



# Laguna Hills GENERAL PLAN

July 14, 2009







# Laguna Hills GENERAL PLAN

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# Table of Contents

<b>INTRODUCTION .....</b>	<b>I-1</b>
Preface.....	I-1
What is a General Plan? .....	I-1
Organization of the Laguna Hills General Plan.....	I-2
Planning Area .....	I-4
History of Laguna Hills.....	I-4
Community Participation .....	I-6
Community Involvement .....	I-6
The Vision for Laguna Hills.....	I-8
Using the General Plan .....	I-11
Documents Related to the General Plan .....	I-12
<b>LAND USE .....</b>	<b>LU-1</b>
Introduction .....	LU-1
Purpose and Scope of the Land Use Element .....	LU-1
Background .....	LU-2
Northern Land Uses.....	LU-2
Central Land Uses.....	LU-3
Southern Land Uses .....	LU-5
Surrounding Land Uses .....	LU-5
Land Use Plan .....	LU-5
Land Use Density and Intensity.....	LU-6
Land Use Classifications .....	LU-7

Concepts of the City’s Land Use Plan ..... LU-14

Opportunity Areas ..... LU-19

Future Study Areas ..... LU-25

Goals and Policies ..... LU-30

    Activity Centers and Community Connections..... LU-30

    Respect for Existing Neighborhoods ..... LU-31

    Sustainable and Creative Infill Development..... LU-32

    Enhancing the Community’s Identity ..... LU-33

    Fiscal Health and Economic Sustainability..... LU-34

Summary of Approach ..... LU-36

**MOBILITY..... M-1**

Introduction ..... M-1

Purpose and Scope of the Mobility Element ..... M-1

Background ..... M-2

Mobility Plan..... M-2

    Efficient Local and Regional System ..... M-2

    Traffic Calming and Safety ..... M-9

    Walking and Cycling, and Beautiful Streets..... M-10

    Transit and Transportation Demand Management ..... M-13

    Parking ..... M-15

Goals and Policies ..... M-16

    Efficient Local and Regional System ..... M-16

    Traffic Calming and Safety ..... M-17

    Walking and Cycling..... M-17

Beautiful Streets ..... M-18

Transit and Transportation Demand Management ..... M-18

Parking ..... M-19

Summary of Approach ..... M-20

**CONSERVATION AND OPEN SPACE ..... COS-1**

Introduction ..... COS-1

Purpose and Scope of the Conservation and Open Space  
Element ..... COS-1

Background ..... COS-2

Conservation and Open Space Plan ..... COS-2

    Sustaining Our Resources ..... COS-2

    Parks and Play ..... COS-15

    Air Quality and Global Climate Change ..... COS-23

Goals and Policies ..... COS-26

    Sustaining Our Resources ..... COS-26

    Parks and Play ..... COS-28

    Air Quality and Global Climate Change ..... COS-29

Summary of Approach ..... COS-30

**COMMUNITY SERVICES AND FACILITIES ..... CSF-1**

Introduction ..... CSF-1

Purpose and Scope of the Community Services and  
Facilities Element ..... CSF-1

Background ..... CSF-2



Community Services and Facilities Plan..... CSF-2

    Community Facilities ..... CSF-3

    Schools ..... CSF-6

    Fire Protection and Emergency Services ..... CSF-7

    Police Services ..... CSF-8

    Water Services ..... CSF-9

    Sewer Services ..... CSF-11

    Solid Waste Disposal ..... CSF-11

    Libraries..... CSF-12

    Electricity and Natural Gas ..... CSF-12

    Communications ..... CSF-14

    Flood Control and Stormwater Drainage ..... CSF-14

Goals and Policies ..... CSF-15

    Community Facilities ..... CSF-16

    Schools ..... CSF-16

    Fire Protection and Emergency Services ..... CSF-17

    Police Services ..... CSF-17

    Water Service ..... CSF-17

    Sewer Service ..... CSF-18

    Solid Waste Disposal ..... CSF-18

    Libraries..... CSF-19

    Electricity and Natural Gas ..... CSF-19

    Communications ..... CSF-19

    Flood Control and Stormwater Drainage ..... CSF-20

Summary of Approach ..... CSF-20

- SAFETY ..... S-1**
- Introduction ..... S-1
- Purpose and Scope of the Safety Element..... S-1
- Background ..... S-2
- Safety Plan..... S-2
  - Geology and Seismicity ..... S-3
  - Urban and Wildland Fire Hazards ..... S-9
  - Law Enforcement and Criminal Activities..... S-10
  - Hazardous Materials and Nuclear Power Production ..... S-13
  - Flooding and Stormwater Management ..... S-15
  - Emergency Preparedness..... S-15
- Goals and Policies ..... S-17
  - Geology and Seismicity ..... S-17
  - Urban and Wildland Fire Hazards ..... S-18
  - Law Enforcement and Criminal Activity..... S-18
  - Hazardous Materials and Nuclear Power Production ..... S-19
  - Flooding and Stormwater Management ..... S-20
  - Emergency Preparedness..... S-21
- Summary of Approach ..... S-21
  
- NOISE ..... N-1**
- Introduction ..... N-1
- Purpose and Scope of the Noise Element ..... N-1
- Background ..... N-1
  - Effects of Noise on People ..... N-2
- Noise Plan ..... N-3



