).**

The 2007 Air Quality Management Plan (AQMP) discussed in Section 4.2.2 (Regulatory Setting) was prepared to accommodate growth, to reduce the high levels of pollutants within areas under the jurisdiction of SCAQMD, to return clean air to the region, and to minimize the impact of reduced air quality on the economy. Projects that are considered to be consistent with the AQMP would not interfere with attainment because this growth is included in the projections used during the preparation of the AQMP. Therefore, projects, uses, and activities that are consistent with the applicable assumptions used in the development of the AQMP would not jeopardize attainment of the air quality levels identified in the AQMP, even if they exceed the SCAQMD's recommended daily emissions thresholds.

Projects that are consistent with the employment and population projections identified in the Growth Management Chapter of the Regional Comprehensive Plan and Guide (RCPG) prepared by SCAG are considered consistent with the AQMP growth projections, since the Growth Management Chapter forms the basis of the land use and transportation control portions of the AQMP.

As discussed in Section 4.10 (Population and Housing) of this EIR, SCAG projections anticipate the City's population will increase by approximately 1,713 residents, from 21,789 residents to 23,502 residents by 2035. Section 4.10 (Population and Housing) goes on to state that, under full buildout of the General Plan Update, the City's 2035 population is expected to increase from 23,337 residents to approximately 25,394 residents, an increase of 2,057 residents. This population estimate exceeds the SCAG 2035 population projection of 23,502 residents by 1,892 residents. Further, available employment within the City is projected to increase at a rate of 0.44 percent annually by adding 1,749 new jobs by 2035 based on the City's existing General Plan (1993). Based on the proposed build out under the General Plan Update, approximately 16,258 employment opportunities would be available in City in 2035. This employment estimate exceeds the SCAG 2035 employment projections by 2,629 jobs. The City's jobs/housing ratio would increase from 0.64 jobs per household in 2005 to 2.0 jobs per household in 2035, compared to 0.58 jobs per household in 2035 projected by SCAG. As the AQMP growth projections are based on SCAG population levels, the increase in population growth associated with the proposed plan would not have been accounted for in the AQMP. Therefore, implementation of the General Plan Update would not be consistent with AQMP attainment forecasts and attainment of the standards could be delayed.

Another measurement tool in determining consistency with the AQMP is to determine how a project accommodates the expected increase in population or employment. Generally, if a project is planned in a way that results in the minimization of vehicle miles traveled (VMT), both within the project area and the surrounding area in which it is located, and consequently the minimization of air pollutant emissions, that aspect of the project is consistent with the AQMP.

Goals and policies contained in the General Plan Update would serve to promote mixed-use, pedestrian-friendly areas in the City of Agoura Hills, which could contribute to decreases in vehicle miles traveled. Policy M-7.4 (Walkable Developments), encourages mixed-use development so that it is possible for a greater number of short trips to be made by walking. Policy M-7.2 (Pedestrian Connectivity) and Policy M-7.3 (Pedestrian Experience) encourages improved pedestrian connections and streetscape amenities, and Policy M-6.2 (Mode Choice) expands the choices of available travel modes to increase the freedom of movement for residents and reduce reliance on the automobile. Policy M-10.1 (Current Techniques) through M-10.3 (Ride Share) would promote Transportation Demand Management programs, which encourage the use of alternative transportation modes, and coordination with transit agencies to promote mass transit use. These planning policies would serve to encourage the use of transit, reduce the number of vehicle trips and miles traveled, and create further opportunities for residents and employees of the City to walk and bike to work or to shop.

Based on the above information, the General Plan Update would be consistent with the 2007 AQMP in the reduction of vehicle miles traveled but would be inconsistent with the 2007 AQMP with respect to forecast population/employment/housing levels. Therefore, because the General Plan Update would

conflict with implementation of the 2007 AQMP, this impact would be considered ***significant and unavoidable*** (Class I).

Threshold	Would the project violate any air quality standard or contribute substantially to an existing or projected air quality violation?

Impact 4.2-3 **Implementation of the General Plan Update would result in construction and operational emissions that could contribute substantially to an existing or projected air quality violation. This is a *significant and unavoidable* impact (Class I).**

Construction

Implementation of the General Plan Update would result in new emissions being generated from construction activities. The thresholds of significance that have been recommended by SCAQMD for these new emissions were developed for individual development projects. Under the General Plan Update, varying amounts of construction would likely occur every year until buildout of the General Plan Update. Many of the individual projects would be small and likely not generate construction emissions that would exceed the SCAQMD's recommended thresholds of significance. Although the City would not consider these smaller projects to cause a potentially significant air quality impact, development of each project would require implementation of the General Plan Update policies (listed below) that address air quality in order to minimize emissions. For example, Policy NR-7.4 (Dust and Particulate Control) requires the adoption of regulations, and/or procedures to minimize particulate emissions from paved and unpaved roads, parking lots, and building construction. Other projects could be large enough to generate construction emissions that exceed these thresholds. Through the environmental review process for individual projects, additional mitigation may also be required to further reduce emissions and potential impacts; however, even with mitigation it may not be possible to reduce potential emissions to levels below the SCAQMD thresholds.

In the case of the General Plan Update, which is considered a project under CEQA, it is expected that a number of construction projects could occur every year simultaneously. Without adequate construction schedules or information regarding project locations and demolition requirements, future economic conditions or market demand, construction emissions for individual projects cannot be quantified; therefore, it would be difficult, if not impossible, to quantify the emissions related to construction activities under the General Plan Update as the amount and timing of each construction event is not known at this time. Because the thresholds are established for individual development projects and as certain development projects implemented under the General Plan Update could individually exceed the SCAQMD thresholds, the total amount of construction within the City under the General Plan Update could also exceed the SCAQMD's recommended thresholds of significance.

Policy LU-5.1 (Sustainable Building Practices) promotes sustainable building practices that utilize materials, architectural design features, and interior fixtures and finish materials to reduce energy and water consumption, reduce toxic and chemical pollution, and reduce the generation of waste. Policy LU-5.2 (Existing Structure Reuse) encourages the retention of existing structures and promotes

their adaptive reuse and renovation of existing buildings with "green" building technologies in accordance with a green building standard such as Leadership in Energy and Environmental Design (LEED™). Policy LU-5.4 (Sustainable Land Development Practices) promotes land development practices that reduce energy and water consumption, pollution, greenhouse gas emissions, and wastes. However, the potential reductions resulting from implementation of these policies cannot be quantified as no information on construction scheduling and project size for individual projects is currently available and no specific development projects are identified in the General Plan Update. Therefore, a worst-case assumption needs to be made that air pollutant emissions resulting from construction activities have the potential to not be reduced to below SCAQMD significance thresholds, and so this impact may not be reduced to a less-than-significant level, even with inclusion of mitigation measure MM4.2-1 below. As a result, this impact would remain ***significant and unavoidable*** (Class I).

Operation

Air emissions associated with the General Plan Update would also occur as a result of operation of new land uses. The thresholds of significance that have been recommended by the SCAQMD for these new emissions were developed for individual development projects and are based on the SCAQMD's New Source Review emissions standards for individual sources of new emissions, such as boilers and generators. They do not apply to cumulative development or multiple projects. Project-specific air quality analyses would be required to determine whether operational emissions are below the established thresholds. Currently, no information pertaining to the land use and overall size of individual projects under the General Plan Update is available, as no specific development projects are identified in the General Plan Update. As such, operational emissions cannot be quantified. However, there are policies within the General Plan Update that are aimed to reduce emissions within the City. Such policies include Policy NR-9.1 (Public Outreach) in the General Plan Update would promote energy conservation measures and options to all residents, businesses, contractors, and consultants; and Policy NR-9.2 (Energy Conservation for City Facilities) would implement energy-conserving measures for all existing City facilities, as feasible and incorporate energy-conserving measures to the extent practical. Policy LU-5.1 (Sustainable Building Practices) would promote sustainable building practices that utilize materials, architectural design features, and interior fixtures and finishings to reduce energy and water consumption, toxic and chemical pollution, and waste, not only in the design and construction of buildings. Policy LU-5.4 (Sustainable Land Development Practices) would promote land development practices that reduce energy and water consumption, pollution, greenhouse gas emissions, and wastes. Policy NR-10.1 (Climate Change) would comply with all state requirements regarding climate change and greenhouse gas reduction and review the progress toward meeting the emission reductions targets. These policies within the General Plan Update would help reduce emission within the City during operation of new land uses.

Because air pollutant emissions resulting from operation under a General Plan Update are considered cumulative in nature, and as specific information regarding the land use and overall size of individual development projects and the resulting potential operational air quality impacts is not available, the SCAQMD does not recommend calculation of operational emissions for a planning document, such as the General Plan Update, as stated on page 7-6 of the *CEQA Air Quality Handbook* (SCAQMD 1993). Therefore, there remains the possibility that air pollutant emissions resulting from operation of specific

projects under the General Plan Update may not be reduced below the thresholds established by the SCAQMD. Therefore, this impact would remain ***potentially significant and unavoidable*** (Class I).

Threshold	Result in a cumulatively considerable net increase of any criteria pollutant for which the project region is non-attainment under an applicable federal or state ambient air quality standard;

Impact 4.2-4 **Implementation of the General Plan Update would result in a cumulatively considerable net increase of criteria pollutants for which the region is in nonattainment under an applicable federal or state ambient air quality standard. This is a *significant and unavoidable* impact (Class I).**

A significant impact may occur if a project would add a cumulatively considerable contribution of a federal or state nonattainment pollutant. Because the Basin is currently in nonattainment for ozone, CO, PM_{10}, and $PM_{2.5}$, related projects could exceed an air quality standard or contribute to an existing or projected air quality exceedance. With regard to determining the significance of the proposed project contribution, the SCAQMD neither recommends quantified analyses of cumulative construction or operational emissions, nor provides methodologies or thresholds of significance to be used to assess cumulative construction or operational impacts. Instead, the SCAQMD recommends that a project's potential contribution to cumulative impacts should be assessed utilizing the same significance criteria as those for project-specific impacts. Therefore, this analysis assumes that individual development projects may generate construction or operational emissions that would exceed the SCAQMD recommended daily thresholds for project-specific impacts and would also cause a cumulatively considerable increase in emissions for those pollutants, for which the Basin is in nonattainment.

Construction and operation of the proposed project could generate emissions that exceed the thresholds of significance recommended by the SCAQMD for ROG, NO_X, CO, and $PM_{10,}$ and $PM_{2.5}$. Because the Basin is in nonattainment for PM_{10} and CO and because both ROG and NO_X are precursors of ozone, for which the Basin is also in nonattainment, the proposed project could make a cumulatively considerable contribution to these emissions. At this time, construction and operational emissions generated by projects occurring as a result of the General Plan Update are not known. Future projects resulting from implementation of the General Plan Update would be required to undergo environmental analysis to determine whether each project results in a significant air quality impact and would also have to implement policies from the General Plan listed below, to the extent feasible.

Thus, because construction and operational emissions associated with implementation of the General Plan Update cannot be quantified at this time, and because no mitigation is available to reduce such impacts to a level of less than significant, this impact is considered to be ***potentially significant and unavoidable*** (Class I). It should be noted that the applicable General Plan Update policies would also serve to reduce the severity of this impact, but not to a level of less than significant.

Threshold	Would the project expose sensitive receptors to substantial pollutant concentrations?

Impact 4.2-5 **Construction under the General Plan Update could expose sensitive receptors to substantial pollutant concentrations. This is a *significant and unavoidable* impact (Class I) for construction activities.**

Construction

Localized Significance Thresholds (LSTs) have been developed by the SCAQMD to determine maximum allowable concentrations of criteria air pollutants during construction under the General Plan Update. LSTs have been established by the SCAQMD only for construction of projects and do not apply to emissions during operation. For projects greater than five acres in total area, dispersion modeling is done to determine worst-case pollutant concentration at sensitive receptors associated with construction of the project. This dispersion modeling is site-specific and different project areas may have unique characteristics. For projects less than 5 acres in size, screening analyses would occur using the concentrations identified in the LST lookup tables developed by the SCAQMD. Each SRA within the Basin has a unique LST for pollutants. Because specific construction activity under the General Plan Update cannot be determined at this time, this impact is considered potentially ***significant and unavoidable*** (Class I), even with implementation of mitigation measure MM4.2-1 listed below. Once construction projects under the General Plan Update are identified and the entitlement processes begin, project-specific environmental analysis will be completed to determine whether construction would result in a significant impact with respect to localized significance thresholds.

Cumulative Impacts

Cumulative impacts are only addressed for those thresholds that have a project-related impact, whether it is less than significant, significant, or significant and unavoidable. If "no impact" occurs, no cumulative analysis is provided for that threshold. The geographic context for air quality impacts is the Basin. The significance of cumulative air quality impacts is typically determined according to the project methodology employed by the SCAQMD, as the regional body with authority in this area, and which has taken regional growth projections into consideration.

Cumulative development could result in a significant impact in terms of conflicting with, or obstructing implementation of, the 2007 AQMP. Growth considered to be inconsistent with the AQMP could interfere with attainment of federal or state ambient air quality standards because this growth is not included in the projections utilized in the formulation of the AQMP. Consequently, as long as growth in the Basin is within the projections for growth identified in the Growth Management Chapter of the RCPG, implementation of the AQMP would not be obstructed by such growth. Anticipated growth under the General Plan Update is not consistent with the growth assumptions of SCAG's RCPG. Even with implementation of Goal LU-1 (Growth and Change) which aims for sustainable growth and change through orderly and well-planned development that provides for the needs of existing and future residents and businesses, ensures the effective and equitable provision of public services, and makes efficient use of land and infrastructure, as well as Policy LU-1.2 (Development Locations) that would

prioritize future growth as infill of existing developed areas, re-using and, where appropriate, intensifying development of vacant and underutilized properties, the proposed project would not be consistent with the current AQMP. Under subsequent AQMPs, projected increases in population and employment within the City of Agoura Hills, as well as that of other cities within the Basin, would be included in forecasts, as the SCAG population forecasts are based on a city's General Plan. However, as the proposed project is not consistent with the current AQMP, this cumulative impact would be considered ***significant and unavoidable*** (Class I).

With regard to daily emissions and the cumulative net increase of any criteria pollutant for which the region is in nonattainment, this is considered to be a potentially significant cumulative impact, due to nonattainment of ozone, CO, $PM_{2.5,}$ and PM_{10} standards in the Basin. With regard to the contribution of the General Plan Update, the SCAQMD has recommended methods to determine the cumulative significance of new land use projects. The SCAQMD's methods are based on performance standards and emission reduction targets necessary to attain federal and state air quality standards as predicted in the AQMP. Because no information on individual projects is currently available, cumulative construction and operational emissions cannot be quantified. The contribution of daily construction and operational emissions from individual projects proposed in the future has the potential to be significant and are therefore considered cumulatively considerable. This cumulative impact is considered to be ***significant and unavoidable*** (Class I). Furthermore, as because construction and operational emissions associated with implementation of the General Plan Update cannot be quantified at this time, and because no feasible mitigation is available to reduce such impacts, the proposed project could contribute to a cumulative impact in the region.

Policy M-4.6 (Energy Reduction) promotes the use of alternative energy sources to reduce greenhouse gas emissions within the City, including the use of low-emission vehicles in the City's fleet system. Policy M-5.1 (Traffic Calming) would consider the application of traffic calming techniques, where needed, to minimize neighborhood intrusion by through traffic and promote the safety and livability of collector and local streets. Such General Plan Update policies would further reduce the exposure of sensitive receptors to substantial pollutant concentrations by increasing transit opportunities and requiring more low emission vehicles and alternative fuel stations within the City. Cumulative development is not expected to expose sensitive receptors to substantial pollutant concentrations. Thus, this is considered to be a less than significant cumulative impact. Future ambient CO concentrations resulting from the proposed project would be substantially below national and state standards. These future predictions take into account cumulative development that would occur in the region through the use of an annual percentage growth rate (refer to Section 4.13 [Transportation/Traffic]). Therefore, the project's contribution to the impact is not considered cumulatively considerable, and the cumulative impact would be ***less than significant*** (Class II), and no mitigation measures are necessary.

Cumulative development would not have a potentially significant impact in terms of the creation of objectionable odors affecting a substantial number of people. Thus, this is considered to be a less than significant cumulative impact. Projects currently anticipated to be built in the project area include residential, office, and commercial developments, and could include restaurants. Odors resulting from the construction of projects that would occur upon implementation of the General Plan Update are not likely to affect a substantial number of people, due to the fact that construction activities are localized

and are not expected to emit odors that are considered to be offensive for an extended period of time or that can be perceived from areas other than immediately adjacent to the construction sites. Other odor impacts resulting from these projects are also not expected to affect a substantial amount of people, as garbage from these projects would be stored in areas and in containers as required by the City Municipal Code and restaurants are typically required to have ventilation systems that avoid substantial adverse odor impacts. As a result, the General Plan Update would not be considered cumulatively considerable, and the cumulative odor impacts would be ***less than significant*** (Class II), and no mitigation measures are necessary.

Mitigation Measures

The following mitigation measures would be used to reduce construction emissions associated with implementation of the proposed General Plan Update:

MM4.2-1 *The City shall require future development within City limits to implement the following measures to the extent feasible:*

Fugitive Dust Control Measures

- *Water trucks shall be used during construction to keep all areas of vehicle movements damp enough to prevent dust from leaving the site. At a minimum, this will require twice-daily applications (once in late morning and once at the end of the workday). Increased watering is required whenever wind speed exceeds 15 mph. Grading shall be suspended if wind gusts exceed 25 mph.*
- *The amount of disturbed area shall be minimized and onsite vehicle speeds shall be limited to 15 mph or less.*
- *If importation, exportation and stockpiling of fill material is involved, earth with 5% or greater silt content that is stockpiled for more than two days shall be covered, kept moist, or treated with earth binders to prevent dust generation. Trucks transporting material shall be tarped from the point of origin or shall maintain at least two feet of freeboard.*
- *After clearing, grading, earth moving, or excavation is completed, the disturbed area shall be treated by watering, revegetation, or by spreading earth binders until the area is paved or otherwise developed.*
- *All material transported off-site shall be securely covered to prevent excessive amounts of dust.*

NO_X Control Measures

- *When feasible, electricity from temporary power poles on site shall be utilized rather than temporary diesel or gasoline generators.*
- *When feasible, on site mobile equipment shall be fueled by methanol or natural gas (to replace diesel-fueled equipment), or, propane or butane (to replace gasoline-fueled equipment).*
- *Aqueous Diesel Fuel or biodiesel (B20 with retarded fuel injection timing), if available, shall be used in diesel fueled vehicles when methanol or natural gas alternatives are not available.*

VOC Control Measures

- *Low VOC architectural and asphalt coatings shall be used on site and shall comply with AQMD Rule 1113-Architectural Coatings.*

Other Ozone Precursor Control Measures

- *Equipment engines should be maintained in good condition and in proper tune as per manufacturer's specifications.*
- *Schedule construction periods to occur over a longer time period (i.e., lengthen from 60 days to 90 days) during the smog season so as to minimize the number of vehicles and equipment operating simultaneously.*
- *Use new technologies to control ozone precursor emissions as they become readily available.*

Final Level of Significance

With the implementation of the General Plan Update policies and application of all local, state, and federal regulations pertaining to air quality and incorporation of mitigation measure MM4.2-1, impacts, from a programmatic perspective, would still be ***significant and unavoidable*** (Class I). Cumulative impacts would also be considered ***significant and unavoidable*** (Class I).

4.2.4 Draft General Plan Goals and Policies

Policies relating to Air Quality to minimize air pollutant emissions by reducing vehicle miles traveled (VMT) were identified in the Community Conservation and Development Chapter; Infrastructure and Community Services Chapter; and Natural Resources Chapter of the General Plan Update.

Goal LU-1 **Growth and Change.** Sustainable growth and change through orderly and well-planned development that provides for the needs of existing and future residents and businesses, ensures the effective and equitable provision of public services, and makes efficient use of land and infrastructure.

Policy LU-1.2 **Development Locations.** Prioritize future growth as infill of existing developed areas re-using and, where appropriate, increasing the intensity of development on vacant and underutilized properties, in lieu of expanded development outward into natural areas and open spaces. Allow for growth on the immediate periphery of existing development in limited designated areas, where this is guided by standards to assure seamless integration and connectivity with adjoining areas and open spaces.

Goal LU-5 **City Sustained and Renewed.** Development and land use practices that sustain natural environmental resources, the economy, and societal well-being for use by future generations, which, in turn, reduce greenhouse gas emissions and impacts on climate change.

Policy LU-5.1 **Sustainable Building Practices.** Promote sustainable building practices that utilize materials, architectural design features, and

interior fixtures and finishings to reduce energy and water consumption, toxic and chemical pollution, and waste in the design and construction of buildings.

Policy LU-5.2 **Existing Structure Reuse.** Encourage the retention of existing structures and promote their adaptive reuse with "green" building technologies in accordance with a green building standard, such as Leadership in Energy and Environmental Design (LEED™), or other equivalent.

Policy LU-5.3 **Heat Island Effect.** Seek innovative ways to reduce the "heat island effect" by promoting such features as white roofs, light-colored hardscape paving, and shade structures and trees, and by reducing the extent of unshaded parking lots.

Policy LU-5.4 **Sustainable Land Development Practices.** Promote land development practices that reduce energy and water consumption, pollution, greenhouse gas emissions, and waste, incorporating such techniques as:

- Concentration of uses and design of development to promote walking and use of public transit in lieu of the automobile
- Capture and re-use of stormwater on-site for irrigation
- Orientation of buildings to maximize opportunities for solar energy use, daylighting, and ventilation
- Use of landscapes that protect native soil, conserve water, provide for wildlife, and reduce green waste
- Use of permeable paving materials
- Shading of surface parking, walkways, and plazas
- Management of wastewater and use of recycled water

Goal M-4 **Ensuring Quality of Life.** A transportation system that meets existing and future demands by balancing the need to move traffic with the needs of residents.

Policy M-4.6 **Energy Reduction.** Promote the use of alternative energy sources for transportation related programs and measures to reduce greenhouse gas emissions within the City, including the use of low-emission vehicles in the City's fleet system.

Goal M-5 **Neighborhood Traffic Management.** Minimized through traffic in neighborhoods adjacent to major travel routes.

Policy M-5.1 **Traffic Calming.** Consider the application of traffic calming techniques, where needed, to minimize neighborhood intrusion by through traffic and promote a safe and pleasant neighborhood environment.

Goal M-6 **Alternative Transportation.** Reduced reliance on single-occupancy vehicle travel through the provision of alternative travel modes and enhanced system design.

Policy M-6.2 **Mode Choice.** Expand the choices of available travel modes to increase the freedom of movement for residents and reduce reliance on the automobile. Ensure that existing and future infrastructure will be adequate for future transportation modes.

Policy M-6.3 **Design of Alternative Modes.** New roadways and future street-improvement projects shall be bicycle- and pedestrian-friendly in design.

Policy M-6.6 **Alternative Mode Funding.** Identify funding sources and allocate funds, including the potential formation of assessment districts, for pedestrian, bicycle, transit, and streetscape improvements in existing neighborhoods.

Goal M-7 **Pedestrians.** Transportation improvements and development enhancements that promote and support walking within the community.

Policy M-7.1 **Walkability.** Create a pedestrian environment accessible to all that is safe, attractive, and encourages walking. Maintain and promote the walkability within the City by identifying and completing deficient links within the sidewalk system.

Policy M-7.2 **Pedestrian Connectivity.** Preserve and enhance pedestrian connectivity in existing neighborhoods and require a well-connected pedestrian network linking new and existing developments to adjacent land uses, including commercial uses, schools, and parks.

Policy M-7.3 **Pedestrian Experience.** Promote walking and improve the pedestrian experience with streetscape enhancements and by orienting future development toward the street, where appropriate.

Policy M-7.4 **Walkable Developments.** Encourage mixed-use development so that it is possible for a greater number of short trips to be made by walking.

Goal M-8 **Bikeways.** Enhanced bicycle facilities throughout Agoura Hills for short trips and recreational uses.

Policy M-8.1 **Bikeway Linkages.** Provide bikeway connectivity between residential areas and surrounding natural resource areas, parks, schools, employment centers, and other activity centers in the community.

Policy M-8.2 **Continuous Bikeway Connectivity.** Provide a bicycle network that is continuous, closes gaps in the existing system, and permits easy bicycle travel throughout the community and the region.

Goal M-9 **Transit.** Transit options that are a viable component of the City's multi-modal transportation system.

Policy M-9.1 **Transit Commuting.** Encourage the use of public transportation for commuting trips by collaborating with regional transit agencies to provide additional transit options for service to Agoura Hills.

Goal M-10 **Transportation Demand Management.** The successful application of TDM measures to reduce reliance on single-occupancy vehicles for everyday travel.

Policy M-10.1 **Current Techniques.** Actively utilize current TDM techniques to aid in the reduction of single-occupancy vehicle trips.

Policy M-10.2 **Trip Reduction.** Encourage existing and new developments to participate in trip reducing activities.

Policy M-10.3 **Ride Share.** Actively promote the use of ride-sharing and ride-matching services, for both residents and non-residents.

Policy M-10.4 **City Employees.** Establish a TDM program for the City of Agoura Hills' employees.

Policy M-10.5 **Preferential Parking.** Encourage the availability of preferential parking in selected areas for designated carpools.

Goal U-5 **Energy Provision and Conservation.** Adequate, efficient, and environmentally sensitive energy service for all residents and businesses.

Policy U-5.1 **New Development Requirements.** Require that new development be approved contingent upon its ability to be served by adequate natural gas and electric facilities and infrastructure.

Policy U-5.4 **Energy Efficient Incentives.** Coordinate with relevant utilities and agencies to promote energy rebate and incentive programs offered by local energy providers to increase energy efficiency in older neighborhoods and developments.

Goal NR-7 **Air Quality.** Improvement of the City and the region's air quality.

Policy NR-7.1 **Regional Cooperation.** Cooperate with the South Coast Air Quality Management District (SCAQMD) and the Southern California Association of Governments (SCAG) in their efforts to implement provisions of the region's Air Quality Management Plan.

Policy NR-7.2 **Truck Deliveries.** Encourage businesses to alter local truck delivery schedules to occur during non-peak hours, as feasible.

Policy NR-7.3 **Federal and State Regulations.** Comply with and promote state and federal legislation that improves vehicle/transportation technology and cleaner fuels.

Policy NR-7.4 **Dust and Particulate Control.** Adopt incentives, regulations, and/or procedures to minimize particulate emissions from

paved and unpaved roads, parking lots, and building construction.

Goal NR-9 **Energy Conservation.** Provision of affordable, reliable, and sustainable energy resources to residents and businesses.

Policy NR-9.1 **Public Outreach.** Promote energy conservation measures and options to all residents, businesses, contractors, and consultants.

Policy NR-9.2 **Energy Conservation for City Facilities.** Implement energy-conserving measures for all existing City facilities, as feasible. For new City facilities, incorporate energy-conserving measures to the extent practical.

Goal NR-10 **Greenhouse Gas Reduction.** Reduce emissions from all activities within the City boundaries to help mitigate the impact of climate change.

Policy NR-10.1 **Climate Change.** Comply with all state requirements regarding climate change and greenhouse gas reduction and review the progress toward meeting the emission reductions targets.

4.2.5 References

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4.3 BIOLOGICAL RESOURCES

This section provides a discussion of the biological resources that exist or have the potential to exist within the City of Agoura Hills, in addition to an evaluation of the potential effects resulting from implementation of the General Plan Update on special-status species, natural communities, wetland resources, wildlife movement corridors, and local policies or ordinances protecting biological resources.

No comment letters regarding biological resources were received in response to the April 30, 2009, Notice of Preparation (NOP) circulated for the General Plan Update. Full bibliographic entries for all reference materials are provided in Section 4.3.5 (References) of this section.

4.3.1 Environmental Setting

Regional Context

The City of Agoura Hills is situated in western Los Angeles County in an area known as the Conejo–Las Virgenes region located north of the Santa Monica Mountains, south of the Simi Hills, east of the Conejo Pass, and west of the San Fernando Valley. The general area also encompasses the cities of Thousand Oaks, Westlake Village, and Calabasas, as well as the unincorporated communities of Oak Park and Agoura. Located approximately 6½ miles inland and north of the Pacific Ocean, the bioregion that defines the area is influenced by a relatively arid climate that, in part, can be attributed to the rain shadow effect imposed by the steep rugged terrain of the adjacent Santa Monica Mountains. The area's climate, coupled with a complex geology, give rise to an array of habitat types and vegetation communities. Oak woodland, oak savannah, chaparral, coastal sage scrub, grasslands, and riverine and palustrine habitats collectively contribute to the overall biological value and aesthetic appeal of the general area. Although agricultural practices and urbanization have resulted in the conversion of land and development within many of the larger valleys, there remains expansive undeveloped land within the mountains and foothills that provide important habitat for plant and wildlife species that reside and migrate to and from the area.

Topography and Soils

Topographic features not only provide for scenic viewsheds in a community, but also support the collection and delivery of important water resources, dictate the distribution of valuable habitat types, and aid in the facilitation of wildlife movement to and from important habitat areas. In general, the City of Agoura Hills is situated within a relatively narrow east/west-trending valley corridor between the rolling foothills of the Simi Hills to the north, and the steep slopes of the Las Virgenes region of the Santa Monica Mountains to the south (Google Earth 2009; USGS 2006). Six major ridgelines and five canyon features characterize the City (Rincon Consultants, Inc. 2003). The highest feature within the City is Ladyface Mountain, which towers over the southwestern portions of the City and has a peak elevation of 2,036 feet above mean sea level (amsl). The lowest feature, Lindero Canyon, traverses the western portions of the City and has a base elevation of 815 feet amsl. Other important features include Strawberry Hill, Palo Comado Canyon, Liberty Canyon, and a number of smaller hills, ridgelines, and

canyons ranging in elevation from 800 to 1,500 feet amsl. A number of surface drainages occur within the City, all of which are contained within the Malibu Creek watershed. These drainages include Medea Creek and unnamed tributaries, as well as unnamed tributaries to Las Virgenes Creek that discharge into Liberty Canyon. In addition, a single man-made waterbody, Lake Lindero, is located in the western portion of the City.

The geology and soils associated with topographic features give way to varying habitat types and often provide unique safe havens for rare narrow endemic plants with specific microhabitat requirements such as clay, shale, granite, and limestone pockets, rock outcrops, and cliff faces. The underlying soils of the City and surrounding areas are derived from Miocene-age volcanic and marine-deposit sedimentary rocks that include the "Conejo Volcanics," generally consisting of hard basalt and andesite rocks, and the Topanga, Calabasas, and Modelo foundations, consisting of marine-deposit sedimentary rocks such as conglomerate, sandstone, siltstone, and shale. The City is mapped as being supported by 14 separate soil map units in addition to areas in the central portions of the City that lack digitized soils information and are primarily urbanized (USDA n.d.). In general, undeveloped land north of the Ventura Freeway is dominated by silty clay loams from the Linne and Rincon series, clay loams from the Los Osos and San Benito series, shaly loam from the Calleguas series, very fine sandy loam from the Huerhuero series, and Cumulic Haploxerolls. Undeveloped land to the south of the Ventura Freeway is underlined by Cotharin clay loam and Cotharin-Talepop association, as well as Linne-Los Osos-Haploxerepts association and Typic Haploxerepts.

Vegetation

The vegetation mapping for the General Plan Update takes a broad-based approach toward delineating habitat types and vegetation communities that occur within the City. For the purposes of this assessment, vegetation communities are mapped and defined based on overall dominance of trees, shrubs, and herbaceous plants that occur over relatively large areas. As environmental conditions change and more specific analyses are conducted over time, it is likely that deviations from the large-scale mapping will occur, and more fine-scale mapping will reveal a greater diversity of habitat types.

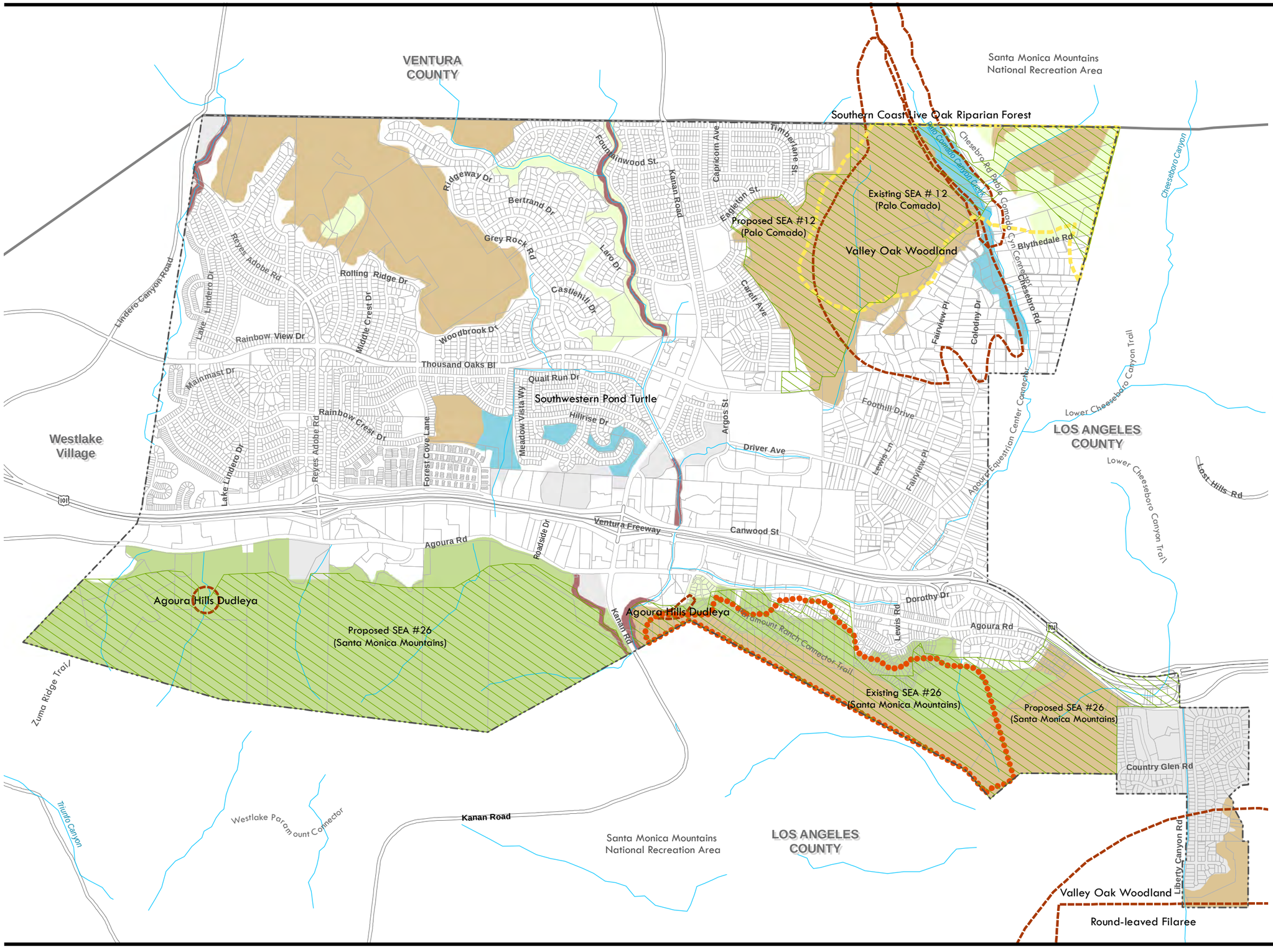
In addition to urban/developed land, a total of five general vegetation communities characterize the City including grassland, coastal sage scrub, chaparral, oak woodland, and riparian woodland as shown in Figure 4.3-1 (Habitats and Sensitive Species). The names and definitions of vegetation communities are discussed below and are suggested based on general definitions provided by Holland, Sawyer and Keeler-Wolf, and the California Department of Fish and Game's (CDFG) California Wildlife Habitat Relations (CWHR) natural communities classification system (Holland 1986; Sawyer and Keeler-Wolf 1995; CDFG 1988).

Urban/Developed

Urban/developed includes land that has been permanently altered due to the construction of aboveground developments such as buildings, roads, and golf courses. Urban/developed areas are often characterized by isolated stands of nonnative vegetation typically associated with landscaping

CITY of AGOURA HILLS
General Plan Update EIR

HABITATS and SENSITIVE SPECIES



Legend

Vegetation Community
- Chaparral
- Coastal Sage Scrub
- Developed
- Grassland
- Oak Woodland
- Riparian Woodland
- California Natural Diversity Database (CNDDB) Occurrence

Significan Ecological Areas
- Existing SEA # 12 (Palo Comado)
- Existing SEA #26 (Santa Monica Mountains)
- Proposed SEA #12 or #26 (Palo Camado or Santa Monica Mountains)
- City Limits
- County Boundary
- Streams

Source: City of Agoura Hills General Plan 2003; Agoura Village Specific Plan EIR; LA County Dept. Regional Planning, 2009.

D21377_Agoura_Hills\Veg_Communities_CNDDB.mxd

Miles: 0 0.125 0.25 0.5 0.75

Figure 4.3-1

improvements, including ornamental tree- and shrub-vegetated slopes and rights-of-way, and groundcover-vegetated parks.

As shown in Figure 4.3-1 (Habitats and Sensitive Species), urban/developed land occurs throughout the City, with the majority occurring north of the Ventura Freeway in the form of surface streets, arterials, residential developments, shopping centers, and parks. A number of commercial and retail developments also exist to the immediate north and south of the Ventura Freeway corridor, and scattered residential developments occur to the south along Agoura Road. Areas characterized by urban/developed land provide very limited biological function and value.

Grassland

For the purposes of this assessment, grassland can be divided into two general categories: native grassland or nonnative grassland. The native grassland type that is known to occur in sparse patches within the City is described as valley needlegrass grassland. Valley needlegrass grassland has been defined as supporting a vegetative cover that includes at least 10 percent coverage by native purple needlegrass (*Nassella pulchra*), with the remaining 90 percent comprised of other native and nonnative grasses and forbs (Sawyer and Keeler-Wolf 1995; Rincon Consultants, Inc. 2003; City of Agoura Hills 2006). Nonnative grassland, or annual grassland, is described as a dense to sparse cover of nonnative annual grasses often associated with numerous ruderal species and native annual forbs, especially in years with plentiful rain. Seed germination occurs with the onset of winter rains. Some plant growth occurs in winter, but most growth and flowering occurs in the spring. Plants then die in the summer, and persist as seeds in the uppermost layers of soil until the next rainy season. In addition to purple needlegrass, other native grasses typically found within valley needlegrass grasslands include foothill needlegrass (*Nassella lepida*), California brome (*Bromus carinatus* var. *carinatus*), and California blue-eyed grass (*Sisyrinchium bellum*), among others. Native forbs may also be present such as fiddleneck (*Amsinckia* spp.), California poppy (*Eschscholzia californica*), popcorn flower (*Plagiobothrys* spp.), and phacelia (*Phacelia* spp.). Nonnative species typically found in native and nonnative grassland habitats include grasses such as red bromes (*Bromus madritensis* ssp. *rubens*), ripgut (*Bromus diandrus*), soft chess (*Bromus hordeaceus*), cheat grass (*Bromus tectorum*), oats (*Avena* spp.), barleys (*Hordeum* spp.), and rattail fescue (*Vulpia myuros*), and forbs such as black mustard (*Brassica nigra*), shortpod mustard (*Hirschfeldia incana*), filaree (*Erodium* spp.), and sweet fennel (*Foeniculum vulgare*).

As shown in Figure 4.3-1 (Habitats and Sensitive Species), grassland occurs in contiguous stands north of Thousand Oaks Boulevard adjacent to Medea Creek, as well as on the south-facing slopes of the foothills located in the northeastern corner of the City. Smaller, isolated patches of grassland also occur on the south facing slopes of the foothills located in the northwestern portions of the City, adjacent to Deep Shadow Drive and Canwood Street in the central portions of the City, and adjacent to Cornell Road in the southern portions of the City. These stands function as understory extensions to the adjacent scrub and woodland communities, and provide foraging and dispersal habitat for wildlife species that commonly occur in the area.

Coastal Sage Scrub

Coastal sage scrub is a native scrub-type community that is widespread throughout the lower elevations of southern California. For the purposes of this assessment, coastal sage scrub habitat has been defined to include elements of Venturan coastal sage scrub (Holland 1986), coastal scrub, coyote brush series (CDFG 1988), and California buckwheat series (Sawyer and Keeler-Wolf 1995) due to the potential variability of the stands that exist within the City. Coastal sage scrub vegetation typically consists of low-growing, drought-deciduous, perennial, and evergreen shrubs adapted to xeric sites supported by steep and gentle sloping topography with severely drained soils or clays that release stored soil moisture slowly. Coastal sage scrub may occur as a dense scrub-type community of scattered shrubs, sub-shrubs, and herbs generally less than 3 feet tall and often developing considerable cover. Typical stands in the bioregion are relatively dense and dominated by the native shrub, California sagebrush (*Artemisia californica*), with a sub-dominance of one or more native shrubs, and an herbaceous understory consisting of native and nonnative grasses, and annual forbs. Diagnostic species generally include California sagebrush, California buckwheat (*Eriogonum fasciculatum*), black sage (*Salvia mellifera*), white sage (*Salvia apiana*), laurel sumac (*Malosma laurina*), sticky monkeyflower (*Mimulus auranticus*), chaparral yucca (*Yucca whipplei*), and California aster (*Corethrogyne filaginifolia*), among others. This community is fire-adapted, with many constituent species being able to sprout new stems from remnant crowns after a burn. In southern California, this community typically intergrades with coastal dunes scrub and foredune habitats along the coast, and with grassland, chaparral, and oak woodland habitats at inland locales.

