

PART 3: ENVIRONMENTAL IMPACT REPORT

CEQA Process

Pursuant to the California Environmental Quality Act (CEQA), General Plans are subject to CEQA. The City prepared a Notice of Preparation (NOP) of a Program Environmental Impact Report (EIR) for the General Plan Update, which was mailed to all relevant local, state and federal agencies on April 28, 2009. The agencies had 30 days from the date of receipt of the NOP to provide responses to the NOP and inform the City of any environmental issues in the purview of each agency that should be addressed in the EIR. The NOP was also published in the *Acorn* on April 23, 2009. On May 21, 2009, a public scoping meeting on the NOP was held by the Planning Commission. The NOP and comments received are included in Appendix A of the Final EIR.

While the public comments were more germane to the GPU policies and goals, rather than the scope of the EIR, staff would note that both the Infrastructure and Community Services Element and the Natural Resources Element address the importance of trail linkages and contain several trail goals and policies, as well as refer the reader to the recently adopted Citywide Trails and Pathways Master Plan.

It is the nature of General Plan EIRs that they are often prepared concurrently with the GPU, although the GPU preparation is at least slightly ahead of the EIR. This is because it is preferable to have goals and policies that address potential environmental concerns proactively, as opposed to relying on standard CEQA mitigation measures, reacting to a potential impact. In this way, General Plans attempt to be “self-mitigating” to the extent possible.

The Draft EIR was completed in December 2009. A Notice of Availability/Notice of Intent to Adopt the EIR was prepared and published on December 10, 2009 in the *Acorn* and distributed to about 300 agencies, individuals, and groups. The document was posted on the City’s website, and hardcopies were made available for review at City Hall and the Agoura Hills Library. The CEQA-mandated 45-day public comment period began on December 10, 2009 and ended on January 25, 2010. Within this comment period, on January 21, 2010, the Planning Commission held a public hearing to receive oral comments on the adequacy of the Draft EIR. One person spoke at the hearing.

By the close of the public comment period, ten letters were received on the Draft EIR. City staff reviewed each comment submitted to the City and prepared a written response to each comment as part of the Responses to Comments required by CEQA. Oral comments received at the January 21, 2010 hearing were also addressed with written responses. The responses to the individual comments note where changes to the EIR text have occurred, if applicable. The Final EIR document, dated February 2010, consists of the Draft EIR; all of the public comments received on the Draft EIR, and responses to the items raised in these letters; technical appendices; and the Mitigation Monitoring and Reporting Program that ensures proper implementation of the required mitigation measures. Any necessary changes to the EIR based on the public comments have been incorporated into the Final EIR text, and are also listed

separately in Chapter 9 of the FEIR. The main change is a clarification. Kanan Road, south of Agoura Road was inadvertently omitted from the GPU and DEIR as a roadway with valuable scenic resources recognized by the City, and is now included. The revisions made to the EIR and the GPU as a result of the public comments are minor and do not constitute significant new information added to the documents as defined in the CEQA Guidelines Section 15088.5. Therefore, recirculation of the EIR was not required per CEQA.

On February 2, 2010, a copy of the full set of comments and the corresponding responses was mailed to each individual, agency or entity that provided comments on the Draft EIR, along with information on how to obtain a full copy of the Final EIR. A copy of the Final EIR is available online on the City’s website, as well as available at the Planning Counter at City Hall and at the Agoura Hills Library. Notices of this public hearing and availability of the Final EIR and GPU were posted at City Hall, the City Recreation Center, and the Agoura Hills Library; published in the *Acorn*; and mailed to about 300 individuals, agencies and groups. For informational purposes, the Public Resources Code Section 21092.5(a) requires that the City provide responses to all comments received at least ten days prior to certifying the Final EIR.

Content of EIR

A Program EIR was prepared for the GPU in accordance with CEQA Guidelines. A Program EIR is typically prepared when the project involves a series of actions that can be characterized as one large project, and in which the actions are closely related either geographically or temporally. Program EIRs generally analyze broad environmental effects of the project with the acknowledgement that site-specific environmental review may be required for particular aspects or portions of the project at a later date.

The EIR assessed the potential impacts of implementing the GPU to the following environmental issue areas.

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

Note that in many cases, approval of the GPU alone would not trigger environmental impacts, but that specific development projects that are proposed in the future under the GPU may. As these individual development projects are proposed, a specific CEQA analysis would be necessary, separate from this Program EIR. In some cases dealing with construction and project-related impacts, because specific development activity that may occur in the future is not known at this time, the EIR conservatively assumes that potentially significant impacts may result, even though that may not ultimately be the case.

The EIR project impacts are divided into three categories:

- Class I (Significant and Unavoidable) SU
- Class II (Less Than Significant, with or without Mitigation Measures) LTS

- Class III (No Impact) NI

These impacts are briefly listed in the Executive Summary of the EIR (Table 2-1). Class II means that an impact is either less than significant on its own, or is potentially significant, but with certain identified measures, can be mitigated to a level of insignificance. In this EIR, there are no impacts that are potentially significant, but with the incorporation of a mitigation measure, result in a less than significant impact. If an impact would still be significant, even with application of the mitigation measures, or there are no feasible mitigation measures to be employed, then the impact is “significant and unavoidable” (Class I) For Class I impacts, a Statement of Overriding Considerations (SOC) per CEQA Guidelines Section 15093 is required. A SOC is a written statement explaining why an agency (City) is willing to accept each significant effect, after weighing the specific benefits and environmental disadvantages associated with the project.

A listing of the Class I impacts in the EIR is provided below. These are the anticipated impacts, even with incorporation of the numerous GPU goals and policies to protect the environment. If there are feasible mitigation measures that have been identified in the EIR, this is also noted in the table. Nonetheless, the impacts still remain significant, unavoidable. If the impact pertains to the effects of the General Plan only, it is designated as “project specific.” If the impact pertains to the effects of the General Plan within a larger regional context, it is designated “cumulative.”

Item	Impact	MM Applied?	Impact Before MM	Impact After MM
Air Quality				
4.2.2	New sources of regional air emissions conflicting with the South Coast Air Quality Management District’s Air Quality Management Plan. (Project Specific and Cumulative) <i>Reason:</i> County’s AQMP has not yet been revised to include GPU’s new population, housing, and employment numbers.	None	SU	SU
4.2.3	New construction and operational emissions could contribute to an existing or projected air quality violation. (Project Specific and Cumulative) <i>Reason:</i> The region is in non-attainment for several pollutants.	Yes	SU	SU
4.2.4	Cumulatively considerable net increase of criteria pollutants for which region is in non-attainment. (Project Specific and Cumulative) <i>Reason:</i> The region is in non-attainment for several pollutants.	Yes	SU	SU
4.2.5	Sensitive receptors could be exposed to substantial pollutant concentrations. (Project Specific)	Yes	SU	SU

	<i>Reason:</i> Pollutants could concentrate in areas near sensitive receptors (e.g., schools, residences) from construction activity and ongoing operation of uses.			
Cultural Resources				
4.4.3	Possible substantial adverse change in the significance of an historical resource. (Project Specific)	None	SU	SU
	<i>Reason:</i> While there are no known or suspected historical resources in the City that could be candidates for state or federal listing, it is possible that a structure is identified in the future. The GPU advocates protection of historical resources, but does not prohibit their alteration or demolition as a general rule.			
Noise				
4.9-6	Generation of noise levels that exceed the noise standards established by the City. (Project Specific)	None	SU	SU
	<i>Reason:</i> Areas of the City currently exceed City noise standards. Therefore, construction and operation of future development projects would further exacerbate this condition.			
4.9-7	Construction activities could generate or expose people or structures to excessive groundborne vibration. (Project Specific and Cumulative)	None	SU	SU
	<i>Reason:</i> Construction could result in the use of equipment that could cause temporary groundborne vibration.			
Population, Housing, Employment				
4.10-1	While the population increase by 2035 estimated in the proposed General Plan would not be considered substantial in a cumulative context, it results in an inconsistency with SCAG's published growth forecasts. (Cumulative)	None	SU	SU
	<i>Reason:</i> SCAG's growth forecast has not yet been revised to include the proposed General Plan's anticipated minor population growth.			
Transportation/Traffic				
4.13-5	Increase in traffic that is substantial in relation to existing traffic load and capacity of the street system. (Project Specific and Cumulative)	None	SU	SU
	<i>Reason:</i> Roadways are currently congested. Additional trips would further add to this condition.			