Noise Measurement ..... N-3

Noise and Land Use Planning ..... N-4

Noise Standards ..... N-6

Transportation-Related Noise ..... N-9

Noise Control at Reception Sites ..... N-9

Nontransportation-Related Noise ..... N-10

Noise Ordinance ..... N-11

Goals and Policies ..... N-11

    Noise and Land Use Planning ..... N-12

    Transportation-Related Noise ..... N-12

    Nontransportation-Related Noise ..... N-13

Summary of Approach ..... N-13

**HOUSING ..... H-1**

Introduction ..... H-1

Purpose and Scope of the Housing Element ..... H-1

Related Plans and Programs ..... H-2

    Regional Housing Needs Assessment ..... H-2

    Housing Element Cycle ..... H-2

Relationship to Other General Plan Elements ..... H-3

Citizen Participation ..... H-3

    Summary of Input ..... H-4

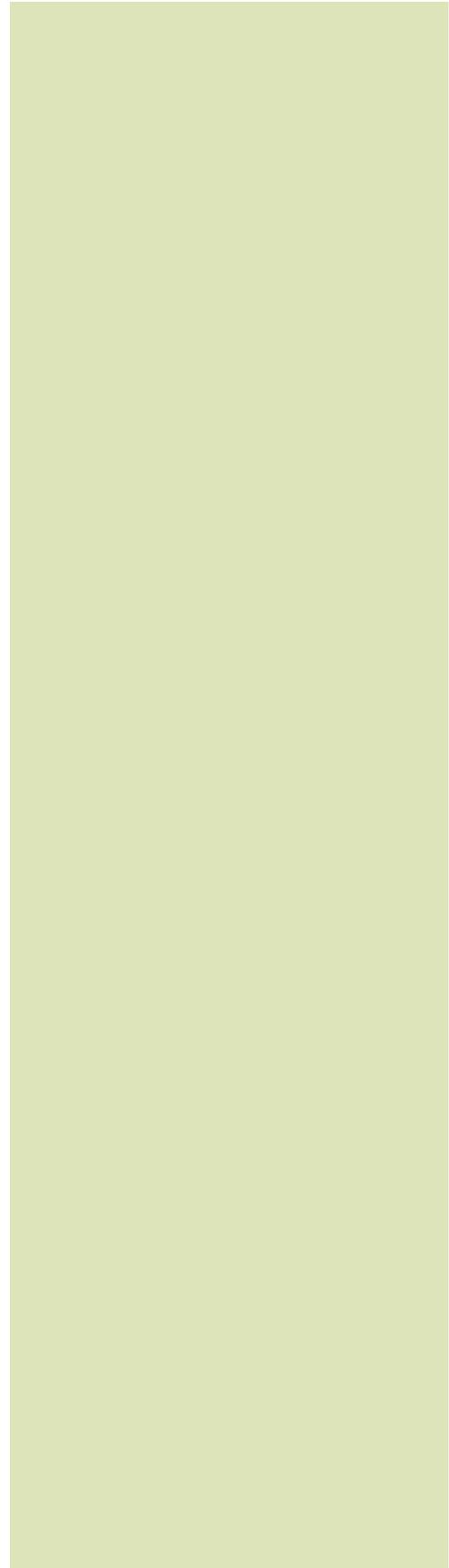
Housing Needs Assessment ..... H-9

    Community Profile ..... H-9

    Population Characteristics ..... H-9

        Population Growth Trends ..... H-9

Age Characteristics .....	H-10
Race /Ethnicity Characteristics.....	H-11
Employment Characteristics.....	H-12
Occupation and Labor Participation .....	H-12
Housing Characteristics .....	H-14
Household Type and Size .....	H-14
Household Income .....	H-16
Overcrowding.....	H-18
Overpayment.....	H-18
Special Needs Populations.....	H-19
Senior Households.....	H-20
Agricultural Workers.....	H-22
Female-Headed Households.....	H-22
Persons with Disabilities .....	H-23
Large Households.....	H-25
Homeless.....	H-26
Housing Stock Characteristics.....	H-29
Housing Growth Trends.....	H-30
Tenure.....	H-30
Vacancy.....	H-31
Age and Housing Stock Conditions .....	H-32
Housing Costs and Affordability .....	H-33
Homeownership Market .....	H-33
Rental Market .....	H-34
Housing Affordability by Household Income .....	H-36
At-Risk Rental Housing.....	H-40