Coastal sage scrub is the dominant natural community within the City. As shown in Figure 4.3-1 (Habitats and Sensitive Species), the largest stands of coastal sage scrub occur north of the Ventura Freeway occupying the foothill areas in the northeastern and northwestern portions of the City. Another large stand occurs south of the Ventura Freeway, occupying an expansive north-facing slope in the vicinity of Renee Drive. These stands are largely intact, intergrading with grassland habitat on the drier south-facing sides of the foothill slopes and within sparse open areas, and chaparral within higher elevations and areas characterized by steep slopes. Emergent oak trees (*Quercus* spp.) also characterize portions of these stands in low percentages. There are a number of areas where segments of larger stands overlap the City boundaries from adjacent areas, including areas in the northeastern corner of the City east of Chesebro Road, and areas in the southeastern portions of the City near Liberty Canyon. A smaller isolated stand also occupies a hodgeback east of Forest Cove Park. Based on their contiguity and large size, some of the stands within the City may provide habitat for both common and sensitive plant and wildlife species.

Chaparral

Chaparral is one of the most widespread upland vegetation communities in California, with many distinct types or series that are determined by the dominant soils, elevation, rainfall, and other conditions. For the purposes of this assessment, chaparral habitat has been defined to include elements of northern mixed chaparral (Holland 1986), mixed chaparral (CDFG 1988), and scrub oak—chamise series (Sawyer and Keeler-Wolf 1995) due to the potential variability of the stands that exist within the City. Chaparrals are generally composed of hard-stemmed shrubs with leathery-leaves that avoid desiccation during the dry season. Shrubs are primarily broad-leaved sclerophyll, deeply rooted, and densely arranged, leaving little

opportunity for understory growth. Typical sites are characterized by steep, dry, rocky slopes with little soil development. Characteristic shrub species typically include wild lilac (*Ceanothus* spp.), chamise (*Adenostoma fasciculatum*), manzanita (*Arctostaphylos* spp., *Xylococcus* sp.), scrub oak (*Quercus berberidifolia*), toyon (*Heteromeles arbutifolia*), mountain mahogany (*Cercocarpus betuloides*), holly-leaf cherry (*Prunus ilicifolia*), coffee berry (*Rhamnus californica*), laurel sumac, poison oak (*Toxicodendron diversilobum*), and black sage. Chaparral is also a fire-adapted community with many species having the ability to stump-sprout after a burn and/or develop seeds that are stimulated to germinate after a fire. In southern California, this community typically intergrades with grassland, coastal scrub, and oak woodland habitats at drier locales on less rocky soils and lower elevations, and evergreen and coniferous forest habitats in cooler locales on less rocky soils in higher elevations.

As shown in Figure 4.3-1 (Habitats and Sensitive Species), chaparral is restricted to the steeper, rockier, higher elevation slopes that bound the southern portions of the City within the Santa Monica Mountains. Two large contiguous stands occur within this area and are bisected from east-to-west by Kanan Road and Medea Creek. These stands continue further to the south into the Santa Monica Mountains undisturbed and intact, and based on their contiguity and large size, they provide good quality habitat for both common and sensitive plant and wildlife species.

Oak Woodland

Oak woodland is a sclerophyllous woodland community containing a mix of several oak tree species. For the purposes of this assessment, oak woodland is defined as having characteristics of coast live oak woodland and valley oak woodland (Holland 1986) due to the potential variability of the stands that exist within the City. Its canopy generally ranges from 30 to 75 feet tall and may be open or closed. A more closed canopy typically defines an oak forest community type, while an open canopy is typically associated with an oak savannah. This community is typically found on north-facing slopes or in shaded ravines. The understory is usually dominated by nonnative and native grasses or covered with leaf litter and has a poorly developed shrub layer. Oak woodlands occur in a variety of locations where soil conditions are moister and less rocky than the soils that support coastal sage scrub and chaparral vegetation. In the lowlands, they are mostly confined to stream and canyon bottoms, but in the foothills and mountains they occur in areas with good soil, especially on north- and east-facing slopes. Within the bioregion, characteristic species may include coast live oak (*Quercus agrifolia*), interior live oak (*Quercus wislizeni*), valley oak (*Quercus lobata*), and scrub oak. Oak woodlands typically intergrade with coastal scrub and chaparral habitats at drier, rockier sites, and oak and mixed evergreen forest habitats in cooler, moister sites.

Although numerous oak trees (coast live oak and valley oak) occur throughout the City as remnants or ornamental plantings, dense stands that constitute intact oak woodland habitat are limited. As shown in Figure 4.3-1 (Habitats and Sensitive Species), three stands have been identified within the City including a large linear stand within the lower reach of Palo Comado Canyon in the northeastern portion of the City, and two smaller isolated stands near Meadow Vista Way in the central portions of the City. Some of these stands may contain other native tree species, including southern California black walnut (*Juglans californica* var. *californica*).

Riparian Woodland

Riparian woodlands are characterized by dense, broadleafed, evergreen sclerophyllous, and winter-deciduous riparian thickets of vegetation, typically dominated by several species of willow (*Salix* spp.), emergent cottonwood (*Populus* spp.), California sycamore (*Platanus racemosa*), and mulefat (*Baccharis salicifolia*). Due to the variability of riparian habitat within the City, areas mapped as riparian woodland may include elements of southern cottonwood-willow riparian forest, southern coast live oak riparian forest (Holland 1986), coast live oak - arroyo willow series (Sawyer and Keeler-Wolf 1995), southern willow scrub, and mule fat scrub (Holland 1986). Riparian seeps, springs, and freshwater emergent wetlands may also be present within these areas. Some stands are too dense to allow much understory development, while other stands are characterized by canopy breaks and a more open structure allowing for substantial growth in the shrub, herbaceous and woody vine strata. Riparian woodlands may be found in a number of scenarios: within narrow ribbons along streambeds and washes that tend to dry out quickly after storm events; within areas characterized by loose, sandy, or fine gravelly alluvium deposits near stream channels exposed to flood flows; within intermittent stream channels with fairly coarse substrate, moderate depth to the water table, and maintained by frequent flooding or scouring; within low gradient stream reaches and seasonally flooded bottomlands supported by moist or saturated sandy or gravelly soils; within drier outer flood plains along perennial streams; or within or adjacent to the active stream channel and primary floodplain of intermittent or perennial streams. Many riparian systems support wetland habitats within and adjacent to their understory. In addition to the dominants discussed above, other species associated with riparian woodlands in the region may include coast live oak, Mexican elderberry (*Sambucus mexicana*), coyote bush (*Baccharis pilularis*), skunkbush (*Rhus trilobata*), poison oak (*Toxicodendron diversilobum*), mugwort (*Artemisia douglasiana*), California rose (*Rosa californica*), California blackberry (*Rubus ursinus*), docks (*Rumex* spp.), sedges (*Carex* spp.), rushes (*Juncus* spp.), oats (*Avena* spp.), bromes (*Bromus* spp.) and mustards (e.g., *Brassica, Hirschfeldia, Rapa* spp.), among others. Riparian woodland habitat was formerly extensive along the major rivers of coastal southern California, but has been much reduced by urban expansion, agriculture, flood control, and channel improvements that have disrupted natural flow regimes.

As shown in Figure 4.3-1 (Habitats and Sensitive Species), riparian woodland is mapped as occupying portions of Lindero Canyon Creek and Medea Creek within the City limits. Dominant species within these stands may include red willow (*Salix laevigata*), arroyo willow (*Salix lasiolepis*), mulefat, coast live oak, and valley oak. Riparian woodland habitat within the City is considered to be of high biological function and value as it provides water resources, suitable nesting and foraging opportunities, and live-in refuge and migratory habitat for a number of common and sensitive resident and migratory wildlife species.

Sensitive Biological Resources

Sensitive biological resources are defined as the following: (1) vegetation communities that are unique, of relatively limited distribution, or of particular value to wildlife; and (2) species that have been given special recognition by federal or state agencies, or are included in regional conservation plans due to limited, declining, or threatened populations.

Sensitive Biological Resources Designations

Federal

Federal listing of endangered and threatened wildlife and plants is administered by the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service (USFWS) for terrestrial and freshwater species and by the National Marine Fisheries Service (NMFS) for marine and anadromous species. The USFWS and NMFS also recognize species of concern that are candidates for listing. Before a plant or animal species can receive protection under the federal *Endangered Species Act*, it must first be placed on the federal list. The program follows a strict legal process to determine whether to list a species. An "endangered" species is defined as one that is in danger of extinction throughout all or a significant portion of its range. A "threatened" species is one that is likely to become endangered in the foreseeable future. The USFWS also maintains a list of plants and animals native to the U.S. that are species of special concern for possible addition to the federal list but that are not currently regulated.

State

California Department of Fish and Game (CDFG) implements the *California Endangered Species Act*. The CDFG maintains a list of designated endangered, threatened, and rare plant and animal species that are known to occur within California. Listed species are either designated under the Native Plant Protection Act or designated by the Fish and Game Commission. The CDFG also affords interim protection to candidate species while they are being reviewed for formal listing by the Fish and Game Commission. In addition, the CDFG maintains a list of "Species of Special Concern," most of which are species whose breeding population in California faces extirpation. Sensitive natural communities are vegetation communities, associations, or sub-associations designated by the CDFG and/or California Native Plant Society (CNPS) that support concentrations of special-status plant or wildlife species, are of relatively limited distribution, or are of particular value to wildlife. The primary information source on the distribution of special-status species and sensitive natural communities in California is the California Natural Diversity Database (CNDDB) inventory, which is maintained by the Wildlife and Habitat Data Analysis Branch of the CDFG.

Special-Status Species

Special-Status Plant Species

Based on a list compiled through the CNDDB (CNDDB 2009) and other sources (CNPS 2009; Consortium 2009; BerkeleyMapper 2009; Calflora 2009a; City of Agoura Hills 2006; CDFG 2009c, 2009d), a total of fourteen special status plant species were determined to have a potential to occur within the City. Figure 4.3-1 (Habitats and Sensitive Species)) displays the locations of known special-status plant species occurrences within the City that have been reported to the CNDDB. Further information detailing the listing status, habitat requirements, species life form, and blooming periods for all fourteen special-status plant species included in the analysis are provided in Table 4.3-1 (Special Status Plant Species Potentially Occurring within the City of Agoura Hills).

Oak Trees

Oak resources are considered a valuable resource to the bioregion by the CDFG and the City. The City contains open oak woodland habitat in addition to individual oak trees scattered throughout other habitat types and integrated into the urban landscape (Trees, etc. 2004) Although not afforded any legal protection under federal or state endangered species laws, Coast live oak, valley oak, and other oak trees are protected by the City of Agoura Hills Oak Tree Ordinance, and preservation of these oak resources is a high priority to the City for their biological and aesthetic value.

Special-Status Wildlife Species

Based on a list compiled through the CNDDB (CNDDB 2009) and other sources (City of Agoura Hills 2006; CDFG 2009c, 2009d, 2009b), a total of seventeen special-status wildlife species were determined to have the potential to occur within the City. Figure 4.3-1 (Habitats and Sensitive Species), displays the locations of known special-status wildlife species occurrences that have been reported to the CNDDB. Further information detailing the listing status and habitat requirements for all seventeen special-status wildlife species included in the analysis are provided in Table 4.3-2 (Special Status Wildlife Species Potentially Occurring within the City of Agoura Hills).

Sensitive Natural Communities

Based on a list compiled through the CNDDB (CNDDB 2009; CDFG 2003), five sensitive natural communities are known to occur in the general area. Table 4.3-3 (Sensitive Natural Communities Potentially Occurring within the City of Agoura Hills) below lists these five communities along with their global- and state-sensitivity rankings.

Of the five listed above, two sensitive natural communities are specifically mapped as occurring within the City according to the CNDDB, including southern coast live oak riparian forest and valley oak woodland. Southern coast live oak riparian forest is known to occur in the northeastern portions of the City within the upper reach of Palo Comado Creek. Valley oak woodland is known to occur in two locations, including the foothills west of Palo Comado Creek in the northeastern portion of the City and within Liberty Canyon in the extreme southeastern corner of the City.

In addition to these two known occurrences, the City may contain smaller areas characterized by other sensitive natural communities that have not been investigated or reported to the CNDDB. For example, assessments conducted for the Agoura Village Specific Plan EIR (City of Agoura Hills 2006) delineated smaller patches of valley needlegrass grassland within areas mapped as both annual grassland and coastal sage scrub. Additionally, the riparian woodland habitat within the City likely contains a wide variety of riparian and wetland types which may contain constituents of other sensitive riparian natural communities such as southern riparian scrub, southern willow scrub, or mule fat scrub.

Table 4.3-1 Special Status Plant Species Potentially Occurring within the City of Agoura Hills

Species	Status					
Scientific Name Common Name	Federal	State	CNPS	Preferred Habitat	Life Form	Blooming Period
Astragalus brauntonii Braunton's milk-vetch	FE	—	1B.1	Closed-cone coniferous forest, chaparral, coastal sage scrub, valley and foothill grassland. Recent burns or disturbed areas. Stiff gravelly clay soils overlying granite or limestone outcrops. Known Elevation Limits: 10–2,100 feet	Perennial herb	Feb–Jul
Baccharis malibuensis Malibu baccharis	—	—	1B.1	Coastal sage scrub, chaparral, cismontane woodland, and riparian woodland within Conejo volcanic substrates, often on exposed roadcuts. Sometimes occupies oak woodland habitat. Known Elevation Limits: 485–832 feet	Deciduous shrub	Aug
Baccharis plummerae ssp. *plummerae* Plummer's baccharis	—	—	4.3	Broadleaf upland forest, chaparral, cismontane woodland, coastal sage scrub. Known Elevation Limits: 16–1,394 feet	Deciduous shrub	May–Oct
California macrophylla Round-leaved filaree	—	—	1B.1	Cismontane woodland and valley and foothill grassland supported by clay soils. Known Elevation Limits: 49–3,900 feet	Annual herb	Mar–May
Calachortus clavatus var. *gracilis* Slender mariposa lily	—	—	1B.2	Chaparral, coastal sage scrub, and valley and foothill grassland. Known Elevation Limits: 1,180–3,280 feet	Bulbiferous herb	Mar–Jun
Calochortus plummerae Plummer's mariposa lily	—	—	1B.2	Coastal sage scrub, chaparral, valley and foothill grassland, cismontane woodland, and lower montane coniferous forest. Occurs on rocky and sandy sites, usually of granite or alluvial material. Fire follower. Known Elevation Limits: 300–5,280 feet.	Bulbiferous herb	May–Jul
Chorizanthe parryi fernandina San Fernando Valley spineflower	FC	CE	1B.1	Coastal sage scrub supported by dry, gravelly, or sandy soils. Sandy soils in flats and foothills in mixed grassland and chaparral. Known Elevation Limits: 10–3,396 feet.	Annual herb	Apr–Jun
Dienandra minthornii Santa Susana tarplant	—	CR	1B.2	Chaparral and coastal sage scrub within rocky areas supported by sandstone outcrops and rock crevices. Known Elevation Limits: 920–2,500 feet.	Deciduous shrub	Jul–Nov
Dudleya cymosa ssp. *Agourensis* Agoura Hills dudleya	FT	—	1B.2	Chaparral and cismontane woodland within rocky areas characterized by volcanic breccia. Known Elevation Limits: 656–1,640 feet.	Perennial herb	May–Jun
Dudleya cymosa ssp. *Marcescens* marcescent dudleya	FT	CR	1B.2	Chaparral within rocky areas supporting by volcanic-derived substrate. Sheer volcanic rock surfaces and canyon walls. Known Elevation Limits: 490–1,700 feet.	Perennial herb	Apr–Jul
Dudleya multicaulis many-stemmed dudleya	—	—	1B.2	Openings in chaparral and coastal sage scrub, and valley and foothill grasslands, often supported by clay soils. Known Elevation Limits: 50–2,590 feet.	Perennial herb	Apr–Jul
Nolina cismontana Peninsular nolina	—	—	1B.2	Chaparral and coastal sage scrub supported primarily by sandstone and shale substrates. Known Elevation Limits: 460–4,183 feet.	Evergreen shrub	May–Jul
Orcuttia californica California Orcutt grass	FE	CE	1B.1	Vernal pools. Known Elevation Limits: 50–2,165 feet.	Annual herb	Apr–Aug
Pentachaeta lyonii Lyon's pentachaeta	FE	CE	1B.1	Openings and edges of chaparral, coastal sage scrub, and valley and foothill grassland supported by rocky or clay substrates. Known Elevation Limits: 100–2,100 feet	Annual herb	Mar–Aug

Table 4.3-1 Special Status Plant Species Potentially Occurring within the City of Agoura Hills

Species	Status					
Scientific Name Common Name	Federal	State	CNPS	Preferred Habitat	Life Form	Blooming Period

SOURCE: California Native Plant Society. 2009. *CNPS Inventory of Rare and Endangered Plants – CNPS Rare Plant Program Ranking System*. http://www.cnps.org/cnps/rareplants/inventory/ranking_system_mods.php (accessed on June 3, 2009).

Federal
FE = Federal Endangered
FT = Federal Threatened
PE = Proposed Endangered
PT = Proposed Threatened
FC = Federal Candidate

State
CE = California Endangered
CT = California Threatened
CR = California Rare

California Native Plant Society (CNPS)
1A = Plants presumed extinct in California
1B = Plants rare, threatened, or endangered in California and elsewhere
2 = Plants rare, threatened, or endangered in California, but more common elsewhere
3 = Plants in need of more information
4 = Plants of limited distribution.
x.1 = Seriously endangered in California (>80% of occurrences threatened or high degree and immediacy of threat)
x.2 = Fairly endangered in California (20-80% of occurrences threatened)
x.3 = Not very endangered in California (<20% of occurrences threatened or no current threats known)

Table 4.3-2 Special Status Wildlife Species Potentially Occurring within the City of Agoura Hills

Species Scientific Name Common Name	Status Federal	 State	 Other	Preferred Habitat
Invertebrates				
Solcalchemmis gertschi Gertsch's socalchemmis spider	—	—	—	Closed canopy riparian woodland and coastal sage scrub. May occur within urban settings. Known from two localities in Los Angeles County, including Brentwood and Topanga Canyon.
Amphibians and Reptiles				
Actinemys marmorata pallida Southwestern pond turtle	—	CSC	—	Permanent or nearly permanent fresh water habitats below 6,000 feet in elevation. Requires basking sites such as partially submerged logs, vegetation mats, or open mud banks. In lower elevations and latitudes, this species may be active at aquatic sites year-round. Uses protected upland terrestrial sites near aquatic sites with appropriate slope aspect and soils for an oviposition site.
Anaxyrus californicus Arroyo toad	FE	CSC	—	Semi-arid regions near washes and intermittent streams characterized by valley and foothill riparian, desert riparian, desert wash, and other riparian habitats. Prefers rivers with unvegetated sandy banks and loose gravelly areas of streams for burrowing and foraging.
Aniella pulchra pulchra Silvery legless lizard	—	CSC	—	Wide variety of upland habitats characterized by sparse vegetation supported by moist, sandy, or loose loamy soils. Soil moisture is essential.
Aspidoscelis tigris stejnegeri Coastal western whiptail	—	WL	—	Sparse scrub-type habitats within deserts and semiarid areas. Also found within woodland and riparian habitats. Substrates may be firm, sandy, or rocky.
Phrynosoma coronatum (blainvillii population) Coast (San Diego) horned lizard	—	CSC	—	Inhabits coastal sage scrub and chaparral in arid and semi-arid climate conditions. Also inhabits annual grassland, oak woodland, riparian woodland, and coniferous forest. Requires loose fine soils with a high sand fraction for burrowing. Feeds primarily on harvester ants, but also termites, beetles, flies, wasps, and grasshoppers. This species is unable to survive in habitats altered through urbanization, agriculture, off-road vehicle use, or flood control structures.
Rana draytonii California red-legged frog	FT	CSC	—	Dense emergent wetland and riparian vegetation associated with lowland and foothill perennial streams and other clean permanent freshwater habitats. Larval development requires 11 – 20 weeks of permanent inundation of breeding and oviposition sites. Requires adjacent upland habitat with suitable burrows for aestivation.
Taricha torosa torosa Coast range newt	—	CSC	—	Occurs within a wide variety of scrub-, woodland-, and grassland-type terrestrial habitats in coastal locales from Mendocino County south to San Diego County. Breeding habitat consists of reservoirs, ponds, and slow moving streams. Adults will migrate over 1.0 kilometer from terrestrial sites to breeding sites.
Thamnophis hammondii Two-striped garter snake	—	CSC	—	Highly aquatic species that requires permanent freshwater habitats characterized by rocky beds and riparian vegetation. Occurs within coastal locales from Salinas south to Baja, California from sea level to approximately 7,000 feet above mean sea level.

Table 4.3-2 Special Status Wildlife Species Potentially Occurring within the City of Agoura Hills

Species Scientific Name Common Name	Status Federal	 State	 Other	Preferred Habitat
Birds				
Agelaius tricolor Tricolored blackbird	—	CSC	—	Nesting habitat consists of protected emergent wetland and riparian habitats adjacent to open water including, lakes, ponds, slow moving streams, canals, sloughs and backwaters. Foraging areas support high density of insect prey. Highly colonial species that is most abundant in the Central Valley and vicinity.
Accipiter cooperi Cooper's hawk	—	WL	—	Nesting habitat includes open, uninterrupted, or marginal type woodlands. Nest sites commonly found in riparian growths of deciduous trees and live oaks. Forages within a wide variety of habitat types primarily on the wing.
Aimophila ruficeps canescens Southern California rufous-crowned sparrow	—	CSC	—	Nesting habitat includes steep, often rocky, hillsides characterized by grass and forb patches intermittent to sparse coastal sage scrub and sparse mixed chaparral stands.
Aquila chrysaetos Golden eagle	—	CF CSC	—	Nesting and wintering habitat consists of rolling foothills and mountain areas, juniper-sage flats, and deserts. Primarily associated with cliff-walled canyons and large trees in open habitats for nesting. Shrub-steppe and native grassland communities provide important foraging habitat. Carrion is also an important dietary item.
Athene cunicularia Burrowing owl	—	CSC	—	Open grasslands, desert, and sparse scrublands with low-growing vegetation and suitable burrows.
Elanus leucurus White tailed kite	—	CF	—	Rolling foothills and valley margins characterized by scattered oaks. Also, river bottomlands or marshes adjacent to deciduous woodland. Forages in open grasslands, meadows, or marshes that occur adjacent to isolated, densely vegetated treetops used for nesting and perching.
Polioptila californica californica Coastal California gnatcatcher	FT	CSC	—	Coastal sage scrub on mesas, gently sloping areas, and along the lower slopes of the coast ranges. May also use chaparral, grassland, and riparian habitats
Mammals				
Macrotus californicus California leaf-nosed bat	—	CSC	—	Desert riparian, desert wash, desert scrub, desert succulent scrub, alkali scrub, and palm oasis habitats. Requires rocky and rugged terrain that supports caves or mines for roosting.

Federal
FE = Federal Endangered
FT = Federal Threatened
FC = Federal Candidate

State
CE = California Endangered
CT = California Threatened
CF = California Fully Protected
CSC = California Species of Special Concern
WL = Watch List

Other

Wildlife Corridors and Linkages

Wildlife movement corridors link areas of suitable wildlife habitat that are otherwise separated by rugged terrain, changes in vegetation, or human disturbance. The fragmentation of open space areas by urbanization creates isolated "islands" of wildlife habitat, separating different populations of a single species. Corridors act as links between these "islands" and populations. Wildlife corridors represent a specific route that is used for movement and migration of species between lands that has been constrained. A corridor may be different from a "linkage" because it may represent a smaller, narrower avenue for movement. A linkage is generally defined as an area of land which supports or contributes to the long-term movement of wildlife and genetic exchange by providing live-in habitat that connects to other habitat areas. Although wildlife corridors and linkages may provide umbrella transitory and/or live-in habitat for an array of smaller and less mobile wildlife and fish species, they are most important in serving larger species that are migratory and/or require large home ranges to carry out their life history requirements. For an area to be important in facilitating wildlife movement, it should contain the resources necessary for breeding, denning, nesting, rearing, pupping, foraging, staging, wintering, concentrating, migrating, and dispersing within or outside of home ranges.

Table 4.3-3 Sensitive Natural Communities Potentially Occurring within the City of Agoura Hills

Natural Community	*Global Ranking*	*State Ranking*
California Walnut Woodland	G2	S2.1
Southern Coast Live Oak Riparian Forest	G4	S4
Southern Sycamore Alder Riparian Woodland	G4	S4
Valley Needlegrass Grassland	G1	S3.1
Valley Oak Woodland	G3	S2.1
Global Rankings **G1** = Less than 2,000 acres exist worldwide. **G2** = Approximately 2,000 to 10,000 acres exist worldwide. **G3** = Approximately 10,000 to 50,000 acres exist worldwide. **G4** = Community is secure worldwide, but factors exist to cause some concern.	State Rankings **S2.1** = Considered very threatened in California; approximately 2,000 to 10,000 acres exist statewide. **S3.1** = Considered very threatened in California; approximately 10,000 to 50,000 acres exist statewide. **S4** = Community is secure statewide, but factors exist to cause some concern.	

From a regional perspective, the City lies within a conceptual bottleneck that provides a corridor between the Los Padres National Forest, Santa Susana Mountains, and Simi Hills to the north, and the Santa Monica Mountains, Malibu Creek State Park, and coastal areas to the south (City of Agoura Hills 2006; Google Earth 2009). Four topographic features that serve as conceptual linkages intersect portions of the City and provide landscape-level connections between the north and south. These include the Medea Creek, Palo Comado Canyon, Chesebro Canyon, and Liberty Canyon linkages. Medea Creek trends north-to-south and traverses the center of the City, utilizing a large underpass beneath the Ventura Freeway that serves as an important corridor area. This linkage is supported by Medea Creek and contains a combination of urbanized and natural land, with both temporary and live-in habitat throughout its reach. The Medea Creek linkage is perhaps most limited in function by its proximity to adjacent developments and anthropogenic disturbances north of the Ventura Freeway, in addition to its

unaccommodating features, including artificial channel sections, steep vertical walls, and a constrained culvert underneath the Ventura Freeway. Also trending north-to-south, Palo Comado Canyon serves as a tributary canyon to the larger Chesebro Canyon, which in turn crosses beneath the Ventura Freeway within another important corridor, eventually connecting directly through constrained watercourses with Medea Creek. North of the Ventura Freeway, Chesebro Canyon also indirectly connects with Liberty Canyon through undeveloped upland habitat blocks. Wildlife access beneath the Ventura Freeway is provided via Liberty Canyon Road. Although constrained by existing developments, the Chesebro Canyon/Liberty Canyon linkage has been identified as the highest potential wildlife crossing area along the Ventura Freeway (City of Agoura Hills 2006; City of Calabasas 2008). The Liberty Canyon area has been identified as a regional choke-point linkage and one of sixty important habitat linkages in the South Coast region (City of Agoura Hills 2006).

Large- and medium-sized mammals that are commonly known to the region and have the highest potential to use these linkages include species such as bobcat (*Lynx rufus*), striped skunk (*Mephitis mephitis*), and coyote (*Canis latrans*). Although less likely, species such as mountain lion (*Felis concolor*) and southern mule deer (*Odocoileus hemionus*) may also use these linkages as important travel routes between the Simi Hills and Santa Monica Mountains. All of these species are highly mobile within their home ranges, which can be many square miles in size and encompass a variety of habitat types depending on the species and the availability of resources at any given time throughout the year. Portions of these linkages also support aquatic habitats in the form of riparian/riverine and wetland habitats. These habitats provide important dispersal habitat for amphibians and birds that are both resident and migratory to the area. Amphibians such as California newt (*Taricha torosa*), Pacific tree frog (*Pseudacris regilla*), and western toad (*Bufo boreas*) rely on seasonal inundation for larval dispersal and refuge within these cool and moist protected habitats, and birds such as song sparrow, lesser goldfinch (*Carduelis psaltria*), common yellowthroat, red-winged blackbird (*Agelaius phoeniceus*), orange-crowned warbler (*Vermivora celata*), Cooper's hawk, snowy egret (*Egretta thula*), and great blue heron (*Ardea herodias*), among others, may all use these habitats as foraging corridors and dispersal routes. The riparian habitats, bridges, and culverts associated with these linkages may also provide important roosting and linear foraging habitat for various bat species that are known to occur in the area.

Significant Ecological Areas

Significant Ecological Areas (SEA) are areas identified by the Los Angeles County General Plan (LACDRP 1980) that contain biological resources of particular importance to the region. SEA are defined in Article IX of the City's Municipal Code as "significant ecological areas/habitat management areas designated as open space on the land use map of the general plan, which are ecologically important or fragile land and water areas valuable as plant and animal communities. The intent is to preserve these resources in an ecologically viable state." The City's Municipal Code contains measures to protect the SEA from incompatible development, preserve the natural terrain, and maintain a quality environment and aesthetic character of the City while limiting development. The adopted ordinance requires new development to obtain a conditional use permit or architectural review approval prior to the commencement of development within the SEA. Selection of each SEA is based on a variety of criteria and each are assigned various conservation goals and objectives that pertain to each target resource proposed for conservation. These resources can include habitat types and plant communities, special-

status species occurrences, important foraging areas, corridors and linkages, and watercourses and wetlands, among others. Land regulations regarding SEA are applicable only to those areas that fall within unincorporated County of Los Angeles lands outside of any city's jurisdictional limits. However, many cities have incorporated SEA mapping, as well as the identified conservation goals and objectives of each SEA into their local policies protecting biological resources.

According to the Draft County of Los Angeles General Plan (LACDRP 2008), and specifically, the Santa Monica Mountains North Area (Eastern and Western) overlays, portions of two proposed SEAs occur within the City: the Santa Susana Mountains/Simi Hills SEA (proposed SEA #27), and the Santa Monica Mountains SEA (proposed SEA #26). The proposed Santa Susana Mountains/Simi Hills SEA contains the existing Palo Comado SEA (existing SEA #12) currently mapped within the northeastern portions of the City. The proposed Santa Monica Mountains (#26) SEA contains the existing Las Virgenes SEA (existing SEA #6) currently mapped within the southeastern portions of the City. In general, the extent of the Palo Comado SEA within the City includes undeveloped rolling hills north of Thousand Oaks Boulevard and west of Sumac Park in the northeastern corner of the City. The extent of the Las Virgenes SEA within the City includes the undeveloped slopes of the Santa Monica Mountains, generally extending from the southern boundary of the City, northward, and into shallow-sloping undeveloped lands just south of Agoura Road. These SEAs contain the largest blocks of undeveloped habitat in the City and are characterized by grassland, coastal sages scrub, chaparral, and oak woodland habitats. The majority of this land is, however, currently under private ownership and may be subject to development pressures.

Jurisdictional Waters and Wetlands

The most significant waterways within the City include Medea Creek, Chesebro Creek, Liberty Canyon Creek, Lindero Canyon Creek, and Lake Lindero. In addition to intermittent and ephemeral surface water flows, these features likely support wetlands conditions and riparian habitat throughout portions of their reach. It is likely that these features and their tributaries would fall under the regulatory jurisdiction of the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers (USACE) as wetland and nonwetland "waters of the U.S." pursuant to Section 404 of the *Clean Water Act* (CWA), the Regional Water Quality Control Board (RWQCB) as wetland and nonwetland "waters of the State" pursuant to Section 401 of the CWA, and the CDFG as jurisdictional streambed or lake pursuant Section 1600 et seq. of the California Fish and Game Code.

4.3.2 Regulatory Framework

Federal

Federal Endangered Species Act (ESA)

The U.S. Congress passed the federal ESA in 1973 to provide a means for conserving the ecosystems that endangered and threatened species require in order to prevent species extinctions. The federal ESA has four major components: (1) Section 4, which provides for listing species and designating critical habitat; (2) Section 7, which requires federal agencies, in consultation with the USFWS, to ensure that

their actions are not likely to jeopardize the continued existence of species or result in the modification or destruction of critical habitat; (3) Section 9, which prohibits against "taking" listed species; and (4) Section 10, which provides for permitting incidental take of listed species.

Under the federal ESA, the term "take" is defined as "to harass, harm, pursue, hunt, shoot, wound, kill, trap, capture, collect, or attempt to engage in any such conduct." "Critical habitat" is defined as "the specific areas within the geographic area occupied by a species on which are found those physical and biological features essential to the conservation of the species, and that may require special management considerations or protection; and specific areas outside the geographic area occupied by a species at the time it is listed, upon determination that such areas are essential for the conservation of the species." Critical habitat has been designated for numerous species in the unincorporated County.

Fish and Wildlife Coordination Act

Section 7 of *Fish and Wildlife Coordination Act* (16 USC 742 et seq., 16 USC 1531 et seq., and 50 CFR 17) requires consultation if any project facilities could jeopardize the continued existence of an endangered species. Applicability depends on federal jurisdiction over some aspect of the project. The administering agency for these authorities is the United States Army Corps of Engineers (Corps) in coordination with the USFWS.

Migratory Bird Treaty Act (MBTA)

The MBTA of 1918 (16 U.S. Code 703-711) implements an international treaty for the conservation and management of bird species that may migrate through more than one country. Enforced in the U.S. by the USFWS, the MBTA makes it unlawful to take, possess, buy, sell, purchase, or barter any migratory bird listed in 50 CFR Part 10, including feathers or other parts, nests, eggs, or products, except as allowed by implementing regulations (50 CFR 21). Disturbance that causes nest abandonment and/or loss of reproductive effort (e.g., killing or abandonment of eggs or young) may be considered a "take" and is potentially punishable by fines and/or imprisonment. In 1972, the MBTA was amended to include protection for migratory birds of prey (raptors). Generally, applicants who obtain an ESA Section 10(a) permit simultaneously receive a three-year MBTA permit for ESA-listed migratory birds.

Bald and Golden Eagle Protection Act

Enacted in 1940, this Act prohibits the take, transport, sale, barter, trade, import, export, and possession of bald eagles, making it illegal for anyone to collect bald eagles and eagle parts, nests, or eggs without authorization from the Secretary of the Interior. The Act was amended in 1962 to extend the prohibitions to the golden eagle.

Federal Water Pollution Control Act (Clean Water Act) (1972)

The *Water Pollution Control Act*, passed by Congress in 1948, authorized the Surgeon General of the Public Health Service to prepare comprehensive programs for eliminating or reducing the pollution of interstate waters and tributaries and improving the sanitary condition of surface and underground waters. The Act was later amended to become the federal *Water Pollution Control Act Amendments of 1972*, commonly

known as the *Clean Water Act* (CWA). The CWA was designed to restore and maintain the chemical, physical, and biological integrity of the waters of the U.S. and gave the EPA the authority to implement pollution control programs, including setting wastewater standards for industry and water quality standards for contaminants in surface waters. The EPA has delegated responsibility for implementation of portions of the CWA in California to the State Water Resources Control Board (SWRCB) and the RWQCB, including water quality control planning and control programs.

The CWA also prohibits the discharge of any pollutants from a point source into navigable waters, except as allowed by permits issued under certain sections of the CWA. Specifically, Section 404 authorizes the USACE to issue permits for and regulate the discharge of dredged or fill materials into wetlands or other "waters of the U.S." Under the CWA and its implementing regulations, "waters of the U.S." are broadly defined as rivers, creeks, streams, and lakes extending to their headwaters, including adjacent wetlands. Further, Section 401 allows states to certify or deny federal permits or licenses that might result in a discharge to State waters, including wetlands. Section 401 certifications are issued by the RWQCB for activities requiring a federal permit or license that may result in the discharge of pollutants into waters of the U.S.

State

California Endangered Species Act

The *California Endangered Species Act* (CESA) declares that deserving plant or animal species would be given protection by the state because they are of ecological, educational, historic, recreational, aesthetic, economic, and scientific value to the people of the state. CESA established that it is state policy to conserve, protect, restore, and enhance endangered species and their habitats. Under state law, plant and animal species may be formally designated rare, threatened, or endangered by official listing by the California Fish and Game Commission. Listed species are generally given greater attention during the land use planning process by local governments, public agencies, and landowners than are species that have not been listed.

CESA authorizes that "Private entities may take plant or wildlife species listed as endangered or threatened under the federal ESA and CESA, pursuant to a federal incidental take permit issued in accordance with Section 10 of the federal ESA, if the California Department of Fish and Game (CDFG) certifies that the incidental take statement or incidental take permit is consistent with CESA (*Fish & Game Code* Section 2080.1(a)).

California Fish and Game Code

The *California Fish and Game* (CFG) *Code* provides specific protection and listing for several types of biological resources. Section 1580 of the CFG Code presents the process and definition for Designated Ecological Reserves. Designated Ecological Reserves are significant wildlife habitats to be preserved in natural condition for the general public to observe and study.

CFG Code Sections 1600 et seq. regulate the alteration of jurisdictional waters, which may include intermittent and ephemeral streams, rivers, creeks, dry washes, sloughs, blue-line streams, lakes, and watercourses with subsurface flows, and mandates that "it is unlawful for any person to substantially divert or obstruct the natural flow or substantially change the bed, channel, or bank of any river, stream, or lake designated by the department, or use any material from the streambeds, without first notifying the department of such activity." CDFG's jurisdiction includes ephemeral, intermittent, and perennial watercourses (including dry washes) characterized by (1) the presence of hydrophytic vegetation; (2) the location of definable bed and banks; and (3) the presence of existing fish or wildlife resources. Section 1602 of the CFG Code requires a Streambed Alteration Agreement for any activity that may alter the bed and/or bank of a stream, river, or channel. Typical activities that require a Streambed Alteration Agreement include excavation or fill placed within a channel, vegetation clearing, structures for diversion of water, installation of culverts and bridge supports, cofferdams for construction dewatering, and bank reinforcement. The state definition of "lakes, rivers, and streams" includes all rivers or streams that flow at least periodically or permanently through a bed or channel with banks that support fish or other aquatic life, and watercourses with surface or subsurface flows that support or have supported riparian vegetation. Furthermore, CDFG jurisdiction is often extended to habitats adjacent to watercourses, such as oak woodlands in canyon bottoms or willow woodlands that function as part of the riparian system. Under the CDFG definition, a watercourse need not exhibit evidence of an ordinary high water mark (OHWM) to be claimed as jurisdiction. However, CDFG does not regulate isolated wetlands; that is, those that are not associated with a river, stream, or lake.

Section 2081(b) and (c) of the CESA allows CDFG to issue an incidental take permit for a state-listed threatened and endangered species only if specific criteria are met. These criteria can be found in Title 14 CCR, Sections 783.4(a) and (b). No Section 2081(b) permit may authorize the take of "fully protected" species. If a project is planned in an area where a fully protected species occurs, an applicant must design the project to avoid all take of the fully protected species; the CDFG cannot provide take authorization for fully protected species under CESA. No licenses or permits may be issued for take of fully protected species or parts thereof except for necessary scientific research. CFG Code Section 3511 lists fully protected bird species; Section 4700 lists fully protected mammal species; Section 5050 lists fully protected reptiles and amphibians; and, Section 5515 lists fully protected fish species.

CFG Code Section 3503 makes it illegal to destroy any birds' nest or any birds' eggs that are protected under the MBTA. CFG Code Section 3503.5 further protects all birds in the orders Falconiformes and Strigiformes (birds of prey, such as hawks and owls) and their eggs and nests from any form of take. CFG Code Section 3505 makes it illegal to take, sell, or purchase any "specified birds" under this Section, including any aigrette or egret, osprey, bird of paradise, goura, numidi, or any part of such bird.

Native Plant Protection Act of 1977

The *Native Plant Protection Act of 1977* and implementing regulations in Section 1900 et seq. of the Fish and Game Code designates rare and endangered plants, and provides specific protection measures for identified populations. It is administered by the CDFG.

California Native Plant Society Listings

The California Native Plant Society (CNPS) is a California resource conservation organization that has developed an inventory of California's special status plant species (Tibor 2001). This inventory summarizes information on the distribution, rarity, and endangerment of California's vascular plants. The inventory is divided into four lists based on the rarity of the species. A CNPS list species is assigned a status value by the CNPS based on rarity indices of List 1A, List 1B, List 2, List 3, or List 4, and a level of endangerment value for each rarity index of 0.1, 0.2, or 0.3. CNPS rarity indices of List 1A and levels of endangerment of 0.1 correspond to species of highest priority in protecting the resource from threatening or endangerment of extinction, whereas rarity indices of List 4 and levels of endangerment of 0.3 correspond to species of lowest priority in protecting the resource from threatening or endangerment of extinction. In addition, the CNPS provides an inventory of plant communities that are considered special status by the state and federal resource agencies, academic institutions, and various conservation groups. Determination of the level of sensitivity is based on the number and size of remaining occurrences as well as recognized threats.

Wetlands Conservation Policy of 1993

This policy provides for the protection, preservation, restoration, enhancement, and expansion of wetland habitats in California. Primarily it acts to ensure no overall net loss of wetlands within the state and achieve a long-term net gain in the quantity, quality, and permanence of wetlands acreage and values in California in a manner that fosters creativity, stewardship, and respect for private property. The administering agencies for this authority are the CDFG, the California Environmental Protection Agency (Cal-EPA), and the Regional Water Quality Control Board (RWQCB).

Porter-Cologne Water Quality Control Act

The *Porter-Cologne Water Quality Control Act* provides for statewide coordination of water quality regulations. The Act established the California SWRCB as the statewide authority and nine separate RWQCBs to oversee smaller regional areas within the state. The Act authorizes the SWRCB to adopt, review, and revise policies for all waters of the State (including both surface and ground waters); and directs the RWQCBs to develop regional Basin Plans. Section 13170 of the *California Water Code* also authorizes the SWRCB to adopt water quality control plans on its own initiative. The purpose of each plan is to designate beneficial uses of the Region's surface and ground waters, designate water quality objectives for the reasonable protection of those uses, and establish an implementation plan to achieve the objectives.