As evident in the table above, many of the Class I impacts are due in part to already impacted

conditions in the City. These include air quality, noise and traffic. The historic resources issue is described fully in PART 2: GENERAL PLAN UPDATE. The remaining impacts occur as a result of the GPU revising the estimated future population, housing and employment numbers in the City, and other existing regional plans, adopted in prior years, not reflecting these new numbers.

Further discussion of traffic is warranted. The traffic study indicates that eleven of the 43 analyzed segments in the City currently operate below LOS C during at least one peak hour period, which is considered the minimum acceptable level identified in the current General Plan. These segments are:

- Kanan Road north of Thousand Oaks Boulevard
- Kanan Road south of Thousand Oaks Boulevard
- Kanan Road south of Agoura Road
- Kanan Road south of Canwood Street East
- Lake Lindero Drive north of Thousand Oaks Boulevard
- Driver Avenue east of Argos Street
- Driver Avenue west of Chesebro Road
- Palo Comado Canyon Road east of Chesebro Road
- Chesebro Road south of Dorothy Drive
- Palo Comado Canyon Road south of US-101
- Canwood Street west of Reyes Adobe Road

Note that the impacts along Driver Avenue and Lake Lindero Drive are primarily derived from school trips during the AM peak period.

With the GPU buildout, the following segments are expected to operate below LOS C. They are listed by segment number per the traffic study.

#	Peak Hour	Segment Name
1	AM	Lake Lindero Drive north of Thousand Oaks Boulevard
8	AM and PM	Kanan Road south of Fountainwood Street
9	AM and PM	Kanan Road north of Thousand Oaks Boulevard
12	AM and PM	Kanan Road south of Thousand Oaks Boulevard
13	AM	Driver Avenue east of Argos Street
16	PM	Canwood Street west of Reyes Adobe Road
21	PM	Kanan Road south of Canwood Street East
23	PM	Canwood Street east of Kanan Road
24	AM and PM	Kanan Road north of Agoura Road
26	PM	Agoura Road east Kanan Road
27	PM	Kanan Road south of Agoura Road
29	PM	Agoura Road east of Cornell Road
31	AM	Driver Avenue west of Chesebro Road
34	PM	Dorothy Drive between Lewis Road and US 101 SB Ramps
35	AM	Chesebro Road south of Dorothy Drive

36	PM	Agoura Road west of Chesebro Road
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These results assume that by 2035 the improvements proposed and outlined on page 3-15 of the GPU (and noted in this Guidebook in PART 2: GENERAL PLAN UPDATE, Chapter 3 Infrastructure and Community Services, A. Mobility) are implemented. These include some improvements identified in the 1993 General Plan and carried forward, as well as some new roadway improvements. Improvements called out in the 1993 General Plan that are no longer proposed and so not assumed in the traffic analysis are:

- ✓ Agoura Road – 4 lanes from Kanan Road to Liberty Canyon Road
- ✓ Kanan Road – 6 lanes from Agoura Road to Laro Drive
- ✓ Kanan Road – 4 lanes from Agoura Road to Cornell Road
- ✓ Canwood Street – 4 lanes from Kanan Road to Chesebro/Palo Comado Canyon Roads

These improvements are not assumed, as the City Council has already determined that Agoura Road east of Kanan Road should remain a two-lane road, and staff, PBS&J and the GPAC have proposed that the other widenings are not practical due to limited land availability in the right-of-way and in consideration of neighborhood character and quality of life issues (e.g., pedestrian friendliness, maintenance of landscaping, aesthetics, maintaining the small town feel of Agoura Hills).

Consequently, as described in PART 2: GENERAL PLAN UPDATE, the GPU proposes allowing a reduced LOS at the above noted segments, and includes alternatives to constructing traditional roadway improvements, such as Intelligent Transportation Systems (ITS), and the promotion of other modes of travel. However, the alternative improvements may still not result in an LOS of C or better on the same segment. Regardless of whether the LOS standard is reduced on certain key roadway segments, the GPU would result in additional trips being added to an already congested roadway system, thereby creating a significant and unavoidable environmental impact.

CEQA requires that alternatives to the project be assessed. Three alternatives to the proposed GPU were selected for analysis. The goal for evaluating any of these alternatives is to identify ways to avoid or lessen the significant environmental effects resulting from implementation of the GPU. These are described below:

- **Alternative 1—No Build (Zero Growth under Existing General Plan)**—Under this alternative, no future development would occur through 2035 under the existing General Plan (1993) and the GPU would not take place. Therefore, all potential environmental impacts would be the same as existing conditions. This alternative allows decision-makers to assess the impacts of approving the GPU with the impacts of not approving the GPU based on existing conditions and not approving any subsequent development proposals. The alternative reduces impacts overall when compared to the GPU because there would be no more development. However, under this alternative, no aesthetic, trails, recreation, alternative transportation facilities, or

transportation management systems benefits would result, as the proposed goals and policies related to these items in the GPU would not be implemented.

- **Alternative 2—No Project/Existing General Plan (1993) Buildout**—Under this alternative, all future development would occur according to the existing General Plan (1993). This is the “No Project” alternative, since no legislative changes would be required, and the 1993 General Plan would continue to be in effect. It is assumed that the buildout would occur by 2035. Because the current General Plan allows for more development overall in the City than the proposed GPU (see PART 2. GENERAL PLAN UPDATE) the impacts are generally greater than the proposed GPU.
- **Alternative 3—Reduced Density**—As previously discussed, project-related traffic impacts along 16 roadway segments cannot practically be mitigated to less-than-significant levels. It was considered that a less intensive development plan may help to reduce these impacts. Under Alternative 3, development within portions of TAZs 6, 8, 10, and 12 was generally reduced by 25 percent. These TAZs were selected as targeted reduction areas due to the amount of existing and projected traffic that occurs or would occur within the TAZ. A portion of the development in Subarea 5, which is located in TAZ 8, was reduced. In addition, reduced traffic tends to generate less air and noise pollution. The result was that the traffic impacts and air and noise impacts were slightly lessened. Alternative 3 is considered the “environmentally superior alternative,” when compared to the other two alternatives and the proposed GPU. However, it does not fully meet the objectives of the General Plan Update, as it reduces economic development opportunities.

As mentioned in PART 2: GENERAL PLAN UPDATE, the GPU substantially lowers the amount of residential and non-residential development at buildout, when compared to the existing General Plan (1993). The GPU buildout scenario was created to be a more realistic development scenario for 2035, allowing some future development and flexibility for additions to existing buildings. Alternative 3 would further reduce the amount of development that would be ultimately allowed, thereby reducing potential flexibility for new development, and additions to existing development, and so reducing potential economic vitality and viability of the City for the future.