Assisted Housing Inventory ..... H-40

At-Risk Housing..... H-41

Preservation Options ..... H-41

Replacement Costs ..... H-42

Cost Comparison ..... H-42

Estimates of Housing Needs ..... H-43

Disproportionate Needs..... H-44

Constraints on Housing Production ..... H-45

Governmental Constraints ..... H-45

    Land Use Controls..... H-45

    Zoning Districts Allowing Res. Development..... H-46

    Parking Standards ..... H-50

    Provision for a Variety of Housing..... H-50

    Single-Family Dwellings ..... H-51

    Single-Family Attached Dwellings..... H-50

    Duplex Dwellings..... H-50

    Multifamily Dwellings ..... H-50

    Manufactured Housing (Mobile Homes)..... H-53

    Boarding House..... H-53

    Accessory Living Quarters/Second Unit Housing .... H-54

    Single-Room Occupancy Housing Facility ..... H-55

    Community Care Facilities (Six or Fewer Indiv.) ..... H-56

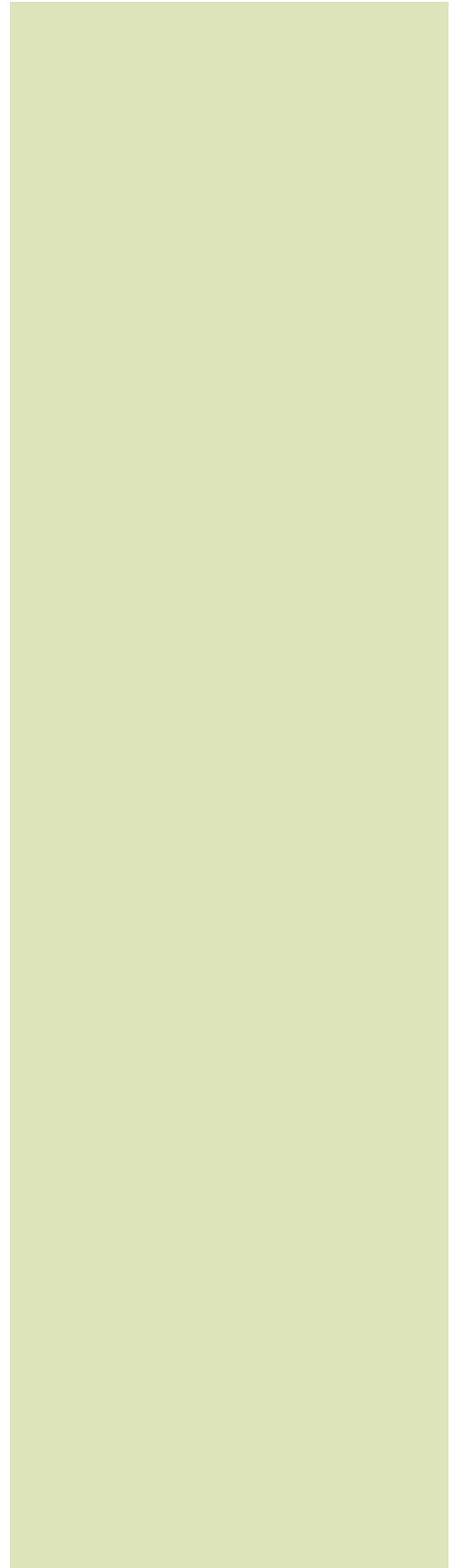
    Community Care Facilities (Seven or More Indiv.) .. H-56

    Large Family Day Care Homes ..... H-56

    Small Family Day Care Homes ..... H-56

    Transitional Care Facilities/ Emergency Shelters ..... H-57

Farm Worker Housing .....	H-60
Housing for Persons with Disabilities .....	H-60
Development Fees and Entitlements.....	H-61
On- and Off-site Improvement Requirements.....	H-63
Building Codes and Enforcement.....	H-64
Processing and Permit Procedures.....	H-65
Site Development Permit .....	H-66
Discretionary Permit(s) Processing Time .....	H-67
Measure M .....	H-69
Regulatory Concessions and Incentives .....	H-71
Market Constraints.....	H-72
Land Costs .....	H-72
Constructions and Labor Costs .....	H-73
Financing .....	H-73
Environmental Constraints .....	H-77
Infrastructure Constraints .....	H-77
Housing Resources.....	H-78
Available Sites for Housing .....	H-78
Future Housing Need .....	H-78
Credit Toward the RHNA.....	H-79
Residential Sites Inventory.....	H-80
Comparison of Sites Inventory and RHNA .....	H-90
Financial Resources.....	H-91
Community Development Block Grant (CDBG) ....	H-91
Section 8 Housing Choice Voucher Program .....	H-92
Energy Conservation .....	H-92



Housing Plan.....H-94

Evaluation of Accomplishments under Adopted  
Housing Element.....H-94

Goals and Policies of 2008-2014 Housing Element .....H-100

    Neighborhood and Housing Preservation .....H-100

    Housing Availability .....H-101

    Equal Housing Opportunity .....H-102

    Implementation and Monitoring.....H-102

Summary of Approach .....H-103

Quantified Objectives .....H-104

**APPENDICES**

- A. Implementation Program
- B. Related Plans and Programs
- C. Glossary

## FIGURES

### INTRODUCTION

I-1 Regional Context .....	1-5
----------------------------	-----

### LAND USE

LU-1 North, Central, and Southern Areas of Laguna Hills.....	LU-3
LU-2 Urban Village Area.....	LU-4
LU-3 Typical Residential Densities .....	LU-6
LU-4 Floor-Area Ratio Description .....	LU-7
LU-5 Typical Floor-Area Ratio Calculations .....	LU-7
LU-6 Land Use .....	LU-8
LU-7 Alicia Gateway Opportunity Area.....	LU-20
LU-8 Alicia Gateway Opportunity Area Planning Concepts...	LU-21
LU-9 Via Lomas Opportunity Area .....	LU-22
LU-10 Via Lomas Concept Plan.....	LU-23
LU-11 Moulton/La Paz Opportunity Area.....	LU-24
LU-12 Moulton/La Paz Planning Concepts .....	LU-25
LU-13 Future Study Areas.....	LU-26

### MOBILITY

M-1 Street Network .....	M-3
M-2 Traffic Calming Techniques.....	M-9
M-3 Bicycle Network.....	M-12
M-4 Orange Co. Transportation Authority Bus Routes, 2008 ..	M-14