Local

City of Agoura Hills Municipal Code—Article IX

Article IX, Chapter 6 of the City's Municipal Code includes the Regulatory Provisions for Zoning. Division 2 of Part 2 provides special regulations that protect hillsides and SEAs from incompatible development, and preserve the natural terrain, quality environment, and aesthetic character while

encouraging creative, innovative, and safe residential development. Appendix D includes regulations regarding Hillside and Significant Ecological Areas.

Division 7 of Part 2 within Chapter 6 includes the City's Oak Tree Preservation Guidelines. The purpose is to protect and preserve oak trees in recognition of their historical, aesthetic, and environmental value to the citizens of Agoura Hills, present and future, and to provide regulatory measures designed to accomplish this purpose. Appendix D sets out at length the complete Oak Tree Preservation Guidelines for the City.

4.3.3 Project Impacts and Mitigation

Analytic Method

The analysis of significant impacts is based on the literature as outlined in Section 4.3.1 (Environmental Setting) of this chapter.

Thresholds of Significance

For the purposes of this EIR, implementation of the General Plan Update would have a significant impact if it would do any of the following:

- 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
- Have a substantial adverse effect on any riparian habitat or other sensitive natural community identified in local or regional plans, policies, or regulations or by the California Department of Fish and Game or U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service
- 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
- Interfere substantially with the movement of any native resident or migratory fish or wildlife species or with established native resident or migratory wildlife corridors, or impede the use of native wildlife nursery sites
- Conflict with any local policies or ordinances protecting biological resources, such as a tree preservation policy or ordinance
- Conflict with the provisions of an adopted Habitat Conservation Plan, Natural Community Conservation Plan, or other approved local, regional, or state habitat conservation plan

Impacts to biological resources are determined on a case-by-case and site-by-site basis as resources vary by location and level of existing development. The General Plan Update EIR is considered to be a program-level analysis meaning that a project or site-specific analysis has not been completed for properties across the City. As such, individual, future proposed development projects will undergo specific environmental review, including any biological analysis that may be necessary.

Effects Not Found to Be Significant

Threshold	Would the proposed project conflict with the provisions of an adopted Habitat Conservation Plan, Natural Community Conservation Plan, or other approved local, regional, or state habitat conservation plan?

Development under the General Plan Update would not conflict with the provisions of an adopted Habitat Conservation Plan, Natural Community Conservation Plan, or other approved local, regional, or state habitat conservation plan, and therefore would result in *no impact* (Class III).

The City is not located within any adopted Habitat Conservation Plans, Natural Community Conservation Plans, or any other approved local, regional, or state habitat conservation plans. Implementation of the General Plan Update would not conflict with any provisions related to such plans and would result in ***no impact*** (Class III)***.*** No further discussion of this effect is required.

Less-Than-Significant Impacts

Threshold	Would the proposed project 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?

Impact 4.3-1 **Development under the General Plan Update could result in direct and indirect impacts to special status species; however, these impacts would be reduced to less-than-significant levels through the implementation of the General Plan goals and policies and compliance with relevant local, state, and federal regulations. This is a *less-than-significant* (Class II) impact.**

Construction

Construction of developments allowed within the General Plan Update could result in significant direct and indirect impacts to special status species. Additionally, construction of new developments and infrastructure within land that is currently undeveloped could result in the removal of habitat that may be suitable and occupied by special status plant and wildlife species. Proposed construction of infill development under the General Plan Update on land that is currently urbanized could result in direct impacts to sensitive oak trees and nesting birds. Special status species could be inadvertently killed, trapped, removed, or injured during construction activities, or displaced from critical resources within development footprints and forced into less-suitable areas. The removal of occupied and suitable habitat during construction could result in a reduction in the habitat available in the local area. Additionally, construction activities could result in adverse indirect impacts associated with noise, lighting, runoff, and fugitive dust to special status species located in the immediate vicinity. In response to construction-related noise, special status wildlife may be disrupted during breeding activities potentially leading to reduced reproductive success, or temporarily or permanently displaced from their preferred habitats potentially resulting in increased mortality. Lighting at construction sites could also present adverse

conditions affecting the ability for species to carry out breeding activities, forage, or evade predators. Water quality within riparian areas that are suitable for special status species could be adversely affected by pollutants in construction runoff and sedimentation. Decreased water quality could adversely affect the acute and long-term functions and values of riparian and wetland habitats, thereby affecting the terrestrial and aquatic species that depend upon the resources provided within them. Fugitive dust produced by construction could disperse onto sensitive areas adjacent to construction sites. Excessive levels of dust could reduce the overall vigor of individual plants and increasing their susceptibility to pests or disease, in turn, potentially adversely affecting special status species dependent on the vegetation for breeding, foraging, and other life history requirements. These impacts could be considered significant.

The General Plan Update would allow for increased densities of existing uses (Subareas 5 and 8), and/or the amendment of land use designations in some of the twelve specific community Subareas. Land use designations in some of the community Subareas would be amended to accommodate mixed use, including residential and commercial retail uses, as well as to uphold existing commercial recreation land use. Changes in land use designations would occur in areas where no residential uses previously occur, and in some cases, where no development currently exists. In all cases, existing uses within the City would be allowed to remain. Three of the twelve Subareas proposed within the General Plan Update, herein referred to as Subareas 4, 7, and 12, include development goals within land that is currently undeveloped. These Subareas include goals for mixed development (Subareas 4 and 7) and low density residential developments (Subarea 12) proposed south of Agoura Road within large contiguous stands of coastal sage scrub and chaparral habitats that are suitable and potentially occupied by special status species. Subarea 4 represents the Ladyface Mountain Specific Plan and Subarea 7 represents the Agoura Village Specific Plan, both of which are approved plans with certified EIRs. These EIRs contain specific biological mitigation measures that were found to adequately mitigate all impacts to a less-than-significant level. The two specific plans were designed to protect sensitive natural resources and habitats, including substantial amounts of open space, in the plan areas. Additionally, Subarea 12 lies within portions of the Las Virgenes SEA with proposed conservation and goals for special status species. No land use or density changes are proposed for Subarea 12, rather existing vacant lots would gradually be developed.

Special status plant species with the potential to occur within these areas include Agoura Hills dudleya, Santa Monica Mountains dudleya, Lyon's pentachaeta, Braunton's milk-vetch, Malibu baccharis, Plummer's baccharis, slender mariposa lily, Plummer's mariposa lily, San Fernando Valley spineflower, Santa Susana tarplant, marcescent dudleya, many-stemmed dudleya, and Peninsular nolina. Of these special status plant species, five are federally- and/or State-listed as endangered or threatened and afforded protection under the federal ESA and/or CESA, including Agoura Hills dudleya, Lyon's pentachaeta, Braunton's milk-vetch, San Fernando Valley spineflower, and marcescent dudleya. Special status wildlife species with the potential to occur within these areas include species such as Gertsch's socalchemmis spider, southwestern pond turtle, coastal western whiptail, coast (San Diego) horned lizard, California red-legged frog, two-striped garter snake, Coast Range newt, white-tailed kite, southern California rufous-crowned sparrow, and coastal California gnatcatcher. Of these special status wildlife species, two species, the federally threatened coastal California gnatcatcher and federally threatened California red-legged frog, are afforded protection under the federal ESA. Although the coastal California gnatcatcher has a potential to occur, there are no previously recorded occurrences within the City according to the CNDDB. None of the special status wildlife species with potential to occur within

the Subareas are State-listed as endangered or threatened. The white-tailed kite is however a California state fully protected species pursuant to Section 3511 of CFG Code, by which no take can be authorized by the CDFG under CESA, and any impacts to the species, including its associated nesting habitats and breeding territories, must be avoided. Special status species could be inadvertently killed or injured during construction activities or displaced from critical resources within development footprints and forced into less-suitable areas. These impacts would be considered significant.

Suitable nesting habitat occurs throughout the City for a number of resident and migratory bird species, including raptors, which are protected under the MBTA and CFG Code. The coastal sage scrub and chaparral habitats provide nesting opportunities for common resident species such as California quail (*Callipepla californica*), California towhee (*Pipilo crissalis*), and wrentit (*Chamaea fasciata*), in addition to the sensitive resident species coastal California gnatcatcher and southern California rufous-crowned sparrow. The oak and riparian woodland habitats provide potential nesting opportunities for common resident species such as western scrub jay (*Aphelocoma californica*), oak titmouse (*Baeolophus inornatus*), acorn woodpecker (*Melanerpes formicivorus*), black phoebe (*Sayornis nigricans*), common yellow throat (*Geothlypis trichas*), and song sparrow (*Melospiza melodia*), among others. The nonnative grasslands and sparse ruderal habitats may provide marginal nesting opportunities for common species such as western meadowlark (*Sturnella neglecta*) and killdeer (*Charadrius vociferus*), and the ornamental vegetation throughout the urban/developed portions of the City provide marginal nesting opportunities for common resident species such as house finch (*Carpodacus mexicanus*) and northern mockingbird (*Mimus polyglottos*). Any impacts to nesting birds resulting in violations of the MBTA and CFG Code would be considered significant.

Additionally, some of the undeveloped land within the City could provide suitable foraging opportunities for raptor species, including sensitive raptors such as golden eagle. The highest quality raptor foraging areas occur in the southern portions within the sparsely vegetated undeveloped land at the base of the Santa Monica Mountains, where the toe of slope transitions into the valley floor. These areas include sparse coastal sage scrub, open canopy chaparral, and scattered parcels in-between existing developments that are characterized by sparse, low-growing nonnative grassland and ruderal-dominated habitats. These areas also contain scattered tall emergent trees suitable for nesting and perch locations, and suitable habitat for rodents and other small mammals that could serve as prey items for raptors and other wildlife species. The areas are also contiguous with adjacent undeveloped land further to the south and into the Santa Monica Mountains that provides additional refuge, nesting habitat, and thermals for soaring. Common raptor species such as red-tailed hawks, red-shouldered hawks, American kestrels, and turkey vultures, and sensitive raptors such as golden eagle, Cooper's hawk, and prairie falcon may occasionally forage within these areas. Other areas in the City, although more constrained, isolated in nature, and less suitable, may also provide foraging opportunities for raptors. Some of these areas include the undeveloped lower slopes of the foothills in the northwestern and northeastern portions of the City, and the isolated patches of sparse nonnative grassland adjacent to the upper reach of Medea Creek and Deep Shadow Drive. The loss of raptor foraging habitat in these areas could present an adverse indirect impact to the species that depend on them.

The remaining nine Subareas proposed within the General Plan Update, Subareas 1 through 3, Subareas 5 and 6, and Subareas 8 through 11, include development goals within land that is currently developed

and urbanized. These Subareas generally include redevelopment goals for commercial recreation, commercial retail, business park, and medium density residential proposed within existing developed and urbanized land at locations immediately south of the Ventura Freeway, north of Lake Lindero, and near the intersection of Thousand Oaks Boulevard and Kanan Road. Although not characterized by natural vegetation communities, some of these areas may contain valuable oak resources protected under the City's Oak Tree Preservation Ordinance and suitable nesting habitat for bird species protected under the federal MBTA and CFG Code. Existing oak trees that occur within urbanized landscaped areas, as well as remnant oak trees that occur intermittent to existing developments could be killed or damaged during construction through removal or damage to aboveground resources or belowground root systems. These impacts would be considered significant. There are also a number of common bird species that are tolerant of urban settings that may nest within ornamental landscapes and other vegetation typical of urban areas. The sensitive raptor, Cooper's hawk, may also nest and forage within urban environments that are less disturbed. Development could result in the removal of nests and/or disruption of nesting activities during the breeding season in violation of the federal MBTA and CFG Code. These impacts would also be considered significant.

Operation

Operation of development considered within the General Plan Update could result in significant long-term indirect impacts to special status species through the siting of developments adjacent to areas occupied by special status species and an increase in anthropogenic-related disturbances to the local area. Development considered under the General Plan Update would include mixed-use recreation, commercial retail, business park, and residential projects with a wide range of operational requirements that could result in adverse indirect affects related to an urban/wildlands interface. Subareas 3, 4, 5, 7, and 12 include developments that would be sited immediately adjacent to undeveloped land and habitat for special status species, thereby presenting an interface between the urban and natural environments. Adverse edge effects could occur if blocks of habitat are left fragmented and adequate buffers are not incorporated into project designs to minimize the effects of project operation. An urban/wildlands interface that is not compatible with the adjacent sensitive areas could present an adverse indirect impact to special status species potentially occurring in the area.

Noise associated with the operation of proposed developments could exceed ambient levels potentially resulting in adverse affects to special status wildlife species in the local area. Excessive operational noise could disrupt vital activities (e.g., breeding, foraging, and migration) for some wildlife species and potentially displace them from important habitats located adjacent to proposed developments. This can be expected to be an elevated threat imposed by new developments proposed within currently undeveloped land. Outdoor lighting proposed in new developments or redevelopments would also have the potential to result in a change in ambient conditions and new source of glare and/or lighting onto adjacent habitats. Artificial night lighting during operation on adjacent native habitats could therefore disrupt essential behavioral and ecological processes of special status wildlife species. Runoff directed into adjacent undeveloped areas could adversely affect special status species through habitat degradation, conversion of natural flow regimes, erosion, and introduction of nonnative species. Additionally, the installation and operation of project landscape elements could result in the introduction of nonnative plant species that have the potential to colonize development and spread into adjacent native habitats.

Some nonnative plants are highly invasive and can out-compete and displace native plant species that are endemic to the area, including special status plant species. Invasive nonnatives have the ability to degrade and transform habitats making them unsuitable for special status species.

Lastly, an overall increase in human activity as a result of new developments and/or land uses could result in degradation of the local area and introduced threats to special status species. This can lead to an increase in habitat fragmentation and disturbance over time through pedestrian traffic and the creation of unauthorized trails, as well as other indirect impacts such as the introduction of domestic pets, nonnative species, trash, and other anthropogenic factors.

Direct and indirect impacts to special status species potentially resulting from the development goals proposed within the General Plan Update would be addressed at the project-level through the CEQA process and compliance with relevant local, state, and federal regulations protecting sensitive plant and wildlife species. Project-specific requirements would include compliance with the federal ESA, CESA, and local policies protecting sensitive species, such as the City's Municipal Code and Oak Tree Preservation Guidelines. Project-level analyses would ensure that the appropriate biological resources technical studies are conducted, including baseline surveys, protocol-level surveys, tree inventories, and pre-construction surveys, in order to confirm the presence or absence of any special status species within or immediately adjacent to proposed impact areas. Reports would be prepared that would document baseline conditions at the time of project application, identify constraints, recommend project re-design, analyze potential effects, and propose mitigation measures that reduce potential impacts to less-than-significant levels. If necessary, projects would be required to enter into consultations and obtain the appropriate permits from the USFWS, CDFG, and/or the City of Agoura Hills for unavoidable impacts to special status species and other protected resources.

Furthermore, the proposed General Plan Update includes policies that guide the environmental review of projects and ensure potential impacts to special status species are avoided, minimized, and mitigated appropriately. Policy NR-4.3 (Development and Environmental Review) will make certain that environmental review remains sensitive to the preservation and protection of special status plant and wildlife species in light of all relevant local, state, and federal regulations. Policy NR-4.1 (Resource Protection) seeks to preserve the two significant ecological areas (SEAs) from incompatible development through City policies and coordination with Los Angeles County and other relevant agencies to protect habitats of sensitive plants and animals. Additionally, Policy NR-1.1 (Open Space Preservation) and Policy NR-4.5 (Open Space Preservation) include high priority objectives to continue to acquire and preserve open space lands for the purpose of habitat protection and enhancement, which would include preservation of open space lands potentially occupied by special status species. Implementation of both Policy NR-1.1 (Open Space Preservation) and Policy NR-4.5 (Open Space Preservation) would provide for a mitigation mechanism for projects proposed under the General Plan Update that may require compensation for the loss of habitat for special status species and preservation of these resources in perpetuity. Policy NR-1.4 (Wildlife Habitat) further calls for the preservation of contiguous open space areas in their natural form so that they can support sensitive, endangered, threatened, or otherwise protected species and promote the uninterrupted movement of these species between open space areas. Policy NR-4.6 (Connected Open Space System) compliments this policy by ensuring that development does not create any barriers to wildlife movement or impede the continuity of the City's open space

system. Policy NR-4.12 (Wildlife Corridors) seeks to protect and maintain wildlife corridors to help the continued survival of wildlife.

Policy NR-4.4 (Cluster Development) encourages clustering of development footprints to avoid sensitive areas, including special status species, and preserve and reduce impacts to natural lands. Clustering of developments reduces the overall perimeter of projects and consequently the resulting urban/wildlands interface, thereby minimizing habitat loss and potential impacts to special status species, while maintaining project acreage goals through smart planning and design. Policy NR-1.2 (New Development) further requires that the siting and design of new development be compatible with open space resources potentially occupied by special status species by promoting transition areas and buffers that minimize indirect impacts from the siting of projects adjacent to natural lands. These transition areas would ensure that the functions and values of open space resources adjacent to proposed developments are conserved, and any potential long-term indirect impacts are minimized by siting development away from sensitive areas and incorporating design features that reduce potential indirect effects from noise, lighting, runoff, nonnative species, and other anthropogenic-related disturbances that may spread into open space areas.

Policy NR-1.3 (Slope Preservation) requires that proposed grading, cuts and fills, or other alterations of land conserve the natural integrity of site topography to prevent potential indirect impacts to resources located downslope or downstream from affected areas. This policy would aid in the protection of special status species potentially occurring within habitats located downslope or downstream from impact areas through preventing adverse changes in hydrology, water quality, sedimentation, and erosion during construction and operation. Policy NR-4.9 (Landscaping) encourages landscaping that is compatible for wildlife use and enhances the overall ecosystems that support special status species. Policy NR-4.10 (Tree Preservation) specifically addresses oak tree preservation, ensuring their protection through the City's Municipal Code and promoting ongoing oak tree planting and maintenance. Lastly, Policy NR-4.13 (Public Education) would reduce potential anthropogenic-related disturbances to special status species and other sensitive resources by promoting educational programs to inform residents and visitors of the uniqueness and value of natural resources, plants, and wildlife in the region, as well as how to manage development to preserve native wildlife populations.

Compliance with all relevant local, state, and federal regulations in combination with the General Plan Update policies discussed above would ensure that the appropriate processes are undertaken during project review to avoid, minimize, and mitigate potential impacts to special status species. Therefore, impacts would be considered ***less than significant*** (Class II), and no mitigation measures are required.

Threshold	Would the proposed project have a substantial adverse effect on any riparian habitat or other sensitive natural community identified in local or regional plans, policies, or regulations or by the California Department of Fish and Game or U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service?

Impact 4.3-2 **Development under the General Plan Update could result in direct and indirect impacts to riparian habitat and other sensitive natural communities; however, these impacts would be reduced to less-than-significant levels through the implementation of the General Plan Update goals and policies and compliance with relevant local, state, and federal regulations. This is a *less-than-significant* (Class II) impact.**

Construction

Construction of development allowed within the General Plan Update could result in significant direct and indirect impacts to riparian habitat and other sensitive natural communities identified by the CDFG, namely, valley needlegrass grassland and oak woodland. Oak trees, which contribute to the formation of oak woodlands, are protected at the local level within the City's Municipal Code. Although future development under the General Plan Update is not identified within areas that are mapped as riparian woodland, there may be smaller stands of riparian scrub or woodland habitat present that require project-level studies. Of the twelve Subareas, five occur on or in the immediate vicinity of areas that are mapped as supporting streams, and it is likely that portions of these streams are characterized by smaller stands of riparian habitat. Although the General Plan Update focuses growth in existing developed areas, future projects throughout the City may require work within or adjacent to existing stream courses, potentially resulting in permanent or temporary impacts to riparian habitats. "Organic" growth would also occur outside of the identified Subareas in the City overall. In addition to direct removal of vegetation, individual project construction could result in indirect impacts pertaining to water quality within areas supporting riparian habitat located downslope or downstream of construction zones.

Subarea 1 contains channelized portions of Lindero Canyon Creek that run through the existing golf course. These channelized portions may currently support riparian scrub and woodland habitats, and should the area be transitioned to open space in the future, consideration should be given toward avoiding and minimizing impacts during decommissioning of the golf course and enhancing the area as open space. Subarea 4 includes development goals for a planned business park within land potentially supporting streams that may contain riparian scrub and other aquatic resources; however, any related impacts in these areas have already been addressed for the Ladyface Mountain Specific Plan. Subarea 7 includes proposed mixed-use development adjacent to riparian resources. However, any impacts in these areas have already been addressed in the Agoura Village Specific Plan and EIR, and biological resources analysis. Subarea 8 includes development goals for mixed-use within existing commercial centers. The western portions of this Subarea, however, directly abut natural and channelized portions of Medea Creek that likely contain riparian woodland and scrub, and other aquatic resources. Construction within or immediately adjacent to these portions of Medea Creek could result in direct and indirect impacts to existing riparian habitat. Any impacts to riparian habitat would be considered significant.

Ground-truthing of riparian resources and fine-scale mapping would occur for all development allowed under the General Plan Update at a project-specific level. Ground-truthing would include formal delineations and detailed mapping of riparian resources according to specific criteria defined by the CDFG and other agencies. Project-specific analyses would determine the presence or absence of riparian, streambed, lake, or other habitat regulated by the CDFG and protected under Section 1600 et seq. of the CFG Code within areas considered for development under the General Plan Update. Specifically, these

riparian habitats may include elements of other sensitive natural communities including southern coast live oak riparian forest, southern riparian scrub, southern willow scrub, and mule fat scrub. All projects with the potential to impact these habitats, directly or indirectly, temporarily or permanently, would be required to obtain a Lake or Streambed Alteration Agreement from the CDFG pursuant to Section 1602 of the CFG Code prior to obtaining a grading permit. The Lake or Streambed Alteration Agreement would ensure that all construction-related impacts to riparian habitat and other areas under the jurisdiction of the CDFG are fully mitigated and reduced to less-than-significant levels.

Some of the developments considered within the General Plan Update could occur within areas that are mapped as containing natural communities other than riparian habitat types that are also considered sensitive by the CDFG but not protected under Section 1600 et seq. of the CFG Code, such as valley needlegrass grassland and oak woodland. Studies conducted for the Agoura Village Specific Plan suggest that smaller patches of valley needlegrass grassland may occur within open canopy portions of areas mapped as coastal sage scrub and chaparral in the southern portions of the City. Individual oak trees and/or stands of oak woodland may also occur within the southern portions of the City. These areas include undeveloped lands considered for development in Subareas 4, 7, and 12. Some of the undeveloped lands within Subareas 4 and 7 have already been approved for development under the Ladyface Mountain and Agoura Village Specific Plans. Valley needlegrass grassland is valued for its native species composition and suitable habitat for narrow endemic plants, and is considered a very threatened sensitive natural community in California, with approximately 10,000 to 50,000 acres remaining statewide. Grasslands are also valued for providing foraging opportunities for raptors and other wildlife species. Oak trees and oak woodland are protected under the City's Municipal Code. Substantial impacts to these sensitive natural communities could be considered significant. Natural communities that support special status species, including populations of plant species and established breeding territories and home ranges for wildlife, would also be considered sensitive.

Ground-truthing and fine-scale mapping of areas considered for development would occur under the General Plan Update at the project-specific level. Detailed vegetation maps will be prepared in biological resources technical studies that delineate the boundaries of specific plant communities and habitat types, including smaller patches of less-widespread communities, such as valley needlegrass grassland. Depending on the size, quality, resources present, and overall function and value of the habitat delineated, compensatory mitigation for unavoidable direct permanent impacts to sensitive natural communities may be necessary to reduce impacts to less than significant and ensure there is no net loss of the habitat. For habitats supporting federally- and/or state-listed endangered or threatened species, these impacts would be addressed at the project level during consultation and permitting pursuant to the federal ESA and CESA.

Operation

Operation of future development considered under the General Plan Update could result in potential indirect impacts to riparian habitat and other sensitive natural communities through the siting of development adjacent to these areas. Developments adjacent to riparian habitats and other sensitive natural communities could result in the spread of nonnative invasive species, excessive runoff and

impacts to water quality, as well as other anthropogenic-related disturbances that may degrade habitat over time. These impacts could be considered significant.

The General Plan Update includes policies that guide the environmental review of projects and ensure potential impacts to riparian habitat and other sensitive natural communities are avoided, minimized, and mitigated appropriately. Policy NR-4.3 (Development and Environmental Review) ensures a thorough and comprehensive review of projects potentially affecting sensitive habitat communities in light of all relevant local, state, and federal regulations. Policy NR-4.1 (Resource Protection) seeks to preserve the two SEAs located within the City from incompatible development to protect habitats of sensitive plants and animals. Policy NR-6.1 (Riparian Habitat) specifically addresses riparian habitat in aiming to protect and enhance its natural qualities. Policies NR-6.4 (Protect Open Space Areas and Water Resources) and NR-6.8 (New Development) include goals to further protect water resources from construction- and post-construction-related runoff, including waterbodies and natural drainage systems potentially supporting riparian habitat. Policies NR-1.1 (Open Space Preservation) and NR-4.5 (Open Space Preservation) include high priority objectives to continue to acquire and preserve open space lands for the purpose of habitat protection and enhancement, which would include preservation of open space lands containing sensitive natural communities. Future projects allowed under the General Plan Update may require compensation for the loss of natural communities and habitat for special status species, and this policy would ensure the acquisition and preservation of these areas. Policy NR-4.4 (Cluster Development) encourages clustering of development footprints to avoid, preserve, and reduce impacts to natural lands that may contain sensitive natural communities. Policy NR-1.2 (New Development) requires that the siting and design of new development be compatible with adjacent open space resources characterized by sensitive natural communities, and that developments incorporate adequate buffers from these communities. Buffer areas between development and sensitive natural communities would ensure that functions and values are conserved and potential long-term indirect impacts are minimized by siting development away from sensitive areas and incorporating design features that reduce potential indirect effects from noise, lighting, runoff, nonnative species, and other anthropogenic-related disturbances that may spread into open space areas. Policy NR-1.3 (Slope Preservation) requires that proposed grading, cuts and fills, or other alterations of land conserve the natural integrity of site topography to prevent potential indirect impacts to resources located downslope or downstream from affected areas, including riparian habitat and other sensitive natural communities. Finally, Policy NR-4.11 (Creeks and Natural Resources) includes goals for the enhancement of riparian habitat in the City, including promoting creek cleanup activities, erosion and urban runoff control, and weeding of nonnative plants. This policy would ensure that continued efforts are directed toward long-term maintenance and management of areas potentially supporting riparian habitat and other resources throughout the City.

Compliance with all relevant local, state, and federal regulations in combination with the policies discussed above would ensure that the appropriate processes are undertaken during project-level review to avoid, minimize, and mitigate potential impacts to riparian habitat and other sensitive natural communities. Therefore, impacts would be considered ***less than significant*** (Class II), and no mitigation measures are necessary.

Threshold	Would the proposed project 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?

Impact 4.3-3 **Development under the General Plan Update could result in direct and indirect impacts to wetlands; however, these impacts would be reduced to less-than-significant levels through the implementation of the General Plan Update goals and policies and compliance with relevant local, state, and federal regulations. Therefore, impacts would be *less than significant* (Class II).**

Construction

Construction of future development allowed within the General Plan Update could result in significant direct and indirect impacts to wetlands and other waters of the U.S. as defined by Section 404 of the *Clean Water Act* and regulated by USACE. Five of the twelve Subareas occur on or in the immediate vicinity of areas that are mapped as potentially containing streams. These include Subarea 1 and Lindero Canyon Creek, Subarea 4 and unnamed drainage features, Subarea 7 and unnamed drainage features, Subarea 8 and Medea Creek, and Subarea 12 and unnamed drainage features. There are additional areas mapped outside of the Subareas that potentially contain streams. All or portions of these streams and their tributaries may meet the criteria to be considered potential wetlands and/or other waters of the U.S. Some areas mapped as potentially containing streams have already been approved for developments under the Ladyface Mountain and Agoura Village Specific Plans. Although the majority of the Subareas propose goals for redevelopment and infill projects, they may require access routes, staging, storage, and/or developments potentially resulting in the direct removal, fill, hydrologic interruption, discharge, and/or other permanent or temporary impacts to wetlands and other waters of the U.S. "Organic" development and infill projects that occur outside of Subareas may also result in potential impacts to these resources. These direct impacts would be considered significant. Project construction could also result in indirect impacts pertaining to water quality within wetlands and other waters of the U.S. that may occur downslope or downstream of construction zones. These indirect impacts would be considered significant.

Technical studies that include formal wetland delineations would occur for all development considered under the General Plan Update at the project-specific level. Project-specific analyses would determine the presence or absence of wetlands and other waters of the U.S. regulated by the USACE and protected under Section 404 of the *Clean Water Act*. All projects with the potential to impact these features, directly or indirectly, temporarily or permanently, would likely be required to obtain either a Nationwide or Individual permit from the USACE pursuant to Section 404 of the *Clean Water Act* prior to obtaining a grading permit. In addition, all qualifying projects would likely be required to obtain a Water Quality Certification from the Los Angeles Regional Water Quality Control Board (RWQCB) pursuant to Section 401 of the *Clean Water Act*. For qualifying projects, a Water Quality Certification is required prior to the USACE issuing a Nationwide or Individual permit for the project. Further discussion regarding water quality standards, discharge, drainage alteration, and construction and operation runoff is provided in Section 4.7 of this EIR. In addition, it is anticipated that areas potentially supporting wetlands and

other waters of the U.S. would overlap with some areas potentially supporting riparian, streambed, and other habitat regulated by the CDFG pursuant to Section 1600 et seq. of the CFG Code. Consultation and permitting with the USACE, Los Angeles RWQCB, and CDFG would ensure that all construction-related impacts to wetlands and other waters of the U.S. are fully mitigated and reduced to less-than-significant levels.

Operation

Operation of future development considered under the General Plan Update could result in potential indirect impacts to wetlands and other waters of the U.S. through the siting of adjacent developments and inadequate maintenance of stormwater and irrigation runoff. Runoff during operation could adversely affect wetlands and other waters of the U.S. located adjacent to developments as a result of alterations in natural hydrology regimes, erosion, siltation, sedimentation, and flooding. Additionally, without proper access restrictions to these areas from adjacent developments, other anthropogenic-related disturbances such as illegal dumping may also degrade these areas over time. These indirect impacts during operation would be considered significant.

The General Plan Update includes policies that guide the environmental review of projects and ensure potential impacts to wetlands and other waters of the U.S. are avoided, minimized, and mitigated appropriately. Policy NR-4.3 (Development and Environmental Review) ensures proper environmental review of projects potentially affecting wetlands in light of all relevant local, state, and federal regulations. Policy NR-4.2 (Conserve Natural Resources) includes goals to continue to enforce relevant City ordinances that require new and existing developments maintain appropriate distances from creeks and other natural drainages that may contain wetlands and/or other waters of the U.S. Policy NR-4.4 (Cluster Development) encourages clustering of development footprints to avoid, preserve, and reduce impacts to natural lands that may contain wetlands and/or other waters of the U.S. Policy NR-1.2 (New Development) requires that the siting and design of new development be compatible with adjacent open space resources potentially containing wetlands and/or other waters of the U.S. This policy further promotes the incorporation of buffers into project designs to help reduce potential adverse indirect impacts from runoff and other anthropogenic-related disturbances. Policy NR-1.3 (Slope Preservation) requires that proposed grading, cuts and fills, or other alterations of land conserve the natural integrity of site topography to ensure that downstream watercourses potentially containing wetlands and/or other waters of the U.S. are not adversely affected by siltation or runoff. Policy NR-4.11 (Creeks and Natural Resources) includes goals for the long-term maintenance and management of areas potentially supporting wetlands and/or other waters of the U.S. throughout the City, including creek cleanup activities, erosion and urban runoff control, and weeding of nonnative plants. Lastly and as discussed in Section 4.7 of this EIR, all policies under Goal NR-6 (Water Quality) include goals for the protection of water quality of local watersheds and groundwater resources, addressing construction- and post-construction-related runoff into areas potentially qualifying as wetlands and/or other waters of the U.S.

Compliance with all relevant local, state, and federal regulations in combination with the General Plan Update policies discussed above would ensure that the appropriate processes are undertaken during project-level review to avoid, minimize, and mitigate potential impacts to wetlands and other waters of

the U.S. Therefore, impacts would be considered ***less than significant*** (Class II), and no mitigation is required.

Threshold	Would the proposed project interfere substantially with the movement of any native resident or migratory fish or wildlife species or with established native resident or migratory wildlife corridors, or impede the use of native wildlife nursery sites?

Impact 4.3-4 **Development under the General Plan Update could interfere substantially with the movement of native resident and migratory wildlife species, established wildlife corridors, and impede the use of native wildlife nursery sites; however, these impacts would be reduced to less-than-significant levels through the implementation of the General Plan Update goals and policies and compliance with relevant local, state, and federal regulations. This is a *less-than-significant* (Class II) impact.**

Construction

Construction of future development allowed within the General Plan Update could result in significant direct and indirect impacts to wildlife movement and established wildlife corridors. There are no known wildlife nursery sites located within the City. None of the identified areas of change within the General Plan Update are located within the Chesebro Canyon/Liberty Canyon linkage area, which has been identified as the most important linkage occurring within the City. Additionally, the majority of the considered development is concentrated within existing developed or partially undeveloped areas that are isolated or otherwise constrained from adjacent open undeveloped land. Wildlife movement within these areas is unlikely due to limited access, lack of suitable habitat, and anthropogenic-related disturbances that deter their use. Additionally, any growth that would abut expansive undeveloped land (such as Subareas 4 and 7) would not likely have an adverse affect on wildlife movement, as wildlife would be afforded unobstructed access around proposed developments within the adjacent undeveloped land and much of the vacant land in Subareas 4 and 7 is designated as open space. However, four of the twelve Subareas are proposed adjacent to linear features that have been identified as potential linkages in the facilitation of wildlife movement through portions of the City. These include Subarea 8 and the adjacent sections of Medea Creek, Subarea 10, Subarea 11, and Subarea 12 and the adjacent of Chesebro Creek and surrounding undeveloped areas. Although no focused land use changes or density increases are happening in some of these areas, development under the General Plan Update in Subareas adjacent to identified biological resources could be impacted by indirect impacts such as lighting and noise from construction.

Although channelized, constrained, and disturbed as a result of adjacent developments, the short reach of Medea Creek that abuts Subarea 8 and other portions of the City that occur outside of the Subareas may serve as a section of a north-to-south linkage for wildlife. Similarly, the reach of Chesebro Creek that abuts Subareas 10, 11, and 12, although channelized throughout its entire length, may also serve as a linkage for wildlife moving to Medea Creek to the west and Liberty Canyon to the east. Temporary indirect impacts may occur as a result of construction lighting, noise, fugitive dust, and runoff into sections of the creeks. These adverse indirect impacts could degrade habitat, albeit constrained and

disturbed, and deter wildlife from using sections of the creeks during important movement activities, and therefore could be considered significant.

Ground-truthing and fine-scale mapping of areas considered for development would occur under the General Plan Update at the project-specific development level. Detailed maps will be prepared in biological resources technical studies that delineate the boundaries of potential wildlife corridors. Depending on the size, quality, resources present, and overall function and value of the areas delineated, avoidance of, and setbacks from these areas during construction may be necessary to minimize potential impacts. Changes to the project design could be necessary to accommodate linkage areas and continued unobstructed use by wildlife. Construction activities would be required to implement best management practices and all site-specific water quality measures to reduce potential indirect impacts. For unavoidable impacts, construction zones may be altered and schedules may be restricted from occurring within important dispersal and migration windows, such as at night or during optimal seasons.

Operation

Operation of future development considered under the General Plan Update could result in significant long-term indirect impacts to wildlife corridors through the siting of developments adjacent to potential use areas. Development types proposed under the General Plan Update include mixed-use, commercial retail, business park, and residential projects with a wide range of operational requirements that could result in adverse indirect effects. Noise associated with the operation of proposed developments could exceed ambient levels potentially deterring wildlife from the area and/or disrupting vital activities during dispersal. Outdoor lighting proposed in new developments or redevelopments would also have the potential to result in a change in ambient conditions and new source of glare and/or lighting onto adjacent corridors. Stormwater and irrigation runoff directed into adjacent corridors could degrade habitat, albeit constrained and disturbed, and change natural flow regimes, cause erosion, and introduce nonnative species to the habitats. An overall increase in human activities as a result of new developments and/or land uses could also deter wildlife from moving through the area. These indirect impacts could be considered significant prior to incorporation of the proposed General Plan Update policies.

The General Plan Update includes policies that guide the environmental review of projects and ensure potential impacts to wildlife movement, established wildlife corridors, and areas linking potential wildlife nursery sites are avoided, minimized, and mitigated appropriately. Policy NR-4.3 (Development and Environmental Review) ensures proper environmental review of projects potentially affecting wildlife corridors in light of all relevant regulations. Policy NR-4.12 (Wildlife Corridors) specifically addresses wildlife corridors and includes goals to protect and maintain important corridors in the City to help the continued survival of wildlife. Additionally, Policy NR-1.4 (Wildlife Habitat) includes goals to prioritize the preservation of open space as part of a contiguous system that allows the movement of wildlife from one habitat area to another. Policy NR-4.2 (Conserve Natural Resources) includes goals to continue to enforce relevant City ordinances that require new and existing developments maintain appropriate distances from creeks and other natural drainages that may serve as important corridor and linkage areas. Policy NR-6.1 (Riparian Habitat) includes the protection and enhancement of riparian habitat which is commonly associated with important corridor and linkage areas within drainage courses. Policy NR-4.4 (Cluster Development) encourages clustering of development footprints to avoid, preserve, and reduce

impacts to natural lands that may contain wildlife corridors. Policy NR-1.2 (New Development) requires that the siting and design of new development be compatible with adjacent open space resources potentially containing important corridor and linkage areas, and further promotes the incorporation of buffers into project designs to help reduce potential adverse indirect impacts from runoff and other anthropogenic-related disturbances. Policy NR-4.11 (Creeks and Natural Resources) includes goals for the long-term maintenance and management of areas potentially supporting corridors and linkages, including creek cleanup activities, erosion and urban runoff control, and weeding of nonnative plants.

Compliance with all relevant local, state, and federal regulations in combination with the General Plan Update policies discussed above would ensure that the appropriate processes are undertaken during project-level review to avoid, minimize, and mitigate potential impacts to wildlife movement and established wildlife corridors. Therefore, impacts would be considered ***less than significant*** (Class II) and no mitigation measures are required.

Threshold	Would the proposed project conflict with any local policies or ordinances protecting biological resources, such as a tree preservation policy or ordinance?

Impact 4.3-5 **Development under the General Plan Update could conflict with local policies and ordinances protecting biological resources, including oak trees and existing SEAs; however, these impacts would be reduced to less-than-significant levels through the implementation of the General Plan Update goals and policies and compliance with relevant local, state, and federal regulations. This is a *less-than-significant* (Class II) impact.**

Construction

Construction activities associated with future development considered under the General Plan Update could result in direct and indirect impacts to oak trees that are protected under the City's Municipal Code. Coast live oaks, valley oaks, and other oak tree species are expected to occur throughout both developed and undeveloped areas of the City. Therefore, construction of projects could result in direct and indirect impacts to oaks. New development and redevelopment projects could require that certain trees be removed, trimmed, or pruned during construction of various project elements and to accommodate access, staging, and storage requirements within construction zones. Below ground root systems could also be severed or damaged during construction, potentially resulting in mortality of oak trees. Construction activities may also disrupt the site's hydrology, potentially affecting available water sources for existing oak trees.

Technical studies that include formal oak tree inventories would occur for all development considered under the General Plan Update at the project-specific level adjacent to or within areas of oak trees. Specifically, this would include the preparation of an oak tree report by qualified personnel. Project-specific analyses would determine the presence or absence of oak trees that meet the criteria to be afforded protection under the City's Oak Tree Preservation Guidelines. All projects with the potential to impact qualifying oak trees would be required to obtain an oak tree permit prior to obtaining a grading permit. The City's Oak Tree Preservation Guidelines also include measures for oak tree relocation and replacement to ensure that impacts are minimized and there is no net loss of the resource.

Construction of future developments could result in direct and indirect impacts to areas containing special status species and/or sensitive habitat areas, including existing SEAs. Subarea 12 encompasses portions of the existing Las Virgenes SEA. These portions are characterized by coastal sage scrub and chaparral habitats that provide suitable habitat for special status species and potentially contain other sensitive resources. There are other portions of the City outside of the identified Subareas that fall within the boundaries of existing SEAs. Removal of habitat within any of these areas and/or siting of development adjacent to these areas could be considered significant depending on the size, quality, types of resources present, and overall functions and values of the areas.

Biological resources technical reports would be prepared for all development considered under the General Plan Update at the project-specific level adjacent to or within potentially sensitive resources areas in SEAs. The Municipal Code specifies the contents of the biological reports requirement in the SEAs, and outlines findings that must be made to approve a project, which include ensuring compatibility with biological resources and wildlife corridors.

Operation

Operation of future development considered under the proposed General Plan Update could result in indirect impacts to existing SEAs. Operation of projects within Subarea 12 could result in adverse indirect impacts to portions of the Las Virgenes SEA that occur immediately outside of project footprints, including those which could result from noise, outdoor lighting, spread of nonnative invasive species, stormwater and irrigation runoff, as well as other anthropogenic-related disturbances that may degrade these areas over time. Operation of projects that occur outside of the Subareas and within the boundaries of existing SEAs could also result in adverse indirect impacts. These impacts could be considered significant prior to incorporation of General Plan Update policies.