APPENDIX A



AGOURA HILLS

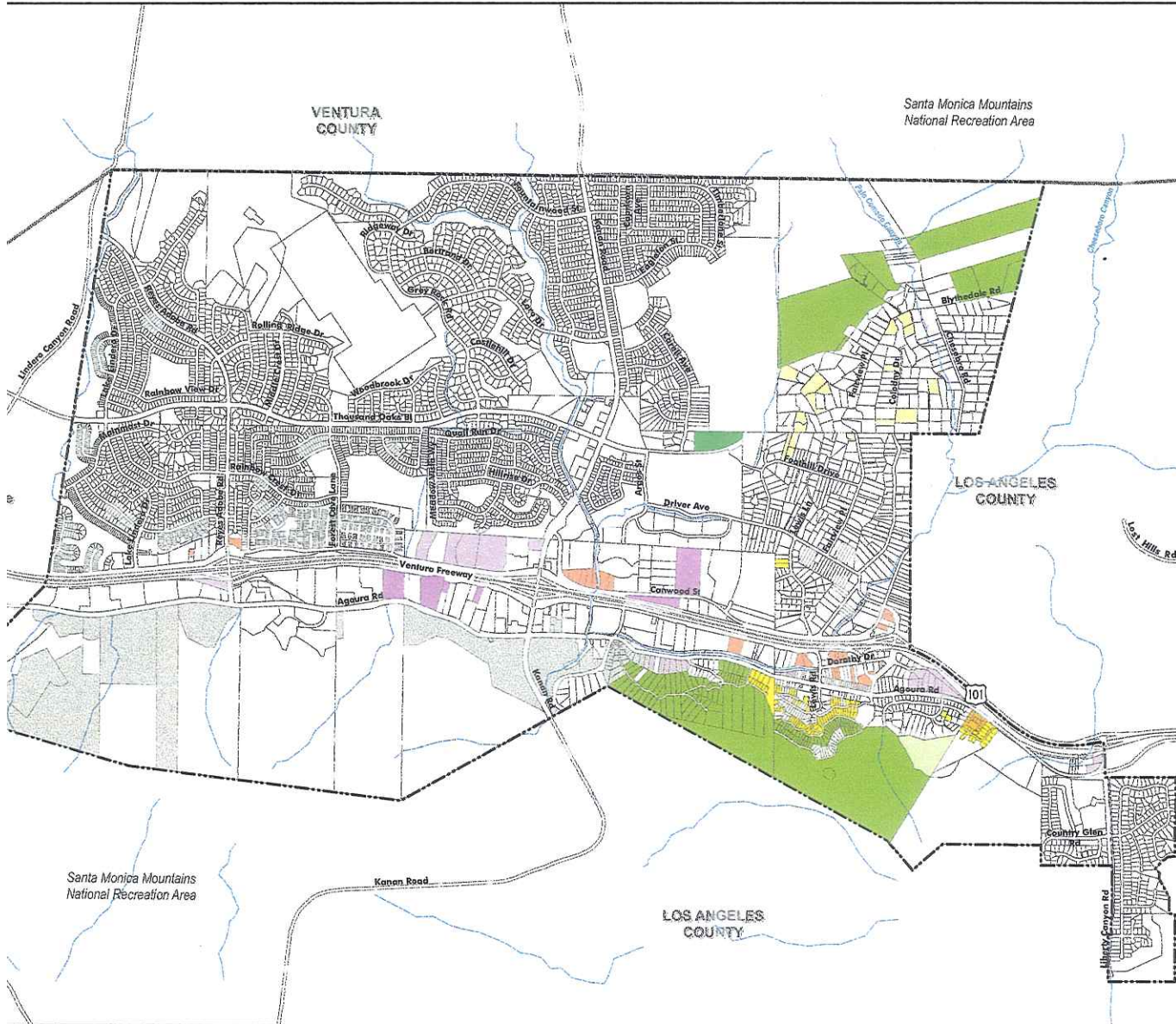
Existing Vacant Lands by

Zoning Designations

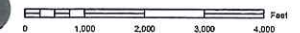
- Rural Residential (RR)
- Very Low-Residential (<2du/ac.) (RV)
- Low Density-Residential (1-2 du/ac.) (RL)
- Single Family-Residential (2-6 du/ac.) (RS)
- Medium Density Residential (6-15 du/ac.)
- High Density-Residential (15-25 du/ac.) (R)
- Commercial Shopping Center (CS)
- Commercial Retail/Service (CRS)
- Commercial Recreational (CR)
- Business Park Office Retail (BP-OR)
- Business Park-Manufacturing (BP-M)
- School (SH)
- Local Park (P)
- Restricted Open Space (OS-R)
- Specific Plan (SP)

Base Map Features

- County Boundary
- City Boundary
- Water Courses



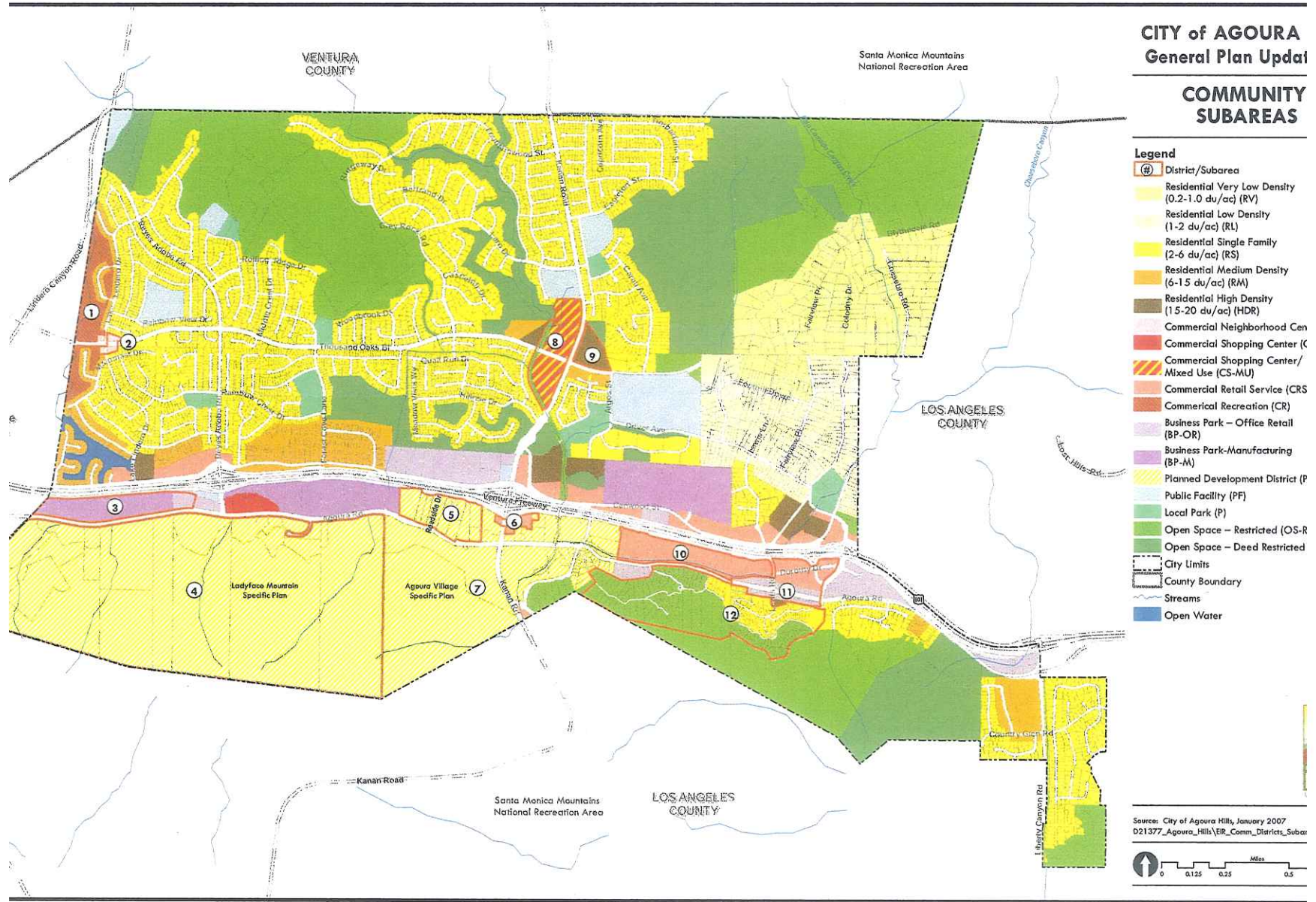
Last Updated: November 21, 2006.



APPENDIX B

**CITY of AGOURA
General Plan Update**

**COMMUNITY
SUBAREAS**



Figure

APPENDIX C

**PUBLIC COMMENTS RECEIVED ON THE
GENERAL PLAN UPDATE**

APPENDIX C1

**PUBLIC COMMENTS RECEIVED ON THE
GENERAL PLAN UPDATE PRIOR TO AND AT THE PLANNING
COMMISSION HEARING ON 2-18-10**

Public Written Comments Received on the General Plan Update Prior to and at the Planning Commission Hearing of 2-18-10

Eleven letters/e-mails were received on the General Plan Update (GPU). These are in addition to the comment letters received on the DEIR during the CEQA-required 45-day public comment period, which are included in the FEIR. Note that the Ventura County Resource Management Agency letter incorporates three memorandums from Ventura County departments, transmitted via the letter. The letters/e-mails are included herein.

For the most part, the comments pertain to minor corrections and clarifications. Where relevant, these items have been addressed in the GPU text and figures. In some cases, the commenters request that certain information be provided in the GPU, which had already been incorporated into the GPU prior to its release for review in October 2009 and needs no further addressing. In other cases, the information requested is not relevant to the GPU, and so no further action is warranted as part of the GPU process. Changes to the document in response to these comments do not result in any substantive changes to the GPU, nor do they require additional CEQA review in the EIR. Any changes that have been made to the GPU as a result of these letters are included in the "Additional Changes to the Draft Agoura Hills General Plan 2035," provided as Exhibit B to the City Council General Plan Amendment Resolution, an attachment to the staff report.