**CONSERVATION AND OPEN SPACE**

COS-1 Open Space and Parklands ..... COS-7

COS-2 Scenic Resources ..... COS-11

COS-3 Trails Plan ..... COS-22

COS-4 South Coast Air Basin ..... COS-24

**COMMUNITY SERVICES AND FACILITIES**

CSF-1 Community Facilities ..... CSF-4

CSF-2 Water Districts ..... CSF-10

CSF-3 Electricity and Gas Providers ..... CSF-13

**SAFETY**

S-1 Landslide and Liquefaction Hazard Zone ..... S-4

S-2 Fault Locations ..... S-7

S-3 Flood Hazards ..... S-8

S-4 Fire Hazards ..... S-11

**NOISE**

N-1 Land Use Compatibility Guidelines ..... N-5

N-2 Noise Contours 2008 ..... N-7

N-3 Noise Contours 2030 ..... N-8

**HOUSING**

H-1 Age Distribution, 2000 ..... H-11

H-2 Housing Stock Composition ..... H-16

H-3 Year Structure Built ..... H-33

H-4 Multifamily Housing Sites, Laguna Hills ..... H-39

H-5 Housing Opportunity Areas.....	H-81
H-6 Urban Village Specific Plan Area .....	H-85
H-7 Alicia Gateway.....	H-88

## TABLES

### LAND USE

LU-1 Land Use Designations .....	LU-9
LU-2 Urban Village Specific Plan Area .....	LU-28
LU-3 General Plan Development Capacity .....	LU-29
LU-4 Description of Actions to Address Land Use Issues .....	LU-37

### MOBILITY

M-1 Level of Service Descriptions .....	M-8
M-2 Bikeway Classification Descriptions .....	M-11
M-3 OCTA Bus Routes Serving Laguna Hills, 2008 .....	M-13
M-4 Description of Actions to Address Mobility Issues .....	M-21

### CONSERVATION AND OPEN SPACE

COS-1 Significant Vista Points.....	COS-12
COS-2 Paleontological Sensitivity within Laguna Hills.....	COS-14
COS-3 Public Parks .....	COS-16
COS-4 Private Parks .....	COS-18
COS-5 Existing Pedestrian/Equestrian Trails and Multi-Use Corridors within Laguna Hills.....	COS-20
COS-6 Description of Actions to Address Conservation and Open Space Issues .....	COS-31

**COMMUNITY SERVICES AND FACILITIES**

CSF-1 Community Services and Facilities Service Standards .. CSF-3

CSF-2 Fire Stations Near Laguna Hills ..... CSF-8

CSF-3 Description of Actions to Address Community Services  
and Facilities Issues ..... CSF-21

**SAFETY**

S-1 Reservoir and Dams within/Near Laguna Hills ..... S-9

S-2 Description of Actions to Address Safety Issues..... S-22

**NOISE**

N-1 Common Noise Levels ..... N-3

N-2 Residential Noise Standards ..... N-6

N-3 Description of Actions to Address Noise Issues ..... N-14

**HOUSING**

H-1 Housing Stakeholders ..... H-5

H-2 Population Growth Trends ..... H-10

H-3 Race and Ethnicity, 2000 ..... H-11

H-4 Employment Profile, 2000 ..... H-12

H-5 Average Yearly Salary by Occupation Orange County  
MSA, 2007 ..... H-13

H-6 Employment Structure by North America Industry Classification  
System (NAICS) Sector, 2003 ..... H-14

H-7 Household Characteristics ..... H-15

H-8 Household Income by Income Group, 2000..... H-17

H-9 Overcrowded Households, 2000 .....	H-18
H-10 Overpayment by Income and Tenure, 2000 .....	H-19
H-11 Households by Tenure by Age, Laguna Hills, 2000 .....	H-20
H-12 Senior Households by Income and Tenure, Laguna Hills, 2000 .....	H-21
H-13 Tenure in Female-Headed Households, Laguna Hills, 2000 .....	H-22
H-14 Persons with Disability by Employment Status, 2000 .....	H-24
H-15 Persons with Disability by Disability Type, 2000 .....	H-25
H-16 Summary of Homeless Estimates.....	H-27
H-17 Housing Stock Composition .....	H-30
H-18 Housing Tenure by Units in Structure, 2000 .....	H-31
H-19 Vacancy Rates, 2000 .....	H-32
H-20 House and Condo. Sales May 1, 2007 - May 1, 2008 .....	H-34
H-21 Housing Values, City of Laguna Hills and Surrounding Jurisdictions, June 2000.....	H-35
H-22 Apartment Rental Rates, April 2008.....	H-35
H-23 Housing Affordability Matrix Orange County .....	H-36
H-24 Summary of Housing Affordability and Availability .....	H-38
H-25 Inventory of Assisted Rental Housing.....	H-40
H-26 Market Value of At-Risk Housing Units .....	H-41
H-27 Rent Subsidies Required .....	H-43
H-28 Housing Assistance Needs of Low and Moderate Income Households in Laguna Hills.....	H-44
H-29 Residential Land Uses and Zones .....	H-46
H-30 Basic Standards for Residential Development .....	H-48

H-31 Comparison of Residential Development Standards –  
     Surrounding Jurisdictions ..... H-49

H-32 Parking Requirements for Residential Uses ..... H-51

H-33 Regional Comparison of Parking Requirements ..... H-51

H-34 Provisions for a Variety of Housing ..... H-52

H-35 Required Permit for Community Care Facilities  
     (≥ Seven Individuals) ..... H-57