The proposed General Plan Update includes policies that guide the environmental review of projects and ensure potential impacts to SEAs are avoided, minimized, and mitigated appropriately. Policy NR-4.3 (Development and Environmental Review) ensures a thorough and comprehensive review of projects potentially affecting SEAs and any potential sensitive resources contained therein in light of all relevant local, state, and federal regulations. Policy NR-4.1 (Resource Protection) further includes objectives to preserve the two SEAs that occur within the City and protect these areas from incompatible development through City policies and coordination with Los Angeles and Ventura Counties.

Compliance with all relevant local, state, and federal regulations in combination with the policies discussed above would ensure that the appropriate processes are undertaken during project review to avoid, minimize, and mitigate potential impacts to riparian habitat and other sensitive natural communities during the construction and operation phases. Therefore, impacts would be considered ***less than significant*** (Class II), and no mitigation measures are required.

Significant and Unavoidable Impacts

There are no significant and unavoidable impacts related to biological resources from implementation of the General Plan Update.

Cumulative Impacts

Cumulative impacts are only addressed for those thresholds that have a project-related impact, whether it is less than significant, significant, or significant and unavoidable. If "no impact" occurs, no cumulative analysis is necessary to address that threshold. The geographic context for the cumulative analysis for biological resources includes the neighboring cities and unincorporated County lands located within the greater Conejo Valley area, and generally, areas north of the Santa Monica Mountains, south of the Simi Hills, east of Conejo Pass, and west of the San Fernando Valley. In addition to Agoura Hills, these areas would include Westlake Village, Thousand Oaks, Oak Park, and Calabasas. This cumulative setting was selected based on commonalities in climate, geography, watershed, and existing biological resources, including similar or shared habitat types and ranging plant and wildlife species.

The majority of biological resources-related issues are largely site-specific, as many of the resources are sedentary, fixed, or dependent upon specific attributes of a particular site or area. Any impacts pertaining to such resources would require additional studies and analyses at the project-specific level in order to fully comprehend the scope and breadth of the impact and its potential contribution at the cumulative level. As discussed, the General Plan Update supports goals and policies for redevelopment and infill projects within existing developed land. As such, any resulting impacts to biological resources are anticipated to be minimal and not cumulatively considerable. The remaining area that was considered for development on undeveloped land would be required to adhere to the General Plan Update policies and all relevant local, state, and federal regulations pertaining to biological resources, whereby any potential impacts would be reduced to less-than-significant levels. These developments include goals to establish open space areas and ensure compatibility of developments with natural lands and sensitive resources, and therefore would not result in a substantial loss of habitat and other resources relative to that which currently exists within the local and regional area. Additional impacts and mitigation may be identified later during project-specific analyses.

Potentially significant impacts resulting from other past, present, and reasonably foreseeable future projects within the cumulative setting would be required to incorporate project design features and implement measures to reduce impacts to the extent feasible. Such measures would include entering into consultations and obtaining the appropriate endangered species permits from the wildlife agencies (USFWS and CDFG), compensating for the removal of sensitive natural communities through onsite preservation or offsite acquisition to meet no-net-loss standards, obtaining the appropriate wetlands permits from the regulatory agencies (USACE, RWQCB, and CDFG), incorporating setbacks and design features that minimize impacts to adjacent sensitive areas, facilitating the movement of wildlife within and around projects through project design elements, and adhering to local policies and ordinances through project design and permitting to protect sensitive resources. These measures would be expected to reduce potential impacts to less-than-significant levels. As such, when considered along with those measures proposed for the General Plan Update, cumulative impacts to biological resources would be ***less than significant*** (Class II), and no mitigation measures are required.

Mitigation Measures

No mitigation measures are necessary; compliance with local, state, and federal regulations as well as General Plan Update goals and policies fully mitigate potential impacts.

Final Level of Significance

No mitigation measures are necessary to reduce potential impacts of the General Plan Update. With the implementation of the General Plan Update goals policies and application of all local, state, and federal regulations pertaining to biological resources, the impacts would be ***less than significant*** (Class II). Cumulative impacts would also be considered ***less than significant*** (Class II).

4.3.4 Draft General Plan Goals and Policies

Policies relating to biological resources were identified in the Natural Resources Chapter of the General Plan Update.

Chapter 4 (Natural Resources)

Biological Resources

Goal NR-1 **Open Space System.** Preservation of open space to sustain natural ecosystems and visual resources that contribute to the quality of life and character of Agoura Hills.

- **Policy NR-1.1** **Open Space Preservation.** Continue efforts to acquire and preserve open space lands for purposes of recreation, habitat protection and enhancement, resource conservation, flood hazard management, public safety, aesthetic visual resource, and overall community benefit.
- **Policy NR-1.2** **New Development.** Require new development to create a transition area between open space resources and development to minimize the impacts affecting these resources.
- **Policy NR-1.3** **Slope Preservation.** Require that uses involving grading or other alteration of land maintain the natural topographic character and ensure that downstream properties and watercourses are not adversely affected by siltation or runoff.
- **Policy NR-1.4** **Wildlife Habitat.** Prioritize preservation of open space in its natural form to support sensitive, endangered, threatened, or otherwise protected species as part of a contiguous system that allows the movement of wildlife from one habitat area to another.

Goal NR-4 **Natural Areas.** Protection and enhancement of open space resources, other natural areas, and significant wildlife and vegetation in the City as an integral component of a sustainable environment.

Policy NR-4.1 **Resource Protection.** Preserve Agoura Hills' two significant ecological areas (SEAs) from incompatible development through City policies and coordination with Los Angeles County and other relevant agencies to protect habitats of sensitive plants and animals.

Policy NR-4.2 **Conserve Natural Resources.** Continue to enforce the ordinances for new and existing development in the City's hillside areas, such that development maintains an appropriate distance from ridgelines, creek and natural drainage beds and banks, oak trees, and other environmental resources, to prevent erosion, preserve viewsheds, and protect the natural contours and resources of the land.

Policy NR-4.3 **Development and Environmental Review.** Ensure that the development and environmental review process is sensitive to the preservation and protection of sensitive wildlife and plant species, wildlife corridors, significant ecological areas (SEAs), and other sensitive habitat communities.

Policy NR-4.4 **Cluster Development.** Encourage clustered development in sensitive areas to preserve and reduce the impact to natural lands.

Policy NR-4.5 **Open Space Preservation.** Place a high priority on acquiring and preserving open space lands for purposes of recreation, habitat preservation and enhancement, resource conservation, flood hazard management, public safety purposes, and overall community benefits.

Policy NR-4.6 **Connected Open Space System.** Ensure that new development does not create barriers or impede the connection of the City's open space systems.

Policy NR-4.7 **Green Infrastructure.** Maintain a multi-functional "green infrastructure," consisting of natural areas, open spaces, urban forest, and parklands, that serves as a defining physical character of Agoura Hills, provides visitors and residents with access to open spaces and recreation, and is designed for environmental sustainability.

Policy NR-4.8 **Open Space and Activity Centers.** Link open space to activity centers, parks, other open space, and scenic routes to help define urban form and beautify the City.

Policy NR-4.9 **Landscaping.** Encourage landscaping that minimizes the need for herbicides and pesticides and that provides food, water, shelter, and nesting sites for birds, butterflies, beneficial insects, and other creatures that both help maintain the landscape and restore the larger ecosystem. Landscape design can re-create habitat lost to urban development and attract resident and migratory wildlife.

Policy NR-4.10 **Tree Preservation.** Continue to sustain the City's oak trees, which are an integral part of the character of the City, and continue to plant and maintain these trees in a manner that will allow them to mature and thrive.

Policy NR-4.11 **Creeks and Natural Resources.** Support the restoration of creeks and other natural resources. Activities include creek cleanup, erosion and urban runoff control, and weeding of non-native plants.

Policy NR-4.12 **Wildlife Corridors.** Protect and maintain wildlife corridors, particularly the Liberty Canyon wildlife corridor, and adjacent areas as appropriate, to help the continued survival of wildlife.

Policy NR-4.13 **Public Education.** Support educational programs for residents and visitors about the uniqueness and value of the natural resources, plants, and wildlife in the region, and about how to manage development to preserve native wildlife populations.

Goal NR-6 **Water Quality.** Protection of the water quality of local watersheds and groundwater resources.

Policy NR-6.1 **Riparian Habitat.** Protect and enhance the natural qualities of riparian habitat.

Policy NR-6.4 **Protect Open Space Areas and Water Resources.** Conserve undeveloped open space areas and drainage courses and channels for the purpose of protecting water resources in the City's watershed. For construction and post-development runoff, control sources of pollutants and improve and maintain urban runoff water quality through stormwater protection measures consistent with the City's National Pollution Discharge Elimination System (NPDES) Permit.

Policy NR-6.8 **New Development.** The City shall require new development to protect the quality of waterbodies and natural drainage systems through site design, stormwater treatment, and best management practices (BMPs) consistent with the City's NPDES Permit.

4.3.5 References

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4.4 CULTURAL RESOURCES

This section of the EIR assesses potential effects to cultural resources that could result from implementation of the General Plan Update. Cultural resources are defined as buildings, sites, districts, structures, or objects having historical, architectural, archaeological, cultural, or scientific importance. This section briefly describes the prehistoric and historic setting of the Agoura Hills area and discusses known cultural resources and cultural resource sensitivity. Applicable federal, state, and local regulations are identified, followed by impact analysis and mitigation measures, where available, to reduce adverse impacts on cultural resources.

Sources used to prepare this section include a cultural resources records search conducted by the South Central Coastal Information Center (SCCIC) of the California Historical Resources Information System (CHRIS) (SCCIC 2009) and a search of the Native American Heritage Commission's (NAHC) sacred lands database.

One comment letter regarding cultural resources was received in response to the April 30, 2009, Notice of Preparation (NOP) (Appendix A). The NAHC submitted a letter which indicated that the General Plan Update is subject to required Tribal Consultation under SB 18 and also included the NAHC's recommendations for assessing impacts on Native American cultural resources. Both of these items are addressed in this section.

4.4.1 Environmental Setting

Prehistoric Setting

The City of Agoura Hills lies within the archaeological Santa Barbara Subregion of the Southern Coastal Region. This area is also known as the Northern Bight. The earliest known archaeological sites found in the subregion are on the Channel Islands, a chain of eight islands located approximately 35 miles from Agoura Hills off the coast of Southern California. Arlington Springs Woman from Santa Rosa Island (one of the Channel Islands) is one of the earliest finds of human remains in North America. Her remains date to approximately 11,000 B.C. Daisy Cave on San Miguel Island (also a Channel Island) is another early site. The culture associated with these finds dating before 7000 B.C. for the Northern Bight are most often associated with the Paleo Coastal Tradition. The people of this complex are most often characterized as highly mobile hunters and gatherers. Artifacts associated with this complex are well-formed large leaf-shaped projectile points, crescents, engraving tools, choppers, pebble hammerstones, and various types of scrapers. What makes this complex differ from other early southern Californian complexes, such as the San Dieguito or Western Pluvial Lakes Tradition, is its focus on near shore subsistence resources, such as shellfish, more than on land animals.

Ethnographic Setting

At the time of Spanish contact in the late eighteenth century, the Hokan-speaking Chumash Indians occupied the area that is now Agoura Hills. The Chumash comprised a large and diverse population living in contiguous autonomous settlements along the California coast. Chumash villages could be found from Malibu Creek, in the southeast, to Estero Bay, in the north. By the time the Spanish arrived, the Chumash had evolved into a complex society. Chumash villages were relatively large, with some of them containing as many as one thousand people, although one or two hundred inhabitants were more typical. Interior villages may have contained populations varying from 15 to 250 people, much smaller than the coastal villages which contained as many as 1,000 inhabitants.

Historic Setting

The Spanish colonization of California was achieved through a program of military-civilian-religious conquest. Under this system soldiers secured areas for settlement by suppressing Indian and foreign resistance and established fortified structures (presidios) from which the colony would be governed. Civilians established towns (pueblos) and stock-grazing operations (ranchos) that supported the settlement and provided products for export. The missionary component of the colonization strategy was led by Spanish priests, who were charged with converting Indians to Catholicism, introducing them to the benefits of Spanish culture, and disciplining them into a productive labor force. Ultimately, four presidios and 21 missions were established in Spanish California between 1769 and 1821. Spanish priest Juan Crespi described the Agoura Hills area as "a plain of considerable extent and much beauty, forested in all parts by live oaks with much pasture and water."

In 1822, after more than a decade of revolutionary struggle, Mexico achieved independence from Spain, and California became a distant outpost of the Mexican Republic. Under a law adopted by the Mexican congress in 1833, the mission lands were to be subdivided into land grants, or ranchos, to be sold to trustworthy citizens. Although wheat was cultivated and sheep and horses were raised, the rancho economy was based primarily on stock raising for the hide and tallow trade. Miguel Ortega received a land grant for the 17,760-acre El Rancho de Nuestra Senora La Reina de Las Virgenes, or Rancho Las Virgenes, a part of which is now Agoura Hills.

Beginning in the early 1840s, Mexico's hold on California was threatened by the steady overland migration of American settlers into the region. War between the U.S. and Mexico broke out in May 1846, and many decisive battles in this conflict took place in California. The United States eventually prevailed, and the American victory over Mexico was formalized in February 1848 with the Treaty of Guadalupe Hidalgo, under which the United States ceded from Mexico the present states of California, Nevada, Utah, New Mexico, Arizona, and parts of Wyoming and Colorado.

In January 1848, just a few days before the treaty was signed, James Marshall, an employee of John Sutter, discovered gold on the American River. Marshall's discovery triggered the gold rush, a massive influx of fortune-seekers into California which led to the creation of major cities and numerous smaller settlements. The sudden and enormous growth of California's population brought about by the gold rush

resulted in a movement for statehood that culminated in the state constitutional convention at Monterey in 1849 and the establishment of California as a state in 1850.

In the late 1800s, the Las Virgenes Rancho was obtained by Pierre Agoure, who raised sheep and cows on the land. Improved irrigation during this period brought an expansion of agricultural activity in the Las Virgenes area as farmers planted orchards, vegetables, and wheat. By the 1920s, the former rancho lands had been subdivided. It was also during the 1920s that Paramount Studios bought a ranch near present-day Agoura Hills to capitalize on the area's ideal backdrops and settings for film productions. Soon after, the future Agoura Hills became known as "Picture City." In 1928, the area was officially renamed Agoura, and despite ongoing water supply problems, the population grew steadily over the next few decades. The transformation of local highway 101 to the Ventura Freeway in 1956 and the formation of the Las Virgenes Municipal Water District in 1959 (which brought a reliable source of water) led to increased residential and commercial growth in the area, which continues to the present day.

Known Cultural Resources

The most prominent cultural resource in Agoura Hills is the Reyes Adobe Historical Site. Maria Antonia Machado, a widow with 14 children purchased the original Reyes rancho, known as Rancho Las Virgenes, from her uncle Jose Maria Dominguez in 1845. Machado's husband, Jose Jacinto Reyes, was the son of Juan Francisco Reyes who served on the famous Portola expedition. Maria and Jose Reyes' son, Jose Paulino, built the adobe home in approximately 1850 during the period of Mexican rule in California. Reyes ownership lasted into the next century. From 1916 to 1983 the property transferred to owners who shared a common interest in preserving the landmark adobe home located in the foothills beneath Ladyface Mountain, which is located to the south of Agoura Hills in the Santa Monica Mountains. Ladyface Mountain was a favored source among Native Americans for toolstone, as evidenced by the numerous prehistoric quarry and chipping stations found on the south side of the City.

SCCIC Records Search

A records search was conducted by the South Central Coastal Information Center (SCCIC) of the California Historical Resources Information System (CHRIS) at the California State University, Fullerton. The search included a review of all recorded archaeological sites within a quarter-mile radius of the community Subareas, as identified in Figure 3-3 (Community Subareas), as well as a review of cultural reports on file. In addition, the California Points of Historical Interest, California Historical Landmarks, California Register of Historical Resources, and the National Register of Historic Places (NRHP) were reviewed for the community Subareas.

The SCCIC records search identified numerous archaeological sites within the community Subareas. The records search results identified no built-environment historic resources within any of the community Subareas. The archaeological sites located within and around the community Subareas are largely temporary prehistoric occupation sites and chipping stations focused on stone tool production. This is not surprising since three prehistoric quarries are also recorded in the Agoura Hills area, and Ladyface Mountain is a known source for toolstone, particularly chert. Several sites within in the community

Subareas appear to be the remains of more permanent villages with well-developed midden (i.e., soil which contains the byproducts of human activity).

Native American Consultation

A search of the Native American Heritage Commission (NAHC) sacred lands database was conducted to determine the presence of Native American cultural resources within the community Subareas. The NAHC response letter indicated that no Native American cultural resources have been recorded within the community Subareas, but that the NAHC files are not exhaustive, and the results of the searches do not preclude the presence Native American resources. The NAHC letter also listed local Native American organizations and individuals who may have knowledge of cultural resources in the General Plan Update area. Letters that included a brief description of the General Plan Update were sent to each organization/individual identified on the NAHC list. As of the printing of this document, one response from Native American individuals identified by the NAHC has been received. Beverly Salazar Folkes, a representative of the Chumash Indians, commented via telephone that the Ladyface Mountain area is considered to be sensitive for Native American cultural resources and that earth-disturbing development in the Ladyface Mountain area may require archaeological/Native American monitoring.

Finally, the NAHC letter received in response to the April 30, 2009, NOP indicated that the General Plan Update is subject to required Tribal Consultation under SB 18 (refer to the "State Regulations" section below).

4.4.2 Regulatory Framework

Federal Regulations

Federal regulations for cultural resources are primarily governed by Section 106 of the NHPA of 1966, which applies to actions taken by federal agencies. The goal of the Section 106 review process is to offer a measure of protection to sites that are determined eligible for listing on the NRHP. The criteria for determining NRHP eligibility are found in 36 *Code of Federal Regulations* (CFR) Part 60. Section 106 of the NHPA requires federal agencies to take into account the effects of their undertakings on historic properties and affords the federal Advisory Council on Historic Preservation a reasonable opportunity to comment on such undertakings. The Council's implementing regulations, "Protection of Historic Properties," are found in 36 CFR Part 800. The NRHP criteria (contained in 36 CFR 60.4) are used to evaluate resources when complying with NHPA Section 106. Those criteria state that eligible resources comprise districts, sites, buildings, structures, and objects that possess integrity of location, design, setting, materials, workmanship, feeling, and association, and any of the following:

(a) Are associated with events that have made a significant contribution to the broad patterns of our history
(b) Are associated with the lives of persons significant in our past
(c) Embody the distinctive characteristics of a type, period, or method of construction, or that possess high artistic values, or that represent a significant distinguishable entity whose components may lack individual distinction

(d) Have yielded or may be likely to yield, information important to history or prehistory

Archaeological site evaluation assesses the potential of each site to meet one or more of the criteria for NRHP eligibility based upon visual surface and subsurface evidence (if available) at each site location, information gathered during the literature and records searches, and the researcher's knowledge of and familiarity with the historic or prehistoric context associated with each site.

State Regulations

Under CEQA, public agencies must consider the effects of their actions on both "historical resources" and "unique archaeological resources." Pursuant to *Public Resources Code* (PRC) Section 21084.1, a "project that may cause a substantial adverse change in the significance of an historical resource is a project that may have a significant effect on the environment." Section 21083.2 requires agencies to determine whether proposed projects would have effects on "unique archaeological resources."

"Historical resource" is a term with a defined statutory meaning (refer to PRC Section 21084.1 and CEQA Guidelines, Section 15064.5(a) and (b)). The term embraces any resource listed in or determined to be eligible for listing in the California Register of Historical Resources (CRHR). The CRHR includes resources listed in or formally determined eligible for listing in the NRHP, as well as some California State Landmarks and Points of Historical Interest.

Properties of local significance that have been designated under a local preservation ordinance (local landmarks or landmark districts) or that have been identified in a local historical resources inventory may be eligible for listing in the CRHR and are presumed to be "historical resources" for purposes of CEQA unless a preponderance of evidence indicates otherwise (PRC Section 5024.1 and *California Code of Regulations*, Title 14, Section 4850). Unless a resource listed in a survey has been demolished, lost substantial integrity, or there is a preponderance of evidence indicating that it is otherwise not eligible for listing, a lead agency should consider the resource to be potentially eligible for the CRHR.

In addition to assessing whether historical resources potentially impacted by a proposed project are listed or have been identified in a survey process, lead agencies have a responsibility to evaluate them against the CRHR criteria prior to making a finding as to a proposed project's impacts to historical resources (PRC Section 21084.1 and CEQA Guidelines Section 15064.5(a)(3)). In general, an historical resource, under this approach, is defined as any object, building, structure, site, area, place, record, or manuscript that:

(a) Is historically or archeologically significant, or is significant in the architectural, engineering, scientific, economic, agricultural, educational, social, political or cultural annals of California; and

(b) Meets any of the following criteria:

1) Is associated with events that have made a significant contribution to the broad patterns of California's history and cultural heritage;

2) Is associated with the lives of persons important in our past;

3) Embodies the distinctive characteristics of a type, period, region, or method of construction, or represents the work of an important creative individual, or possesses high artistic values; or

4) Has yielded, or may be likely to yield, information important in prehistory or history.

(CEQA Guidelines, Section 15064.5(a)(3))

Archaeological resources can sometimes qualify as "historical resources" (CEQA Guidelines, Section 15064.5(c)(1)). In addition, PRC Section 5024 requires consultation with the Office of Historic Preservation when a project may impact historical resources located on state-owned land.

For historic structures, CEQA Guidelines Section 15064.5(b)(3) indicates that a project that follows the Secretary of the Interior's Standards for the Treatment of Historic Properties with Guidelines for Preserving, Rehabilitating, Restoring, and Reconstructing Historic Buildings, or the Secretary of the Interior's Standards for Rehabilitation and Guidelines for Rehabilitating Historic Buildings (1995) shall mitigate impacts to a level of less than significant. Potential eligibility also rests upon the integrity of the resource. Integrity is defined as the retention of the resource's physical identity that existed during its period of significance. Integrity is determined through considering the setting, design, workmanship, materials, location, feeling, and association of the resource.

As noted above, CEQA also requires lead agencies to consider whether projects will impact "unique archaeological resources." PRC Section 21083.2(g) states that "'unique archaeological resource' means an archaeological artifact, object, or site about which it can be clearly demonstrated that, without merely adding to the current body of knowledge, there is a high probability that it meets any of the following criteria:

- Contains information needed to answer important scientific research questions and that there is a demonstrable public interest in that information.
- Has a special and particular quality such as being the oldest of its type or the best available example of its type.
- Is directly associated with a scientifically recognized important prehistoric or historic event or person.

(*Public Resources Code* §21083.2(g))

Treatment options under Section 21083.2 include activities that preserve such resources in place in an undisturbed state. Other acceptable methods of mitigation under Section 21083.2 include excavation and curation or study in place without excavation and curation (if the study finds that the artifacts would not meet one or more of the criteria for defining a "unique archaeological resource").

Advice on procedures to identify cultural resources, evaluate their importance, and estimate potential effects is given in several agency publications such as the series produced by the Governor's Office of Planning and Research (OPR). The technical advice series produced by OPR strongly recommends that Native American concerns and the concerns of other interested persons and corporate entities, including but not limited to, museums, historical commissions, associations and societies, be solicited as part of the process of cultural resources inventory. In addition, California law protects Native American burials, skeletal remains and associated grave goods regardless of their antiquity and provides for the sensitive treatment and disposition of those remains.

Section 7050.5(b) of the California Health and Safety code specifies protocol when human remains are discovered. The code states:

> In the event of discovery or recognition of any human remains in any location other than a dedicated cemetery, there shall be no further excavation or disturbance of the site or any nearby area reasonably suspected to overlie adjacent remains until the coroner of the county in which the human remains are discovered has determined, in accordance with Chapter 10 (commencing with section 27460) of Part 3 of Division 2 of Title 3 of the Government Code, that the remains are not subject to the provisions of section 27492 of the Government Code or any other related provisions of law concerning investigation of the circumstances, manner and cause of death, and the recommendations concerning treatment and disposition of the human remains have been made to the person responsible for the excavation, or to his or her authorized representative, in the manner provided in section 5097.98 of the Public Resources Code.

CEQA Guidelines Section 15064.5(e) requires that excavation activities be stopped whenever human remains are uncovered and that the county coroner be called in to assess the remains. If the county coroner determines that the remains are those of Native Americans, the NAHC must be contacted within 24 hours. At that time, the lead agency must consult with the appropriate Native Americans, if any, as timely identified by the NAHC. Section 15064.5 directs the lead agency (or project proponent), under certain circumstances, to develop an agreement with the Native Americans for the treatment and disposition of the remains.

Senate Bill 18

As of March 1, 2005, Senate Bill 18 (*Government Code* Sections 65352.3 and 65352.4) requires that, prior to the adoption or amendment of a general plan proposed on or after March 1, 2005, a city or county must consult with Native American tribes with respect to the possible preservation of, or the mitigation of impacts to, specified Native American places, features, and objects located within that jurisdiction.

Local Regulations

Goals and policies related to cultural resources within the existing General Plan (1993) identified below:

Goal 6 Preserve the Reyes Adobe and Neale's Oak

Policy 6.1 Implement activities to preserve and enhance interpretation of the Reyes Adobe and Neale's Oak.

Since the time Policy 6.1 was written, the Neal's Oak tree has died.

4.4.3 Project Impacts and Mitigation

Analytic Method

To gather information on known cultural resources within the community Subareas, a records search was conducted by the South Central Coastal Information Center of the California Historical Resources Information System at the California State University, Fullerton. The search included a review of all recorded archaeological sites within a quarter-mile radius of the identified community Subareas as well as

a review of cultural reports on file. In addition, the California Points of Historical Interest, California Historical Landmarks, California Register of Historical Resources, and the National Register of Historic Places (NRHP) were reviewed for the community Subareas. A search of the Native American Heritage Commission (NAHC) sacred lands database was conducted to determine the presence of Native American cultural resources within the community Subareas.

Thresholds of Significance

For the purposes of this EIR, implementation of the General Plan Update would have significant impact if it would do any of the following:

- Cause a substantial adverse change in the significance of a historical resource as defined in 15064.5
- Cause a substantial adverse change in the significance of an archaeological resource pursuant to 15064.5
- Disturb any human remains, including those interred outside of formal cemeteries

Effects Not Found to Be Significant

No Effects Not Found to Be Significant have been identified with respect to cultural resources.

Less-Than-Significant Impacts

Threshold	Would the project cause a substantial adverse change in the significance of an archaeological resource pursuant to Section 15064.5 of the CEQA Guidelines or disturb human remains?

Impact 4.4-1 **Construction activities associated with implementation of the General Plan Update could cause a substantial adverse change in the significance of an archaeological resource pursuant to Section 15064.5 of the CEQA Guidelines. However, with implementation of the General Plan Update goals and policies, as well as compliance with relevant local, state, and federal regulations, these changes would result in a *less-than-significant* (Class II) impact.**

The SCCIC records search identified numerous archaeological sites within the community Subareas as identified in Figure 3-3 (Community Subareas), as well as other parts of the City. The archaeological sites located within and around the community Subareas are largely temporary prehistoric occupation sites and chipping stations focused on stone tool production. Three quarries are also recorded within Agoura Hills, and Ladyface Mountain is a known source for toolstone, particularly chert. While the NAHC response letter indicated that no Native American cultural resources have been recorded within the community Subareas, the NAHC noted that its files are not exhaustive and the results of the searches do not preclude the presence Native American resources. Therefore, the community Subareas as well as the General Plan Update area as a whole are considered to be highly sensitive known and previously undocumented archaeological and Native American cultural resources.

Under CEQA, public agencies must consider the effects of their actions on "unique archaeological resources." PRC Section 21083.2 requires agencies to determine whether proposed projects would have effects on unique archaeological resources. PRC Section 21083.2(g) states that "'unique archaeological resource' means an archaeological artifact, object, or site about which it can be clearly demonstrated that, without merely adding to the current body of knowledge, there is a high probability that it contains information needed to answer important scientific research questions and that there is a demonstrable public interest in that information; or has a special and particular quality such as being the oldest of its type or the best available example of its type; or is directly associated with a scientifically recognized important prehistoric or historic event or person. The proposed General Plan Update provides for the development of residential, retail/service, office/business park, and manufacturing uses. Earth-disturbing development activities associated with the proposed General Plan Update have the potential to cause a substantial adverse change in the significance of an archaeological resource through inadvertent damage or destruction. The proposed General Plan Update includes goals and polices providing for the management and protection of significant archaeological resources. Specifically, proposed Policy HR-3.1 (Recognition of Resources) requires that the potential for the presence of significant archaeological resources be considered prior to the development of a property, and Policy HR-3.2 (Protection of Resources) requires that significant archaeological resources be preserve in-situ, as feasible, and when avoidance of impacts is not possible, data recovery mitigation is required for all significant resources. Because the proposed General Plan Update includes policies that require identification and mitigation of impacts on significant archaeological resources, this impact is considered ***less than significant*** (Class II), and no mitigation measures are required.

Impact 4.4-2 **Construction activities associated with implementation of the General Plan Update could disturb any human remains, including those interred outside of formal cemeteries. However, with implementation of the General Plan Update goals and policies, as well as compliance with local, state, and federal regulations, these activities would result in a *less-than-significant* (Class II) impact.**

The greater Los Angeles region is known to be rich in subsurface archaeological resources in certain settings, and the archaeological record indicates a high level of habitation/seasonal habitation and resource use by Native Americans. Therefore, there is the possibility that human remains could be found in the subsurface, especially beneath structures built before the application of environmental compliance laws requiring surveys prior to construction. General Plan Update Policy HR-3.3 (Human Remains) requires the identification and proper handling of human remains, consistent with relevant laws. Therefore, impacts on human remains from earth-disturbing development activities associated with the proposed General Plan Update are considered ***less than significant*** (Class II). No mitigation measures are required.

Significant and Unavoidable Impacts

Threshold	Would the proposed project cause a substantial adverse change in the significance of a historical resource?

Impact 4.4-3 **Implementation of the General Plan Update could cause a substantial adverse change in the significance of a historical resource. This is a *significant and unavoidable* (Class I) impact.**

The most prominent cultural resource in Agoura Hills is the Reyes Adobe Historical Site landmark adobe home located 5464 Reyes Adobe Road. During the mid 1980s, the former Las Virgenes Historical Society sought to nominate the Reyes Adobe as a California State Landmark or Point of Historical Interest. However, the Reyes Adobe was found not to qualify due to modifications to the structure and foundation. A cultural resources records search performed by the SCCIC identified no other recorded built environment historical resources within the community Subareas identified in Figure 3-3 (Community Subareas), or in the remainder of the City. However, because the City has not been comprehensively surveyed for historical resources, buildings or structures of historic age (45 years old or older) and which qualify as historical resources pursuant to CEQA may also exist within the City.

CEQA Guidelines Section 15064.5(b) states that "a project with an effect that may cause a substantial adverse change in the significance of an historical resource is a project that may have a significant effect on the environment." The proposed General Plan provides for the development of residential, retail/service, office/business park, and manufacturing uses. Development activities have the potential to cause a substantial adverse change in the significance of an historical resource through demolition or alteration of a historical resource's physical characteristics that convey its historical significance. The General Plan Update policies encourage the appreciation and maintenance of historical resources on a broader level. Specifically, Policy HR-1.1 (Appreciation and Protection of Historic Resources) encourages enhanced community appreciation for the importance of its historic sites and buildings and protection of those that are significant. Policy HR-1.2 (Maintenance of Historic Resources) seeks to maintain the physical quality of important and significant historic resources, particularly those elements contributing to the identity and role within the community. Nonetheless, while there are no known structures that would qualify for state or federal listing, because it cannot be determined with certainty that such resources exist, and because existing and proposed City policies do not explicitly prohibit demolition or alteration of historic-period buildings or structures, it is possible that development activities resulting from implementation of the General Plan Update could cause a substantial adverse change in a historical resource that could possibly be identified in the future as being historically significant under state or federal criteria. Impacts to historical resources are, therefore, considered ***significant and unavoidable*** (Class I), assuming that there could be a substantial adverse impact to a significant historical resource as defined by Section 15064.5 of the CEQA Guidelines.

As individual development applications that may affect a significant historical resource are submitted to the City, these projects would undergo separate environmental review which would require an assessment of the potential significance of the structure and recommendations for mitigation impacts if the structure is determined to be historically significant (Implementation Measure HR-7).

Cumulative Impacts

The cumulative analysis for impacts on cultural resources considers a broad regional system of which the resources are a part. The cumulative context for the cultural resources analysis is the Los Angeles Basin (which includes Los Angeles and Orange counties) and Ventura County, where common patterns of prehistoric and historic development have occurred. While the project-specific impact analysis for cultural resources necessarily includes separate analyses for historic-period resources, archaeological resources, and human remains, the cumulative analysis combines these resources into a single, non-renewable resource base and considers the additive effect of project-specific impacts to significant regional impacts on cultural resources.

Threshold	Would the project, in combination with other projects in the Los Angeles Basin and Ventura County, cause a substantial adverse change in the significance of historical or archaeological resources or disturb human remains?

Urban development that has occurred over the past several decades in the Los Angeles Basin and Ventura County has resulted in the demolition and alteration of innumerable significant historical resources, and it is reasonable to assume that present and future development activities will continue to result in impacts on significant cultural resources. Because all cultural resources are unique and non-renewable members of finite classes, all adverse effects or negative impacts erode a dwindling resource base. Federal, state, and local laws protect cultural resources in most instances. Even so, it is not always feasible to protect cultural resources, particularly when preservation in place would prevent implementation of projects. For this reason, the cumulative effects of development in the Los Angeles Basin are considered significant. Because proposed City policies do not explicitly prohibit demolition or inappropriate alteration of historic-period buildings or structures that are considered significant under state or federal regulations, it is possible that development activities resulting from implementation of the proposed General Plan Update could cause a substantial adverse change in the significance of a historical resource, if such a resource is identified in the future. However, the project's incremental contribution to significant cumulative effects on cultural resource would not be cumulatively considerable. Proposed City policies would encourage the maintenance of the physical quality of significant historic resources, particularly those elements contributing to its identity and role in the community, and would encourage preservation and protection of significant archaeological resources. Furthermore, as individual development applications that may affect a significant historical resource are submitted to the City, these projects will undergo separate environmental review which would require an assessment of the potential significance of the structure and recommendations for mitigation impacts if the structure is determined to be historically significant. Implementation of the proposed policies would substantially reduce impacts on significant cultural resource, and cumulative impacts are therefore considered ***less than significant***.

Mitigation Measures

Although a potentially significant and unavoidable impact has been identified with respect to historical resources, there are no additional mitigation measures that could feasibly be implemented to further reduce impacts.

Final Level of Significance

With the implementation of the General Plan Update policies and application of all local, state, and federal regulations pertaining to cultural and historical resources, some impacts would remain ***significant and unavoidable*** (Class I). Cumulative impacts would be considered ***less than significant*** (Class II).

4.4.4 Draft General Plan Goals and Policies

Goal HR-1 **City that Values its Historic Resources.** The protection and maintenance of historic resources to foster stewardship and civic pride, which contributes to the unique identity and character of Agoura Hills.

Policy HR-1.1 **Appreciation and Protection of Historic Resources.** Enhance community appreciation of the importance of the City's historic sites and buildings, and protect and preserve significant historical resources, to the extent feasible.

Policy HR-1.2 **Maintenance of Historic Resources.** Ensure the maintenance of the physical quality of significant historic resources, particularly those elements contributing to its identity and role in the community.

Policy HR-1.3 **Community Education.** Utilize Agoura Hills' historic resources as opportunities to educate and engage the community in cultural and civic activities.

Goal HR-3 **City that Recognizes its Prehistoric Resources.** The protection of significant archaeological and paleontological resources in Agoura Hills.

Policy HR-3.1 **Recognition of Resources.** Require that the potential for the presence of significant archaeological and paleontological resources be considered prior to the development of a property.

Policy HR-3.2 **Protection of Resources.** Require that significant archaeological and paleontological resources be preserve in-situ, as feasible. When avoidance of impacts is not possible, require data recovery mitigation for all significant resources. Require that excavation of deposits of Native American origin be coordinated with and monitored by recognized Chumash representatives.

Policy HR-3.3 **Human Remains.** Require that if human remains or funerary objects are discovered and unearthed during any soil disturbing activity, the discoveries shall be treated in compliance with applicable state and federal laws, including notifying the County Coroner and the California Native Heritage Commission, as appropriate, and following relevant procedures.

Implementation Measure HR-7: For any project involving the demolition, relocation, or alteration of a structure, or a change to the structure's immediate setting, in which the structure is over 45

years old, and which potentially exhibits characteristics of an historic resource pursuant to CEQA Guidelines Section 15064.5, during the project review and entitlement process, the City shall require an assessment of the potential historic significance of the structure by a professional historic resource consultant as part of the application. If the resource is considered historical per CEQA, the assessment shall make recommendations for mitigating potential impacts to the structure, or identify requirements for the proper documentation per state or federal guidelines of any significant historic structure proposed for demolition, which shall be made conditions of project approval, as approved by the Director of Planning and Community Development.

4.4.5 References

Agoura Hills, City of. 2009. *Agoura Hills Draft General Plan*.

South Central Coastal Information Center (SCCIC). 2009. Records Search for Several Locations in Agoura Hills, California. SCCIC file number 9535.6840, May 27.

4.5 GEOLOGY AND SOILS

This section of the EIR analyzes the potential physical environmental impacts from the implementation of the General Plan Update as these impacts relate to seismic hazards, underlying soil characteristics, slope stability, erosion, and existing mineral resources. Data used to prepare this section was taken from the City of Agoura Hills Master Environmental Assessment Database (1992), the California Geological Survey (CGS) (formerly known as the Division of Mines and Geology), and previous seismic related documentation prepared for the City of Agoura Hills.

No comment letters regarding geology or soils were received in response to the April 30, 2009 Notice of Preparation (NOP) circulated for the General Plan Update. Full bibliographic entries for all reference materials are provided in Section 4.5.5 (References) of this section.

4.5.1 Environmental Setting

Regional Topography

The City of Agoura Hills is located in the southwestern portion of the Transverse Ranges geomorphic province in Southern California. This province forms a major structural block of the earth's crust between the San Gabriel and San Andreas faults on the northeast, and the Malibu Coast and Anacapa-Santa Monica faults on the south. Within this province the City occupies part of a depression extending from the western Conejo Valley to the southwestern San Fernando Valley, known as the Conejo–Las Virgenes region. The region is characterized by connected valleys, low hills, and undulating terrain bounded on the south by the Santa Monica Mountains and on the north by Mountclef ridge, Conejo Ridge, and the Simi Hills. Most of the Transverse Ranges province is mountainous, including the San Gabriel and San Bernardino Mountains to the east, and the Santa Monica Mountains to the north and west. In addition to Agoura Hills, the region includes the cities of Thousand Oaks, Westlake Village, and Calabasas, and the unincorporated communities of Oak Park, Ventu Park, and Agoura.

Within the Transverse Ranges there are abundant compressional reverse and thrust normal faults, and curvilinear strike-slip faults that generally trend in an east/west direction. The foremost structural feature that has affected the geologic evolution of the province is the San Andreas Fault. This fault, located approximately 45 miles northeast of the City, has a northwest strike, located both to the north and south of the Transverse Ranges, but changes to a west-northwest strike within the Transverse Ranges, thus forming a bend in the fault. Many thrust normal faults break the ground surface south of the San Andreas Fault along the southern flank of the San Gabriel and Santa Monica Mountains. The thrust faults that break the surface south of the San Andreas Fault dip southward and merge with the broad buried fold and thrust belts that underlie the Los Angeles basin and the southern margin of the Transverse Ranges.

Local Topography and Geology

The topography of Agoura Hills is characterized by rolling hills that are gently to moderately inclined. Along watercourses that cross through the hills steep slopes are often present. The principal topographic features of the City include Ladyface Mountain with an elevation of approximately 2,036 feet above mean sea level (msl), Strawberry Hill, Lindero Canyon, Medea Creek (Canyon), Liberty Canyon, Palo Comado Canyon, and several intervening hills and ridgelines ranging in elevation from 950 to 1,500 feet above msl. The undulating lowland areas of the City generally range from 800 to 1,000 feet in elevation and are drained toward the south primarily by Medea Creek and its tributaries. The southeastern corner of the City is drained by Liberty Canyon. Lake Lindero, the only body of water located in the City, is a man-made lake located in the western portion of the City (City of Agoura Hills 1992, 3-1).

The creation of Agoura Hills occurred during the Miocene Epoch (approximately 6 to 16 million years ago) when compressional tectonic forces folded thick layers of marine sediments into broad undersea ridges and troughs. Volcanic activity also occurred during this time period resulting in the formation of large volcanic units, including Ladyface Mountain and much of the western Santa Monica Mountains. About nine million years ago, tectonic movements uplifted large portions of the undulating sea terrain above sea level, and one million years ago during the Pleistocene Epoch another period of uplift began. These tectonic forces continue to remain active, as evidenced by the slow tilting of the basin containing the City of Agoura Hills, towards the south due to uplift along its northern flank.

Rock formations underlying the City and surrounding areas consist primarily of Miocene-age volcanic and marine-deposit sedimentary rocks. The "Conejo Volcanics" generally consist of hard basalt and andesite rocks. The Topanga, Calabasas, and Modelo Foundations consist of marine-deposit sedimentary rocks such as conglomerate, sandstone, siltstone, and shale.

Geologic Hazards

Surface Fault Rupture

Surface fault ruptures can be identified by the breakage of ground along the surface trace of a fault, which is caused by the intersection of the surface area of a fault ruptured in an earthquake with the Earth's surface. Fault displacement occurs when material on one side of a fault moves relative to the material on the other side of the fault, potentially resulting in surface rupture. This can have particularly adverse consequences when buildings are located within the rupture zone. Surface displacement can range from a few inches to tens of feet during a rupture event.