For your reference, the following information is provided by staff in response to some of the general topics raised in the letters. The information identifies if the comments are applicable to the General Plan, and if so, where the General Plan Update addresses such topics.

Zuma Ridge Trail in Agoura Hills

The proposed National Park Service (NPS) Zuma Ridge (Simi-to-Sea) Trail is partially within the City of Agoura Hills. Existing and new trails are addressed broadly in the GPU. Figure CS-3 of the GPU (Figure 4.12-2 of the EIR) shows existing and proposed trails in and adjacent to the City. Currently in the City, the southernmost portion of the Zuma Ridge Trail follows Agoura Road westerly from Dorothy Drive to Cornell Road, where it terminates. The Agoura Village Specific Plan (AVSP), adopted by the City Council in 2008, shows a conceptual continuation of this alignment along Cornell Road to south of the City, as does the Citywide Trails and Pathways Master Plan, adopted by the City Council in 2009. The GPU and the EIR reference and follow the Citywide Trails and Pathways Master Plan. The specific additional alignment needed within the City in order to connect with the Zuma Ridge Trail south of the City would be coordinated with the Los Angeles County Parks and Recreation Department and the NPS, and in consideration of the feasibility of being able to acquire permission of property owners and the practicality of trail construction given physical constraints. Goals and policies that address trails in the City are found in Chapter 3, Section C., of the General Plan Update. In particular, Policy CS-5.3 specifically calls for coordination of the City's trail system with regional jurisdictions and other public agencies. Policy CS-5.1 calls for linking the local trail and pathway system to existing and proposed regional trails.

Liberty Canyon Wildlife Corridor

The boundaries of the Liberty Canyon Wildlife Corridor, as shown on GPU Figure NR-1, were based on original information prepared by the Santa Monica Mountains Conservancy staff. The National Park Service's Santa Monica Mountains National Recreation Area (SMMNRA) staff suggests widening the corridor based on observations of biological activity. In response, the corridor boundaries have been expanded as the corridor passes over the freeway and just south of the freeway. In particular, the boundary has been widened on the western side, and partially on the eastern side, with the exception of the existing developed area on the east. In addition, Policy NR-4.12 Wildlife Corridors has been amended to include protection and maintenance of areas adjacent to the corridor, as appropriate. This change is predicated on the understanding that, while the corridor boundaries have been identified, the boundaries do not prevent wildlife from passing through adjacent areas.

Visual/Scenic Resources in the City of Agoura Hills

The reference to Kanan Road south of Agoura Road was inadvertently omitted from the discussion of scenic resources in the City in Section B. of Chapter 4: NATURAL RESOURCES. A description of this roadway segment is now included in the GPU.

Trails and Trail Funding

There is no special trail fund in the City, and no taxes or resident fees contribute to a trail fund. Trail development is either funded by a grant, or, in some cases, when properties are developed, the property owner is required to improve the street frontage along the property, which would include a trail, if there is an approved trail alignment in the area. The City Council adopted the Citywide Trails and Pathways Master Plan in January 2009. The GPU incorporates the adopted Plan. The Plan identifies proposed trails both north of the freeway, and south of the freeway in the Ladyface Mountain and Agoura Village Specific Plans, as well as in the southeastern portion of the City.

Coordination with Ventura County

The City will continue to coordinate with Ventura County on issues that overlap jurisdictions. In particular, development projects in the City would contribute to Ventura County Traffic Impact Mitigation Fees, as applicable. However, it should be noted that the EIR for the General Plan Update does not identify any impacts to Ventura County roadways as a result of GPU implementation.

Fire Hazards and Wildlands

The GPU contains policies to protect property owners from fire hazards. Policy S-39 addresses fuel modification, ensuring that new development complies with the Los Angeles County Fire Department fuel modification requirements while protecting natural resources and habitat to the extent feasible. Additional language has been added to this policy to further protect public parklands, by encouraging design that minimizes the need for fuel modification on public

parklands, to the extent feasible.

Night-time Lighting

The issue of night-time lighting, including minimizing adverse effects of lighting on the night sky, is addressed in the Municipal Code and the Lighting Guidelines in the Architectural Design Standards. The GPU identifies this issue specifically in Policy LU-3.8 and IM LU-12.

Billboards

GPU Policy NR-2.5 addresses signage in the City, ensuring that building and site signage is appropriate to the use and location, and not visually intrusive. Implementation Measures LU-20 and NR-28 address signage and billboards.

Noise

Noise concerns regarding barking dogs can be addressed, if the City Council so desires, separately from the GPU. No changes to the existing Noise Ordinance in the City are proposed as part of the GPU.

Character of Old Agoura

Policies LU-30.1 through LU-30.5, as well as Implementation Measures LU-42 and LU-43, address preserving the special character of the commercial portions of Old Agoura. No changes are proposed to the residential areas of Old Agoura, and the Old Agoura Overlay identified in the Zoning Ordinance would remain in the residential areas.

Land Uses at the Shopping Centers Along Kanan Road

For Subarea 8 (retail shopping centers along Kanan Road), the maximum number of multi-family dwelling units that could be allowed is a total of 44 for the entire subarea. This number is included in the buildout figures called out in Policy LU-1.1, and was analyzed as part of the EIR. Any increase in this number would require a General Plan Amendment and re-analysis in a CEQA document.

Agoura Village Specific Plan and Ladyface Mountain Specific Plan

Both of these specific plans have been adopted in prior years by the City Council. No change to these specific plans, except to replace the designations of “Specific Plan” with “Planned Development,” is proposed as part of the GPU. Note that the Agoura Village Specific Plan allows multi-family housing. Beyond this, the specific type of housing is not called out. A portion of the housing would be required to be affordable, per California Redevelopment Law. However, whether the multi-family housing is for families or seniors, etc. is not specified in the Agoura Village Specific Plan, nor is it appropriate to be specified.

Private Schools – Land Use Designations

Currently, private schools are allowed in the Business Park – Office/Retail (BP-OR) designation and zoning with a Conditional Use Permit. The GPU does not propose a change in the BP-OR designation, nor in the allowance of private schools in other designations. A portion of the area north of Agoura Road, west of Reyes Adobe Road, is designated BP-OR.

Types of Parks

Implementation Measure CS-2, which implements Policy CS-1.1, identifies the preparation of a proposed Park Master Plan update. The types of facilities in the City currently, as well as plans for new facilities, would be identified as part of that Plan update.

Access to Creeks and Cleaning of Creeks

Implementation Measure NR-15, which implements Policy NR-2.2 among others, calls for enhancing access to the City's water courses via bikeways and pedestrian paths. This would be done as feasible, given practical constraints and also the potential need to preserve sensitive riparian habitat by minimizing human intrusion. It would also require permission from regulatory agencies, such as the California Department of Fish and Game and the County Flood Control Department, in many cases. Implementation Measure NR-15 also addresses the feasibility of improving creeks and other water courses in the City from an environmental standpoint, to the extent possible. Policies NR-6.1, NR-4.11, NR-4.14 and S-1.5 address improving the habitat, natural resource quality, and water quality of the City's creeks. Good water quality in the City's watercourses is a priority for the City, especially in consideration of Regional Water Quality Control Board requirements, and the many policies addressing water and creeks in the GPU consider the regulatory requirements.

Oak Tree Preservation

The GPU does not propose any changes to the City's existing Oak Tree Ordinance. Policy NR-4.10 addresses tree preservation, and the objective to continue to sustain the City's oak trees.

Replanting of Vegetation

The GPU contains policies that encourage planting of additional vegetation along creeks, in parklands, and in other public areas. Policies also encourage community involvement in such restoration and planting efforts. See Policies LU-19.1, NR-4.7, and NR-4.14.

Chesebro Bridge

Improvements to the Chesebro Road/U.S. 101 interchange bridge are currently being designed by the City. This bridge was identified as a capital improvement in the current General Plan (1993), and is identified as such in the proposed GPU. Refer to Item 1 of the matrix of proposed transportation improvements on page 3-15 of the GPU, and Policy M-1.6.