H-36 Planning and Development Fees ..... H-62

H-37 Planning Application Fees — Surrounding Jurisdictions .. H-63

H-38 Construction Cost Estimates (2007) ..... H-73

H-39 Disposition of Home Purchase Loans by Census Tract ..... H-75

H-40 RHNA Credits and Remaining Need ..... H-79

H-41 Vacant Sites Inventory ..... H-80

H-41a Commercial Underutilized Sites Inventory..... H-90

H-42 Summary of Residential Sites Inventory ..... H-91

H-43 Review of Accomplishments under  
     2000 Housing Element..... H-95

H-44 Description of Actions to Address Housing Issues..... H-103

H-45 Quantified Objective Summary (2006–2014)..... H-104

# Introduction



## Preface

Laguna Hills offers a high standard of living, making it a great community in which to live, work, shop, and play. Its beautiful natural setting of rolling hills, miles of trails, and connected open spaces make the City a welcome refuge in the heart of Orange County. People take pride in their neighborhoods and feel safe enjoying the many amenities Laguna Hills has to offer. While residents value this small town atmosphere, they also enjoy the big city amenities in Laguna Hills. The City's shopping and employment destinations provide for a strong and sound economy, further strengthening the City's quality of life. Looking to protect and enhance these qualities, the City undertook an update to its original 1994 General Plan. An important part of this update process was working with the citizens of Laguna Hills to identify opportunities to create a greater sense of community; enhance the City's identity; offer new job, shopping, and housing choices; and promote a more sustainable future.

These opportunities were articulated by the Laguna Hills citizens in an extensive community involvement process and are expressed in a set of

eight "Guiding Themes." The Guiding Themes are the vision for Laguna Hills and set the future course for the City. Through the Guiding Themes, the updated General Plan builds upon the City's existing strengths and provides opportunities to enhance the quality of life in the City. The General Plan functions as a blueprint that defines not only how the City wishes to evolve during the next 20 years, but the key steps the community will take to make this vision a reality.

## What is a General Plan?

The General Plan is a legal document and much of its content, such as background data, analysis, maps, and exhibits, is established by statutory requirements. The legal adequacy of the General Plan is critical because many city actions and programs are required to be consistent with the General Plan.

California law requires every city and county in the state to prepare and adopt a comprehensive long-range General Plan for the physical development of the jurisdiction. The General Plan represents the community's view of its future and becomes



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a blueprint for creating the view envisioned by the community. The General Plan and its maps, diagrams, and the development policies form the basis for the city's zoning, subdivision, and public works actions. Decision makers and city staff use the goals, policies, and programs of the General Plan as a basis for making decisions.

The General Plan is considered comprehensive because it addresses a wide range of issues that affect the city such as the physical development of the jurisdiction or social concerns that can affect the overall quality of life. The General Plan is considered a “long-term” plan since it looks 20 years or more into the future. Each jurisdiction can establish a time horizon that best fits its individual needs. The State General Plan Guidelines recommend that General Plans be updated every 5 to 10 years to ensure that they remain relevant—to reflect local physical and demographic changes and broader changes in culture and technology.

Seven specific “elements” in California planning law are mandatory for General Plans: land use, housing, circulation, conservation, open space, noise, and safety. These issues directly affect the community's neighborhoods and quality of life. A local jurisdiction may adopt a General Plan in the format that best fits its unique circumstances. In doing so, the jurisdiction must ensure that the General Plan and its component parts comprise an integrated, internally consistent, and compatible statement of development policies and implementation programs to achieve its vision. The Laguna Hills General Plan is intended to be an active and evolving Plan, guiding the community and decision makers in prioritizing issues related to land use, capital improvements, and budgeting.

It is not unusual for new information to become available following adoption of an updated General Plan. Alternatively, the vision for the community may change over time, and as a result, General Plans are periodically reviewed and updated to reflect the community's changing needs.

## Organization of the Laguna Hills General Plan

The Laguna Hills General Plan is organized into 10 sections. The sections include this introduction, seven General Plan elements, a General Plan Implementation Program, description of related plans and programs, and a glossary of terms used throughout this General Plan.

The seven General Plan elements encompass all of the elements required by California General Plan law. The Laguna Hills General Plan combines the mandatory Open Space and Conservation Elements required by State law, and includes a separate, optional element on Community Services and Facilities.

The seven General Plan elements in the Laguna Hills General Plan include:

- Land Use
- Mobility
- Conservation and Open Space
- Community Services and Facilities
- Safety
- Noise
- Housing

The seven elements are generally organized in a similar format. Each element contains an Introduction, Background, and Plan section as described below.

**Introduction.** This section indicates the purpose of each element and how it will help Laguna Hills achieve its vision for the community as articulated through the eight Guiding Themes.

**Background.** This section provides the reader with the existing conditions and/or the environmental setting particular to that element topic. Additionally, this information helps the reader understand the rationale and the content for the Plan section.

**Plan.** The Plan section is composed of three sections: issues, goals and policies, and approach. The issues section describes issues and concerns expressed by the community, City staff, and the City Council. The issues and concerns are also expressed in the Guiding Themes. The goals and policies section sets both broad and specific direction for the future of the City based on the identified issues and concerns. The approach section provides a general description and summary of the City’s course of action to achieve the goals and policies.

The Laguna Hills General Plan also contains the following appendices, which are integral parts of the General Plan:

**Implementation Program.** The Implementation Program follows the elements and identifies the specific actions that will achieve the goals, policies, and plans identified in each element. The Implementation Program is an important part of the City’s bi-annual budgeting process. In preparation for each budgeting cycle, each City Department actively reviews the General Plan, and Implementation Program, when determining what Major Plans will be proposed for consideration by the City Council.

**Related Plans and Programs.** This section identifies plans and programs related to the General Plan and applicable to future activities and land use decisions within Laguna Hills.

**The Seven General Plan Elements**

---

- Land Use
- Mobility
- Conservation and Open Space
- Community Services and Facilities
- Safety
- Noise
- Housing

**Glossary.** This section provides definitions for technical terms used throughout the General Plan.

## Planning Area

The City of Laguna Hills is located in the San Joaquin Hills in southern Orange County, approximately 60 miles south of Los Angeles and 70 miles north of San Diego. Laguna Hills is bounded by the cities of Irvine and Lake Forest to the north; Interstate 5 (I-5) and the cities of Mission Viejo and Lake Forest to the east; the City of Laguna Niguel to the south; and, the cities of Aliso Viejo and Laguna Woods to the west. Regional access is provided by I-5 and the San Joaquin Hill Transportation Corridor (State Route 73).