The *Alquist-Priolo Earthquake Fault Zoning Act* regulates development near active faults to mitigate the hazard of surface fault ruptures. Recognizing that it is neither structurally nor economically feasible to design and build structures which can accommodate rapid fault displacement, the Act contains two requirements regarding development on or near active faults: (1) it prohibits the location of most structures for "human occupancy" across the trace of active faults; and (2) it establishes earthquake fault zones and requires geologic/seismic reports for all proposed developments within 1,000 feet of the zone. The earthquake fault zones are delineated and defined by the State Geologist and identify areas where

potential surface rupture along a fault could prove hazardous. The State of California has not delineated any Alquist-Priolo Special Study Zones within the City (City of Agoura Hills 1992, 3-2). However, the counties of Los Angeles and Ventura have both been identified by the California Geological Survey (CGS) as locations affected by Alquist-Priolo earthquake fault zones (California Geological Survey 1999).

Fault rupture risk in the City is considered to be negligible, as there are no major active faults known to exist in the Conejo–Las Virgenes region. Six minor faults have been identified in the City, but all are considered inactive and would not result in fault rupture.

Faults

The Southern California region is seismically active and commonly experiences strong groundshaking resulting from earthquakes along both known and previously unknown active faults. Active faults are defined as faults that have caused soil and strata displacement within the Holocene period (the last 10,000 years). Potentially active faults are faults that have experienced movement in the Quaternary period (last two million years), but not during the Holocene period. Faults that have not experienced movement in the last two million years are generally considered inactive.

Active faults that could potentially cause ground-shaking in Agoura Hills are at a distance of seven miles or greater from the City, and include the San Andreas, Oak Ridge, Malibu Coast, San Cayetano, and the Simi-Santa Ana faults. In addition, the Thousand Oaks area contains segments of the potentially active Sycamore Canyon-Boney Mountain fault zone, which lies no closer than 5 miles from the City of Agoura Hills. The most likely earthquake generating faults in the geographic region are the San Andreas, San Jacinto, Elsinore-Whittier, and the Newport-Inglewood faults. Table 4.5-1 (Maximum Credible Earthquakes for Active Faults in the Region) summarizes the seismic parameters of active faults in the region and Figure 4.5-1 (Regional Fault Map) identifies the location of regional faults.

Table 4.5-1 Maximum Credible Earthquakes for Active Faults in the Region

Fault Name	*Distance to Agoura Hills (miles)*	*Maximum Credible Earthquake (MCE)[a] (Richter Scale Magnitude, M)[b]*
Active Faults		
Anacapa-Santa Monica	13	7.0
Elsinore-Whittier	48	7.5
Malibu Coast	7	7.5
Newport-Inglewood	27	7.0
Oak Ridge	17	7.0
San Andreas	45	8.0
San Cayetano	18	7.5
Simi-Santa Rosa	7	7.5

SOURCE: Agoura Hills General Plan, Seismic Safety Element, Table SS-1, 1993; California Geological Survey, Revised 2002 California Seismic Shaking Analysis. Appendix A Faults A and B, http://www.conservation.ca.gov/cgs/rghm/psha/fault_parameters/pdf/Documents/A_flt.pdf (accessed on June 16, 2009)

Seismicity

Earthquake Magnitude

Earthquake magnitude is a quantitative measure of the strength of an earthquake or the strain energy released by it, as determined by seismographic or geologic observations. It does not vary with distance or the underlying earth material. This differs from earthquake intensity, which is a qualitative measure of the effects a given earthquake has on people, structures, loose objects, and the ground at a specific location. Intensity generally increases with increasing magnitude and in areas underlain by unconsolidated materials, and decreases with distance from the epicenter.

Several magnitude scales have been developed to measure the strength of an earthquake. The most commonly used scale is the moment magnitude (Mw) scale. Moment magnitude is related to the physical size of a fault rupture and the movement or displacement across the fault, offering a more uniform measure of the strength of an earthquake. Another measure of earthquake size is seismic moment. The seismic moment determines the energy that can be radiated by an earthquake. The moment magnitude of an earthquake is defined relative to the seismic moment for that event.

Earthquake intensity in a given locality is typically measured using the Modified Mercalli Intensity Scale with values of this scale ranging from I to XII. The most commonly used adaptation covers the range of intensities from the conditions of a value of I that is defined as not felt except by very few, favorably situated, to XII that is defined as damage total, lines of sight disturbed, and objects thrown into the air. While an earthquake has only one magnitude, it can have many intensities that typically decrease with distance from the epicenter. Table 4.5-2 (Modified Mercalli Intensity Scale) provides additional information on the Modified Mercalli Intensity Scale.

Table 4.5-2 Modified Mercalli Intensity Scale

Richter Magnitude (M)	*Modified Mercalli Intensity*	*Description*
3	I	Detected by only sensitive instruments
	II	Felt by a few people at rest
	III	Felt noticeably indoors, but not always recognized as a quake; vibration like a passing truck
4	IV	Felt indoors by many and outdoors by few
	V	Felt by most people. Some breakage of windows, dishes, and plaster
5	VI	Felt by all; falling plaster and chimneys; damage small
	VII	Damage to buildings varies; depends on quality of construction
6	VIII	Walls, monuments, chimneys fall; panel walls thrown out of frames
	IX	Buildings shift off foundations; foundations crack; ground cracks; underground pipes break
7	X	Most masonry and frame structures destroyed; ground cracks; landslides
8	XI	Ground fissures; pipes break; landslides; rails bent; new structures remain standing
	XII	Damage total; waves seen on ground surface; objects thrown into the air

SOURCE: USGS. 2006. Earthquakes Hazards Program. *The Modified Mercalli Intensity Scale*, November 17.

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REGIONAL FAULT MAP

Legend

- Fault Lines
- San Andreas fault
- City of Agoura Hills
- County Boundary
- Lake or Reservoir
- Interstate or Highway

Source: California Dept. Mines & Geology, 1982

D21377_Agoura_Hills\fault zone.mxd

Miles

0 1.25 2.5 5 7.5

Figure 4.5-1

Ground Shaking

The primary cause of structural damage from earthquakes is ground shaking. The intensity of ground motion expected at a particular site depends upon the magnitude of the earthquake, the distance from the site to the epicenter, and the geology of the area between the epicenter and the property. Greater movement can be expected at sites with soils consisting of poorly consolidated material, such as sand or sandy silt, at sites located in close proximity to the causative fault, or in response to an event of great magnitude.

Soil Related Geologic Hazards

Liquefaction

Liquefaction is the process in which loose granular soils deposited below the groundwater table temporarily lose strength and cohesion during strong ground shaking as a consequence of increased pore water pressure and reduced effective stress. The vast majority of liquefaction hazards are associated with sandy soils and silty soils of low plasticity. Potentially liquefiable soils (based on composition) must be saturated or nearly saturated to be susceptible to liquefaction.

Significant factors that affect liquefaction include water level, soil type, particle size and gradation, relative density, confining pressure, intensity of shaking, and duration of shaking. Liquefaction potential has been found to be the greatest where the groundwater level is shallow and submerged loose, fine sands occur within a depth of about 50 feet or less. Liquefaction potential decreases with increasing grain size and clay and gravel content, but increases as the ground acceleration and duration of shaking increase. Given the local bedrock geology and depth to groundwater within the City, the liquefaction potential is considered low. However, seasonable fluctuation in rainfall, and the effect of development, can cause the local water table to rise.[3]

The Seismic Hazards Zones map prepared by the California Department of Conservation in 2000 for the Thousand Oaks Quadrangle identifies an area within Agoura Hills that is subject to liquefaction in the eastern portion of the City, located immediately south of US-101 Freeway and partially included in the Agoura Village Specific Plan area.

Expansion Potential

Soils that volumetrically increase, or expand when exposed to water are considered expansive soils. These soils are typically very fine grained (i.e., clays) and can expand from small fractions to multiples of their volume, depending on their clay mineralogy. Such expansion can cause structural damage to foundations and roads without proper structural engineering. According to the Natural Resources Conservation Service, ungraded native soils in the lowland portions of the City exhibit the highest potential for shrinkage and swelling, while the northern uplands are rated moderate and the south uplands (Ladyface Mountain) have areas rated both low and moderate. Refer to Figure 4.5-2 (Expansion Potential of Soils).

[3] City of Agoura Hills. *Master Environmental Assessment*. July 1993. Page 11-7.

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EXPANSION POTENTIAL OF SOILS

SOIL RATINGS FOR SHRINK/SWELL POTENTIAL

- High
- Moderate
- Low

Source: City of Agoura Hills General Plan Master Environmental Assessment Data Base, 1992.

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Figure 4.5-2

Subsidence

Subsidence is generally related to over pumping of groundwater or petroleum reserves from deep underground reservoirs. Subsidence is not related to any surface activity. As a result of the generally limited groundwater resources contained in the relatively shallow alluvial basin, and the low probability of significant future oil production, the likelihood of significant subsidence occurring in the City is considered very minimal.[4]

Landslides and Slope Stability

Landslides are often associated with earthquakes, but there are other factors that can influence the occurrence of landslides. These factors include the slope, moisture content of the soil, and composition of the subsurface geology. For example, heavy rains or improper grading may trigger a landslide. Slope stability problems in Agoura Hills are often associated with the thin-bedded, clay-rich portions of the Topanga, Calabasas, and Modelo rock formations.

Slope stability is a major environmental concern in the developed hillside areas of the City. Several areas are prone to such stability problems, such as landslides, mudslides, slumping, and rockfalls. Development occurring within close proximity to these geologic conditions may endanger the public's safety. As shown in Figure 4.5-3 (Slope Stability), landslides have occurred in the mountainous portions of Agoura Hills, particularly in the higher elevations of Ladyface Mountain and two ridgelines in northwestern and northeastern Agoura Hills, respectively. According to the General Plan Update Community Safety Chapter, Geological and Seismic Hazards Section, areas with greatest potential for slope stability problems include:

- Northwest of the Thousand Oaks Boulevard/Kanan Road intersection in the northwest corner of the City
- North of Thousand Oaks Boulevard between Kanan Road and Chesebro Canyon Road, which includes a substantial portion of Old Agoura, and east of Chesebro Canyon Road
- Southwest of the Agoura Road/Liberty Canyon Road intersection

Landslides in the City have previously occurred in the mountainous portions of Agoura Hills, primarily in the higher elevations of Ladyface Mountain and two ridgelines in northwest and northeast Agoura Hills. Although landsliding can result from improper grading practices, no major structural damage has occurred in the City as a result of deep-seated-bedrock instability triggered by grading practices. Superficial slides, however, have occurred locally on graded cut-and-fill slopes in a few tract developments. One such problem area has been in Liberty Canyon, south of the Ventura Freeway. The majority of shallow-slope failures occur on the moderate-to-steep, soil-covered natural slopes.

Shallow slope failures, such as mudslides and slumping, have occurred in the City, especially where graded cut and fill slopes have been poorly constructed. Mudslides have the potential to occur with great

[4] City of Agoura Hills. *Master Environmental Assessment,* July 1993. Page 3-5.

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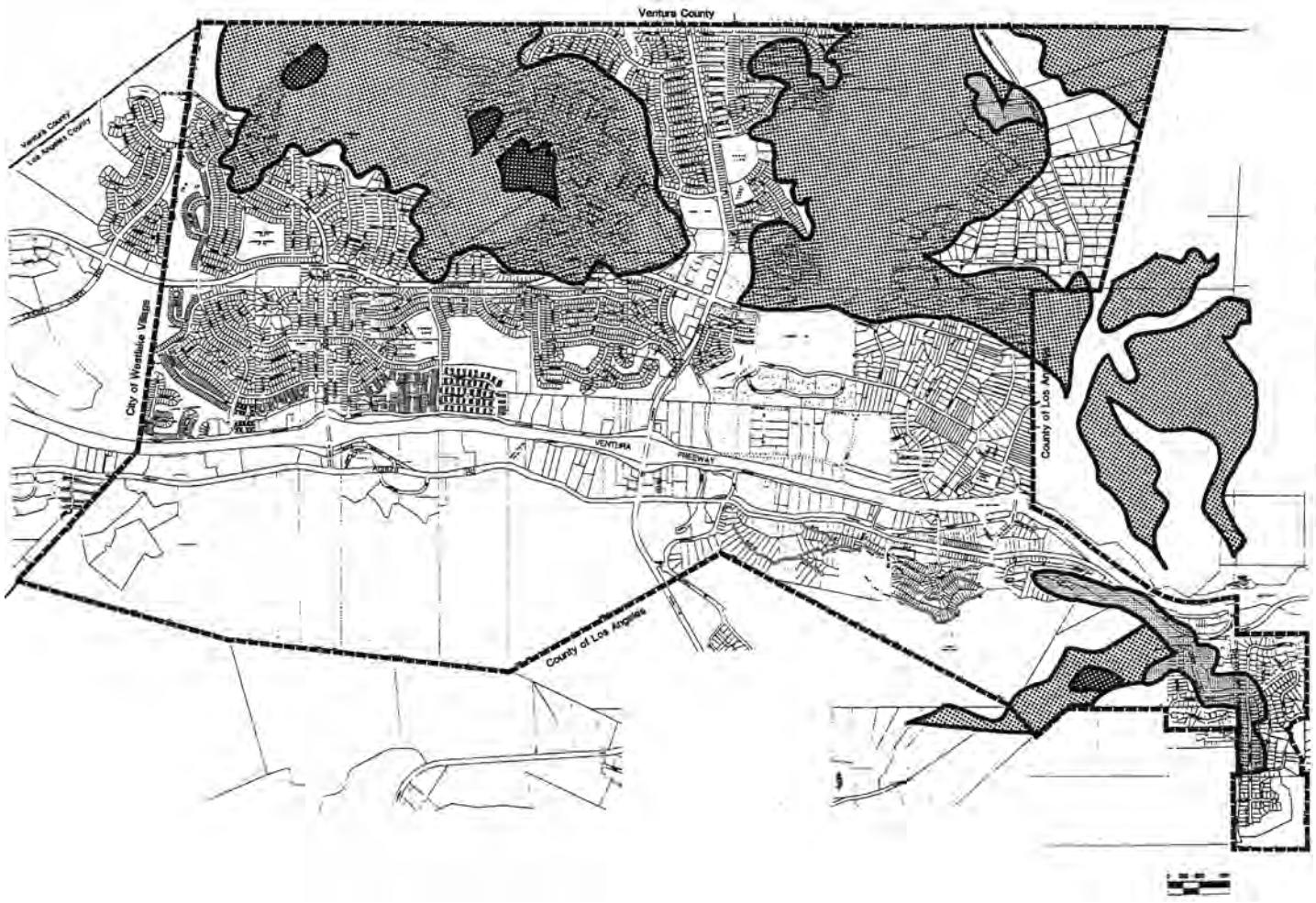
SLOPE STABILITY



STABILITY RATINGS

- Very Low
- Low
- Moderately Low
- High to Moderately High

Source: City of Agoura Hills General Plan Master Environmental Assessment Data Base, 1992.

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PBS&J

Figure 4.5-3

suddenness and destructive force, thereby constituting a significant threat to life and property in hillside areas. Soil slumping is a slower process that can also potentially cause extensive structural damage, although it is not as life threatening as the other soil stability hazards. Rockfalls are generally associated with seismic groundshaking and are a potential hazard for developments located at the base of steep slopes which have fractured rock outcroppings. Such conditions may be locally present in the area of the Ladyface Mountain and in the Indian Hills area. Rockfall hazard is greatest during strong earthquakes.

Tsunamis, Inundation, and Seiche

The City of Agoura Hills is not located within a coastal area or near any other large water body; therefore, tsunamis (seismic sea waves) and seiches, associated with ocean surges and inland water bodies, are not expected to occur within the City. Lake Lindero is the only water body within the City boundaries that could be affected by a seiche, however due to the size of the lake and the absence of any active faults crossing the City these hazards would not affect the City.

4.5.2 Regulatory Framework

Federal

Executive Order 12699

Executive Order 12699, "Seismic Safety of Federal and Federally Assisted of Regulated New Building Construction," was signed by President George H. W. Bush on January 5, 1990 to further the goals of Public Law 95-124, the *Earthquake Hazards Reduction Act of 1977*, as amended. The Executive Order applies to new construction of buildings owned, leased, constructed, assisted, or regulated by the federal government. Guidelines and procedures for implementing the order were prepared in 1992 by the federal Interagency Committee on Seismic Safety in Construction. The guidelines establish minimum acceptable seismic safety standards, provide evaluation procedures for determining the adequacy of local building codes, and recommend implementation procedures. Each federal agency is independently responsible for ensuring appropriate seismic design and construction standards are applied to new construction under its jurisdiction (U.S. Department of Commerce 1992, 1–7).

Under the original Executive Order 12699, the model code for the West Coast was the Uniform Building Code developed by the International Conference of Building Officials (ICBO). In 1994, the ICBO joined with other similar organizations in the Southeast and on the East Coast to form the International Code Council (ICC). In 2000, the ICC published the first International Building Code (IBC) based on the reassessment of earlier codes and the combined updated experience of ICC member organizations. The current 2006 IBC is the result of nearly 100 years of building code improvement and forms the basis of the California and Agoura Hills building codes (discussed below), which are successively more stringent than the codes in force at the time of the implementation of the original federal guidelines.

State

Alquist-Priolo Earthquake Fault Zoning Act

Surface rupture is the most easily avoided seismic hazard. The *Alquist-Priolo Earthquake Fault Zoning Act* was passed in 1972 to mitigate the hazard of surface faulting to structures for human occupancy. In accordance with this act, the state geologist established regulatory zones, called "earthquake fault zones," around the surface traces of active faults and published maps showing these zones. Buildings for human occupancy are not permitted to be constructed across the surface trace of active faults. Each earthquake fault zone extends approximately 200 to 500 feet on either side of the mapped fault trace, because many active faults are complex and consist of more than one branch. There is the potential for ground surface rupture along any of the branches. The City of Agoura Hills is not in an Alquist-Priolo Earthquake Fault Zone. Therefore, the General Plan Update would not be subject to this Act.

Seismic Hazard Mapping Act

The state regulations protecting the public from geo-seismic hazards, other than surface faulting, are contained in *California Public Resources Code*, Division 2, Chapter 7.8 (the *Seismic Hazards Mapping Act*), described here, and 2007 *California Code of Regulations*, Title 24, Part 2 (the *California Building Code* [CBC]), described below. Both of these regulations apply to public buildings, and a large percentage of private buildings, intended for human occupancy.

The *Seismic Hazard Mapping Act* was passed in 1990 following the Loma Prieta earthquake to reduce threats to public health and safety and to minimize property damage caused by earthquakes. The Act directs the California Geological Survey to identify and map areas prone to the earthquake hazards of liquefaction, earthquake-induced landslides, and amplified groundshaking. The Act requires site-specific geotechnical investigations to identify potential seismic hazards and formulate corrective measures prior to permitting most developments designed for human occupancy within the Zones of Required Investigation.

As of February 2009, 117 official seismic hazard zone maps showing areas prone to liquefaction and landslides had been published in California, and more are scheduled for 2010. The mapping is being performed in Southern California. The City of Agoura Hills is on the Seismic Hazard Map for the Thousand Oaks Quadrangle, published in November 2000. The map identifies an area within Agoura Hills that is subject to liquefaction in the eastern portion of the City, located immediately south of US-101 Freeway and partially included in the Agoura Village Specific Plan area. Future development in this area would be subject to mitigation as defined in Public Resources Code Section 2693(c).

Section 2697 of the *Seismic Hazards Mapping Act* mandates that, prior to the approval of a project in a seismic hazard zone, the City require the preparation of a geotechnical report defining and delineating any seismic hazard, the report would be reviewed by the Department of Building Inspection (DBI). After a report was approved, subsequent geotechnical reports would not be required, provided that new geologic information warranting further investigation was not recorded and that the recommendations of the report are incorporated in the building design. The City is required to submit one copy of the

approved geotechnical report to the State Geologist. If the City approves a project that is not in accordance with the policies and criteria of the *Seismic Hazards Mapping Act*, the City is required to explain the reasons for the differences in writing to the State Geologist, within 30 days of the project's approval. The site-specific geotechnical investigation often refines the state's areawide interpretations. If the new documentation supports the site-specific interpretation, the State Geologist files the report as an amendment to the Seismic Hazard Evaluation for the appropriate USGS topographic quadrangle map.

California Building Code

Until January 1, 2008, the California Building Code (CBC) was based on the then-current *Uniform Building Code* and contained Additions, Amendments and Repeals specific to building conditions and structural requirements in the state of California. The 2007 CBC, effective January 1, 2008, is based on the current (2006) *International Building Code* (IBC) and contains prominent enhancement of the sections dealing with fire safety, equal access for disabled persons, and environmentally friendly construction (California Building Standards Commission 2008). Each jurisdiction in the state may adopt its own building code based on the 2007 CBC. Local codes are permitted to be more stringent than Title 24, but, at a minimum, are required to meet all state standards and enforce the regulations of the 2007 CBC beginning January 1, 2008.

Agoura Hills adopted the 2007 CBC as the basis for its Building Code (Municipal Code Chapter 2, Section 8200) through Ordinance No. 07-350, on January 9, 2008. The full 2007 Agoura Hills Building Code (AHBC) consists of the 2006 IBC, as amended by the 2007 CBC, and as further modified by Agoura Hills amendments designed to be used in conjunction with the 2007 CBC.

Regional

Southern California Association of Governments

Regional, multi-agency planning efforts are summarized by the Southern California Association of Governments (SCAG 1996). Among policies aimed at managing regional growth, and relevant to geologic resources, is the following:

Policy 3.22 Discourage development, or encourage the use of special design requirements, in areas with steep slopes, high fire, flood and seismic hazards.

Local

Agoura Hills Municipal Code

Article VIII, Building Regulations

This Article provides for general design and construction practices within the City of Agoura Hills.

4.5.3 Project Impacts and Mitigation

Analytic Method

Widely available industry sources were examined to document regional and local geology. Information regarding regional geology and seismically induced hazards was taken from various sources of the California Geological Survey and the United States Geological Survey (USGS). Where potential geological hazards are identified, such hazards would be expected to affect any proposed development in the hazard area. Adherence to design and construction standards, as required by state and local regulations, would ensure maximum practicable protection for users of the buildings and associated infrastructure.

Thresholds of Significance

For the purposes of this EIR, implementation of the General Plan Update would have significant impact if it would do any of the following:

- Expose people or structures to potential substantial adverse effects, including the risk of loss, injury, or death involving:
  - > 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
  - > Strong seismic groundshaking
  - > Seismic-related ground failure, including liquefaction
  - > Landslides
- Result in substantial soil erosion or the loss of topsoil
- 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
- Be located on expansive soil, as defined in Table 18-1-B of the California Building Code (1994) creating substantial risks to life or property
- Have soils incapable of adequately supporting the use of septic tanks or alternative waste water disposal systems where sewers are not available for the disposal of waste water

Effects Not Found to Be Significant

Threshold	Would the project 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 wastewater?

Future development under the General Plan Update would be served by sanitary sewer service and would not include the use of septic tanks. As such, the proposed project will result in *no impact* (Class I) due to existence of inappropriate soils to support septic systems.

The City and County currently provide sanitary sewer service, with the Las Virgenes Municipal Water District providing the major sewer trunk lines, and would continue to provide these services to development in the City. No alternative wastewater systems are currently proposed. Existing septic tanks in the Old Agoura area of the City would be phased out as sewer lines are extended. Therefore, ***no impact*** (Class III) would occur and no further analysis of this issue is required.

Less-Than-Significant Impacts

Threshold	Would the project expose people or structures to potential substantial adverse effects, including the risk of loss, injury, or death involving: ■ Rupture of a known earthquake fault, as delineated on the most recent Alquist-Priolo Fault Zone Map as issued by the State Geologist for the area or based on other substantial evidence of known fault? ■ Strong seismic groundshaking? ■ Seismic-related ground failure, including liquefaction?

Impact 4.5-1 **Future development under the General Plan Update would not expose people and/or structures to potentially substantial adverse effects, including the risk of loss, injury, or death, involving fault rupture, strong seismic groundshaking and/or seismic-related ground failure, including liquefaction. Although seismic groundshaking would occur during major earthquakes, typical of the region, compliance with applicable state and City regulations, and the General Plan Update goals and policies would reduce the potential impacts of vibration and associated ground failures to *less-than-significant* levels in the City (Class II).**

A discussion of potential impacts associated with landslides has been provided under Impact 4.5-3 below. According to the Seismic Safety Element of the existing General Plan (1993) no Alquist-Priolo special study fault zones have been identified within the City of Agoura Hills. Fault rupture risk in the City is considered to be negligible, as there are no major active faults known to exist in the Conejo–Las Virgenes region. Six minor faults have been identified in the City, but all are considered inactive and would not result in fault rupture.

The City of Agoura Hills is located in a seismically active region. During the design life of existing and future development, strong seismic groundshaking will occur. Although no special study fault zones have been identified in the City, the risk of groundshaking still exists. Furthermore, the counties of Los Angeles and Ventura have both been identified by the California Geological Survey (CGS) as a counties affected by Alquist-Priolo earthquake fault zones (California Geologic Survey 1999). Active faults which could potentially cause ground-shaking in Agoura Hills are at a distance of seven miles or greater from the City of Agoura Hills, and include the San Andreas, Oak Ridge, Malibu Coast, San Cayetano, and the Simi-Santa Ana faults. In addition, the Thousand Oaks area contains segments of the potentially active Sycamore Canyon-Boney Mountain fault zone, which lies no closer than five miles from the City of Agoura Hills. The most likely earthquake generating faults in the geographic region are the San Andreas, San Jacinto, Elsinore-Whittier, and the Newport-Inglewood faults. Table 4.5-1 (Maximum Credible Earthquakes for Active Faults in the Region) summarizes the seismic parameters of active faults in the region.

The potential for liquefaction to occur in the City of Agoura Hills is considered low, given the local bedrock geology and depth to groundwater within the City (MEA 2002). However, seasonable fluctuation in rainfall, and the effect of development, can cause the local water table to rise. Although the majority of the City is not at risk for liquefaction, the Seismic Hazards Zones map prepared by the CGS in 2000 for the Thousand Oaks Quadrangle identifies an area subject to liquefaction in the eastern portion of the City located immediately south of US-101 Freeway and partially included in the Agoura Village Specific Plan area.

The General Plan Update is a regulatory tool to guide development of Agoura Hills, and not a specific development project. All future development would be required to perform a site-specific geotechnical report as required by Policy S-2.2 (Geotechnical Investigations) of the General Plan Update, which would include design and foundation recommendations. Additionally, new development would be required to adhere to the City's *Municipal Code*, the *Uniform Building Code*, and the *California Building Code*.

Goal S-2 (Protection from Geologic Hazards) of the General Plan Update aims to minimize adverse effects to residents, public and private property and essential services caused by seismic and geologic hazards. Proposed policies, including Policy S-2.2 (Geotechnical Investigations), would require that a geotechnical investigation be performed for all new construction, and that all seismic and geologic safety standards, as well as the use of best management practices in site design and building construction methods, are implemented. Implementation of the City's building codes and compliance with the policies contained in the General Plan Update will ensure that structures built in the future would perform in a manner at least equal to, and in many cases, far better than, the existing structures they replace. As no Alquist-Priolo special study fault zones have been identified in the City, and future development would be required to conform to all applicable federal, state, and local regulations, this impact is considered ***less than significant*** (Class II) in regard to impacts from fault rupture, strong seismic ground shaking and liquefaction. No mitigation measures are required.

Threshold	Would the project result in substantial soil erosion or the loss of topsoil?

Impact 4.5-2 **Implementation of the General Plan Update would not result in substantial soil erosion and the loss of topsoil, as future development in the City would comply with applicable state and City regulations and General Plan Update goals and policies. This is a *less-than-significant* impact (Class II).**

Topsoil is typically considered to be the uppermost 6 to 8 inches of soil. It has the highest concentration of organic matter and microorganisms, and is where most biological soil activity occurs. Soil erosion typically results from concentrated runoff on unprotected slopes or along unlined stream channels. Soil erosion has largely been reduced throughout most of the City due to soil coverage by various land uses and the construction of flood control facilities. However, the undeveloped hillside and mountainous areas of the City could experience substantial erosion from runoff if the vegetation cover is destroyed by brushfire or removed by grading operations.

All demolition and construction activities within the City are presently required to comply with CBC Chapter 70 standards, which are designed to ensure implementation of appropriate measures during grading and construction to control erosion and storm water pollution. Additional Policy S-2.1 (Review Safety Standards) of the General Plan Update would require that all seismic and geologic safety standards, as well best management practices in site design and building construction methods are implemented, which reduce the potential of soil erosion.

While new construction activities carried out as a result of the General Plan Update may slightly increase the potential for construction related soil erosion, consistent enforcement of CBC code requirements and National Pollutant Discharge Elimination System (NPDES) permit conditions can be expected to minimize the polluting effects of erosion from construction sites, and ensure compliance with the Regional Water Quality Control Board (RWQCB) Water Quality Control Plan and its regulations. Standard best management practices regarding post-construction erosion and sediment control remains would also be implemented for all future development. Additionally, *Municipal Code* Article V Chapter 5 Section 5509 also requires sediment controls. As specific development projects are proposed in the future, site-specific technical reports would be prepared and separate environmental reviews would occur. Compliance with the General Plan Update goals and policies, as well as applicable state and City regulations, would result in a ***less-than-significant*** impact (Class II) related to erosion and the loss of topsoil. No mitigation measures are required.

Threshold	Would the project 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?

Impact 4.5-3 **Implementation of the General Plan Update could be located on a geologic unit or soil that is unstable or would become unstable and potentially result in on- or off-site landslides, lateral spreading, subsidence, or collapse. However, adherence to the General Plan Update goals and policies and City, state, and federal regulations would result in a *less-than-significant* impact (Class II).**

As previously discussed, there are no significant impacts related to liquefaction under Impact 4.5-1; therefore, this analysis addresses impacts related to landslides, unstable soils as a result of lateral spreading, subsidence, or collapse.

Landslides are often associated with earthquakes, but there are other factors that can influence the occurrence of landslides. These factors include the slope, moisture content of the soil, and the composition of the subsurface geology. For example, heavy rains or improper grading may trigger a landslide. Slope stability problems in the City are often associated with the thin-bedded, clay-rich portions of the Topanga, Calabasas, and Modelo rock formations. According to the City's Seismic Safety Element (1993), areas with greatest potential for slope stability problems include, northwest of the Thousand Oaks Boulevard/Kanan Road intersection in the northwest corner of the City, north of Thousand Oaks Boulevard between Kanan Road and Chesebro Canyon Road, which includes a substantial portion of Old Agoura, east of Chesebro Canyon Road, and southwest of the Agoura Road/Liberty Canyon Road intersection.

Lateral spreading occurs as a result of liquefaction. As such, liquefaction-prone areas could also be susceptible to lateral spreading. Subsidence is generally related to over pumping of groundwater or petroleum reserves from deep underground reservoirs. Because of the generally limited groundwater resources contained in the relatively shallow alluvial basin, and because of the low probability of significant future oil production, the likelihood of significant lateral spreading or subsidence occurring in the City is considered very minimal.

Development resulting from the General Plan Update would be required to comply with the CBC regarding the minimum standards for structural design and site development. The CBC, which is based on the *Uniform Building Code* (UBC), has been modified for California conditions with more detailed and/or more stringent regulations. The CBC requires that "classification of the soil at each building site shall be determined when required by the building official," and that "the classification shall be based on observation and any necessary test of the materials disclosed by borings or excavations." The CBC provides standards including, but not limited to, excavation, grading, and earthwork construction; fills and embankments; expansive soils; foundation investigations; and liquefaction potential and soils strength loss. Thus, an acceptable degree of soil stability can be achieved for soil materials by the Building Code required incorporation of soil treatment programs (replacement, grouting, compaction, drainage control, etc.) in the excavation and construction plans to address site-specific soil conditions. A site-specific evaluation of soil conditions, as required by Policy S-2.2 (Geotechnical Investigation) of the

General Plan Update, would be required for all construction projects in the City and must contain recommendations for ground preparation and earthwork specific to the site that become an integral part of the construction design.

As part of the construction permitting process, the City would require complete geotechnical investigation at specific construction sites to identify potentially unsuitable soil conditions, including lateral spread, subsidence, and collapse. The evaluations must be conducted by registered soil professionals, and measures to eliminate inappropriate soil conditions must be applied. The design of foundation support must conform to the analysis and implementation criteria described in CBC Chapter 15.

Adherence to the General Plan Update policies, City requirements, as well as other state and federal building codes would ensure that development is not located on unstable soils or geologic units. With these requirements, the proposed project would have a ***less-than-significant*** impact (Class II) associated with the exposure of people or structures to hazards associated with unstable geologic units or soils. No mitigation measures are required.

Threshold	Would the project be located on expansive soil, as defined in Table 18-1-B of the Uniform Building Code (1994), creating substantial risks to life or property?

Impact 4.5-4 **Implementation of the General Plan Update could be located on expansive soils, as defined in Table 18-1-B. However, adherence to General Plan goals and policies, and City, state, and federal regulations would result in a *less-than-significant* impact (Class II).**

Soils that volumetrically increase, or expand when exposed to water, are considered expansive soils. These soils are typically very fine grained (i.e., clays) and can expand from small fractions to multiples of their volume, depending on their clay mineralogy. Such expansion can cause structural damage to foundations and roads without proper structural engineering. According to the Natural Resources Conservation Service, ungraded native soils in the lowland portions of the City exhibit the highest potential for shrinkage and swelling associated with expansive soils, while the northern uplands are rated moderate and the south uplands (Ladyface Mountain) have areas rated both low and moderate. Development permitted under the General Plan Update would be required to comply with applicable provisions of the CBC with regard to soil hazard-related design. Even the slight potential for the existence of expansive soils within the City raises the possibility that foundation stability for building improvements and utilities could be compromised.

Policy S-2.2 (Geotechnical Investigation) of the General Plan Update would require a site-specific foundation investigation and report for any new development. This report must contain appropriate recommendations for foundation type and design criteria that conform to the analysis and implementation criteria described in the City's Building Code. In addition to General Plan Update policy, compliance with City, state, and federal requirements would further reduce impacts related to expansive soils. Therefore, this impact is considered ***less than significant*** (Class II). No mitigation measures are required.

Significant and Unavoidable Impacts

There are no significant and unavoidable impacts related to geology from implementation of the General Plan Update.

Cumulative Impacts

Cumulative impacts are only addressed for those thresholds that have a project-related impact, whether it is less than significant, significant, or significant and unavoidable. If "no impact" occurs, no cumulative analysis is necessary to address that threshold.

The geographic context for the analysis of impacts resulting from geologic and seismic hazards is generally site-specific, rather than cumulative in nature, because each development site has unique geologic considerations that would be subject to uniform site development and construction standards. In this way, potential cumulative impacts resulting from geological, seismic, and soil conditions would be minimized on a site-by-site basis to the extent that modern construction methods and code requirements provide. Implementation of the General Plan Update policies related to earthquake hazards or geologic disturbances and compliance with updated CBC building standards would reduce any impacts resulting from fault rupture or groundshaking within the City of Agoura Hills to a less-than-significant level. The contribution of the General Plan Update to impacts associated with exposing people and property to seismic hazards would, therefore, be ***less than significant***.

Impacts from erosion and loss of topsoil from site development and operation can be cumulative in effect within a watershed. The Malibu Creek Watershed, which includes the City, forms the geographic context of cumulative erosion impacts. This analysis accounts for all future potential growth within this geographic area.

Development throughout the watershed, including all development within the City of Agoura Hills, would be subject to state and local runoff and erosion prevention requirements, including the applicable provisions of the Construction General Permit, BMPs, and Municipal Stormwater NPDES Permit, as well as implementation of fugitive dust control measures of SCAQMD Rule 403. These measures are implemented as conditions of approval of project development and subject to continuing enforcement. Standard water quality best management practices, including erosion and sediment controls would apply to all future development. As a result, it is anticipated that cumulative impacts on the Malibu Creek Watershed due to runoff and erosion from cumulative development activity would be ***less than significant*** (Class II).

Mitigation Measures

With implementation of policies within the General Plan Update, all impacts will be reduced to less-than-significant levels. No mitigation measures are necessary.

Final Level of Significance

With the implementation of the General Plan Update policies and application of all local, state, and federal regulations pertaining to geology and soils, impacts would be ***less than significant*** (Class II). Cumulative impacts would also be considered ***less than significant*** (Class II).

4.5.4 Draft General Plan Goals and Policies

The Agoura Hills General Plan Update contains policies related to geology and soils.

Goal LU-3 **City of Open Spaces.** Open space lands that are preserved to maintain the visual quality of the City and provide recreational opportunities, protect the public from safety hazards, and conserve natural resources.

Policy LU-3.2 **Hillsides.** Preserve ridgelines, natural slopes, and bluffs as open space, minimize hillside erosion, and complement natural landforms through sensitive grading techniques in hillside areas.

Goal LU-23 **Business Park and Natural Open Spaces.** An economically viable business park that is scaled and designed to reflect its natural setting at the base of Ladyface Mountain, while providing high-quality jobs and incorporating a diversity of uses that minimize the need for employees to travel off site.

Policy LU-23.3 **Development Clustering and Location.** Require that buildings be clustered to minimize grading and modifications of the natural topography, with development located below the 1,100-foot elevation.

Goal NR-1 **Open Space System.** Preservation of open space to sustain natural ecosystems and visual resources that contribute to the quality of life and character of Agoura Hills.

Policy NR-1.3 **Slope Preservation.** Require that uses involving grading or other alteration of land maintain the natural topographic character and ensure that downstream properties and watercourses are not adversely affected by siltation or runoff.

Goal NR-8 **Mineral Resources.** Protection of access to and availability of mineral resources, while maintaining protection of the surrounding environment.

Policy NR-8.1 **Mineral Resource Zones.** Protect access to and availability of lands designated MRZ, as mapped by the California Geological Survey, for potential further mining, and regulate any such activities consistent with the Surface Mining and Reclamation Act, mineral land classification information, and the *California Environmental Quality Act*.

Goal S-2 **Protection from Geologic Hazards.** Minimized adverse effects to residents, public and private property, and essential services caused by seismic and geologic hazards.

Policy S-2.1 **Review Safety Standards.** Regularly review and enforce all seismic and geologic safety standards, including the City's Building Code, and require the use of best management practices (BMPs) in site design and building construction methods.

Policy S-2.2 **Geotechnical Investigations.** Require geotechnical investigations to determine the potential for ground rupture, groundshaking, and liquefaction due to seismic events, as well as expansive soils and subsidence problems on sites, including steep slopes, where these hazards are potentially present.

Policy S-2.3 **Retrofit Critical Facilities.** Encourage the upgrade, retrofitting, and/or relocation of all existing critical facilities (e.g., schools, police stations, fire stations, and medical facilities) and other important public facilities that do not meet current building code standards and are within areas susceptible to seismic or geologic hazards.

Policy S-2.4 **Funding Programs.** Pursue federal and state programs to provide additional protection against seismic activity.

4.5.5 References

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4.6 HAZARDS AND HAZARDOUS MATERIALS

This section of the EIR analyzes the potential environmental effects to human health and the environment due to exposure to hazardous materials or hazardous conditions arising from of the accidental release of hazardous material from implementation of the General Plan Update. A hazardous material is defined as any material that, due to its quantity, concentration, physical or chemical characteristics, poses a significant present or potential hazard to human health and safety or to the environment if released. Hazardous materials include, but are not limited to, hazardous substances, hazardous wastes, and any material that a business or local implementing agency has a reasonable basis for believing would be injurious to the health and safety of persons, or harmful to the environment if released. Earthquake and landslide hazards are addressed in Section 4.5 (Geology and Soils). Data for this section were taken from *Las Virgenes–Malibu Council of Governments Hazard Mitigation Action Plan* and other relevant documents related to hazards and hazardous materials.

No comment letters regarding hazards and hazardous materials were received in response to the April 30, 2009 Notice of Preparation circulated for the General Plan Update. Full bibliographic entries for all reference materials are provided in Section 4.6.5 (References) of this section.

4.6.1 Environmental Setting

Definitions

Division 20, Chapter 6.5 of the *California Health and Safety Code* sets forth definitions and regulations related to hazardous materials management and disposal, as follows:

- **Hazardous Material**—Any material which, because of its quantity, concentration, or physical or chemical characteristics, poses a significant present or potential hazard to human health and safety or to the environment if released into the workplace or the environment. Hazardous materials include, but are not limited to, hazardous substances, hazardous waste, and any material that a handler or the administering agency has a reasonable basis for believing would be injurious to the health and safety of persons or harmful to the environment if released into the workplace or the environment.
- **Hazardous Waste**—A hazardous waste is any hazardous material that is abandoned, discarded, or recycled. Hazardous wastes may occasionally be generated by actions that change the composition of previously non-hazardous materials. The same criteria which characterize a material as hazardous make waste hazardous: ignitability, toxicity, corrosively, reactivity, radioactivity, or bioactivity.

Hazard versus Risk

Workers and the general public health are potentially at risk whenever hazardous materials have been used or where there could be an exposure to such materials. Inherent in the setting and analyses presented in this section are the concepts of the "hazard" of these materials and the "risk" they pose to human health. Exposure to some chemical substances may harm internal organs or systems in the human

body, ranging from temporary effects to permanent disability, or death. Hazardous materials that result in adverse effects are generally considered "toxic." Other chemical materials, however, may be corrosive, or react with other substances to form other hazardous materials, but they are not considered toxic because organs or systems are not affected. Because toxic materials can result in adverse health effects, they are considered hazardous materials, but not all hazardous materials are necessarily "toxic." For purposes of the information and analyses presented in this section, the terms hazardous substances or hazardous materials are used interchangeably and include materials that are considered to be toxic.