Traffic Near High Schools

The issue of school traffic on the City roadway system is addressed throughout Section A. Mobility of CHAPTER 3: INFRASTRUCTURE AND COMMUNITY SERVICES. In particular, Driver Avenue has acceptable traffic flow during the day, except during the AM peak period – both currently and with implementation of the GPU. The GPU does not include plans to widen Driver Avenue, given that the heavy flow is directed at the AM peak hour only, and in consideration of insufficient land available in the right-of-way, plus a desire to minimize impacts to the character of this part of the City. Policies M-1.4 and LU-18.6, as well as IM M-5, address traffic issues near schools. In particular, Policy LU-18.6 calls for coordination with the school district to address congestion issues, and IM M-5 identifies particular methods to coordinate traffic with the district to minimize congestion.

Road Paving

Maintenance of the roadways is an ongoing priority of the City. Policy M-1.7 addresses possible funding mechanisms to provide for the continued maintenance and repair of the roadway system.

Debris Basins

Los Angeles County maintains the debris basins in the City as part of its storm water and flood control management responsibilities, and establishes standards for their design and maintenance. The GPU does not propose that the City take over responsibility for the debris basins.

Current Market Trends

Stanley R. Hoffman and Associates, the GPU economic consultant, prepared the “Current Market Trends City of Agoura Hills General Plan Update” (December 2006) to identify market opportunities in the City to help maintain a strong economic base. The report stressed the importance of the General Plan to include a mix of land uses that can contribute to increasing public revenues for the future. The current market trends report was one of many sources of information that contributed to the development of the GPU. The conclusion that the City should maintain a mix of land uses is still valid, even in consideration of the current economic downturn.

**Summary of Oral Public Comments on the
General Plan Update
at the Planning Commission Hearing on 2-18-10**

1. Phil Ramuno, representing the Old Agoura HOA

Mr. Ramuno notes the General Plan was well done. He states that Jess Thomas has already noted some of the mistakes in the document, and that the current miles per hour speed limit on Driver Road needs to be corrected.

He speaks about Policy U-2.2 regarding sewer extension. He notes that septic systems prevent overdevelopment, and asks for the evidence that without sewers there is bad water quality. He urges to eliminate the call for a sewer study (in the General Plan Update).

He asks to stop the school project that was approved by the County, and states that the General Plan should include measures to protect residents in the event this school gets developed. He notes that an emergency egress plan needs to be prepared.

2. Dan Selleck, property owner in Subarea 5

Mr. Selleck notes that with the "Business Park-Manufacturing" (BP-M) designation on his property now, he is allowed to do retail service. He states that recreation and retail use is unrealistic, and isn't what people want. He urges not to modify the zoning, as it would adversely affect him in developing his site.

The following are staff responses to the topics addressed in the oral comments at the hearing:

Subarea 5

For Subarea 5, the GPU proposes to redesignate the area from "Business Park-Manufacturing" (BP-M) to "Planned Development." The purpose of the redesignation is to prepare a Specific Plan or Master Plan or other regulatory document to guide the development of this group of parcels in a cohesive and attractive way, especially considering its high visibility along the freeway. Subarea 5 is described on page 2-38 of the GPU. The aim for the area is a mixed-use center, with an emphasis on retail, office and entertainments uses, along with ancillary multi-family residential use as an option. Since the specific regulatory document has not been prepared, the particular land uses and design and development standards have yet to be developed. It is the decision of the City Council to determine when to prepare the Specific Plan, Master Plan or other document. In the mean time, the BP-M zone and allowed uses per that zone would continue. Existing business park/manufacturing uses would be allowed to continue under a future plan, and if desired by the City Council, the allowance for business park/manufacturing uses can be retained. The objective of the designation change is not to reduce the flexibility for development or the value of land, but to increase them. The purpose of including Subarea 5's change in designation in the GPU is to initiate a process to prepare a document to address these

items. Preparation of the plan would involve community input, particularly from property owners, along with environmental review and public hearings separate from the GPU process.

Sewer Systems

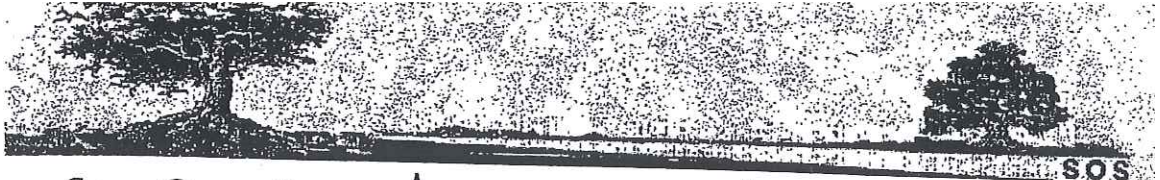
In the current General Plan (1993), Implementation Measure 6.3 calls for the extension of sewer lines into the Old Agoura area, in coordination with a variety of entities. The proposed GPU calls for exploring the potential for extending sewer lines into Old Agoura by working closely with a variety of entities, including the Old Agoura HOA (Policy U-2.2). Implementation Measure U-15 calls for a feasibility study for extending the sewer line into Old Agoura, including coordinating with the Old Agoura HOA. It is important to note that, for the most part, sewer systems tend to impact water quality to a lesser extent than septic systems.

Driver Avenue Speed Limit

The speed limit on Driver Avenue is correctly noted in the GPU on page 3-8 as 30 MPH. The school zone speed limit is posted as needed along Driver Avenue, with a reduced speed limit.

School Project Adjacent to the City

An emergency access plan is currently being prepared by City staff to assist Old Agoura area residents in the event of a disaster, in consideration of the potential location of a private school in the area within the County of Los Angeles.



Save Open Space ✧ P. O. Box 1284 ✧ Agoura, CA 91376

SOS

July 28, 2009

FOR THE RECORD/DRAFT
GENERAL PL

To:

Agoura Hills City Council/General Plan Advisory Commission
30001 Ladyface Court
Agoura Hills, CA 91301

Save Open Space/Santa Monica Mountains suggest several important additions to the new updated Agoura Hills general plan.

Natural Resources

Water: One of my main contributions to our original general plan was that the creeks should all remain in their natural state. Now, we have the opportunity to do more by returning all watercourses to their natural state with walkways for bikes, pedestrians, and joggers. An excellent example of where this was done is the lovely Media Creek through Morrison Ranch. Enclosed are some pictures of how Ventura County preserved Media Creek in Oak Park. The LA River is being returned to its natural state. In northern California, I observed bike, walking, jogging pathways open to the public along the drainages. In this case, if there was a fence it was right up to the edge of the drainage. The public was not kept out. In this updated General Plan, all the creeks and drainages need to be shown as pedestrian pathways and returned to their natural states. These walkways will promote better pedestrian connectivity and get people out of their cars into a healthier lifestyle.

Visual: It's been a remarkable achievement that there only remain 10 of the original 40 or so billboards. Instead of requiring a sculpture, new development approvals should donate into a fund for buying out these few remaining billboards from willing landowners. This fund set up to buy out the few remaining billboards to complement of scenic freeway corridor.

Community Safety

Noise: I am submitting the City of Thousand Oaks noise ordinance. I would like Thousand Oaks rules implemented which will help solve the problem of continual barking dogs after late hours. Thousand Oaks ordinance helps enhance and protect existing peaceful residential neighborhoods/character. Please let me know when this topic is up for discussion.

Fix Kanan Bridge to Hillrise: There is room for an extra lane here. The traffic load now warrants taking out all the landscaped mediums and any plain medium from the bridge north to Hillrise.

*******This will also eliminate the backup on the turn lane to Canwood at the light. This will allow a longer back up lane to turn at the light coming from north Kanan to Canwood. As soon as the new Trader's Joe's opens something has to be done because the turning land is too short.

*******This will also open up another lane to go over the bridge to south on ramp to LA.

Kanan- Add one lane to freeway westbound ramps: There is room to add one more lane entering these westbound ramps. (Going west to Ventura County and the loop ramp going east to LA) Then the two lane on ramp traffic can merge further down the ramp.

Chesebro Bridge: The only improvement that the city should spend any money and/or time on is a light at the bridge off ramp. This bridge does not need widening and/or any multi-million dollar improvement. The new General Plan should not show any improvements planned by our city for Chesebro bridge that serves rural Old Agoura. The city should not spend any time or money on this issue. Let LA County handle it since the unincorporated area served by this bridge should be in the city's sphere of influence.