Laguna Hills contains approximately 6.6 square miles of land or 4,234 acres. Figure I-1 depicts the location of Laguna Hills in the region.

The planning area for Laguna Hills consists solely of areas within the City limits and is identical to the City's jurisdictional boundary. Since all land surrounding the City is under the jurisdiction of other cities, Laguna Hills does not have a planning sphere of influence or any planning authority outside of its jurisdictional boundaries.

## History of Laguna Hills

Laguna Hills is built on one of the major land grants developed during the Rancho Era. Following Mexico's independence from Spain in 1821, those who had served in the government or who had friends in authority, were given vast lands for cattle grazing. Rancho Lomas de Santiago, Rancho San Joaquin, and Rancho Niguel covered much of the western portion of the Saddleback Valley. Don Juan Avila was granted the 13,000-acre Rancho Niguel on which Laguna Hills is located.

In 1874, Lewis Moulton purchased Rancho Niguel from Don Juan Avila and increased the original grant to 22,000 acres. Moulton and his partner, Jean Piedra Daguerre, used the ranch to raise sheep and cattle. The Moulton Ranch was eventually subdivided in the early 1960s, part of which is recognized as Laguna Hills.

Incorporation efforts began in 1987 and on March 5, 1991, the goal of incorporation was finally achieved with 86 percent of the residents voting in favor of forming the City of Laguna Hills. On December 20, 1991, Laguna Hills officially became a City. Shortly after incorporation, the City undertook an extensive research and public outreach process to develop its first General Plan. The City formed a General Plan Advisory



- Laguna Hills
- Counties
- Freeway/ Toll Road
- Orange County Cities
- Conservation Land

Figure I - 1  
Regional Context



Source: EDAW, 2008.

Committee (GPAC), which ensured valuable citizen input into the development of that Plan. Additionally, the City Council conducted a series of workshops, which included the opportunity for the general public to provide comments and input on the General Plan Program.

The first General Plan was organized into five chapters and set major goals for land use, housing, growth management, fiscal management, circulation and transportation, infrastructure, open space, air quality, and noise. On June 28, 1994, the General Plan was adopted by the City Council and has guided growth and development in Laguna Hills since that time.

Since adoption of the City's first General Plan, two key annexations occurred. On November 14, 1995, the City Council approved annexation of the north Laguna Hills area, which became part of the incorporated City on July 1, 1996. The annexation added approximately 755 acres of land with various designations such as residential, mixed use, commercial, open space and parks. On September 18, 2000, with the overwhelming support from the 1,800 residents, the "Westside" Annexation Area officially became part of the incorporated City. The annexation added 149 acres of residential land, which includes the Aliso Viejo Community Association's Sheep Hills Park. The original incorporation boundaries plus these two annexation areas form the City's Planning Area addressed in this Plan.

## Community Participation

This is the first comprehensive revision of the General Plan since the City's first General Plan was adopted in 1994. The General Plan is based on extensive research and analysis of existing conditions, changing local and regional conditions, evolving trends in urban planning, and a collaborative partnership with community members through an extensive public participation process.

## COMMUNITY INVOLVEMENT

At the heart of the update to the Laguna Hills General Plan was an extensive public involvement process. Throughout the General Plan process, the General Plan consultant and City staff team engaged the community and its decision makers in numerous workshops, stakeholder meetings, study sessions, and public hearings to understand the vision and desires for the future of Laguna Hills. Hundreds of residents, employees, business owners, and other stakeholders spent numerous fruitful hours sharing ideas, expressing views, debating policies, and making hard decisions with the intent of creating a General Plan that is right for Laguna Hills. The policy framework in the General Plan reflects the priorities, needs, and aspirations of those involved in the process. The

input received from community members is expressed in a set of Guiding Themes that provides a foundation for the City’s long-range goals.

The public participation program included the following major components.

**General Plan Advisory Committee**

Consisting of 18 members, the GPAC served in an advisory role to City staff and the City Council during the General Plan process. The GPAC was appointed by the City Council and made up of a cross section of representatives of Laguna Hills residents, businesses, and organizations. Throughout the process, the GPAC worked with staff to address issues associated with the General Plan, including a variety of land use alternatives, housing, mobility, open space, environmental issues, and goals and policies refinement.

The GPAC had a total of eight meetings beginning in 2007 and concluding in August 2008, all of which were open to the public.

**Community Workshops**

From September 18, 2007, to May 22, 2008, the City conducted a series of three community workshops involving the broader community, using hands-on activities, expert guest speakers, and focused dialogue sessions.

The purpose of the workshops was to encourage residents and other stakeholders to identify issues and opportunities to address in the General Plan and to solicit input on the General Plan Program.

**Newsletters**

The City used a series of newsletters to inform residents of the General Plan Program and opportunities for input. The newsletters also served as an invitation to the public workshops. The first newsletter was sent to every household in the City. Subsequent newsletters were sent to households indicating an interest in receiving General Plan Program updates.

**Public Hearing and Adoption**

The final step in the General Plan process was public hearings on the Draft General Plan and the Program Environmental Impact Report (PEIR). This hearing process resulted in revisions to the General Plan based on City Council direction. After final review, the City Council adopted the General Plan, superseding the previous General Plan as the City’s official guide for growth and development.