The risk to human health is determined by the probability of exposure to a hazardous material and the severity of harm such exposure would pose. That is to say, the likelihood and means of exposure, in addition to the inherent toxicity of a material, are used to determine the degree of risk to human health. For example, a high probability of exposure to a low toxicity chemical would not necessarily pose an unacceptable human health or ecological risk, whereas a low probability of exposure to a very high toxicity chemical might. Various regulatory agencies, such as the Environmental Protection Agency (EPA), State Water Resources Control Board (SWRCB), the California Department of Toxic Substances Control (DTSC), and state and federal Occupational Safety and Health Administrations (OSHA) are responsible for developing and/or enforcing risk-based standards to protect the public and the environment.

Use, Transport and Abatement of Hazardous Materials

Hazardous Materials Use

Hazardous materials in the City are routinely used, stored, and transported in commercial/retail businesses as well as in educational facilities, and households. Hazardous materials users and waste generators in the City include businesses, public and private institutions, and households. Federal, state, and local agency databases maintain comprehensive information on the locations of facilities using large quantities of hazardous materials, as well as facilities generating hazardous waste. Some of these facilities use certain classes of hazardous materials that require accidental release scenario modeling and risk management plans to protect surrounding land uses.

Asbestos

Asbestos, a naturally occurring fibrous material, was used in many building materials for fireproofing and insulating properties before many of its most common construction-related uses were banned by the EPA between the early 1970s and 1991 under the authority of the *Clean Air Act* (CAA) and the *Toxic Substances Control Act* (TSCA). Loose insulation, ceiling panels, and brittle plaster are potential sources of friable (easily crumbled) asbestos. Since inhalation of airborne asbestos fibers is the primary mode of asbestos entry into the body, friable asbestos presents the greatest health threat. Nonfriable asbestos is generally bound to other materials such that it does not become airborne under normal conditions. Any activity that involves cutting, grinding, or drilling during demolition (especially demolition of older (pre-1980 structures), or relocation of underground utilities, could result in the release of friable asbestos fibers unless proper precautions are taken. Asbestos-related health problems include lung cancer and

asbestosis. Therefore, demolition of the existing structures could result in the release of friable asbestos within the City.

Lead

Lead is a naturally occurring metallic element. Among its numerous uses and sources, lead can be found in paint, water pipes, solder in plumbing systems, and in soils around buildings and structures painted with lead-based paint. In 1978, the federal government required the reduction of lead in house paint to less than 0.06 percent (600 parts per million). Because of its toxic properties, lead is regulated as a hazardous material. Excessive exposure to lead can result in the accumulation of lead in the blood, soft tissues, and bones. Children are particularly susceptible to potential lead-related health problems because it is easily absorbed into developing systems and organs. Inspection, testing, and removal (abatement) of lead-containing building materials must be performed by state-certified contractors who are required to comply with applicable health and safety and hazardous materials regulations. Buildings that have been constructed prior to 1978 and that contain lead-based paints could require abatement prior to construction activities for the proposed project. It is likely that structures constructed prior to 1978 used lead-based paint and abatement will be required.

Natural Gas Pipelines

Agoura Hills is underlain by a network of natural gas pipelines, the largest of which is a 15-inch transmission line traversing the northwestern corner of the City. Natural gas is distributed under high pressure, thereby increasing its explosive potential. Natural gas leaks and explosions can occur as a result of either strong earthquakes or accidental rupture of gas lines during excavation operations at construction sites. Section 4.6.2 (Regulatory Framework) identifies existing federal and state regulations in place to ensure the safe transport of hazardous materials, including natural gas, and to minimize the hazards associated with accidental release of such materials.

Transportation of Hazardous Materials

The transport of hazardous materials through the City of Agoura Hills is regulated by the State Department of Transportation and California Highway Patrol (Caltrans). The Ventura Freeway (US-101) is located within the southern portion of the City boundaries. There is a heightened risk of a hazardous material leak or spill in the Agoura Hills area due to the volume of traffic and the nature of the materials that are be routinely transported through the Ventura Freeway.

Existing Hazardous Materials Sites

Comprehensive Environmental Response, Compensation, and Liability Information System (CERCLIS)

The *Comprehensive Environmental Response, Compensation, and Liability Act of 1980* (CERCLA) was developed to protect the water, air, and land resources from the risks created by past chemical disposal practices. This act is also referred to as the Superfund Act, and the sites listed under it are referred to as Superfund sites. Under CERCLA, the United States Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) maintains a list,

known as CERCLIS, of all contaminated sites in the nation that have in the past or are currently undergoing clean-up activities. CERCLIS contains information on current hazardous waste sites, potential hazardous waste sites, and remedial activities. CERCLIS includes sites which are on the National Priorities List (NPL) or are being considered for the NPL. No sites within the City are currently listed in the CERCLIS database or the NPL (U.S. EPA 2009a; DTSC 2009).

Toxic Release Inventory

The Toxics Release Inventory (TRI) is an EPA database that contains information on toxic chemical releases and other waste management activities reported annually by certain industry groups as well as Federal facilities. TRI sites are known to release toxic chemicals into the air. The EPA closely monitors the emissions from these facilities to ensure that their annual limits are not exceeded. TRI reports provide accurate information about potentially hazardous chemicals and their uses to the public in an attempt to give communities more power to hold companies accountable for their actions and to make informed decisions about how such chemicals should be managed. According to the EPA records, there are no facilities in the City of Agoura Hills area that are listed on the TRI for year 2007 (the most recently available data) (U.S. EPA 2009b).

Hazardous Waste Generators

Many types of businesses can be producers of hazardous waste. Small businesses such as dry cleaners, auto repair shops, medical facilities or hospitals, photo processing centers, and metal-plating shops are usually generators of small quantities of hazardous waste. Generally, small-quantity generators are facilities that produce between 100 and 1,000 kilograms (Kg) of hazardous waste per month (approximately equivalent to between 220 and 2,200 pounds, or between 27 and 275 gallons).

Larger businesses such as chemical manufacturers, large electroplating facilities, and petroleum refineries, can generate large quantities of hazardous waste. The EPA defines a large-quantity generator as a facility that produces over 1,000 Kg (2,200 pounds or about 275 gallons) of hazardous waste per month. As discussed later in Section 4.6.2 Regulatory Framework, large quantity generators are fully regulated under the Resources Conservation and Recovery Act (RCRA). According to the most recent EPA and City data available (2007), there are no large quantity generators or small quantity generators in the City (U.S. EPA 2008).

Leaking Underground Storage Tanks

Leaking underground storage tanks (LUSTs) are one of the greatest environmental concerns of the past several decades. According to data from the State Water Resources Control Board, 18 underground storage tank leaks have been reported in the City of Agoura. Of these reports, nine sites have either been cleaned up or deemed to be of no environmental consequence. Nine cases are still open and in various stages of the remediation or site assessment process. The 18 sites are shown in Table 4.6-1 (LUSTs Reported in the City of Agoura Hills Area).

Table 4.6-1 LUSTs Reported in the City of Agoura Hills Area

Site Name	*Address*	*Status*
Agoura Building Materials	29149 Agoura Road	Case Closed
Agoura Building Materials	29403 Agoura Road W	Case Closed
Agoura Equip Rental and Supplies	29439 Agoura Road	Case Closed
Agoura Road Yard	29773 Mulholland Hwy W.	Case Closed
Exxon #7-3364 (Former)	30245 Canwood St	Case Closed
Hillside Rubbish Co.	29431 Agoura Rd W.	Case Closed
Lake Lindero Country Club	5719 Lake Lindero Dr	Case Closed
Texaco Service Station	5226 Palo Comado Canyon Dr	Case Closed
V-Fire Station #36	555 Deer Hill Road	Case Closed
Chevron #9-9693	5221 Palo Comado Canyon Rd. N	Open—referred
TOSCO- 76 Station #7426	28203 Dorothy Drive W	Open—Remediation
Chevron #9-5348	5051 Kanan Rd N.	Open—Site Assessment
LA CO Fire Station 35	4206 N Cornell Blvd	Open—Site Assessment
Pacific Bell	29300 Roadside Drive	Open—Site Assessment
Shell #204-0048-0107	5134 Kanan Rd	Open—Site Assessment
Shell #204-0054-0124	30245 Agoura Rd W	Open—Site Assessment
Shell (Texaco Service Station)	5226 Palo Comado Canyon Rd	Open—Site Assessment
U-haul Co #711-061	28650 Canwood St	Open—Site Assessment

SOURCE: California State Water Resources Control Board (SWRCB), *Geotracker -Leaking Underground Tank (LUST) Cleanup Sites*, 2009, https://geotracker.swrcb.ca.gov/ (accessed March 31, 2009).

Household Hazardous Waste

The EPA defines household hazardous waste as "leftover products such as paints, cleaners, oils, batteries, and pesticides that contain potentially hazardous ingredients that could be corrosive, toxic, ignitable, or reactive." According to the EPA, Americans generate approximately 1.6 million tons of household hazardous waste per year, while the average home can accumulate as much as 100 pounds of household hazardous waste in the basement and garage or in storage closets. Methods of improper disposal of household hazardous wastes commonly include pouring them down the drain, on the ground, into storm sewers, or in some cases putting them out with the trash. Though the dangers of such disposal methods might not be immediately obvious, improper disposal of these wastes can pollute the environment and pose a threat to human health.

Fire Hazards

As identified by Figure 4.6-1 (Hazards), the City of Agoura Hills is susceptible to both urban and wildland fire hazards. Urban fires can result from a number of causes, including arson, carelessness, home or industrial accidents, or from ignorance of proper safety procedures. Both urban land uses with inappropriate building materials and the native vegetation that surround Agoura Hills are potential fire

hazards. According to the Los Angeles County Fire Department (LACoFD), overall the community was constructed with safe building materials; however, apartment buildings with wood roofs east of Kanan Road and south of Thousand Oaks Boulevard are particularly susceptible to fire hazards. Wildland fires are also a major concern due to the hilly, mountainous, and undeveloped character of much of the surrounding area. Over 50 percent of Agoura Hills is open space with dry, native vegetation.

The City of Agoura has a number of measures to alleviate urban and wildland hazards. The City Code defines standards for minimum roadway widths and clearances around structures. In 1983, the City outlawed wood shingle roofs and required that all new roofs be constructed of Class A materials. The City of Agoura Hills adopted the LACoFD water pressure requirements of 1,250 gallons per minute (gpm) at 20 pounds per square inch (psi) residual pressure for a 2-hour duration for residential projects.

For commercial and industrial projects, 5,000 gpm at 20 pounds psi for a 5-hour duration is required. The City of Agoura Hills will also continue to support the LACFD's attempt to lessen the impacts of a wildland fire through the Brush Clearance and Annual Inspection Programs. This requires that all brush within 200 feet of the northern boundary and 100 feet of the southern boundary of any structure be removed. The LACFD monitors this through site checks, including the Annual Inspection Program. This program requires the LACFD to evaluate fire hazards on any lot adjacent to brush or the hillside on an annual basis.

Emergency Response

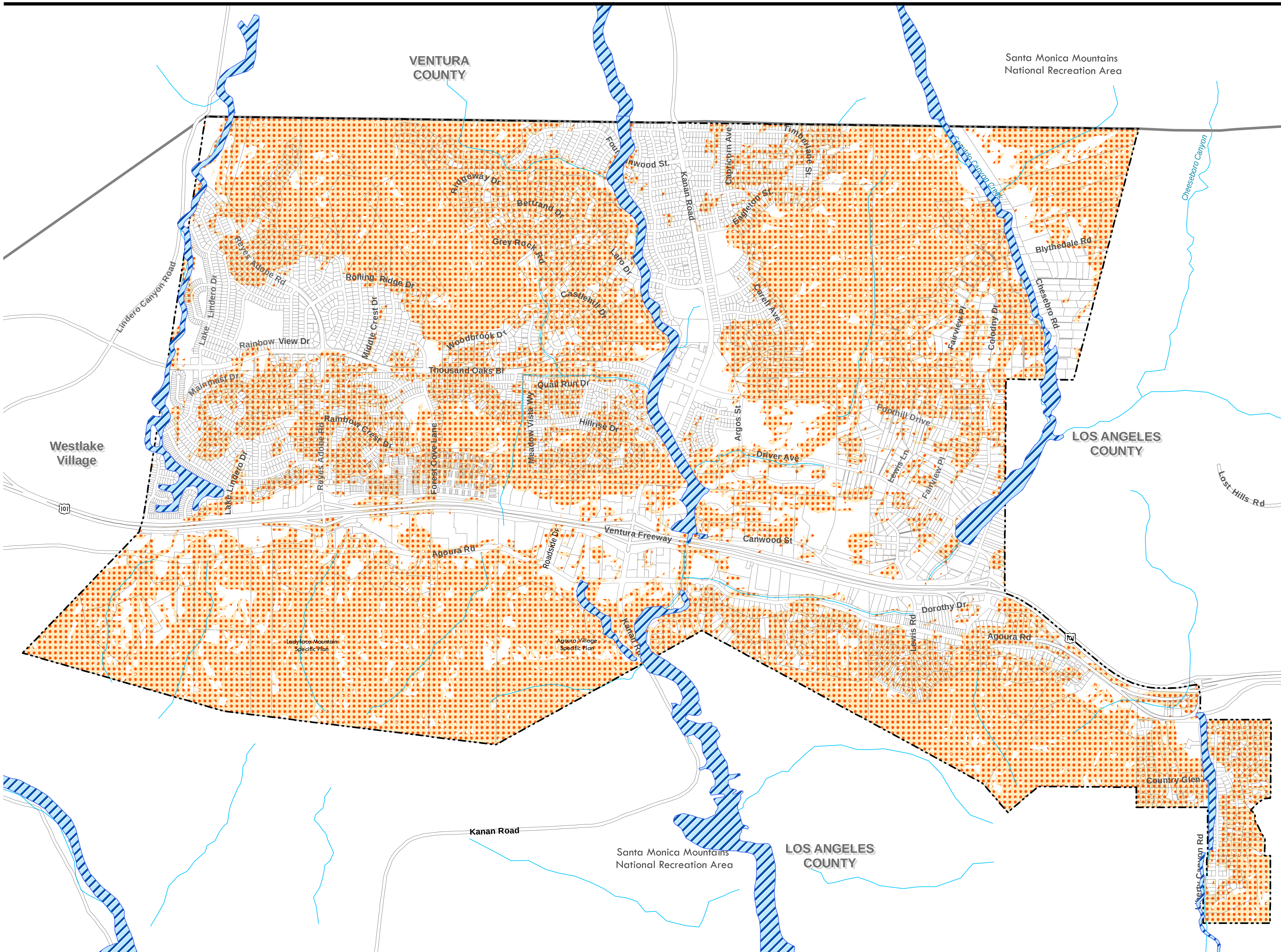
Any potential hazard in the City resulting from a manmade or natural disaster may result in the need for evacuation of few or thousands of citizens of Agoura Hills. Homeland Security has brought disaster awareness to the forefront of the minds of the community, safety officials, and City staff. The release of a hazardous material to the environment can result in adverse impacts to the environment, property, and/or human health. The significance of those impacts is dependent on the type, location, and quantity of the material released. Although hazardous material incidents can happen almost anywhere, uses such as industrial centers, where hazardous materials are used or stored, may be susceptible to a higher risk.

The City of Agoura Hills serves to keep citizens informed and prepared for any emergency, coordinates resources during an emergency, and provides relief after an emergency. The goal of Emergency Operations Center personnel is to save lives and protect property by developing programs and emergency operational capabilities in the event of a natural or man-made disaster. Planning for and responding to disasters and emergencies requires many different actions, such as evacuations, shelter set-ups for earthquakes, or preparations for power outages. All of these activities are coordinated and directed by the Emergency Operations Center. Training for residents and employees within the City continues through the Community Emergency Response Team (CERT) program (City of Agoura Hills 2009b).

The City of Agoura Hills faces multiple risks of potential hazardous material emergencies. The cities of Agoura Hills, Calabasas, Hidden Hills, Malibu, and Westlake Village comprise the Las Virgenes–Malibu Council of Governments (LVMCOG). The LVMCG have decided to combine its efforts and compose

CITY of AGOURA HILLS
General Plan Update EIR

HAZARDS



VENTURA COUNTY
Santa Monica Mountains National Recreation Area
LOS ANGELES COUNTY
Westlake Village
Lindero Canyon Road
Lake Lindero Dr
Rainbow View Dr
Middle Crest Dr
Rolling Ridge Dr
Reyes Adobe Rd
Ridgeway Dr
Bertrand Dr
Grey Rock Rd
Laro Dr
Castleview Dr
Woodbrook Dr
Thousand Oaks Bl
Quail Run Dr
Hillrise Dr
Meadow Vista Way
Forest Cove Lane
Rainbow Crest Dr
Mainmast Dr
Ventura Freeway
Agoura Rd
Roadside Dr
Kanan Rd
Kanan Road
Capricorn Ave
Timberlake St.
Eagleton St.
Carell Ave
Argos St
Driver Ave
Canwood St
Foothill Drive
Lewis Ln
Fairview Pl
Colodny Dr
Chesebro Rd
Blythedale Rd
Cheseboro Canyon
Lost Hills Rd
Dorothy Dr.
Lewis Rd
Country Glen
Ladyface Mountain Specific Plan
Agoura Village Specific Plan

Legend

Entire City is in a Very High Fire Hazard Severity Zone

- Special Flood Hazard Area 1% Annual Chance Flood (Zone A - No base flood elevations determined)
- Slopes > 10% Note: See Policy S-2.2
- City Limits
- County Boundary
- Streams

Source: City of Agoura Hills, January 2007, FEMA Q3, USGS Seamless Data Distribution System, 2009

D21377_Agoura_Hills\Hazards.mxd

Miles: 0 0.125 0.25 0.5 0.75

PBSJ

Figure 4.6-1

one multi-jurisdictional hazard mitigation plan. The LVMCG Hazard Mitigation Action Plan includes resources and information to assist residents of the region, public and private sector organizations, and others interested in participating in planning for hazards. The mitigation plan provides a list of activities that may assist the LVMCG in reducing risk and preventing loss from future hazard events. The strategies address multi-hazard issues, as well as activities for earthquakes, earth movement, flooding, terrorism, fires, and windstorms. The LACoFD has primary responsibility for dealing with a hazardous materials incident within the City of Agoura and provides emergency and non-emergency response services for hazardous materials incidents through the Health Hazardous Materials Division.

4.6.2 Regulatory Framework

Federal

Several federal agencies regulate hazardous materials. These include the Environmental Protection Agency (EPA), Department of Labor (Federal Occupational Health and Safety Administration [OSHA]), and the Department of Transportation (DOT). Applicable federal regulations are contained primarily in Titles 10, 29, 40, and 49 of the Code of Federal Regulations (CFR). In particular, Title 49 of the CFR governs the manufacture of packaging and transport containers, packing and repacking, labeling, and the marking of hazardous material transport. Some of the major federal laws and issue areas include the following statutes (and regulations promulgated there under):

- *Resources Conservation and Recovery Act* (RCRA)—hazardous waste management
- *Hazardous and Solid Waste Amendments Act* (HSWA)—hazardous waste management
- *Comprehensive Environmental Response, Compensation, and Liability Act* (CERCLA)—cleanup of contamination
- *Superfund Amendments and Reauthorization Act* (SARA)—cleanup of contamination
- *Emergency Planning and Community Right-to-Know* (SARA Title III)—business inventories and emergency response planning
- *Clean Air Act (CAA)*—Asbestos National Emission Standards for Hazardous Air Pollutants (NESHAP) rules
- *Toxic Substances Control Act (TSCA)*—Asbestos ban and phase-out rules
- Federal Regulation 49 CFR Title 14 Part 77—Establishes standards and notification requirements for objects affecting navigable airspace.

The EPA is the primary federal agency responsible for implementation and enforcement of hazardous materials regulations. In most cases, enforcement of environmental laws and regulations established at the federal level is delegated to State and local environmental regulatory agencies. The US Consumer Product Safety Commission (CPSC) has also developed bans on the use of asbestos in certain consumer products such as textured paint and wall patching compounds.

State

Primary state agencies with jurisdiction over hazardous chemical materials management include the Department of Toxic Substances Control (DTSC) and the Regional Water Quality Control Board

(RWQCB). Other state agencies involved in hazardous materials management are the Department of Industrial Relations (State OSHA implementation), state Office of Emergency Services (OES—California Accidental Release Prevention implementation), Department of Fish and Game (DFG), Air Resources Board (ARB), Department of Transportation (Caltrans), State Office of Environmental Health Hazard Assessment (OEHHA—Proposition 65 implementation), and the California Integrated Waste Management Board (CIWMB). The enforcement agencies for hazardous materials transportation regulations are the California Highway Patrol (CHP) and Caltrans. Hazardous materials waste transporters are responsible for complying with all applicable packaging, labeling, and shipping regulations.

Hazardous chemical and biohazardous materials management laws in California include the following statutes (and regulations promulgated thereunder):

- *Hazardous Materials Management Act*—business plan reporting
- *Hazardous Waste Control Act*—hazardous waste management
- *Safe Drinking Water and Toxic Enforcement Act of 1986* (Proposition 65)—release of and exposure to carcinogenic chemicals
- *Hazardous Substances Act*—cleanup of contamination
- Hazardous Waste Management Planning and Facility Siting (*Tanner Act*)—preparation of hazardous waste management plans and the siting of hazardous waste facilities
- Hazardous Materials Storage and Emergency Response—including response to hazardous materials incidents

State regulations and agencies pertaining to hazardous materials management and worker safety, which are applicable to the City and General Plan Update, are described below.

California Environmental Protection Agency

The California Environmental Protection Agency (Cal/EPA) has broad jurisdiction over hazardous materials management in the state. Within Cal/EPA, the Department of Toxic Substances Control (DTSC) has primary regulatory responsibility for hazardous waste management and cleanup. Enforcement of state regulations has been delegated to local jurisdictions that enter into agreements with DTSC for the generation, transport, and disposal of hazardous materials under the authority of the *Hazardous Waste Control Law*. Along with the DTSC, the Regional Water Quality Control Board (RWQCB), which operates under the jurisdiction of Cal/EPA, is responsible for implementing regulations pertaining to management of soil and groundwater investigation and cleanup. RWQCB regulations are contained in Title 27 of the California Code of Regulations (CCR). Additional state regulations applicable to hazardous materials are contained in Title 22 of the CCR. Title 26 of the CCR is a compilation of those sections or titles of the CCR that are applicable to hazardous materials.

Department of Toxic Substances Control (DTSC)

The DTSC regulates hazardous waste in California under the authority granted to it by the federal *Resource Conservation and Recovery Act* (RCRA) of 1976, and the *California Health and Safety Code*. Other laws that affect hazardous waste are specific to handling, storage, transportation, disposal, treatment, reduction, cleanup, and emergency planning. In addition, DTSC reviews and monitors relevant pending

legislation to ensure that it reflects the goals of the DTSC. Once legislation is adopted, the DTSC's major program areas develop implementing regulations and consistent program policies and procedures. The implementing regulations spell out what hazardous waste handlers must do to comply with the law. Under the provisions of RCRA, DTSC has the authority to implement permitting, inspection, compliance, and corrective action programs to ensure that people who manage hazardous waste follow state and federal requirements.

California's *Hazardous Waste Control Law* (HWCL), adopted in 1972, provides the general framework for the regulation of hazardous wastes within the state. The DTSC is the state's lead agency charged with the responsibility for implementing the HWCL. The HWCL provides for state regulation of existing hazardous waste facilities, which include "any structure, other appurtenances, and improvements on the land, used for treatment, transfer, storage, resource recovery, disposal, or recycling of hazardous wastes," and requires permit for, and inspection of, facilities involved in the generation and/or treatment, storage and disposal of hazardous wastes.

Tanner Act

Although there are numerous state policies that deal with hazardous waste materials, the most comprehensive is the *Tanner Act* (AB 2948) adopted in 1986. The *Tanner Act* governs the preparation of hazardous waste management plans and the siting of hazardous waste facilities within the State of California. The act also mandates the adoption of a Hazardous Waste Management Plan by every county in the state, which must include provisions to define (1) the planning process for waste management, (2) the permit process for new and expanded facilities, and (3) the appeal process to the state available for certain local decision.

Hazardous Materials Management Plans

In January 1996, Cal EPA adopted regulations implementing a "Unified Hazardous Waste and Hazardous Materials Management Regulatory Program" (Unified Program). The six program elements of the Unified Program are hazardous waste generators and hazardous waste on-site treatment, underground storage tanks, above-ground storage tanks, hazardous material release response plans and inventories, risk management and prevention program, and Uniform Fire Code hazardous materials management plans and inventories. The program is implemented at the local level by a local agency—the Certified Unified Program Agency (CUPA). The CUPA is responsible for consolidating the administration of the six program elements within its jurisdiction. The CUPA that has jurisdiction in the City of Agoura Hills is the Los Angeles County CUPA.

State and federal laws require detailed planning to ensure that hazardous materials are properly handled, used, stored, and disposed of, and, in the event that such materials are accidentally released, to prevent or to mitigate injury to health or the environment. California's Hazardous Materials Release Response Plans and Inventory Law, sometimes called the "Business Plan Act," aims to minimize the potential for accidents involving hazardous materials and to facilitate an appropriate response to possible hazardous materials emergencies. The law requires businesses that use hazardous materials to provide inventories of those materials to designated emergency response agencies, to illustrate on a diagram where the materials

are stored on site, to prepare an emergency response plan, and to train employees to use the materials safely.

California Accidental Release Prevention Program (CalARP)

The CalARP program (CCR Title 19, Division 2, Chapter 4.5) covers certain businesses that store or handle more than a certain volume of specific regulated substances at their facilities. The CalARP program regulations became effective on January 1, 1997, and include the provisions of the federal Accidental Release Prevention program (Title 40, CFR Part 68) with certain additions specific to the state pursuant to Division 20, Chapter 6.95 of the *California Health and Safety Code*.

The list of regulated substances is found in Article 8, Section 2770.5 of the CalARP program regulations. The businesses which store or handle a regulated substance in quantities exceeding the regulatory threshold are required to implement an accidental release prevention program. In addition, some businesses may be required to complete a Risk Management Plan (RMP).

An RMP is a detailed engineering analysis of the potential accident factors present at a business site and the mitigation measures that can be implemented to reduce this accident potential. The purpose of a RMP is to decrease the risk of an off-site release of a regulated substance which might harm the surrounding environment and community. An RMP includes the following components: safety information, hazard review, operating procedures, training, maintenance, compliance audits, and incident investigation. The RMP must consider the proximity of the site to sensitive populations located in schools, residential areas, general acute care hospitals, long-term health care facilities, and child day-care facilities, and must also consider the potential impact of external events such as seismic activity.

Worker and Workplace Hazardous Materials Safety

Federal and state Occupational Safety Standards are intended to enhance worker safety by reducing both physical and chemical hazards in the workplace. The California Division of Occupational Safety and Health (Cal/OSHA) is responsible for developing and enforcing workplace safety standards and assuring worker safety in the handling and use of hazardous materials. Among other requirements, Cal/OSHA obligates many businesses to prepare Injury and Illness Prevention Plans and Chemical Hygiene Plans. The Hazard Communication Standard requires that workers be informed of the hazards associated with the materials they handle. Cal/OSHA rules require provision of Material Safety Data Sheets which must be available in the workplace, and the training of employee in the proper handling of materials.

Hazardous Materials Transportation

The California Highway Patrol (CHP) and California Department of Transportation (Caltrans) enforce hazardous materials transportation regulations. Transporters of hazardous materials and waste are responsible for complying with all applicable packaging, labeling, and shipping regulations. The Office of Emergency Services (OES) also provides emergency response services involving hazardous materials incidents.

Investigation and Cleanup of Contaminated Sites

The oversight of hazardous materials release sites often involves several different agencies with often overlapping authority and jurisdiction. The DTSC and RWQCB are the two primary state agencies responsible for the regulation, investigation and cleanup of hazardous materials release sites. Air quality issues related to remediation and construction at contaminated sites are also subject to federal and state laws and regulations which are administered at the local level.

Investigation and remediation activities which have the potential for disturbing or releasing hazardous materials must comply with applicable federal, state, and local hazardous materials laws and regulations. DTSC has developed standards for the investigation of sites where hazardous materials contamination has either been identified or could exist based on current or past uses. The standards identify approaches to determine if a release of hazardous wastes/substances exists at a site and delineates the general extent of contamination; estimates the potential threat to public health and/or the environment from the release and provides an indicator of relative risk; determines if an expedited response action is required to reduce an existing or potential threat; and completes preliminary project scoping activities to determine data gaps and identifies possible remedial action strategies to form the basis for development of a site strategy.

Siting of Schools

The California Education Code (Section 17210 *et seq.*) outlines the requirements of siting school facilities near or on known or suspected hazardous materials sites, or near facilities that emit hazardous air emissions, handle hazardous or acutely hazardous materials, substances, or waste. The code requires that, prior to commencing the acquisition of property for a new school site, an environmental site investigation be completed to determine the health and safety risks (if any) associated with a site. Recent legislation and changes to the Education Code identify DTSC's role in the assessment, investigation, and cleanup of proposed school sites. All proposed school sites that will receive state funding for acquisition and/or construction must go through a comprehensive investigation and cleanup process under DTSC oversight. DTSC is required to be involved in the environmental review process to ensure that selected properties are free of contamination, or if the property is contaminated, that it is cleaned up to a level that is protective of students and faculty who will occupy the new school. All proposed school sites must be suitable for residential land use, which is DTSC's most protective standard for children.

Regional

Las Virgenes- Malibu Council of Governments Hazard Mitigation Action Plan

The cities of Agoura Hills, Calabasas, Hidden Hills, Malibu, and Westlake Village have decided to combine their efforts and participated in the composition of one multi-jurisdictional hazard mitigation plan. The five cities comprise the Las Virgenes–Malibu Council of Governments (LVMCOG). The cities are also an integral part of the Los Angeles County's Disaster Management Area B. The LVMCG Hazard Mitigation Action Plan includes resources and information to assist residents of the region, public and private sector organizations, and others interested in participating in planning for hazards. The mitigation plan provides a list of activities that may assist the LVMCG in reducing risk and preventing loss from

future hazard events. The strategies address multi-hazard issues, as well as activities for earthquakes, earth movement, flooding, terrorism, fires, and windstorms. This plan meets the requirements of the *Disaster Mitigation Act of 2000*. By preparing this plan, the LVMCG is eligible for federal mitigation funding after disasters and to apply for mitigation grants before disaster strikes.

Local

Los Angeles County Fire Department

As the Los Angeles County Certified Unified Program Agency (CUPA), the Los Angeles County Fire Department (LACoFD) has jurisdiction in all unincorporated and most incorporated areas in the county, including the City of Agoura Hills. Serving as the CUPA, LACoFD's Health Hazardous Material Division (HHMD) directly administers programs related to waste generation, hazardous materials inventories, and risk management. The HHMD's mission is to protect the public health and the environment throughout Los Angeles County from accidental releases and improper handling, storage, transportation, and disposal of hazardous materials and wastes through coordinated efforts of inspections, emergency response, enforcement, and site mitigation oversight. The Los Angeles County Department of Public Works is a participating agency under the LACoFD CUPA and implements the underground storage tank program.

Agoura Hills Municipal Code

Article III, Chapter 4 (General Hazards)

This chapter adopts Title 11, Health and Safety, Division 2, General Hazards, of the Los Angeles County Code as the general hazards ordinance of the City of Agoura Hills.

Article III, Chapter 6 (Emergency Organization)

The purpose of this chapter is to provide for the preparation and carrying out of plans for the protection of persons and property within the city in the event of an emergency; the direction of emergency organization; and the coordination of emergency functions of this chapter with all other public agencies, corporations, organizations and affected private persons.

Article VIII, Chapter 4 (Safety Assessment Placards)

This chapter establishes standard safety assessment placards to be used to indicate the condition of a building or structure for continued occupancy after any natural or manmade disaster, hazard, fire, or other situation that could affect the safe occupancy of a building or structure in the City. The building official and his or her designated deputies are hereby authorized to post the appropriate safety assessment placard at each entry point to a building or structure upon the completion of a safety assessment. The provisions of this chapter are applicable to all buildings and structures of all occupancies in the City of Agoura Hills.

4.6.3 Project Impacts and Mitigation

Analytic Method

Analysis in this section focuses on the use, disposal, transport, or management of hazardous or potentially hazardous materials resulting from development or redevelopment envisioned under the General Plan Update. Disposal options, the probability for risk of upset, and the severity of consequences to people or property associated with the increased use, handling, transport, and/or disposal of hazardous materials associated with implementation of the General Plan Update are also analyzed. This section also addresses short-term construction impacts resulting from demolition of existing (usually older) structures, as well as from disturbance of contaminated soils. Operational impacts would generally be associated with the type of uses proposed and the materials that operation of these uses would entail.

In determining the level of significance, the analysis assumes that any development under the General Plan Update would comply with relevant federal and state laws and regulations, as well as the *Agoura Hills Municipal Code*.

Thresholds of Significance

The following thresholds of significance are based on Appendix G of the 2009 CEQA Guidelines. For the purposes of this EIR, implementation of the General Plan Update would have a significant impact if it would do any of the following:

- Create a significant hazard to the public or the environment through the routine transport, use, or disposal of hazardous materials
- Create a significant hazard to the public or the environment through reasonably foreseeable upset and accident conditions involving the release of hazardous materials into the environment
- Emit hazardous emissions or handle hazardous or acutely hazardous materials, substances, or waste within one-quarter mile of an existing or proposed school
- 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
- 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
- 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
- Impair implementation of or physically interfere with an adopted emergency response plan or emergency evacuation plan

- 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 wildlands

Effects Not Found to Be Significant

Threshold	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?

The City of Agoura Hills is not located within airport land use plan or within two miles of a public use airport. Implementation of the General Plan Update would have ***no impact*** (Class III), and further analysis is not required in the EIR.

Threshold	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?

There are no existing private airstrips within the City of Agoura Hills. As a result, no safety hazard associated with location near a private airstrip would result from the General Plan Update. Consequently, implementation of the General Plan Update would have ***no impact*** (Class III), and no further analysis of this issue is required in this EIR.

Threshold	Would the project impair implementation of or physically interfere with an adopted emergency response plan or emergency evacuation plan?

Implementation of the General Plan Update would not impair implementation of or physically interfere with an adopted emergency response plan or emergency evacuation plan. *No impact* (Class III) would result.

Although the General Plan Update is not anticipated to significantly increase the residential population of the City, additional retail and commercial growth would increase the daily working population. As a result, traffic conditions could become more congested. In the event of an accident or natural disaster, the increase in traffic in the City could impede the rate of evacuation for employees and residents. Traffic could also increase response times for emergency medical or containment services. The General Plan Update goals and policies identified in Section 4.13 (Transportation/Traffic) are proposed to reduce impacts to the maximum extent possible. In any case, there are no adopted emergency response plans or emergency evacuation plans with which the General Plan Update would conflict.

The City of Agoura Hills' Emergency Operations serves to keep citizens informed and prepared for any emergency, coordinates resources during an emergency, and provides relief after an emergency. The goal of Emergency Operations Center personnel is to save lives and protect property by developing programs and emergency operational capabilities in the event of a natural or man-made disaster. Planning for and responding to disasters and emergencies requires many different actions, such as evacuations, shelter set-

ups for earthquakes, or preparations for power outages. All of these activities are coordinated and directed by the Emergency Operations Center. Training for residents and employees within the City continues through the Community Emergency Response Team (CERT) program (City of Agoura Hills 2009b).

The LVMCOG Hazard Mitigation Action Plan provides guidance for the City's response to emergency situations associated with natural and manmade disasters. The mitigation plan provides a list of activities that may assist the LVMCOG in reducing risk and preventing loss from future hazard events. The strategies address multi-hazard issues, as well as activities for earthquakes, earth movement, flooding, terrorism, fires, and windstorms.

In addition, Policy CS-6.1 (Support the Los Angeles County Fire Department) through Policy CS-6.4 (Emergency Response) of the General Plan Update are directly related to emergency services within the City. For example, Policy CS-6.1 (Support the Los Angeles County Fire Department) and Policy CS-6.2 (Coordination with Other Agencies) would coordinate with the Ventura County Fire Department and Los Angeles County Fire Department to provide assistance during emergency situations. Policy CS-6.3 (Agoura Hills CERT Response Team) requires support of the efforts of the Agoura Hills Community Emergency Response Team (CERT). Policy CS-6.4 (Emergency Response) requires periodic evaluation of emergency response to citywide disasters to determine if service improvements are needed. Implementation of the policies in the Community Safety Chapter of the General Plan Update would further ensure that there would be ***no impact*** (Class III) to the City's emergency response plan.

Less-Than-Significant Impacts

Threshold	Would the project create a significant hazard to the public or the environment through the routine transport, use, storage, or disposal of hazardous materials?

Impact 4.6-1 **Implementation of the General Plan Update could result in an increase in the overall routine transport, use, storage, and disposal of hazardous materials within the City. However, with the implementation of the General Plan Update goals and policies, and compliance with local, state, and federal regulations, hazards related to the routine transport, use, storage, or disposal of hazardous materials would be a *less-than-significant* impact (Class II).**

The General Plan Update EIR comprehensively addresses the impacts of the proposed Land Use and Circulation policies throughout the City, focusing on those community Subareas in which change is recommended, as well as throughout the City. The focused areas of potential land use change are located in two primary areas of the City: Subareas 5 and 8. The introduction of new land uses and the continued buildout of the City overall may result in the use of hazardous materials and/or the generation of hazardous materials.

While there is a possibility that new or changed land uses could result in the transport, use, storage, or disposal of hazardous materials, because the General Plan Update does not include specific development projects, it is impossible to reliably quantify the potential future amount of hazardous materials.

However, with additional development, an increase in the potential for hazards associated with hazardous materials and waste would likely occur within the City. The following analysis provides generalized information on the potential for hazards through the routine transport, use, storage, or disposal of hazardous materials associated with the future commercial and industrial uses.

Exposure of persons to hazardous materials could occur in the following manners: improper handling or use of hazardous materials or hazardous wastes during construction or operation of future developments, particularly by untrained personnel; transportation accidents; environmentally unsound disposal methods; or fire, explosion or other emergencies. The types and amounts of hazardous materials would vary according to the nature of the activity. In some cases, it is the type of hazardous material that is potentially hazardous; in others, it is the amount of hazardous material that could present a hazard.

Whether a person exposed to a hazardous substance would suffer adverse health effects depends upon a complex interaction of factors that determine the effects of exposure to hazardous materials: the exposure pathway (the route by which a hazardous material enters the body); the amount of material to which the person is exposed; the physical form (e.g., liquid, vapor) and characteristics (e.g., toxicity) of the material; the frequency and duration of exposure; and the individual's unique biological characteristics such as age, gender, weight, and general health. Adverse health effects from exposure to hazardous materials may be short-term (acute) or long-term (chronic). Acute effects can include damage to organs or systems in the body and possibly death. Chronic effects, which may result from long-term exposure to a hazardous material, can also include organ or systemic damage, but chronic effects of particular concern include birth defects, genetic damage, and cancer. Implementation of existing hazardous materials regulations were established at the state level to ensure compliance with federal regulations to reduce the risk to human health and the environment from the routine use of hazardous substances.

Improper use, storage, and/or transport of hazardous materials have the potential to adversely affect the environment and current and future residents and visitors to the area. These impacts could result from existing and future land uses in the area, the existing natural gas pipeline(s) in the area, and routine transport of hazardous materials along roadway corridors within or adjoining the project area. Agoura Hills is underlain by a network of natural gas pipelines, the largest of which is a 15-inch transmission line traversing the northwestern corner of the City. Section 4.6.2 (Regulatory Framework) identifies existing federal and state regulations in place to ensure the safe transport of hazardous materials, including natural gas, and to minimize the hazards associated with accidental release of such materials.

Although the overall quantity of hazardous materials and waste generated in the City could increase as a result of the change in Land Use and Circulation policies, all new developments that handle or use hazardous materials would be required to comply with the regulations, standards, and guidelines established by the EPA, state, Los Angeles County, and City of Agoura Hills related to storage, use, and disposal of hazardous materials. Both the federal and state governments require all businesses that handle more than a specified amount of hazardous materials to submit a business plan to a regulating agency. Specifically, any new business that meets the specified criteria must submit a full hazardous materials disclosure report that includes an inventory of the hazardous materials generated, used, stored, handled, or emitted; and emergency response plans and procedures to be used in the event of a significant or

threatened significant release of a hazardous material. The plan needs to identify the procedures to follow for immediate notification to all appropriate agencies and personnel in the event of a release, identification of local emergency medical assistance appropriate for potential accident scenarios, contact information for all company emergency coordinators of the business, a listing and location of emergency equipment at the business, an evacuation plan, and a training program for business personnel. The NBFD conducts yearly inspections of all these businesses to confirm that their business plan is in order and up to date.

In addition, policies in the Infrastructure and Community Services Chapter as well as the Community Safety Chapter of the General Plan Update would reduce the potential exposure of people and the environment to hazardous materials. For example, Policy S-5.4 (Hazardous Materials Regulations) would enforce applicable laws requiring all users, producers, and transporters of hazardous materials and wastes to clearly identify the materials that they store, use, produce, or transport, and to notify the appropriate City, county, state, and federal agencies in the event of a violation. Policy U-2.3 (Monitoring of Toxins) would monitor businesses or uses that may generate toxic or potentially hazardous substances to prevent contamination of water and wastewater. Oversight by the appropriate federal, state, and local agencies regarding compliance of new development with applicable regulations related to the handling and storage of hazardous materials would minimize the risk of the public's potential exposure to these substances. Therefore, impacts associated with hazards to the public or the environment through the routine transport, use, storage, or disposal of hazardous materials within the City would be ***less than significant*** (Class II). No mitigation measures are required.