Infrastructure

Remove old style debris basins: I am turning in a picture of these on Agoura Road above the massive commercial complexes from Hampton Inn on to the City of Westlake boundary. Huge areas above these debris basins are devoid of vegetation thus facilitate ting worse erosion. These bare ugly landscapes should be returned to natural conditions. The city should take over the maintenance of these and institute less erosion causing landscapes by restoring native vegetation.

Community/Land Use

Land Use:

Areas along Agoura Road, BP-M and BP-O (leave out area with commercial zoning in Agoura Hills Specific Plan) add private schools to be allowed. A private school is a business and (not like public schools) is legally required to mitigate any traffic impacts etc. This area will already have well functioning on and off ramps at Reyes Adobe and Kanan. Private schools along Agoura Road will not need millions in traffic mitigation.

Just as an update, the Old Agoura Homeowners and Save Open Space/Santa Monica Mountains are challenging in court LA County's approval of a private school, consisting of a huge urban complex of 9 buildings some 2 story adjacent to rural Old Agoura. This land should have been in the city's sphere of influence.

Specific Plan-Agoura Village.

Since one of the goals in 2009 is reducing green house gases, the land use at Agoura Village should also allow a Senior Agoura Village that is an additional positive land use in this current recession economy. The shops will remain with this new senior residential land use type but also the units need to be limited to one car each unit.

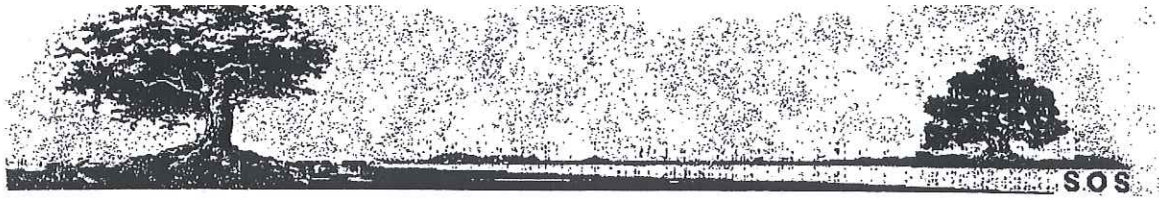
Current Market Trends report: This report is out of date now. The recession has changed the economic data significantly.

Please inform me which measures in this letter are being considered. Thank you for your kind attention.

Sincerely,


Mary E. Wiesbrock, Chair SOS

Enclosures: Media Creek (Oak Park) and barren Agoura Hills debris basins, pictures, land use maps for new area for private schools, and Thousand Oaks Noise Ordinance



Save Open Space ✧ P. O. Box 1284 ✧ Agoura, CA 91376

July 28, 2009 updated October 28, 2009

To:

Agoura Hills City Council/General Plan Advisory Commission
30001 Ladyface Court
Agoura Hills, CA 91301

Save Open Space/Santa Monica Mountains suggest several important additions/deletions to the new updated draft Agoura Hills general plan.

Natural Resources

mobility ✓ Water: One of my main contributions to our original general plan was that the creeks should all remain in their natural state. Now, we have the opportunity to do more by returning all watercourses to their natural state with walkways for bikes, pedestrians, and joggers. An excellent example of where this was done is the lovely Media Creek through Morrison Ranch. Enclosed are some pictures of how Ventura County preserved Media Creek in Oak Park. The LA River is being returned to its natural state. In northern California, I observed bike, walking, jogging pathways open to the public along the drainages. In this case, if there was a fence it was right up to the edge of the drainage. The public was not kept out like in Agoura Hills' Los Angeles County system. In this updated General Plan, all the creeks and drainages need to be shown as pedestrian pathways and returned to their natural states. These walkways will promote better pedestrian connectivity and get people out of their cars into a healthier lifestyle. All transportation funds should be put into this walkway/bikeway effort after the Reyes Adobe Bridge is done.

Visual: It's been a remarkable achievement that there only remain 10 of the original 40 or so billboards. Instead of requiring a sculpture, new development approvals should donate into a fund for buying out these few remaining billboards from willing landowners. This fund set up to buy out the few remaining billboards to complement of scenic freeway corridor.

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protect existing peaceful residential neighborhoods/character. Please let me know when this topic is up for discussion. *Make this an implementation and enforce*

Traffic Congestion from north 101 bound for east and west on ramps

Fix Kanan Bridge to Hillrise: There is room for an extra lane here. The traffic load now warrants taking out all the landscaped medians and any plain median from the bridge north to Hillrise.

***This will also eliminate the backup on the turn lane to Canwood at the light. This will allow a longer back up lane to turn at the light coming from north Kanan to Canwood. As soon as the new Trader's Joe's opens something has to be done because the turning land is too short.

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Kanan- Add one lane to freeway westbound ramps: There is room to add one more lane entering these westbound ramps. (Going west to Ventura County and the loop ramp going east to LA) Then the two lanes of on ramp traffic can merge further down the ramp.

Keep 2 lanes!
Chesebro Bridge: The only improvement that the city should spend any money and/or time on is a light at the bridge off ramp. This bridge does not need widening and/or any multi-million dollar improvement. The new General Plan should not show any improvements planned by our city for Chesebro Bridge that serves rural Old Agoura. The city should not spend any time or money on this issue. Let LA County handle it since the unincorporated area served by this bridge should have been in the city's sphere of influence.

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- ✓ **SOS opposes mixed use (higher density) at our neighborhood shopping centers- Ralph's, Vons and Agoura Deli. The intersection traffic level at Kanan and Thousand Oaks Blvd is an "F" at peak traffic hours. It routinely can take 3 traffic light changes to get through that intersection in the am peak. Our existing General Plan requires traffic to be a "C" level. Mixed use, which means increased density at these shopping centers, will impact traffic significantly because the existing situation is already at a failure level. Please Vote to retain the existing zoning and general plan designation for these shopping centers.**

"200" new trips a day!

Specific Plan-Agoura Village.

Since one of the goals in 2009 is reducing green house gases, the land use at Agoura Village should also allow a Senior Agoura Village that is an additional positive land use in this current recession economy. The shops will remain with this new senior residential land use type but also the units need to be limited to one car each unit.

Current Market Trends report: This report is out of date now. The recession has changed the economic data significantly.

Please inform me which measures in this letter are being considered. Thank you for your kind attention.

Sincerely,

Mary E. Wiesbrock
Mary E. Wiesbrock, Chair SOS

Enclosures: Media Creek (Oak Park) and barren Agoura Hill's debris basins, pictures, land use maps for new area for private schools, and Thousand Oaks Noise Ordinance

To: Agoura Hills City Council

From: Janna Orkney
Oak Park CA

RE: General Plan Update

Concerns:

1. Heavy traffic on Kanan Road, especially at the Kanan/Thousand Oaks Blvd. intersection
2. When was the most recent traffic count on both streets? How about an accident count?
3. Against Possible rezoning the 3 shopping centers at that intersection. Don't want any more traffic or density there.
4. Concern about left turn from Ralph's shopping center, by Starbuck's. Recommend that it be banned.
5. Request that a streetlight be placed at northeast corner of Kanan Rd. and Thousand Oaks Blvd. Other 3 corners have lights, yet the busiest corner, with a lot of right-turning cars, does not.
6. Request that power lines be placed underground in this area. Right now, the lines run on the west side of Kanan, north of Thousand Oaks Blvd., and a lot of trees have been removed this year, and a lot of trees have been severely pruned.
7. Is the left turn lane going south on Kanan Rd at Canwood, going to be extended, due to the new shopping center on Canwood that is being built? Already, the left turn lane can fill and block normal traffic going south.
8. Why not have 2 lanes going south on Kanan Rd., to enter on to the 101 Freeway going west (north)? The exclusive right turn lane onto Canwood could be an either/or...turn right on Canwood, or proceed to the freeway onramp.
9. When will trees be trimmed in the center median on Kanan Road, in the Fountainwood area? There are missing trees, dead limbs, and a lot of tree growth.

*public transportation
neighborhood mills*

SOURCE MANAGEMENT AGENCY
County of ventura

Planning D
Kimberly L. F.

December 21, 2009

City of Agoura Hills
30001 Ladyface Court
Agoura Hills, CA 93010
Attn.: Allison Cook

DEC 21 2009

ae via email

E-mail: acook@ci.agoura-hills.ca.us

Subject: Comments on the City of Agoura Hills Draft General Plan Update

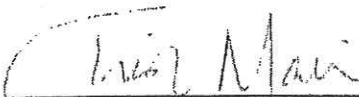
Dear Ms. Cook:

Thank you for the opportunity to review and comment on the subject document. Attached are the comments that we have received resulting from intra-county review of the subject document. Additional comments may have been sent directly to you by other County agencies.