## Other Outreach Efforts

In addition to the outreach efforts described here, the City also announced GPAC Meetings and Public Workshops on the City’s website and in the local newspaper. Additionally, members of the GPAC were encouraged to distribute workshop announcements to their neighbors, friends, and colleagues.

## THE VISION FOR LAGUNA HILLS

A General Plan Program stimulates thinking within the community about the City’s future and generates many important questions for consideration:

- What does the future hold for Laguna Hills?
- What should the vision be for our beautiful City?
- What would you like to see in the next 20 years?
- Where are improvements needed?
- What should be preserved?
- How can we benefit from current planning trends such as green building, walkable communities, and mixed use development?

The citizens of Laguna Hills were asked these types of questions in a variety of community meetings to launch the update to the Laguna Hills General Plan. The community responded with their desires, issues, passions, concerns, and aspirations for the future of the City. This feedback from the community was captured and synthesized into a set of “Guiding Themes” that set the future course for the General Plan. The Guiding Themes build on what residents of Laguna Hills already know: Laguna Hills is a great community and a great place to live. Through the Guiding Themes, the updated General Plan builds upon the City’s existing strengths and provides ways to enhance the quality of life for the citizens, employees, and visitors of Laguna Hills.

The Guiding Themes establish the vision and direction for the General Plan and the City of Laguna Hills and include:

- A City Prepared for the Future
- Focused Revitalization in Commercial Centers
- Efficient Transportation System
- Strong Community Identity
- Healthy and Supportive Community for Families and People of All Ages
- Protecting Environmental Resources and Open Spaces for Future Generations



- Maintaining Safety within the Community
- Sustaining Community Connections as Laguna Hills Advances

## A City Prepared for the Future

Managing growth and proactively meeting residents' needs are key issues for the future of Laguna Hills. Residents recognize the need to provide housing opportunities for all segments of the community. In addition, the need to continually improve municipal services and facilities (such as water, sewer, trash, library, sports facilities, and animal services) is important to the City's welfare. The City will continue to look for opportunities to integrate City services with the best technology available.

Maintaining community connections is important as development occurs in Laguna Hills. Attention should be paid to the amount, type, and design of new development to ensure compatibility with existing neighborhoods and to create new gathering spaces.

Expanding local retail will reduce residents' shopping trips to adjacent cities, increasing local tax revenues, reducing vehicle trips, and enhancing overall quality of life.

## Focused Revitalization in Commercial Corridors

Promoting revitalization that enhances the public realm, expanding the City's unique offerings, and cultivating environmental and economic sustainability are important goals of the General Plan. Some of the commercial and business centers have aged and are ripe with opportunities for new activity and redevelopment. At the same time, many residents are wary of development out of scale and character with the community and instead prefer development (of neighborhood centers) that is locally oriented (as opposed to regionally oriented).

People recognize that goals for development in the northern area of the City may vary from those for the central/southern portions. "Neighborhood centers" in the central and southern areas of the City are envisioned as walkable environments serving one or more neighborhoods and integrating a mix of uses, such as shopping, services, culture and civic facilities, housing, and/or small parks and plazas. To the north, the Laguna Hills Mall and business park sites may be more suitable for greater amounts of employment and services that serve both local and regional markets. The future of the Mall may be as a "town center/urban village" with retail, restaurants, entertainment, gathering spaces, and residential activity. Integrating the town center with the hospital area and the Laguna Hills Transit Center will allow people to live close to work and to use transit or walk to reach destinations. Redevelopment of older, underutilized business parks in the "north district" will result in new environments with rejuvenated employment and shopping opportunities mixed with residences.



## Efficient Transportation System

Safe, well-functioning roads are essential and significantly contribute to people's day-to-day experience in the City. The impact of traffic volume, speed, accidents, and congestion are significant issues for Laguna Hills' residents, employees, and businesses. The General Plan strategically links land use and transportation to make efficient use of existing capacity. General Plan goals, policies, and programs for mobility emphasize pedestrian paths, bikeways, equestrian trails, and transit that connect neighborhoods to commercial districts, other activity centers, and regional transportation systems. The General Plan also establishes policies to address congestion points throughout the City, regional traffic impacts, and coordinated signalization to enhance smooth traffic flow.

## Strong Community Identity

Bolstering the unique attributes of Laguna Hills is an important goal Citywide. The City will benefit from a defined consistent character that connects to the City's origins and culture, while reflecting its natural setting. General Plan goals and policies promote more identifiable local facilities (such as the Civic Center and community centers) and defined streetscapes that tie neighborhoods and districts within the City together. Efforts also focus on City beautification. Reinforcing identity Citywide will also help to better knit together the northern and southern portions of the City and strengthen community connections.

## Healthy and Supportive Community for Families and People of All Ages

Attention to the needs of all community members, including seniors, children, persons with special needs, and residents of all ages, is an important value in Laguna Hills. This is evident in the great schools, senior activities, and recreation opportunities available in the community. These qualities will be maintained and expanded. Residents also recognize the need for opportunities for increased physical activity and desire to maintain and increase access to parks and recreational amenities to foster healthy lifestyles within the community.

## Protecting Environmental Resources and Preserving Open Spaces

Laguna Hills' natural amenities are highly valued. The community is envisioned as a healthy and clean environment where resources are protected. This includes preservation of existing open spaces, parks, trails, and creeks, and the conservation of energy and water resources. Reducing air and noise pollution and improving recycling efforts are also goals of the community.