Threshold	Would the project create a significant hazard to the public or the environment through reasonably foreseeable upset and accident conditions involving the release of hazardous materials into the environment?

Impact 4.6-2 **Implementation of the General Plan Update could result in a hazard to the public or the environment through reasonably foreseeable upset and accident conditions involving the release of hazardous materials to the environment. However, with the implementation of the General Plan Update goals and policies, and compliance with local, state, and federal regulations, hazards related to the accidental release of hazardous material into the environment would be a *less-than-significant* impact (Class II).**

Construction

As implementation of the General Plan Update would primarily result in infill and redevelopment of existing uses within the City, existing structures may need to be demolished prior to the construction of new buildings. Demolition of existing structures in the City could result in exposure of construction personnel and the public to hazardous substances such as asbestos and lead-based paints. In addition, the disturbance of soils and the demolition of existing structures could result in the exposure of construction workers or employees to health or safety risks if contaminated structures and/or soils are encountered during construction or maintenance activities. Exposure to contaminated structures or soil could occur from any of the following:

- Possible asbestos-containing materials and lead-based paints associated with the existing on-site structures, pipes, and/or debris
- Unknown contaminants that have not previously been identified

Exposure to hazardous materials during construction activities could occur through any of the following:

- Direct dermal contact with hazardous materials
- Incidental ingestion of hazardous materials (usually due to improper hygiene, when workers fail to wash their hands before eating, drinking, or smoking)
- Inhalation of airborne dust released from dried hazardous materials

While specific development projects are not associated with approval of the General Plan Update, a regulatory planning document, it is assumed that older buildings could be demolished as uses are redeveloped according to the proposed land use plan. With that activity, construction workers and nearby residents and/or workers could potentially be exposed to airborne lead-based paint dust, asbestos fibers, and/or other contaminants. In addition, there is the possibility that future development may also uncover previously undiscovered soil contamination as well as result in the release of potential contaminants that may be present in building materials (e.g., mold, lead, etc.).

Lead and Asbestos

Federal and state regulations govern the renovation and demolition of structures where materials containing lead and asbestos are present. These requirements include: SCAQMD Rules and Regulations pertaining to asbestos abatement (including Rule 1403), Construction Safety Orders 1529 (pertaining to asbestos) and 1532.1 (pertaining to lead) from Title 8 of the California Code of Regulations, Part 61, Subpart M of the Code of Federal Regulations (pertaining to asbestos), and lead exposure guidelines provided by the U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development (HUD). Asbestos and lead abatement must be performed and monitored by contractors with appropriate certifications from the State Department of Health Services. In addition, Cal/OSHA has regulations concerning the use of hazardous materials, including requirements for safety training, availability of safety equipment, hazardous materials exposure warnings, and emergency action and fire prevention plan preparation. Cal/OSHA enforces the hazard communication program regulations, which include provisions for identifying and labeling hazardous materials, describing the hazards of chemicals, and documenting employee-training programs. While specific development projects are not associated with approval of the General Plan Update, a regulatory planning document, it is assumed that older buildings where materials containing lead and asbestos are present could be demolished as part of the General Plan Update. All demolition that could result in the release of lead and/or asbestos must be conducted according to Cal/OSHA standards.

Soil and Groundwater Contamination

Unknown Contaminated Sites

Aside from the potential release of hazardous materials from demolition of existing structures within the City, grading and excavation of sites for future development in the City resulting from implementation of the General Plan Update may also expose construction workers and the public to potentially unknown hazardous substances present in the soil or groundwater. If any unidentified sources of contamination are encountered during grading or excavation, the removal activities required could pose health and safety risks such as the exposure of workers, materials handling personnel, and the public to hazardous materials or vapors. Such contamination could cause various short-term or long-term adverse health effects in persons exposed to the hazardous substances. In addition, exposure to contaminants could occur if the contaminants migrated from the contaminated zone to surrounding areas either before or after the surrounding areas were developed, or if contaminated zones were disturbed by future development at the contaminated location. If exposed to the hazardous substances, this could result in a significant hazard to the public.

Existing Contaminated Sites

Another potential hazard to construction workers and the public could involve construction activities on existing sites that are known to be contaminated. These sites represent potential health hazards, from the release of hazardous substances into the soil. However, any new development occurring on these documented hazardous materials sites would be preceded by remediation and cleanup under the supervision of the State Department of Toxic Substance Control (DTSC) before construction activities could begin.

Additionally, it is possible that old underground storage tanks (USTs) that were in use prior to permitting and record keeping requirements may be present in the City. If an unidentified UST were uncovered or disturbed during construction activities, it would be closed in place or removed. Removal activities could pose both health and safety risks, such as the exposure of workers, tank handling personnel, and the public to tank contents or vapors. Potential risks, if any, posed by USTs would be minimized by managing the tank according to existing standards as enforced and monitored by the Department of Environmental Health. The extent to which groundwater may be affected, if at all, depends on the type of contaminant, the amount released, and depth to groundwater at the time of the release. If groundwater contamination is identified, remediation activities would be required by the Los Angeles Regional Water Quality Control Board (LARWQCB) prior to the commencement of new construction activities.

Policy S-5.5 (Known Areas of Contaminations) in the Infrastructure and Community Services Chapter would require proponents of projects in known areas of contamination from oil operations or other uses to perform comprehensive soil and groundwater contamination assessments and remediate the sites, as necessary.

Implementation of, and compliance with, existing state and local regulations as well as General Plan Policy S-5.5 (Known Areas of Contamination) and compliance with existing regulations, policies would

ensure that construction workers and the general public would not be exposed to any unusual or excessive risks related to hazardous materials during construction activities. As such, impacts associated with the exposure of construction workers and the public to hazardous materials during construction activities would be ***less than significant*** (Class II). No mitigation measures are required.

Operation

The precise potential future increase in the amount of hazardous materials transported within the Agoura Hills area as a result of implementation of the General Plan Update cannot be predicted because specific development projects are not known at this time. The following discussion focuses on the potential nature and magnitude of risks associated with the accidental release of hazardous materials often used during operations of typical retail-commercial development projects.

Off-Site Transportation of Hazardous Materials

The United States Department of Transportation (USDOT) Office of Hazardous Materials Safety prescribes strict regulations for the safe transportation of hazardous materials, as described in Title 49 of the *Code of Federal Regulations*, and implemented by Title 13 of the CCR.

The transportation of hazardous materials can result in accidental spills, leaks, toxic releases, fire, or explosion. It is possible that licensed vendors could bring some hazardous materials to and from new retail-commercial sites in the Agoura Hills area as a result of the projects constructed pursuant to the General Plan Update. However, appropriate documentation for all hazardous waste that is transported in connection with specific project-site activities would be provided as required for compliance with existing hazardous materials regulations codified in Titles 8, 22, and 26 of the California Code of Regulations, and their enabling legislation set forth in Division 20, Chapter 6.95 of the *California Health and Safety Code*. In addition, specific project-site developers shall comply with all applicable Federal, state, and local laws and regulations pertaining to the transport, use, disposal, handling, and storage of hazardous waste, including but not limited to, Title 49 of the *Code of Federal Regulations*. Compliance with all applicable Federal and State laws related to the transportation of hazardous materials would reduce the likelihood and severity of accidents during transit.

Hazardous Materials Storage

Hazardous materials are required to be stored in designated areas designed to prevent accidental release to the environment. *California Building Code* (CBC) requirements prescribe safe accommodations for materials that present a moderate explosion hazard, high fire or physical hazard, or health hazards. Compliance with all applicable federal and state laws related to the storage of hazardous materials would be implemented to maximize containment (through safe handling and storage practices described above) and to provide for prompt and effective clean-up if an accidental release occurs.

Hazardous Materials Use

Hazardous materials use would present a slightly greater risk of accident than hazardous materials storage. However, for those employees who would work with hazardous materials, the amount of

hazardous materials that are handled at any one time are generally relatively small, reducing the potential consequences of an accident during handling. Further, specific project-site activities would be required to comply with federal and state laws to eliminate or reduce the consequence of hazardous materials accidents. For example, employees who would work around hazardous materials would be required to wear appropriate protective equipment, and safety equipment is routinely available in all areas where hazardous materials are used.

The LACoFD's Health Hazardous Material Division (HHMD) personnel would respond to hazardous materials incidents. Major hazardous materials accidents associated with retail-commercial uses are extremely infrequent, and additional emergency response capabilities are not anticipated to be necessary to respond to the potential incremental increase in the number of incidents that could result from implementation of the General Plan Update. Further, adherence to applicable regulations as discussed above would be required to reduce any potential consequences of a hazardous materials operational accident.

Requiring compliance with applicable laws and regulations that would reduce the risk of hazardous materials use, transportation, and handling through the implementation of established safety practices, procedures, and reporting requirements, as well as compliance with Titles 8, 22, 26, and 49 of the California Code of Regulations, and their enabling legislation set forth in Division 20, Chapter 6.95 of the *California Health and Safety Code,* would ensure that impacts associated with hazards to the public or the environment through reasonably foreseeable upset and accident conditions involving the release of hazardous materials into the environment would be ***less than significant*** (Class II). No mitigation measures are required.

Threshold	Would the project emit hazardous emissions or handle hazardous or acutely hazardous materials, substances, or waste within ¼ mile of an existing or proposed school?

Impact 4.6-3 **Implementation of the General Plan Update has the potential to emit hazardous emissions or result in the handling of hazardous or acutely hazardous materials, substances, or waste within ¼ mile of an existing or proposed school. However, adherence to local, state, and federal regulations, as well as the General Plan Update goals and policies would result in a *less-than-significant* impact (Class II).**

Under the General Plan Update, there is the potential for a construction site and/or new development to use or emit hazardous or acutely hazardous materials within ¼ mile from an existing or proposed school. Since the General Plan Update does not include any specific development projects, the type or quantity of hazardous materials used at future construction sites or by developments is unknown.

Agoura Hills is served by the Las Virgenes Unified School District (LVUSD), which includes six schools in the City of Agoura Hills: three K-5 elementary schools, one 6–8 middle school, and two 9–12 high school. Refer to Section 4.11 (Public Services). Given the wide distribution of schools in the City, it is probable that one or more schools currently exists within ¼ mile of a facility that has or could emit hazardous air emissions or handle hazardous materials or wastes. It is equally likely that future

development and redevelopment within the City may result in an increase in hazardous emissions and handling of hazardous materials and wastes within ¼ mile of an existing or proposed school. The California Education Code (Section 17210 *et seq*.) outlines the requirements of siting school facilities near or on known or suspected hazardous materials sites, or near facilities that emit hazardous air emissions, handle hazardous or acutely hazardous materials, substances, or waste.

Although hazardous materials and waste generated from future development may pose a health risk to nearby schools, all businesses that handle or have on-site transportation of hazardous materials would be required to comply with the provisions of the LACoFD Fire Code and any additional elements as required in the *California Health and Safety Code,* Division 20, Chapter 6.95, Article 1 for Business Emergency Plan. Both the federal and state governments require all businesses that handle more than a specified amount of hazardous materials to submit a business plan to a regulating agency. In addition, Policy S-5.6 (Siting of Sensitive Uses) would protect sensitive uses, such as schools, hospitals, daycare facilities, eldercare facilities, residential, and other sensitive uses from uses that generate, use or store hazardous materials. Refer to the discussions for Impacts 4.6-1 and 4.6-2 for a list of all federal, state, and local regulations required, addressing hazardous materials as well as any applicable General Plan Update policies.

Compliance with the provisions of the LACoFD Fire Code, as well as federal, state, and local regulations, and conformance with the Policy S-5.6 (Siting of Sensitive Uses) of the General Plan Update, would minimize the risks associated with the exposure of schoolchildren to hazardous materials. This impact would be ***less than significant*** (Class II). No mitigation measures are required.

Threshold	Would the project 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 create a significant hazard to the public or the environment?

Impact 4.6-4 **Implementation of the General Plan Update could place uses on a site that is included in a list of hazardous materials sites compiled pursuant to Government Code Section 65962.5; however, it would not result in a significant hazard to the public or the environment, since projects would need to adhere to General Plan Update goals and policies, as well as local, state and federal requirements for remediation and cleanup. This is a *less-than-significant* impact (Class II).**

As discussed under Section 4.6.1 (Environmental Setting), the City contains sites that have been contaminated by the release of hazardous substances into the soil or groundwater, including sites containing leaking underground storage tanks, voluntary cleanup sites, and small-quantity generators of hazardous waste. Implementation of the General Plan Update could lead to development or re-development of these sites that could create a significant hazard to the public or environment. However, current federal, state, and local regulations would require remediation and clean up of such sites before development could take place. Policy S-5.5 (Known Areas of Contamination) requires proponents of projects in known areas of contamination from oil operations or other uses to perform comprehensive soil and groundwater contamination assessments. If contamination exceeds regulatory action levels, the proponent would be required to undertake remediation procedures prior to grading and development.

Therefore, with implementation of existing state and local regulations, as well as with General Plan Policy S-5.5 (Known Areas of Contamination), impacts associated with sites listed as a hazardous material site pursuant to Government Code Section 65962.5 within the City would be ***less than significant*** (Class II). No mitigation measures are required.

Threshold	Would the project 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 wildlands?

Impact 4.6-5 **Implementation of the General Plan Update could expose people or structures to the risk of loss, injury, or death involving wildland fires; however, with the implementation of the fire hazard policies in the Community Safety Chapter of the General Plan Update, this impact would be *less than significant* (Class II).**

Implementation of the General Plan Update could lead to an increase in residential or commercial infill development projects. The City of Agoura Hills is an area that is susceptible to wildland fires. Due to the City being in susceptible areas, land development is governed by special state and local codes, and property owners are required to follow maintenance guidelines aimed at reducing the amount and continuity of the fuel (vegetation) surrounding structures.

In addition, Policy S-3.1 (Coordination with the Los Angeles County Fire Department) through Policy S-3.9 (Fuel Modification) of the General Plan Update are directly related to reducing the threat of fire hazards within the City. For example, Policy S-3.9 (Fuel Modification) would require the use of fire-resistant plant materials in all fire hazard areas and Policy S-3.3 (New Development) would require all new development to incorporate current state, county, and City fire safe building code requirements, as appropriate. Policy S-3.6 (Fire Inspection) would maintain an ongoing fire inspection program to reduce fire hazards associated with critical facilities, public assembly facilities, industrial buildings, and non-residential buildings. With implementation of the hazard reduction standards, as well as the fire hazard policies in the Community Safety Chapter of the General Plan Update, this impact resulting in the risk of loss, injury, or death involving wildland fires would be ***less than significant*** (Class II). No mitigation measures are required.

Significant and Unavoidable Impacts

There are no significant and unavoidable impacts related to hazards and hazardous materials resulting from the implementation of the General Plan Update.

Cumulative Impacts

Impacts associated with hazardous materials are often site-specific and localized. However, for purposes of this cumulative analysis, the geographic context for cumulative hazards impacts would be the City of Agoura Hills. Cumulative impacts are only addressed for those thresholds that have a project-related

impact, whether it is less than significant, significant, or significant and unavoidable. If "no impact" occurs, no cumulative analysis is provided for that threshold.

Since the General Plan Update takes into account all projected future growth and development within the City's boundaries, the impacts discussed in this section pertaining to hazardous materials also address all cumulative impacts. Compliance with all applicable federal, state, and local regulations related to hazardous materials on a project-by-project basis should ensure that the routine transport, use, or disposal of hazardous materials would not result in adverse impacts.

All demolition activities in the City involving removal or disturbance of asbestos or lead-based paint shall comply with SCAQMD Rule 1403 and OSHA Construction Safety Orders, which would ensure that impacts from this activity would be less than significant. Site-specific investigations would be conducted at sites where contaminated soils or groundwater could occur to minimize the exposure of workers and the public to hazardous substances.

The City of Agoura Hills is an area that is susceptible to wildland fires. Due to the City being in susceptible areas, land development is governed by special state and local codes, and any future development property would be required to follow maintenance guidelines aimed at reducing spreading of wildland fire. With adherence to applicable federal, state, and local regulations governing hazardous materials and compliance with the General Plan Update policies indicated below, the potential risks associated with hazardous materials and wastes would be ***less than significant*** (Class II). Their contribution would not be cumulatively considerable; as such, cumulative impacts to hazardous materials would be ***less than significant*** (Class II). No mitigation measures are required.

Mitigation Measures

With implementation of policies within the General Plan Update all impacts will be reduced to less-than-significant levels. No mitigation measures are necessary.

Final Level of Significance

With the implementation of the General Plan Update policies and application of all local, state, and federal regulations pertaining to hazards and hazardous materials, impacts would be ***less than significant*** (Class II) and no mitigation measures are required. Cumulative impacts would also be considered ***less than significant*** (Class II).

4.6.4 Draft General Plan Goals and Policies

Policies relating to hazards and hazardous materials are identified in the Infrastructure and Community Services Chapter and the Community Safety Chapter of the General Plan Update.

Chapter 3 (Infrastructure and Community Services)

Goal U-2 **Wastewater System.** A wastewater collection and treatment system that supports existing and planned development and minimizes adverse effects to water quality.

Policy U-2.3 **Monitoring of Toxins.** Continue to monitor businesses or uses that may generate toxic or potentially hazardous substances to prevent contamination of water and wastewater.

Goal U-4 **Solid Waste Collection and Disposal Operations.** Control and reduction of solid waste generation and disposal.

Policy U-4.6 **Hazardous Waste.** Continue the collection programs that provide disposal of household hazardous waste and electronic items to City residents throughout the year.

Goal CS-6 **Coordination of Fire and Emergency Services.** Coordinated fire protection and emergency medical services that support the needs of residents and businesses and maintain a safe and healthy community.

Policy CS-6.1 **Support the Los Angeles County Fire Department.** Continue to work with and support the Los Angeles County Fire Department to ensure adequate personnel, facilities, and infrastructure needs to maintain a high level of fire protection and emergency services within the City.

Policy CS-6.2 **Coordination with Other Agencies.** Coordinate with the Ventura County Fire Department and Los Angeles County Fire Department to provide assistance during emergency situations that require outside help.

Policy CS-6.3 **Agoura Hills CERT.** Support the efforts of the Agoura Hills Community Emergency Response Team (CERT).

Policy CS-6.4 **Emergency Response.** Continue to monitor emergency response to citywide disasters to determine if service improvements are needed.

Chapter 5 (Community Safety)

Goal S-1 **Protection from Flood Hazards.** Residents, workers, and visitors that are protected from flood hazards.

Policy S-1.3 **Facility Use or Storage of Hazardous Materials.** Require that all facilities storing, using, or otherwise involved with substantial quantities of on-site hazardous materials within flood zones comply with applicable standards of elevation, anchoring, and flood proofing, and that hazardous materials be stored in watertight containers.

Policy S-1.4 **SEMS Plan.** Ensure that the City's Standardized Emergency Management System (SEMS) Plan is evaluated annually and revised as required, that the current mitigation strategies addressing flood hazards are implemented, and that effective public outreach and education are included.

Goal S-3 **Protection from Fire Hazards.** Persons and property in Agoura Hills protected from urban and wildland fires.

Policy S-3.1 **Coordination with the Los Angeles County Fire Department.** Cooperate with the Los Angeles County Fire Department in periodically evaluating services and service criteria to ensure that the City continues to receive adequate fire protection and prevention services.

Policy S-3.2 **Wildfire Mitigation.** Coordinate with the Los Angeles County Fire Department on appropriate wildland fire mitigation.

Policy S-3.3 **New Development.** Continue to ensure that all new development incorporates current state, county, and City, fire safe building code requirements, as appropriate.

Policy S-3.5 **Funding.** Ensure that new developments pay a pro-rata share for increased fire protection as necessitated by that particular development.

Policy S-3.6 **Fire Inspection.** Work with the County Fire Department to ensure an ongoing fire inspection program to reduce fire hazards associated with critical facilities, public assembly facilities, industrial buildings, and nonresidential buildings.

Policy S-3.7 **SEMS Plan.** Incorporate and periodically review fire prevention and protection procedures in the City's Standardized Emergency Management Systems (SEMS) Plan.

Policy S-3.8 **Fire Department Review.** Continue review by the Los Angeles County Fire Department of proposed structures and developments within the community, as applicable, to assure adequacy of structural fire protection, access for fire fighting, water supply, and vegetation management.

Policy S-3.9 **Fuel Modification.** Ensure that new development complies with fuel modification requirements of the Los Angeles County Fire Department while protecting natural resources and habitat to the extent feasible, and encourage design that minimizes the need for fuel modification on public parklands, to the extent feasible.

Goal S-5 **Protection from Hazardous Materials.** Residents, visitors, property, and the natural environment in Agoura Hills are protected to the maximum extent feasible by the use, storage, or transport of hazardous materials.

Policy S-5.1 **Interjurisdictional Coordination.** Continue to coordinate with and support the Los Angeles County Sheriff's Department and Fire Department in carrying out inspections, emergency response, and enforcement of hazardous materials and waste compliance procedures for Agoura Hills.

Policy S-5.2 **Hazardous Waste Collection.** Conduct frequent and convenient household hazardous waste round-ups.

Policy S-5.3 **Educate Residents/Businesses.** Educate residents and businesses regarding methods to reduce or eliminate the use of

hazardous materials, including the disposal of household hazardous materials, including medications, batteries, e-waste, etc., and the use of safer nontoxic equivalents.

Policy S-5.4 **Hazardous Materials Regulation.** Work with relevant agencies regarding enforcement of applicable laws requiring all users, producers, and transporters of hazardous materials and wastes to clearly identify the materials that they store, use, produce, or transport, and to notify the appropriate county, state, and federal agencies in the event of a violation.

Policy S-5.5 **Known Areas of Contamination.** Require proponents of projects in known areas of contamination from oil operations or other uses to perform comprehensive soil and groundwater contamination assessments, and undertake remedial procedures, as appropriate, prior to grading and development.

Policy S-5.6 **Siting of Sensitive Uses.** Protect sensitive uses, such as schools, medical facilities and hospitals, daycare facilities, eldercare facilities, and residential, from significant impacts from uses that generate, use, or store hazardous materials.

Goal S-6 **Preparation for Natural or Manmade Disasters.** Effective emergency response to natural or human-induced disasters that minimize the loss of life and damage to property, and also reduce disruptions in the delivery of vital public and private services during and following a disaster.

Policy S-6.1 **The SEMS Plan.** Maintain and implement the Standardized Emergency Management System (SEMS) Plan to address disasters, such as earthquakes, flooding, hazardous material spills, epidemics, fires, extreme weather, accidents, and terrorism.

Policy S-6.2 **Post-Disaster Response.** Plan for the continued function of critical facilities following a major disaster to help prevent major problems during post-disaster response, such as evacuations, rescues, large numbers of injuries, and major cleanup operations.

Policy S-6.3 **Emergency and Disaster Preparedness Exercises.** Coordinate with Los Angeles County and other jurisdictions to conduct emergency and disaster-preparedness exercises to periodically test operational and emergency plans.

Policy S-6.4 **Mutual Aid Agreements.** Continue to participate in mutual-aid agreements to ensure adequate resources, facilities, and other support for emergency response.

Policy S-6.5 **Education Programs.** Sponsor and support educational programs regarding emergency response, disaster preparedness protocols and procedures, and disaster risk reduction for City residents and volunteers, and provide ongoing training for City staff.

4.6.5 References

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4.7 HYDROLOGY AND WATER QUALITY

This section evaluates the impacts of the General Plan Update associated with hydrology and water quality within the City of Agoura Hills. Existing data sources used to prepare this section were taken from California Department of Water Resources (DWR), California's Groundwater—Bulletin 118, 2004, the Las Virgenes–Malibu Council of Governments *Emergency Mitigation Plan*, Las Virgenes Municipal Water District *Integrated Water System Master Plan*, and the Las Virgenes Municipal Water District *2005 Urban Water Master Plan*.

No comment letters regarding hydrology and water quality were received in response to the April 30, 2009, Notice of Preparation (NOP) circulated for the General Plan Update. Full bibliographic entries for all reference materials are provided in Section 4.7.5 (References) of this section.

4.7.1 Environmental Setting

Watersheds

The City is located entirely within the Malibu Creek Watershed. The Malibu Creek Watershed is made up of 69,760 acres and is comprised of 80 percent vacant undeveloped land. According to the *Los Angeles County Watershed Management 2005*, the Malibu Creek Watershed part of the larger North Santa Monica Bay Watershed Management Area, which is the largest watershed that drains into Santa Monica Bay.

The Los Angeles County Department of Public Works (LACDPW) is the agency responsible for regional flood control within the County. The LACDPW presently owns and maintains three major flood control facilities in the City. These facilities are the Lindero Canyon Channel, the Chesebro Canyon Channel, and parts of Medea Creek. The Lindero Canyon Channel provides flood protection for the west drainage area of the City. This storm drain system consists of a backbone storm drain intercepting drainage flow from Lindero Canyon. This canyon extends into Ventura Canyon, well beyond the City of Agoura Hills' northerly boundary line.

The Chesebro Canyon Channel provides controlled drainage for the east drainage area of the City. Chesebro Canyon Channel intercepts the flows from Chesebro Canyon, and Palo Comado Canyon. Both canyons extend into Ventura Canyon, beyond the City of Agoura Hills northern boundary line. Medea Creek is partially improved between the Ventura Freeway and north to the Ventura County line. Medea Creek provides flood control protection for the central drainage area of the City. Medea Creek intercepts flow from Medea Creek Canyon, extending into Ventura County.

The California State Department of Transportation (Caltrans) also operates and maintains several drainage facilities within state operating right-of-way of the Ventura Freeway. In addition to the above drainage facilities, approximately 70 storm drains exist within the City.

Climate in the City is Mediterranean, characterized by warm summers, cool winters, and markedly seasonal rainfall. Average annual precipitation in the southern portion of the watershed is 24 inches due

to topographical influences of the Santa Monica Mountains and 14 inches in the northern portion of the watershed. Nearly all rain falls from late autumn to early spring; virtually no precipitation falls during the summer.

Surface Water Resources

There are no significant surface water resources within the City. As mentioned earlier, the Las Virgenes Municipal Water District (LVMWD) provides all water service to the City of Agoura Hills. LVMWD purchases 100 percent of its treated water from the Metropolitan Water District (MWD) of Southern California. LVMWD then retails the water to its consumers. LVMWD stores water in the Las Virgenes Reservoir, which it uses for emergency storage of imported water.

Water service deliveries to the LVMWD are based on MWD's goal to provide full service demand for supplemental water. Ability to provide full service, however, can vary depending on overall water availability to MWD from its sources. LVMWD used an average of 254,000 acre-feet of water in 2005. Over the years of normal water supply, MWD has adjusted LVMWD's allotment to allow for new connections that have come on line during the previous years to allow for additional growth. The current drought situation throughout the state has persisted for a number of years and, as a result, MWD is not receiving its normal amount of water. Due to a prolonged statewide drought, low levels of snowpack in the Sierra Nevada Mountains, as well as federal fish species protection measures that have reduced the diversion of water from the Sacramento-San Joaquin River Delta, the Governor, on June 4, 2008, declared a statewide drought and issued an Executive Order to require conservation throughout the state. Accordingly, on June 10, 2008, MWD imposed restrictions on water allotments to all of its member agencies in accordance with the Governor's order. LVMWD followed on June 24, 2008, with a Water Shortage Response Plan. LVMWD's conservation plan sets forth a number of policies aimed at lowering potable water demand below MWD's target allotment for LVMWD at 19,323 AF for the District.

Calculating the precise water demand within the City is difficult because the LVMWD serves eight local jurisdictions and reports water consumption by pressure zone. However, estimates of current water demand can be made using generalized consumption factors used in the 2007 Integrated Water System Master Plan. Total current City water demand is estimated at 3.4 million gallons per day, or 3,824 acre-feet annually. The LVMWD also maintains a fairly extensive reclaimed water supply and distribution system. Reclaimed water lines extend along Agoura Road, Lewis Road, Driver Avenue, and Thousand Oaks Boulevard to Westlake Village. However, reclaimed water availability is somewhat limited south of the Ventura Freeway in the Ladyface Mountain area of the City due to an absence of infrastructure. The LVMWD is exploring ways to increase reclaimed water. Reclaimed water is used for landscape irrigation on street medians and commercial properties. The LVMWD is in the early planning stages of developing a supplemental seasonal reclaimed water program, which includes the consideration of a reclaimed water reservoir, and subsurface pumping and storage.

Groundwater Resources

The LVMWD imports 100 percent of its water from MWD, due in part because the area lacks dependable surface water sources and has limited groundwater potential. There are no major surface

water sources within the City of Agoura Hills. Surface water is generally limited to Lindero Canyon Creek, Medea Creek, Chesebro Creek, and Palo Comado Canyon Creek and seasonal flows in other drainages. The only other surface water in the City is the small man-made Lake Lindero.

Groundwater within the City and surrounding area occurs primarily within the alluvium and the permeable, weathered, or fractured portions of the underlying bedrock formations. The groundwater is primarily unconfined, although multiple or localized, shallow perched water zones may be present. Depths to the water table, primarily in the major canyons, have ranged from about 20 feet to more than 240 feet, based on available well records.

Water Quality

Water quality is defined in terms of the physical, chemical, and biological properties of water pertinent to the use under consideration. Water received from the MWD is pre-treated and considered to be of good quality. Because the water imported by LVMWD is potable, no additional treatment is necessary, and the District does not operate a treatment facility. A filtration plant has been installed at the LVMWD's Westlake Reservoir.

Groundwater Quality

The City is underlain by groundwater in the Russell Valley Basin. Groundwater within the Russell Valley Basin is primarily calcium and sodium bicarbonate in character. Impairments to the Basin include high levels of sulfites due to the volcanic basalt that underlies the aquifer. As a result, the water quality is considered poor quality and is not used as drinking or household water uses. Two wells owned by LVMWD exist, but water is pumped from these on an extremely limited basis to compensate for summer deficiencies of recycled water used for irrigation.

Drinking Water Quality

The drinking water supply for the City is made up entirely by water imported by MWD through the State Water Project. Imported water is treated at the Jensen Filtration Plant. MWD tests and treats its water for microbial, organic, inorganic, and radioactive contaminants as well as pesticides and herbicides. MWD has also instituted measures in conjunction with the Department of Homeland Security to ensure the safety of water quality and to develop contingency plans in the event of an emergency. MWD has one of the most advanced laboratories in the country where it tests its water. MWD monitors and tests for elements not required by regulation, including perchlorate, arsenic, methyl tertiary butyl ether (MTBE), chromium VI, and others, to ensure the safest drinking water possible.

Storm Drain Infrastructure

The City's existing storm drain system and flood control facilities generally have sufficient capacity to provide developed areas with adequate protection from flooding. However, the *Master Plan of Drainage for the City of Agoura Hills* identifies localized areas of the City currently needing drainage improvements. This

plan is, however, outdated. Many of the improvements listed therein have either been completed or are considered not necessary at this time.

Flood Hazards

The City of Agoura Hills has been a participant in the National Flood Insurance Administration (NFIA) program through the Federal Emergency Management Agency (FEMA) since March of 1986. FEMA has identified and mapped those areas of Agoura Hills which are at risk due to periodic flooding. The resulting Flood Insurance Rate Map (FIRM) is designed for flood insurance and floodplain management applications. Four FEMA designated floodways flow through Agoura Hills. The lesser two floodways are Liberty Canyon and Lindero Canyon. The greater two floodways are Palo Comado Canyon and Medea Creek. These areas are generally confined to the established waterways and immediately adjacent parcels and do not expose significant amounts of development to flooding.

Flood Zones

Flooding can be a destructive natural hazard, and is a recurring event. The 100- and 500-year flood zones have been identified by the Federal Emergency Management Agency (FEMA), and include the low-lying areas within Palo Comado Canyon, Medea Creek, Lindero Canyon, Liberty Canyon, and surrounding Lake Lindero. Figure 4.6-1 (Hazards) shows the 100- and 500-year flood zones.

Seismically Induced Inundation

Seismically induced inundation, which refers to flooding that results when water retention structures fail due to an earthquake, is not expected to occur in the City. Within the City, the only water body is Lake Lindero. Other water bodies located outside of the City include Bard Reservoir (located northwest of the City), Malibou Lake (located south of the City), and Lake Sherwood, Westlake Lake, Las Virgenes Reservoir, and Lake Eleanor (all located west of the City).

The State Office of Emergency Services, since the 1971 San Fernando earthquake, has been charged with the responsibility of delineating all areas subject to inundation due to dam failure (for all those dams under state jurisdiction). The State Division of Dam Safety of the Department of Water Resources has a program to identify those dams most susceptible to seismically caused failure, mainly according to their age, type of construction, and present physical condition. These factors, and others, will be specifically investigated for seismic stability on a priority basis.

The relatively low dam/spillway which impounds the water at Lake Lindero has no operational restrictions for safety reasons, in as much as there has been no particular concern regarding its seismic stability. In addition, Lake Lindero is only a few feet deep and therefore, does not contain a significant amount of water. The level of hazard due to seismically induced inundation is low due to the circumstances described above.

Reservoirs, lakes, ponds, swimming pools, and other enclosed bodies of water are subject to potentially damaging oscillations (sloshing), called seiches. This hazard is dependent upon specific earthquake parameters (e.g., frequency of the seismic waves, distance and direction from the epicenter), as well as

site-specific design of the enclosed bodies of water, and thus difficult to predict. Areas of the City that may be vulnerable to this hazard are primarily improvements located next to waterbodies, such as Lake Lindero.

Flood Control

Various flood control measures have helped mitigate flood damage in the City. The Los Angeles County Department of Public Works is responsible for the planning and implementation of flood control facilities in Los Angeles County. The City of Agoura Hills currently administers annual maintenance contracts with Los Angeles County for Flood Control Maintenance. LACDPW requires that facilities and structures be designed for the Capital Flood, which is considered to be the runoff associated with a 50-year frequency storm. The Capital Flood level of protection applies to open channels, closed conduits, debris basins, and culverts under major and secondary highways that are constructed to intercept floodwaters from natural watercourses. All facilities in developed areas that do not fall under the Capital Flood criteria must have flood protection designed to contain the Urban Flood. The Urban Flood, as defined by LACPWD, is runoff from a 25-year frequency storm.

4.7.2 Regulatory Framework

Federal Regulations

Clean Water Act of 1972

The State Water Resources Control Board (SWRCB) and its Regional Water Quality Control Boards (RWQCBs) are responsible for enforcing water quality standards within the state. As mandated by Section 303(d) of the federal *Clean Water Act*, the RWQCB maintains and updates a list of "impaired waterbodies" that do not meet state and federal water quality standards. The state is then required to prioritize waters/watersheds for TMDL development. This information is compiled in a list and submitted to the US EPA for review and approval. This list is known as the Section 303(d) list of impaired waters. The SWRCB and RWQCBs have ongoing efforts to monitor and assess water quality, to prepare the Section 303(d) list, and to develop TMDLs.

Section 404 of the federal *Clean Water Act* authorizes USACE to issue permits for the discharge of dredged or fill material into waters of the United States, including wetlands. This section of the *Clean Water Act* has been interpreted to give the USACE jurisdiction over permitting wetlands fill.

National Flood Insurance Act

Congress acted to reduce the costs of disaster relief by passing the *National Flood Insurance Act of 1968* and the *Flood Disaster Protection Act of 1973*. The intent of these acts was to reduce the need for large, publicly funded flood control structures and disaster relief efforts by restricting development in floodplains.

FEMA administers the National Flood Insurance Program (NFIP) to provide subsidized flood insurance to communities that comply with FEMA regulations limiting development in a floodplain. FEMA issues

Federal Insurance Rate Maps (FIRMs), which delineate flood hazard zones in the community, of communities participating in the NFIP. Since the City of Agoura Hills is a participating member of the NFIP, flood insurance is available to any property owner in the City.

State Regulations

California Wetlands Conservation Policy (1993)

The goal of the California Wetlands Conservation Policy is to ensure no net loss of wetlands within the state. This policy also encourages a long-term net gain in the state's quantity, quality, and permanence of wetlands acreage and values. Interpretation of this order indicates that any developer wishing to fill in wetlands for construction of new development must perform mitigation in the form of constructed wetlands elsewhere at ratios ranging from 2:1 to 10:1. In addition to the USACE, state regulatory agencies claiming jurisdiction over wetlands include the California Department of Fish and Game (CDFG) and the SWRCB.

California Department of Fish and Game (CDFG) Lake or Streambed Alteration Program

CDFG, through provisions of the State of California Administrative Code, is empowered to issue agreements for any alteration of a river, stream, or lake where fish or wildlife resources may adversely be affected. Streams and rivers are defined by the presence of a channel bed and banks, and at least an intermittent flow of water. CDFG regulates wetland areas only to the extent that those wetlands are part of a river, stream, or lake as defined by CDFG.

Typically, wetland delineations are not performed to obtain CDFG Agreements. The reason for this is that CDFG generally includes any riparian habitat present within the jurisdictional limits of streams and lakes. Riparian habitat includes willows, mulefat, and other vegetation typically associated with the banks of a stream or lake shoreline. In most situations, wetlands associated with a stream or lake would fall within the limits of riparian habitat. Thus, defining the limits of CDFG jurisdiction based on riparian habitat will automatically include any wetland areas.

LARWQCB National Pollutant Discharge Elimination System Permit

Industrial facilities and construction sites are regulated by the State Water Resources Control Board (SWRCB) through general stormwater permits. Cities and counties are regulated through permits issued by the Regional Water Quality Control Boards (RWQCBs). Since 1990, operators of large storm drain systems, such as the City's, have been required to do the following:

- Develop a stormwater management program designed to prevent harmful pollutants from being dumped or washed by stormwater runoff, into the stormwater system, then discharged into local waterbodies
- Obtain a NPDES permit

The National Pollutant Discharge Elimination System (NPDES) permit programs in California are administered by the SWRCB and by nine regional boards that issue NPDES permits and enforce regulations within their respective region. Agoura Hills lies within the jurisdiction of the Los Angeles Region. This regional board issues permits to the Los Angeles County permittees, which includes the County of Los Angeles and the 84 incorporated cities within Los Angeles County. The County of Los Angeles is the lead administrator of the permit for the County of Los Angeles.

Pursuant to provisions within the NPDES permit, the County is required to submit Standard Urban Storm Water Mitigation Plans (SUSMPs). The SUSMPs are plans that designate best management practices (BMPs) that must be used in specified categories of development projects. The County's SUSMP's were revised in 2002.

When Los Angeles County Department of Public Works updated its 1996 NPDES permit in 2001, the update included a Storm Water Quality Management Plan (SQMP) and a Monitoring Program. The SQMP contains the following programs previously approved under Board Order No. 96-054 in the following areas:

- Public Information and Participation
- Development Planning
- Development Construction
- Public Agency Activities
- Illicit Connection/Illicit Discharge Elimination Program

A key element of the SQMP is the attainment of pollutant control to the maximum extent practicable (MEP), as provided through the SUSMPs previously adopted. The requirements are intended to reduce impacts of urban runoff and construction on local waterways and the Pacific Ocean. Each new development or redevelopment project of a specified size (for example 10 or more residences) shall include post-construction Treatment Control BMPs, at a minimum, either a volumetric or flow based treatment control design standard, or both, as identified below to mitigate (infiltrate, filter or treat) storm water runoff:

Volumetric Treatment Control BMP

(a) The 85th percentile 24-hour runoff event determined as the maximized capture storm water volume for the area; or

(b) The volume of annual runoff based on unit basin storage water quality volume, to achieve 80 percent or more volume treatment; or

(c) The volume of runoff produced from a 0.75-inch storm event, prior to its discharge to a storm water conveyance system; or

(d) The volume of runoff produced from a historical-record based reference 24-hour rainfall criterion for "treatment" (0.75-inch average for the Los Angeles County area) that achieves approximately the same reduction in pollutant loads achieved by the 85th percentile 24-hour runoff event.

Flow Based Treatment Control BMP

(a) The flow of runoff produced from a rain event equal to at least 0.2 inches per hour intensity; or

(b) The flow of runoff produced from a rain event equal to at least two times the 85th percentile hourly rainfall intensity for Los Angeles County; or

(c) The flow of runoff produced from a rain event that will result in treatment of the same portion of runoff as treated using the volumetric standards above.

As part of the Development Planning Program instituted under the 2001 MS4 NPDES permit, each permittee was required to implement, no later than February 1, 2005, a numerical criteria for peak flow control. The LACDPW adopted the following interim peak flow standards in January 2005 (LACDPW 2005).

Los Angeles Regional Water Quality Control Plan (Basin Plan)

The document for each region of the SWRCB's jurisdiction is the Water Quality Control Plan, commonly referred to as the Basin Plan. It is the foundation for the regulatory programs of each of the nine Regional Water Quality Control Boards (RWQCBs or Regional Boards). The Basin Plan documents the beneficial uses of the region's ground and surface waters, existing water quality conditions, problems, and goals, and actions by the regional board and others that are necessary to achieve and maintain water quality standards.

Reclaimed Water Regulations

Within the State of California, reclaimed water is regulated by the US EPA, SWRCB, RWQCBs, and the State Department of Health Services. The SWRCB has adopted Resolution No. 77-1, Policy with Respect to Water Reclamation in California. This policy states that the SWRCB and RWQCBs will encourage and consider or recommend for funding water reclamation projects that do not impair water rights or beneficial instream uses.

The RWQCBs implement the SWRCB's Guidelines for Regulation of Water Reclamation and issue waste discharge permits that serve to regulate the quality of reclaimed water based on stringent water quality requirements. The State Department of Health Services develops policies protecting human health and comments and advises on RWQCB permits.