Your proposed responses to these comments should be sent directly to the commenter, with a copy to Laura Hocking, Ventura County Planning Division, L#1740, 800 S. Victoria Avenue, Ventura, CA 93009.

If you have any questions regarding any of the comments, please contact the appropriate respondent. Overall questions may be directed to Laura Hocking at (805) 654-2443.

Sincerely,



Tricia Maier, Manager
Program Administration Section

Attachment

County RMA Reference Number 09-019-1



**PUBLIC WORKS AGENCY
TRANSPORTATION DEPARTMENT
Traffic, Advance Planning & Permits Division
MEMORANDUM**

DATE: November 16, 2009

TO: RMA – Planning Division
Attention: Laura Hocking

FROM: Ben Emami, Engineering Manager II

**SUBJECT: REVIEW OF DOCUMENT 09-019
City of Agoura Hills Draft General Plan Update
Lead Agency: City of Agoura Hills**

DEC 21 2009

cc via email

Pursuant to your request, the Public Works Agency -- Transportation Department has completed the review of the Draft General Plan Update for the City of Agoura Hills. This updated General Plan includes a comprehensive update of Land Use and Mobility Goals and policies based on technical assessment and evaluation of land use and traffic data, and a substantive review and update of all other policies based on current information provided by City staff. The updated goals and policies in the entirety of the General Plan have been crafted to assure that they reflect the community's vision for its future. The updated General Plan has been prepared to provide a meaningful guide for the future and fulfills statutory requirements. It is comprehensive, providing a framework for the City's physical, economic, and social development while sustaining natural resources. It is long-range, looking ahead to 2035, while at the same time presenting policies to guide day-to-day decisions.

We offer these comments:

1. When future developments are proposed, the projects may have site specific and/or cumulative impact on County roadways. The subsequent environmental document for these projects should include any site-specific or cumulative impact to the County Road Network and local roads. The project proponent will then be required to mitigate any adverse impacts this project may have on the County Road Network. To address the cumulative adverse impacts of traffic on the Regional Road Network, Traffic Impact Mitigation Fees (TIMF) should be assessed on development projects in accordance with the terms of the Agreement between the City of Agoura Hills and the County dated February 12, 1992 (see attached). With payment of the TIMF, the level of service and safety of the existing roads with regards to cumulative impact would remain consistent with the County's General Plan.
2. Please provide us a copy of the Final General Plan Update for the City of Agoura Hills for our review and comments, when it becomes available.

Our review is limited to the impacts this project may have on the County's Regional Road Network.

Please contact me at 654-2087 if you have questions.

Attachment: Agreement dated February 12, 1992

DEC 21 2009

cc via email



Ventura County
Watershed Protection District
Advance Planning Section

MEMORANDUM

DATE: October 22, 2009
TO: Laura Hocking, RMA - Planning Division
FROM: Brian Trushinski, WPD – Floodplain Management
SUBJECT: RMA 09-019-1 (Draft General Plan Update – City of Agoura Hills)

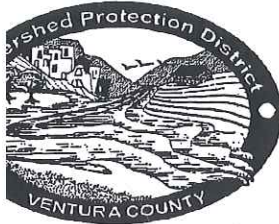
The Advanced Planning Section of the Ventura County Watershed Protection District (Floodplain Management) has reviewed the submitted environmental document for the proposed development project and offers the following comment:

1. Chapter 5 – Community Safety, Hazards, Figure S-1: In the legend, reference to the Special Flood Hazard Area *100-Year Flood* should be changed to reflect the new nomenclature being used in the National Flood Insurance Program (NFIP) as the *1% Annual Chance Flood*.

- End of Text -

DEC 21 2009

al via email



**Ventura County
Watershed Protection District
Water & Environmental Resources Division
Water Quality Section**

MEMORANDUM

DATE: October 28, 2009

TO: Laura Hocking, RMA- Planning Division

FROM: Paul Tantet

SUBJECT: RMA 09-019-1 – City of Agoura Hills Draft General Plan Update

I have reviewed the provided materials for the above referenced project, and would like to add the following comment in the countywide response letter:

On May 7, 2009, the Los Angeles Regional Water Quality Control Board adopted Order No. 09-0057, a new Ventura Countywide Municipal Separate Storm Sewer NPDES Permit ("Permit"), which became active on August 7, 2009. Within the provisions of this Permit, are numerous changes to the regulatory framework governing the review and approval process of assessing new development projects for surface water quality concerns under CEQA.

Page 74, Section V. 1. of the Permit, requires additional procedures necessary for considering potential stormwater quality impacts and providing for appropriate mitigation when preparing and reviewing CEQA documents. These procedures include consideration of the following:

- (A) Potential impact of project construction on storm water runoff.
- (B) Potential impact of project post-construction activity on storm water runoff.
- (C) Potential for discharge of storm water from areas from material storage, vehicle or equipment fueling, vehicle or equipment maintenance (including washing), waste handling, hazardous materials handling or storage, delivery areas or loading docks, or other outdoor work areas.
- (D) Potential for discharge of storm water to impair the beneficial uses of the receiving waters.
- (E) Potential for the discharge of storm water to cause significant harm on the biological integrity of the waterways and waterbodies.
- (F) Potential for significant changes in the flow velocity or volume of storm water runoff to cause harm to or impair the beneficial uses of natural drainage systems.
- (G) Potential for significant increases in erosion at the project site or surrounding areas.

It is anticipated that the Los Angeles Regional Water Quality Control Board will adopt a new permit for the unincorporated county and cities in Los Angeles County in the near future. As such, it is highly recommended that while preparing any CEQA related documents, please keep these new requirements in mind, as they will likely be a requirement of the future Los Angeles County stormwater permit..



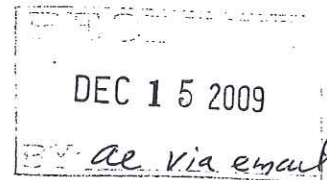
COUNTY OF LOS ANGELES
DEPARTMENT OF PARKS AND RECREATION
"Creating Community Through People, Parks and Programs"

Russ Guiney, Director

December 15, 2009

Sent via email: acook@ci.agoura-hills.ca.us

Allison Cook
Principal Planner
Planning Department
City of Agoura Hills
30001 Ladyface Court
Agoura Hills, CA 93010



Dear Ms. Cook:

**CITY OF AGOURA HILLS
DRAFT GENERAL PLAN UPDATE**

The Department of Parks and Recreation has reviewed the above project for potential impact on the facilities under the jurisdiction of the Department. We have determined that the proposed project will not affect any Departmental facilities.

Thank you for including this Department in the review process. If you have any trail related inquiries, please contact Andrew Lopez at (213) 639-6058 or anlopez@parks.lacounty.gov.

Sincerely,

Julie Yom
Park Planner

JY:tls/response Agoura Hills Draft General Plan update

c: Parks and Recreation (N. E. Garcia, L. Hensley, J. Rupert, F. Moreno, A. Lopez)

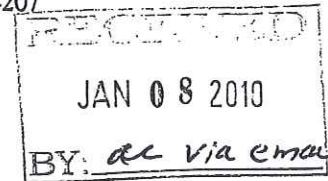


United States Department of the Interior

NATIONAL PARK SERVICE
Santa Monica Mountains National Recreation Area
401 West Hillcrest Drive
Thousand Oaks, California 91360-4207

In reply refer to:
L76

January 8, 2009¹⁰



Allison Cook, Principal Planner
City of Agoura Hills
Department of Planning & Community Development
30001 Ladyface Court
Agoura Hills, CA 91301-1355

Dear Ms. Cook:

This letter offers our comments on the October, 2009, City of Agoura Hills Draft General Plan Update (GPU). Agoura Hills is a gateway city for Santa Monica Mountains National Recreation Area with close connection to federal and state parklands. Federal parkland at Cheeseboro and Palo Comado Canyons surrounds the city to the northwest. Paramount Ranch is south of the city. Kanan Road is an important thoroughfare in the mountains and provides access to other park sites, including those managed by California State Parks and the Santa Monica Mountains Conservancy. Indeed, the city identifies itself as "Gateway to the Santa Monica Mountains National Recreation Area" on its letterhead.