Local Regulations

Los Angeles County Department of Public Works

The Los Angeles County Department of Public Works is responsible for the planning and implementation of watershed management in Los Angeles County. The City of Agoura Hills currently administers annual maintenance contracts with Los Angeles County for Street Maintenance, Sewer Maintenance, Signal Maintenance, Striping and Signing Maintenance, and Flood Control Maintenance. With respect to flooding, the LACDPW requires that facilities and structures be designed for the Capital Flood, which is considered to be the runoff associated with a 50-year frequency storm. Because of the likelihood of fires in the mountains and canyons of Los Angeles County, the Capital Flood requires that the 50-year frequency storm be modified to account for burning and debris bulking. The Capital Flood level of protection applies to open channels, closed conduits, debris basins, and culverts under major and secondary highways that are constructed to intercept floodwaters from natural watercourses. All facilities in developed areas that do not fall under the Capital Flood criteria must have flood protection designed to contain the Urban Flood. The Urban Flood, as defined by LACPWD, is runoff from a 25-year frequency storm.

Agoura Hills Floodplain Ordinance

The City's Floodplain Ordinance (Section 3706(b)(4)) of the Agoura Hills Municipal Code), prohibits an increase in flood elevation of greater than one foot as compared to the pre-development condition. Section 9511–9520 of the City Municipal Code is also applicable to potential future development within the project area as it concerns the "D" Drainageway, Floodplain, Watercourse Overlay District. This overlay district requires a conditional use permit for structures that may be placed within the floodplain subject to specific requirements. Section 9513(A)(4) prohibits encroachment, including fill, unless certified by a registered professional engineer or architect that such encroachment does not cause any increase in flood levels. Section 9514(B) prohibits encroachments that increase the 100-year flood elevation by more than one foot or that cannot be fully offset by stream improvements. As stated in Section 9511, it is contemplated that where flood control measures are provided to eliminate flood hazards, the "D" District would be removed from the protected portion of the property.

4.7.3 Project Impacts and Mitigation

Thresholds of Significance

The following thresholds of significance are based on Appendix G of the 2009 CEQA Guidelines. For the purposes of this EIR, implementation of the General Plan Update would have significant impact if it would do any of the following:

- Violate any water quality standards or waste discharge requirements
- Substantially deplete 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)
- Substantially alter the existing drainage pattern of the site or area, including through the alteration of the course of a stream or river, in a manner which would result in substantial erosion or siltation on or off site
- 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 that would result in flooding on or off site
- Create or contribute runoff water that would exceed the capacity of existing or planned stormwater drainage systems or provide substantial additional sources of polluted runoff
- Otherwise substantially degrade water quality
- Place housing within a 100-year flood hazard area as mapped on a Federal Flood Hazard Boundary or Flood Insurance Rate Map or other flood hazard delineation map
- Place within a 100-year flood hazard area structures that would impede or redirect flows
- Expose people or structures to a significant risk or loss, injury or death involving flooding, including flooding as a result of the failure of a levee or dam

- Expose people or structures to significant risk or loss, injury or death involving inundation by seiche, tsunami, or mudflow

Effects Not Found to Be Significant

There are no effects that were found to have no impacts related to hydrology and water quality from implementation of the General Plan Update.

Less-Than-Significant Impacts

Threshold	Would the proposed project violate any water quality standards or waste discharge requirements?
Threshold	Would the proposed project otherwise substantially degrade water quality?

Impact 4.7-1 **Development under the General Plan Update could result in an increase in pollutants in stormwater and wastewater. However, with compliance with General Plan Update policies and local, state, and federal regulations, water quality standards and waste discharge requirements would not be violated. Impacts would be considered *less than significant* (Class II).**

Construction

Soil disturbance would temporarily occur due to construction of future developments contemplated under the General Plan Update, due to earth-moving activities, such as excavation and trenching for foundations and utilities, soil compaction and moving, cut and fill activities, and grading. Disturbed soils are susceptible to high rates of erosion from wind and rain, resulting in sediment transport via stormwater runoff from the project area. Erosion and sedimentation affects water quality through interference with photosynthesis, oxygen exchange, and the respiration, growth, and reproduction of aquatic species. Runoff from construction sites would be typical of urban areas, and may include sediments and contaminants, such as oils, fuels, paints, and solvents. Additionally, other pollutants, such as nutrients, trace metals, and hydrocarbons, can attach to sediment and be transported to downstream drainages and ultimately into collecting waterways, contributing to degradation of water quality.

Construction materials and waste handling, and the use of construction equipment, could also result in stormwater contamination and impact water quality. Spills or leaks from heavy equipment and machinery can result in oil and grease contamination. The potential demolition of buildings to allow for redevelopment activities, and the removal of waste material during construction could also result in tracking of dust and debris and release of contaminants in existing structures. Staging areas or building sites can also be the source of pollution due to the use of paints, solvents, cleaning agents, and metals during construction. Pesticide use (including herbicides, fungicides, and rodenticides) associated with site preparation is another potential source of stormwater contamination. Larger pollutants, such as trash, debris, and organic matter could also be associated with construction activities. Water quality degradation could result in health hazards and aquatic ecosystem damage associated with bacteria, viruses, and vectors.

Sediments and contaminants may be transported throughout site runoff to downstream drainages and ultimately into the collecting waterways, and potentially into the Pacific Ocean, thereby affecting surface water and offshore water quality.

Construction activities could include road improvements and realignments, installation and realignment of utilities, demolition of existing structures for new development or replacement, new development, and the potential replacement of facilities. Areas that disturb one or more acres of land surface are subject to the Construction General Permit, 99-08-DWQ adopted by the State Water Resources Control Board (SWRCB). Preparation of a Stormwater Pollution Prevention Plan (SWPPP) is required for compliance with the NPDES General Construction Stormwater Activity Permit. Compliance with the permit would involve filing a Notice of Intent with the SWRCB and preparing and submitting a SWPPP prior to construction activities. The SWPPP must describe the site, the facility, erosion and sediment controls, runoff water quality monitoring, means of waste disposal, implementation of approved local plans, control of construction sediment and erosion control measures, maintenance responsibilities, and nonstormwater management controls. Inspection of construction sites before and after storms is required to identify stormwater discharge from the construction activity and to identify and implement controls where necessary. The Construction General Permit requirements would need to be satisfied prior to beginning construction on any project located on a site greater than one acre.

The preparation of a SWPPP requires the individual developer to implement Best Management Practices (BMPs) that are designed to specifically address the potential pollution risks that would be incurred during project construction. BMPs are selected from an approved list of documents (i.e., the California Storm Water BMP Handbook, the Caltrans Storm Water Handbook, the EPA database, and the ASCE database), which describe practices that have a proven track record of effectively preventing stormwater pollution from construction sites. BMPs appropriate for construction activities are organized into four major categories:

- **Erosion Control:** Measures that prevent erosion and keep soil particles from entering stormwater, lessening the eroded sediment that must be trapped, both during and at completion of construction
- **Sediment Control:** Feasible methods of trapping eroded sediments so as to prevent a net increase in sediment load in stormwater discharges from the site
- **Site Management:** Methods to manage the construction site and construction activities in a manner that prevents pollutants from entering stormwater, drainage systems or receiving waters
- **Materials and Waste Management:** Methods to manage construction materials and wastes that prevent their entry into stormwater, drainage systems, or receiving waters

The BMPs to be implemented for future projects allowed for in the General Plan Update would be developed as part of each SWPPP required for individual parcel construction. Implementation of the SWPPP is the responsibility of the construction site contractor with oversight and inspection by the City of Agoura Hills and the LARWQCB. Effective implementation of the specific measures in the SWPPP would comply with the General Construction Permit requirements, and therefore would not violate applicable waste discharge requirements.

General Plan Update policies, such as Policy NR-6.4 (Protect Open Space Areas and Water Resources), Policy NR-6.7 (Stormwater Quality), Policy NR-6.8 (New Development), Policy NR-1.3 (Slope Preservation), and Policy NR-4.2 (Conserve Natural Resources) are designed to minimize stormwater and erosion impacts during construction. Compliance with regulations and policies discussed above would reduce the risk of water degradation within the City from soil erosion related and construction activities. Since violations of water quality standards would be minimized, impacts to water quality from construction activities within the City would be considered ***less than significant*** (Class II). No mitigation measures are required.

Operation

Operation of future developments to occur under the General Plan Update could result in the addition of contaminants into both the stormwater runoff entering the City's drainage system and the wastewater stream entering the local wastewater collection and treatment systems. Future developments would increase the amount of impervious surfaces within the City, which could potentially increase stormwater runoff and associated contaminants that would further degrade the quality of the stormwater runoff and wastewater, including oil, grease, metals, and soil and landscaping chemicals. The National Pollutant Discharge Elimination System (NPDES) Permit regulates and ensures protection of stormwater resources, as would the following proposed General Plan policies: Policy NR-1.3 (Slope Preservation), Policy NR-6.4 (Protect Open Space Areas and Water Resources), Policy NR-6.5 (Watershed Education), Policy NR-6.6 (Cooperation with Other Agencies), Policy NR-6.7 (Stormwater Quality), Policy NR-6.8 (New Development), Policy NR-4.2 (Conserve Natural Resources), Policy NR-4.11 (Creeks and Natural Resources), Policy U-3.5 (Protection of Water Bodies), and Policy U-3.6 (Bioswales).

In addition to stormwater runoff, development under the General Plan Update could increase the potential for point discharge of pollutants. Discharge of pollutants from any point source is prohibited unless the discharge is in compliance with a NPDES Permit issued by the Regional Water Quality Control Board. The County of Los Angeles received a NPDES Permit for municipal stormwater and urban runoff in December 2001, which prohibits discharge of pollutants via stormwater discharge from private developments. To comply with the requirements of the permit, the County requires the preparation of Standard Urban Stormwater Mitigation Plan (SUSMP), which incorporates Best Management Practices (BMPs) to reduce this impact. Point sources of pollutants of greatest concern include nutrients (ammonia and nitrate), heavy metals, toxic chemicals, chlorine, and salts. Nonetheless, new development would be required to comply with current federal, state, and local requirements, including the preparation of a SUSMP, which are more stringent than what was required at the time most existing development was built. As such, redevelopment of these areas with new projects could actually improve water quality. Several General Plan Update policies would also address impacts to water quality from point sources. They include Policy NR-6.8 (New Development) and Policy U-3.5 (Protection of Water Bodies), both of which require and support the implementation of federal and state regulations, including NPDES and SUSMP.

Compliance with NPDES permits requirements and General Plan policies, including Policy NR-4.11 (Creeks and Natural Resources) and Policy NR-6.5 (Watershed Education), would reduce the risk of water degradation within the City from the operation of new developments to the maximum extent

practicable. Therefore, since violation of waste discharge requirements or water quality standards would be minimized, this impact would be considered ***less than significant*** (Class II) and no mitigation measures are required.

Threshold	Would the proposed project substantially deplete 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?

Impact 4.7-2 **Development of the General Plan Update could create additional impervious surfaces, which could interfere with groundwater recharge. However, development would not substantially deplete groundwater supplies or interfere substantially with groundwater recharge, given the anticipated minimal effects from construction and development on the groundwater basin and adherence to General Plan Update policies. Therefore, impacts would be *less than significant* (Class II).**

Construction

Construction activities would primarily occur as part of infill/redevelopment, with most new development in Subareas 4, 5, 7, and 12.

The City is located within the Russell Valley groundwater basin. The Basin is estimated to contain approximately 11,000 acre-feet (AF) of water. Surface depths to water table vary from as shallow as 20 feet along Las Virgenes Creek and in canyon bottoms to 240 feet. Pile driving, dewatering, and other construction activities that would encounter groundwater could potentially occur. While the insertion of support and foundation structures in the groundwater may reduce the storage capacity of groundwater, the displaced volume would not be substantial relative to the volume of the Basin due to the relatively shallow depth to which construction occurs. Likewise, while dewatering would remove groundwater, the volume of water removed would not likely be substantial relative to groundwater pumping for water supply. According to the 2005 UWMP, since the water in the Basin is unsuitable for potable uses, the water table has risen over the past 20 to 30 years due to a decline in groundwater pumping. Also, water used during construction for cleaning, dust control, and other uses would be nominal. Thus, construction activities would not substantially deplete groundwater supplies nor interfere substantially with groundwater recharge. This impact would be considered ***less than significant*** (Class II). No mitigation measures are required.

Operation

All development contemplated in the General Plan Update would utilize water from LVMWD, which receives its potable water from MWD. MWD water that is delivered to Agoura Hills is imported from northern California via the State Water Project and is stored in Castaic Lake. Water is then treated at the Joseph Jensen Filtration Plant in Granada Hills before being delivered to Agoura Hills. MWD also receives water from the Colorado River, which is stored in Lake Mathews and the Diamond Valley Lake Reservoir, both in Riverside County. As such, there will be no increased demand for groundwater supply

within the City under the General Plan Update, and thus the General Plan Update would not substantially deplete groundwater supplies. This impact is considered ***less than significant*** (Class II).

Intensification of development and addition of impervious surfaces as a result of implementation of the General Plan Update would not interfere with groundwater recharge. Recharge to the Basin is derived from percolation of rainfall and from irrigation runoff. Implementation of the General Plan Update would not interfere substantially with percolation flow because the areas targeted for new development are minimal, and the Basin includes significant amounts of open space that will remain undeveloped at General Plan buildout. Also, as stated above, the Russell Valley groundwater basin is not identified as a basin in overdraft condition. In addition, General Plan Update Policy NR-6.2 (Percolation) and Policy NR-6.3 (Permeable Surfaces) would help to reduce potential impacts associated with future development. Therefore, new development would not substantially affect groundwater recharge. Potential impacts to groundwater recharge would be considered ***less than significant*** (Class II). No mitigation measures are required.

Threshold	Would the proposed project substantially alter the existing drainage pattern of the site or area, including through the alteration of the course of a stream or river, in a manner that would result in substantial erosion or siltation on or off site?

Impact 4.7-3 **Development under the General Plan Update would not alter the course of a stream or river, but could alter the existing drainage pattern of portions of the City and potentially result in erosion and siltation. However, adherence to General Plan Update policies and local, state, and federal regulations would reduce impacts to *less-than-significant* (Class II) levels.**

Construction

There are no streams or rivers within the City. Therefore, alteration of these resources would not occur. General Plan Update Policy LU-3.5 (Creeks and Natural Drainages), Policy NR-4.2 (Conserve Natural Resources), and Policy NR-4.11 (Creeks and Natural Resources) would protect existing creeks and drainages from substantial alteration that might result in erosion or siltation.

Construction activities under the General Plan Update would involve stockpiling, grading, excavation, dredging, paving, and other earth-disturbing activities resulting in the alteration of existing drainage patterns. These types of activities would constitute a temporary alteration of drainage patterns. The General Plan Update includes policies designed to minimize stormwater and erosional impacts during construction. Policy NR-6.7 (Stormwater Quality) and Policy NR-6.8 (New Development) require new development applications to minimize runoff during construction. Implementation of this policy would, in turn, minimize runoff-induced erosion. Compliance with this federal regulation would minimize the potential for construction activities to alter natural drainages via the deposition of sediments. In addition, compliance with SWRCB's NPDES General Construction Activity Stormwater Permit, and NPDES MS4 regulations, would reduce the risk of short-term erosion resulting from drainage alterations during construction to ***less than significant*** (Class II) and no mitigation measures are required.

Operation

Development under the General Plan Update would result in alterations to drainage, such as changes in ground surface permeability via paving, changes in topography via grading, and excavation. All development within the City would be subject to the provisions of the City's NPDES MS4 Permit. These include the implementation of appropriate BMPs involving a range of methods that could minimize off-site erosion.

The General Plan Update includes policies designed to minimize post-construction erosional impacts. These include Policy U-3.3 (Drainage Plans and Studies), Policy U-3.5 (Protection of Water Bodies), Policy U-3.6 (Bioswales), Policy NR-1.3 (Slope Preservation), Policy NR-4.2 (Conserve Natural Resources), Policy NR-6.3 (Permeable Surfaces), Policy NR-6.4 (Protect Open Space Areas and Water Resources), Policy NR-6.5 (Watershed Education), Policy NR-6.6 (Cooperation with other Agencies), Policy NR-6.7 (Stormwater Quality), and Policy NR-6.8 (New Development). These policies require projects to minimize runoff quantity and improve quality, require implementation of BMPs, the preparation of drainage plans and studies for new development, incorporation of stormwater facilities, design of drainage facilities to minimize adverse effects on water quality, and minimization of erosion and increases in impervious areas. Implementation of these policies would reduce the volume sediment-laden runoff discharging from sites within the City. Therefore, compliance with NPDES regulations in addition to implementation of the General Plan Update policies identified in this impact analysis would reduce the risk of erosion and siltation resulting from drainage alterations during the operation of new developments to ***less than significant*** (Class II). No mitigation measures are required.

Threshold	Would the proposed project 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 that would result in flooding on or offsite?
Threshold	Would the proposed project create or contribute runoff water that would exceed the capacity of existing or planned stormwater drainage systems or provide substantial additional sources of polluted runoff?

Impact 4.7-4 **Development under the General Plan Update could alter the existing drainage pattern of the City and potentially result in increased downstream flooding through the addition of impervious surfaces, exceeding the capacity of existing or planned stormwater drainage systems, or providing substantial additional sources of polluted runoff. However, adherence to General Plan Update policies and local, state, and federal regulations would reduce impacts to *less-than-significant* (Class II) levels.**

Development of land under the General Plan Update that may currently be vacant and covered with permeable surfaces, such as bare soil or vegetation, has the potential to result in the alteration of drainage patterns or an increase in surface runoff that could cause flooding, and which may exceed the capacity of storm drain systems. The primary areas that could experience changes in drainage and increased runoff from implementation of the General Plan Update would be Subareas 4, 7, and 12, as these areas have substantial vacant land with potential drainages, and include hillsides. Nonetheless, several policies in the

General Plan Update address the issues of minimizing stormwater runoff, protecting areas from flooding, and protecting existing creeks and drainages from development or alteration. These include: Policy U-3.1 (Flood Control Planning); Policy U-3.2 (Identify Deficiencies); Policy U-3.3 (Drainage Plans and Studies); Policy U-3.4 (Conservation of Open Space Areas); Policy U-3.5 (Protection of Water Bodies); Policy U-3.6 (Bioswales); Policy S-1.2 (New Development); Policy S-1.5 (Preservation of Floodplains); Policy S-1.6 (Floodplain Requirements); Policy S-1.7 (Flood Mitigation Design); Policy NR-6.2 (Percolation); Policy NR-6.3 (Permeable Surfaces); and Policy NR-6.8 (New Development). These policies require the preparation of stormwater plans under the NPDES Permit, as well as plans to indicate how a development project would affect the watershed drainage and handle drainage on- and off-site. The policies address flood protection, improving the storm drain system overall, minimizing impervious surface areas and encouraging water percolation, as well as implementing BMPs and site design techniques to protect water bodies. Implementation of these policies would also serve to reduce the volume of runoff generated overall, and therefore, the potential for flooding in the City.

Minimal alteration of drainages and creeks is anticipated in the General Plan Update, as Policy NR-4.2 (Conserve Natural Resources), Policy NR-4.11 (Creeks and Natural Resources), and Policy LU-3.5 (Creeks and Natural Drainages) serve to protect these water bodies in their natural state while ensuring proper stormwater conveyance and flood protection of properties. However, if development results in changes to drainages and creeks, such work would be required to comply with CDFG Streambed Alteration regulations in order to maintain drainage patterns, as well as related requirements of USACE and RWQCB.

General Plan Update Policy U-3.2 (Identify Deficiencies) and Policy U-3.3 (Drainage Plans and Studies) require a development project to include the appropriate mechanisms and infrastructure to adequately manage stormwater on and off site, and for the City to identify and improve the existing storm drain system in the City.

Therefore, implementation of the General Plan Update policies, and compliance with local, state, and federal requirements, including the NPDES Permit and the CDFG Streambed Alteration regulations, would reduce the risk of flooding, minimize changes to drainage patterns, minimize any increases in runoff, and minimize impacts to the capacity of the storm drain system to a ***less-than-significant*** level. (Class II). No mitigation measures are required.

Issues of storm water quality are addressed under Impact 4.7-1.

Threshold	Would the proposed project require or result in the construction and/or expansion of new storm drain infrastructure that would cause significant environmental effects?

Impact 4.7-5 **Increases in stormwater runoff could require expansion of existing or construction of new storm drain facilities, the construction of which could result in significant environmental effects. However, compliance with General Plan Update policies and local, state, and federal regulations would reduce impacts to a *less-than-significant* (Class II) level.**

As described in Section 4.7.1 (Environmental Setting), the capacity of the existing storm drain infrastructure throughout the City is sufficient to handle existing stormwater flows. While development in many urbanized portions of the City may not substantially exceed the capacity of existing storm drain facilities, proposed development under the General Plan Update in currently vacant and underdeveloped areas would necessitate the construction of new, or the expansion of existing, storm drain infrastructure. Policies contained in the General Plan Update would ensure that new development can be adequately supported by utilities, such as storm drainage infrastructure. In adhering to Policy U-3.3 (Drainage Plans and Studies), which requires developers to submit a watershed drainage plan and study, expansion of existing or construction of new facilities would take place prior to development. To further ensure new facilities are provided, the Infrastructure and Community Services Chapter in the General Plan Update specifies that the City will identify any existing deficiencies (Policy U-3.2 [Identify Deficiencies]) and work with the Los Angeles County Flood Control District Flood Control to assure that adequate facilities are provided to serve permitted land use development (Policy U-3.1 [Flood Control Planning]). As part of this process, the adequacy of facilities serving underdeveloped areas will be evaluated to determine future needs.

Storm drain facility upgrades could result in short-term construction impacts due to earth trenching and other earth moving activities. However, the other construction impacts anticipated to result from infrastructure and overall General Plan Update implementation are comprehensively analyzed in Section 4.2 (Air Quality), Section 4.3 (Biological Resources), Section 4.9 (Noise), and Section 4.13 (Transportation/Traffic) of this EIR. It is not anticipated that construction of necessary storm drainage upgrades in and of itself would result in impacts separate from the General Plan Update. Nonetheless, upgrades, expansion, and construction of necessary utilities to accommodate new development would be subject to project-specific environmental review as such infrastructure projects are proposed in the future. Impacts are therefore considered ***less than significant*** (Class II). No mitigation measures are required.

Threshold	Would the proposed project place housing within a 100-year flood hazard area as mapped on a Federal Flood Hazard Boundary or Flood Insurance Rate Map or other flood hazard delineation?

Impact 4.7-6 **Development under the General Plan Update could place housing within a 100-year flood zone. However, adherence to General Plan Update policies and local, state, and federal regulations would reduce impacts to *less-than-significant* (Class II) levels.**

As shown in Figure 4.6-1 (Hazards), the 100-year flood zone is primarily contained within Lindero Canyon, Liberty Canyon, Palo Comado Canyon, and Medea Creek and adjacent to Lake Lindero. Specifically, Subareas 1, 2, and 7 lie within a 100-year flood zone. However, of these Subareas, residential uses are proposed only in Subarea 7. Some existing residential uses are located within the 100-year flood zone. A significant portion of the flood zone is located within open space areas of the City or in low-density residential or commercial areas.

The Community Safety Chapter of the General Plan Update aims to protect human life and public and private property from the risks of flooding. The Flood Hazards section includes flood policies that would achieve this aim through upgraded storm drains commensurate with new development that allow for safe conveyance of increased runoff, continuation of the City's Standardized Emergency Management System (SEMS), preservation of flood plains, and design and construction requirements within flood plains to ensure public safety. These policies include Policy S-1.2 (New Development), Policy S-1.4 (SEMS Plan), Policy S-1.5 (Preservation of Flood Plains), Policy S-1.6 (Flood Plain Requirements), and Policy S-1.7 (Flood Mitigation Design).

Furthermore, future development contemplated in the General Plan Update would be subject to the City's Floodplain Ordinance as well as FEMA requirements. These regulations require that all structure located within the floodplain be flood-proofed, as appropriate, to ensure that encroachment would not cause any increase in downstream or upstream flood levels and that the structures would be built at elevations above the floodplain. In addition, compliance with the Flood Mitigation Strategies set forth in the Las Virgenes–Malibu Council of Governments *Hazard Mitigation Plan* would further reduce any potential impacts.

Therefore, with compliance with General Plan Update policies, and local, state, and federal regulations, impacts of flood hazards to housing developed under the General Plan Update would be considered ***less than significant*** (Class II). No mitigation measures are required.

Threshold	Would the proposed project place within a 100-year flood hazard area structures which would impede or redirect flows?

Impact 4.7-7 **Development under the General Plan Update could place structures within a 100-year flood zone, but not in a manner that would substantially impede or redirect flows. Adherence to General Plan Update policies and local, state, and federal regulations would reduce impacts to *less-than-significant* (Class II) levels.**

Development under the General Plan Update could include structures that could potentially be placed in a 100-year flood zone. Specifically, portions of Subareas 1, 2, and 7 targeted for development under the General Plan Update lie within the 100-year flood zone. Also, existing land uses and structures are located within the 100-year flood zone. A significant portion of the flood zone is located within open space areas of the City or in low-density residential or commercial areas. Intensification of development could alter existing passages through which floodwaters flow, particularly during a 100-year storm event where rainfall may exceed the capacity of storm drain systems.

Floodwaters that exceed the capacities of existing and improved drainages would travel by overland flow on any available grounds surface, such as streets, lawns, and spaces between buildings. Intensification of development would increase the area of land covered by structures, leaving less available ground surface area over which flood flows could travel. However, building density under the General Plan Update is not anticipated to increase to such an extent that would substantially increase obstructions to flood flows. Much of the development would occur on similar building footprints as existing development, leaving similar areas for floodwaters to move as exists now.

A water displacement analysis would be required to investigate the effect of new structural development or fill on flooding depth, pursuant to FEMA regulation 44 CFR 60.3(c)(10). It applies to areas located within specific FEMA Flood Zone Areas (Zones AE, A1-30, AH, AO, VE, and V1-30).

Preparation of water displacement analyses, where appropriate, compliance with other FEMA regulations, and the implementation of Policy S-1.4 (SEMS Plan), Policy S-1.5 ((Preservation of Flood Plains), Policy S-1.6 (Flood Plain Requirements), and Policy S-1.7 (Flood Mitigation Design) would ensure that implementation of the General Plan Update development would not substantially impede or redirect flows. Impacts would be considered ***less than significant*** (Class II). No mitigation measures are required.

Threshold	Would the proposed project expose people or structures to a significant risk or loss, injury or death involving flooding, including flooding as a result of a levee or dam?
Threshold	Would the proposed project expose people or structures to significant risk or loss, injury or death involving inundation by seiche, tsunami, or mudflow?

Impact 4.7-8 **Development under the General Plan Update could expose people and structures to flood risks. However, adherence to General Plan Update policies and local, state, and federal regulations would reduce impacts to *less-than-significant* (Class II) levels.**

Seismically induced inundation, which refers to flooding that results when water retention structures fail due to an earthquake, is not expected to occur in or around the City. As described in Section 4.7.1 (Environmental Setting), within the City the only large water body is Lake Lindero. Other water bodies located outside of the City include Bard Reservoir (located northwest of the City), Malibou Lake (located south of the City), and Lake Sherwood, Westlake Lake, Las Virgenes Reservoir, and Lake Eleanor (all located west of the City). However, according to the *Hazard Mitigation Plan* prepared and implemented by the Las Virgenes–Malibu Council of Governments, the region contains a total of 27 reservoirs but only contains two dams which include: Las Virgenes Reservoir located in Westlake Village and Reservoir #2 Dam located in Calabasas.

The State Office of Emergency Services, since the 1971 San Fernando earthquake, has been charged with the responsibility of delineating all areas subject to inundation due to dam failure (for all those dams under state jurisdiction). The State Division of Dam Safety of the Department of Water Resources has a program to identify those dams most susceptible to seismically caused failure, mainly according to their age, type of construction, and present physical condition. These factors, and others, will be specifically investigated for seismic stability on a priority basis. The relatively low dam/spillway which impounds the water at Lake Lindero, likewise, has no operational restrictions for safety reasons; inasmuch as there has been no particular concern regarding its seismic stability. Furthermore, Lake Lindero is only a few feet deep and does not contain a substantial volume of water.

Reservoirs, lakes, ponds, swimming pools, and other enclosed bodies of water are subject to potentially damaging oscillations (sloshing) called seiches. This hazard is dependent upon specific earthquake

parameters (e.g., frequency of the seismic waves, distance and direction from the epicenter), as well as site-specific design of the enclosed bodies of water, and thus difficult to predict. Areas of the City that may be vulnerable to this hazard are primarily improvements located next to waterbodies, such as Lake Lindero. However, development currently exists around Lake Lindero and no new development is contemplated in this area as a result of the General Plan Update.

The probability of dam failure is low. Development under the General Plan Update would not increase the risk of dam failure, although it would increase the number of persons and amount of development exposed to this hazard. Dam failure could also result due to a seismic event. Implementation of the flood protection policies contained in the General Plan Update, and existing Floodplain Ordinance, would minimize the impact of flooding. These protective measures would also reduce impacts from flooding as a result of dam failure to the extent feasible. Thus, risks associated with flooding, including dam failure inundation, would be considered ***less than significant*** (Class II) in the City. No mitigation is required.

The potential risks associated with inundation by tsunami are minimal due to the City's elevation and distance from the Pacific Ocean. In addition, there are no water bodies of significance size or elevation that could cause loss due to seiche. Potential risks from mudflow (i.e., mudslide, debris flow that occur where large portions of slopes fail due to excessive water and are carried downstream) are possible, as slopes of 10 percent or more exist throughout the City. Refer to Figure 4.6-1 (Hazards) regarding slopes greater than 10 percent. Prolonged rainfall during certain storm events would saturate and could eventually loosen soil, resulting in slope failure.

However, implementation of the flood protection policies contained in the Community Safety Chapter of the General Plan Update (see those listed in the discussion of Impact 4.7-6), would help minimize the impact of mudflows and consequent risk or loss to persons or structures. Also, all new development in the City occurring in areas that are subject to flood hazards would be required to comply with the flood damage prevention provisions of the City's Floodplain Ordinance and the *Hazard Mitigation Plan* for the region, as well as other local, state, and federal regulations. Thus, risks associated with inundation by seiche, tsunami, and mudflow are considered ***less than significant*** (Class II). No mitigation measures are required.

Significant and Unavoidable Impacts

There are no significant and unavoidable impacts related to hydrology and water quality from implementation of the General Plan Update.

Cumulative Impacts

Water Quality

The geographic context for the analysis of cumulative impacts associated with water quality is the area covered by the Malibu Creek Watershed. Buildout of the General Plan Update, in combination with all other development that would occur within the watershed, would involve construction activities and new development from which runoff would discharge into waterways. This could result in increases in

stormwater runoff from new imperious surfaces, and reduction in groundwater recharge areas. Construction of new development throughout the watershed could result in the erosion of soil, thereby cumulatively degrading water quality within the watershed. In addition, the increase in impermeable surfaces and more intensive land uses within the watershed resulting from future development may also adversely affect water quality by increasing the amount of stormwater runoff and common urban contaminants entering the storm drain system. However, new development would be required to comply with existing regulations regarding construction practices that minimize risks of erosion and runoff. Among the various local, state, and federal regulations are the applicable provisions of Best Management Practices, compliance with appropriate grading permits, and NPDES permits. This would minimize degradation of water quality at individual project construction sites. Compliance by the City with applicable SWRCB and RWQCB regulations would ensure that water quality is maintained to the maximum extent practicable for new development under the General Plan Update. In addition, the following policies would help to reduce impacts related to water quality: Policy NR-6.4 (Protect Open Space Areas and Water Resources), Policy NR-6.7 (Stormwater Quality), Policy NR-6.8 (New Development), Policy NR-1.3 (Slope Preservation), and Policy NR-4.2 (Conserve Natural Resources), Policy NR-6.8 (New Development) and Policy U-3.5 (Protection of Water Bodies). Thus, impacts associated with water quality from implementation of the General Plan Update would be considered ***less than significant*** (Class II) and the General Plan Update would not have a cumulatively considerable contribution to the cumulative effects related to water quality. No mitigation measures are required.

Groundwater

The geographic context for the analysis of cumulative impacts associated with groundwater is the area underlain by the Russell Valley Basin, as described in Section 4.7.1 (Environmental Setting). Continued development within the Basin would not interfere with groundwater recharge because, according to the 2005 UWMP, the Basin is not in over draught condition and has risen substantially since the 1970s when pumping of the Basin went into sharp decline. New development occurring in vacant areas that currently serve as groundwater recharge areas would not significantly reduce recharge potential within the watershed. In addition, General Plan Update Policy NR-6.2 (Percolation) and Policy NR-6.3 (Permeable Surfaces) would be implemented. The potential impacts to groundwater recharge in the City would be considered ***less than significant*** (Class II) from implementation of the General Plan Update. No mitigation measures are required.

Storm Drainage

The existing storm drain system in the City is currently owned and operated by the City, while the Los Angeles County Flood Control District is responsible for all regional drainage facilities within the County. Since some local storm drain facilities within the City ultimately flow into the County facilities, the geographic context for cumulative impacts is the County. Buildout of the General Plan Update, in combination with all other development that would occur within the County, would involve development that would increase stormwater runoff from new impervious surfaces. This increased development would require the construction of new, or expansion of existing, storm drain facilities; however, all new development would be required to comply with existing state and local regulations regarding construction and operation practices that minimize the amount of stormwater runoff that

enters the storm drain system. In addition, the General Plan Update policies require that adequate storm water conveyance and storage control facilities be maintained and/or constructed for all development. These include: Policy U-3.3 (Drainage Plans and Studies), Policy U-3.5 (Protection of Water Bodies), Policy U-3.6 (Bioswales), Policy NR-1.3 (Slope Preservation), Policy NR-4.2 (Conserve Natural Resources), Policy NR-6.3 (Permeable Surfaces), Policy NR-6.4 (Protect Open Space Areas and Water Resources), Policy NR-6.5 (Watershed Education), Policy NR-6.6 (Cooperation with other Agencies), Policy NR-6.7 (Stormwater Quality), and Policy NR-6-8 (New Development). As such, the project's contribution to the cumulative effects related to storm drains as well as the overall cumulative impact within the County would be considered ***less than significant*** (Class II). No mitigation measures are required.

Flood Hazards

The geographic context for the analysis of cumulative impacts associated with flooding hazards is the area covered by the Malibu Creek Watershed, as described in Section 4.7.1 (Environmental Setting). Cumulative growth and development throughout the watershed could result in the introduction of new structures and impervious surfaces that would increase stormwater runoff, which could subsequently lead to increased flood hazards. However, it is anticipated that applicable state and local regulations would prevent the placement of housing and structures in 100-year flood hazard areas unless flood control improvements are made to reduce the risk from 100-year floods. Within Los Angeles County, for instance, future development that could potentially affect floodwater conveyance, which in turn could adversely affect public health and general safety, would be subject to the requirements of the Los Angeles County FCD, Los Angeles County General Plan policies related to flood hazards. These include: Policy U-3.1 (Flood Control Planning); Policy U-3.2 (Identify Deficiencies); Policy U-3.3 (Drainage Plans and Studies); Policy U-3.4 (Conservation of Open Space Areas); Policy U-3.5 (Protection of Water Bodies); Policy U-3.6 (Bioswales); Policy S-1.2 (New Development); Policy S-1.5 (Preservation of Floodplains); Policy S-1.6 (Floodplain Requirements); Policy S-1.7 (Flood Mitigation Design); Policy NR-6.2 (Percolation); Policy NR-6.3 (Permeable Surfaces); and Policy NR-6.8 (New Development). As such, this cumulative impact would be considered ***less than significant*** (Class II). The proposed project's contribution to cumulative impacts associated with flood hazards in the Malibu Creek Watershed would be considered Class II, ***less than significant***. No mitigation measures are required.

Cumulative development in the watershed would not expose people or structures to a significant risk of loss, injury, or death involving flooding or inundation. Although cumulative development could potentially result in increases in the number of people living in potential dam, levee, seiche, tsunami, and mudflow inundation areas, the occurrence of these events at a catastrophic level is considered remote. In addition, it is anticipated that applicable policies related to inundation hazards from the general plans of each jurisdiction encompassed by the watershed would ensure that development would be protected against potential structural failures and severe weather conditions. Thus, this cumulative impact would be ***less than significant***. Therefore, the contribution of the General Plan Update to cumulative impacts associated with the potential failure of a dam or levee would be considered ***less than significant*** (Class II). No mitigation measures are required.

Mitigation Measures

There are no feasible mitigation measures that would further reduce the less-than-significant impacts identified for hydrology.

Final Level of Significance

With the implementation of the General Plan Update policies and application of all local, state, and federal regulations pertaining to hydrology, the proposed project would result in a ***less-than-significant*** impact (Class II). The proposed project would result in a ***less-than-significant*** cumulative impact (Class II).

4.7.4 Draft General Plan Goals and Policies

The Community Safety, Infrastructure and Community Services, and Natural Resources Chapters of the General Plan Update include policies that would address issues related to hydrology and water quality. The policies that are applicable to the project are included below.

Policy S-1.2 **New Development.** Require new development to upgrade storm drains to handle the increased runoff generated from the development sites.

Policy S-1.4 **SEMS Plan.** Ensure that the City's Standardized Emergency Management System (SEMS) Plan is evaluated annually and revised as required, that the current mitigation strategies addressing flood hazards are implemented, and that effective public outreach and education are included.

Policy S-1.5 **Preservation of Flood Plains.** Preservation of flood plains as open space shall be considered, as feasible, as an alternative to channelization.

Policy S-1.6 **Floodplain Requirements.** Regulate development within floodplains in accordance with the County, state and federal requirements, and maintain the City's eligibility under the National Flood Insurance Program.

Policy S-1.7 **Flood Mitigation Design.** Require that new development incorporates sufficient measures to mitigate flood hazards, including the design of on-site drainage systems linking with citywide storm drainage, grading of the site so that runoff does not impact adjacent properties or structures on the site, and elevation of any structures above any flooding elevation.

Policy NR-1.3 **Slope Preservation.** Require that uses involving grading or other alteration of land maintain the natural topographic character and ensure that downstream properties and watercourses are not adversely affected by siltation or runoff.

Policy NR-4.2 **Conserve Natural Resources.** Continue to enforce the ordinances for new and existing development in the City's hillside areas, such that development maintains an appropriate distance from ridgelines, creek and natural drainage beds and banks, oak trees, and other environmental resources, to prevent erosion, preserve viewsheds, and protect the natural contours and resources of the land.

Policy NR-4.11 **Creeks and Natural Resources.** Support the restoration of creeks and other natural resources. Activities include creek cleanup, erosion and urban runoff control, and weeding of non-native plants.

Policy NR-6.2 **Percolation.** Design trails, landscaped areas, and other open areas in development projects to capture stormwater runoff and percolate into the groundwater basin, to the extent feasible.

Policy NR-6.3 **Permeable Surfaces.** Encourage maximizing permeable surfaces for new or substantially renovated public, institutional, residential, and commercial projects.

Policy NR-6.4 **Protect Open Space Areas and Water Resources.** Conserve undeveloped open space areas and drainage courses and channels for the purpose of protecting water resources in the City's watershed. For construction and post-development runoff, control sources of pollutants and improve and maintain urban runoff water quality through stormwater protection measures consistent with the City's National Pollution Discharge Elimination System (NPDES) Permit.

Policy NR-6.5 **Watershed Education.** Participate in regional and inter-agency watershed awareness and water quality educational programs for community organizations, the public, and other appropriate groups.

Policy NR-6.6 **Cooperation with other Agencies.** Coordinate and collaborate with other jurisdictions and regional agencies in the watershed to address water quality issues of regional or local importance.

Policy NR-6.7 **Stormwater Quality.** The City shall control sources of pollutants and improve and maintain urban runoff water quality through stormwater protection measures consistent with the City's National Pollution Discharge Elimination System (NPDES) Permit.

Policy NR-6.8 **New Development.** The City shall require new development to protect the quality of waterbodies and natural drainage systems through site design, stormwater treatment, and best management practices (BMPs) consistent with the City's NPDES Permit.

Policy U-3.1 **Flood Control Planning.** Coordinate flood control planning with the Los Angeles County Flood Control District.

Policy U-3.2 **Identify Deficiencies.** Improve the existing storm drainage system by correcting identified deficiencies.

Policy U-3.3 **Drainage Plans and Studies.** Require developers to prepare watershed drainage plans and studies for proposed developments that define needed drainage improvements per City standards.

Policy U-3.4 **Conservation of Open Space Areas.** Conserve undeveloped, designated open space areas and drainage courses to the extent feasible for the purpose of protecting water resources in the City's watersheds.

Policy U-3.5 **Protection of Water Bodies.** Require new development to protect the quality of water bodies and natural drainage systems through site design, stormwater treatment, and best management practices (BMPs) consistent with the City's NPDES permit.

Policy U-3.6 **Bioswales.** Encourage the construction of bioswales in new development to minimize storm water run-off.

Policy LU-3.5 **Creeks and Natural Drainages.** Maintain the form and health of resources and habitat in the City's natural drainages. Explore restoration of those that have been degraded or channelized, such as Medea Creek and Chesebro Creek, as feasible to maintain storm water conveyance and property protection requirements.

Impacts and Mitigation Measures

No mitigation measures are necessary, as the General Plan Update policies fully mitigate the impacts.

Level of Significance After Policies/Mitigation Measures

Impacts associated with hydrology and water quality within the Planning Area would be ***less than significant*** (Class II) upon implementation of the identified General Plan Update policies. Cumulative impacts would also be considered ***less than significant*** (Class II).

4.7.5 References

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