The National Park Service appreciates the opportunity to participate in the public review process for the GPU. We provide comments on the effects of private and public land development in the Santa Monica Mountains at the invitation of state and local units of government with authority to prevent or minimize adverse uses. We respect local agencies' mandate to prepare long-range plans that provide for community development in a manner consistent with federal, state, and local laws. In providing comments, we assume a neutral position and do not support or oppose land development. To this end, we offer the following comments on the DEIR. Overall, we find the policies compatible with National Park Service management for the national recreation area.

Figure NR-1, Open Space Resources

We thank the city for specifically noting the Liberty Canyon wildlife corridor in Policy No. NR-12. We recommend the wildlife corridor mapped in Figure NR-1 be expanded to include the area southwest of the Liberty Canyon freeway ramps and be widened where it overlays US 101 to fully include the areas currently used for wildlife crossing. Attachment No. 1 illustrates the recommended areas to include.

The Liberty Canyon wildlife corridor was identified as part of a larger habitat linkage between the Santa Monica Mountains, Simi Hills, Santa Susana Mountains, and Sierra Madre Mountains in the 2006 South Coast Missing Linkages Project. The ten-lane U.S. 101 freeway is the primary impediment to wildlife movement into and out of the Santa Monica Mountains; directing wildlife crossings to underpasses such as the one at the northern end of Liberty Canyon Road. In addition, development along the 101 freeway corridor as it traverses the Santa Monica Mountains area has further limited wildlife crossings to this and a few other locations. Thus, providing for wildlife movement through the Liberty Canyon wildlife corridor is critical to the long-term persistence of wildlife in the Santa Monica Mountains.

NPS biologists have documented, via GPS telemetry, crossings by mountain lions and other wildlife in this corridor. Wildlife may either make a dangerous freeway crossing, or travel underneath via the Liberty Canyon underpass. Another possible location is a culvert that carries a stream under U.S. 101. Bobcats have been photo-documented using this route. Caltrans, in cooperation with the National Park Service, is currently studying the Liberty Canyon area for construction of a wildlife underpass under U.S. 101 to link habitat north and south of the freeway. Given the findings of wildlife movement and the ongoing study for improved wildlife passage, we recommend inclusion of the areas illustrated on Attachment No. 1.

Figure CS-3, Trail Network

We recommend several changes to Figure CS-3, the Trail Network map, as follows.

- We suggest the title for the map should be “Proposed Trail Network” to account for both existing public trails and proposed trails envisioned in the General Plan for inclusion in the public trail network.
- The most current public parkland should be illustrated on the map. Mountains Recreation and Conservation Authority (MRCA) ownerships are missing.
- The legend should symbolize the Santa Monica Mountains National Recreation Area (SMMNRA) as a boundary line, similar to the City Limits symbol. The map’s current symbol identifies only lands protected as public parkland. The SMMNRA consists of a 153,250-acre land base prescribed by Congress. Within the boundary is a consortium of public and private ownerships, with 50% of the land base in public ownership, mostly as parklands.
- Park name labels should be added (i.e. Paramount Ranch), or made more specific (replace “Santa Monica Mountains National Recreation Area” with “Cheeseboro/Palo Comado Canyons”).
- The legend should use the term “multiple-use” instead of “all purpose” to identify trails on which hikers, equestrians, and bicyclists may travel. “Multiple-use” is the term applied to such trails in SMMNRA.
- The legend should use the term “Future Public Access, Multiple Use” instead of “Future, All Purpose” for trails shown with the red-dashed symbol. We gather this symbol

represents existing unofficial trails where a physical trail is in place, but the public right-of-way has not been secured, or the trail is on public land but has not been officially opened to the public by a public agency. For example, the Westlake-Paramount Connector illustrated on the map as “Existing, All Purpose” is on private property and has no public right-of-way. Another example is the “Future, All Purpose” trail located on the MRCA’s “Abrams” property in the Liberty Canyon wildlife corridor vicinity; the trail is present and used, but never officially acknowledged by MRCA as part of the SMMNRA public trail network.

- Some trails are incorrectly symbolized as to their on-the-ground status and their use designation. We suggest meeting with planning staff to bring the city’s proposed trail network into consistency with the SMMNRA GIS Trail Inventory.

Figure CS-3 identifies a proposed trail along Medea Creek, south of Agoura Road. The trail parallels Kanan Road and Medea Creek as it leaves the city limits to the south. The assumption is that such an alignment would provide a connection along the Medea Creek corridor to Paramount Ranch, Malibu Creek State Park, and other parkland to the south in the heart of the mountains. Such a connection would be a critical missing link, and is indeed the general corridor for the Simi-to-the-Sea trail (a.k.a. Zuma Ridge Trail), which would connect parkland in the Simi Hills (north of the city) to parkland in the Santa Monica Mountains, eventually leading to Zuma Beach. This corridor was identified as a missing link in the 1997 Santa Monica Mountains Area Recreational Trails Coordination Project (SMMART).

However, the Kanan Road/Medea Creek alignment is unfeasible because of issues with right-of-way acquisition, sensitive riparian habitat, and trail maintenance (regular flooding of the trail would occur). Alternately, routing the trail to the east along Cornell Road is not feasible owing to adjacent private landownership, incompatibility with the public road easement, and trail user safety. Thus, the proposed city alignment along Medea Creek is limited in its future connectivity, as there are no viable options to connect this trail to other trails to the south and is inconsistent with draft GPU policies *CS 5.3 Coordinated Trail Planning* and *CS 5.5 Sustainable Trails*. We have commented on this previously in our letter dated February 12, 2009, regarding the Cornerstone Project (SE corner of Agoura Road and Cornell Road), and on the Agoura Village Specific Plan EIR, dated January 19, 2006. There is a viable option for connecting parkland north of the city to parkland to the south. This is marked in Figure CS-3 as the “Paramount Ranch Connector Trail.”

4 B. Visual Resources

We recommend Kanan Road, from US 101 south to the city limits, be identified as a valuable scenic resource in the General Plan. Reyes Adobe Road, Thousand Oaks Boulevard, and Agoura Road are designated as such in the draft plan because they “provide scenic views of the Santa Monica Mountains, including Ladyface Mountain.” Given these criteria, Kanan Road also qualifies as a scenic resource. Kanan Road is a significant entry point into the mountains; more so than any other corridor in the city, it is the gateway into the Santa Monica Mountains proper. Protecting this regionally important scenic route should be of primary

importance. Kanan Road is identified as a scenic route in the 2000 Los Angeles County Santa Monica Mountains North Area Plan.

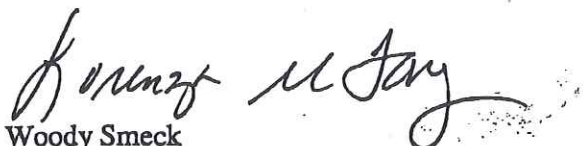
5 C. Wildland and Urban Fire Hazards

We recommend policy *S 3.9 Fuel Modification* include language that development should be sited to not require fuel modification on public parklands. Special attention should be paid to the Old Agoura neighborhood, which abuts federal parkland at Cheeseboro and Palo Comado Canyons. Public laws governing National Park System administration (16 USC Sec. 1-4a) and Santa Monica Mountains National Recreation Area (16 USC Sec. 460kk) do not allow native vegetation and wildlife habitat removal to accommodate adjacent private development.

When establishing the Santa Monica Mountains National Recreation Area, Congress recognized a national interest in protecting and preserving significant natural, cultural, and recreational resources provided by the Santa Monica Mountains and adjacent coastline. Congress further stated that “the State of California and its local units of government have authority to prevent or minimize adverse uses of the Santa Monica Mountains and adjacent coastline area and can, to a great extent, protect the health, safety, and general welfare by the use of such authority” (Public Law 95-625). We appreciate the city’s efforts to craft General Plan policies that are compatible with National Park Service goals for national recreation area resource protection and recreational access.

Thank you for the opportunity to comment. If you have questions, please call Melanie Beck, Outdoor Recreation Planner, at (805) 370-2346.

Sincerely,

for 
Woody Smeck
Superintendent

Attachments: 1) Recommended Changes to Wildlife Corridor

cc: Joe Edmiston, Executive Director, Santa Monica Mountains Conservancy
Ron Schafer, Superintendent, Angeles District, State Department of Parks and Recreation
Executive Officer, District Manager, Resource Conservation District of the Santa Monica Mountains