## Maintaining Safety within the Community

The City's neighborhoods will be secure. People of all ages will be safe walking or bicycling to schools, recreation, or work. Problems with traffic and speeding cars need to be addressed by traffic calming measures to improve the overall safety of the community. Laguna Hills also has a very low crime rate, and residents want that low rate maintained.

## Sustaining Community Connections as Laguna Hills Advances

The City will strive to protect the small town atmosphere that residents identify with living and working in Laguna Hills. Residents feel connected to the community and local government and enjoy knowing their neighbors and their neighborhoods in addition to participating in civic life. Planning will focus on fostering a community feel that creates opportunities for community connections (both social and physical). General Plan goals and policies will foster more community traditions and events by creating additional community activity centers (where residents can congregate), and by establishing physical connections between the residents and the community activity centers.

## Using the General Plan

The City's General Plan is intended for use by all members of the community, including residents, businesses, developers, and decision makers. The organization of the General Plan allows users to find topics or sections that interest them and to quickly review City policies. Readers should keep in mind that policies throughout all elements are interrelated and should be examined comprehensively and must be considered together when making planning decisions.

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

- Goals are statements that describe in general terms a desired future condition or "end" state. Goals describe ideal future conditions for a particular topic and tend to be very general and broad.
- Policies provide guidance toward a specific course of action for decision makers to achieve a desired goal.

- Implementation Programs identify the specific steps to be taken by the City to implement the policies. They may include revisions of current codes and ordinances, plans and capital improvements, programs, financing, and other measures that should be assigned to different City departments after the General Plan is adopted.

The adopted General Plan is a dynamic, not static, document. State law allows up to four General Plan amendments per mandatory element per year. Most amendments propose a change in the land use designation of a particular property (and thus propose a change to the Land Use Element).

As time passes after a number of such amendments, the City may find it desirable to revise portions of the General Plan text to reflect the land use map changes or other changing circumstances or philosophy. The City should comprehensively review the Plan every 5 years to determine whether it is still in step with community values and physical and economic conditions.

## Documents Related to the General Plan

Although the General Plan serves as the primary means to help the City implement its vision, several other documents that serve as implementation tools are needed to ensure that the goals and policies identified in the General Plan are fully realized. The General Plan is implemented in tandem with a number of federal, State, regional, and local plans and regulations. These applicable plans and programs are summarized in Appendix A of this General Plan.

### PROGRAM ENVIRONMENTAL IMPACT REPORT (EIR)

As required by the California Environmental Quality Act (CEQA), an Environmental Impact Report (EIR) is prepared for the General Plan. The EIR is a separate document that describes environmental conditions in the City, assesses the possible effects that future development pursuant to the General Plan will have, identifies actions that will be undertaken to reduce these impacts, and evaluates the comparative impacts of alternatives to the General Plan. Many of the policies in the General Plan serve as mitigation for potential impacts. The document is a “program level” EIR, meaning that it examines the general nature of impacts at a Citywide scale. The findings of the EIR help determine the appropriate level of environmental review that should be performed when subsequent projects consistent with the General Plan are proposed. Although the EIR is certified by the City Council, it is not adopted as a policy document.

# Land Use



## Introduction

The citizens of Laguna Hills take great pride in their City. Residents value the small town atmosphere and the qualities and characteristics that make Laguna Hills such a desirable place to live. Preserving the high standard of living that gives Laguna Hills its appeal is important to the City's residents. At the same time, opportunities exist to strengthen and improve the City and its quality of life.

The City recognizes that quality of life is dependent on preserving neighborhoods, open spaces, and public spaces that already enrich community life, and on creating a compatible and complementary mix of new housing and shopping choices, jobs, and services that can sustain a vibrant economy, a healthy environment, and a vital social life.

The Land Use Element focuses on how land is used in Laguna Hills. The arrangement and use of land helps determine community identity and character, how and where people interact, and how much they enjoy living and working in the community. Policies in this Land Use Element will protect and enhance established neighborhoods while helping the City

evolve into a more integrated, walkable, sustainable, and cohesive community with an identifiable center. The underlying form of the City established by the original planning and development of the community is well suited to accomplishing these objectives.

Some of the factors that must be addressed in achieving the desired community character are preserving environmental resources and open spaces, maintaining and improving the City's residential neighborhoods, creating lively public places, providing quality public services and facilities, integrating and connecting different land uses, maintaining and expanding thriving businesses, and maintaining a strong tax base. Policies addressing land use in this Element promote a pattern of future development that advances the City's desire for a higher quality of life and a more sustainable future.

## Purpose and Scope of the Land Use Element

The Land Use Element is the foundation of the General Plan and serves as a compass that guides citizens, planners, and decision makers on the



desired pattern of growth, development, and change in Laguna Hills. This Element describes both existing and future land use activities and unifies the other elements of the General Plan by providing an overall policy context. The Land Use Element deals with the central issues of development and growth, and the quality of the community, and helps define the desired balance among the social, environmental, and economic costs and benefits associated with growth. Most of the Guiding Themes that were described in the Introduction section of the General Plan are manifested in this Element.

The Land Use Element identifies the distribution, location, and intensity of all land use types throughout the City. Text, maps, and diagrams establish the direction for land uses within the City and describe how these uses are integrated with other General Plan Elements and policies.

## Background

The City of Laguna Hills has a variety of land uses, including residential, commercial, office, mixed use, public and institutional, open space and recreational, as well as planned community areas. The predominate land use in Laguna Hills is moderate to low density single-family homes. This contributes to the small-town character many residents identify with Laguna Hills. The City contains a range of housing types, including single-family detached and attached homes, apartments, condominiums, and mobile homes located throughout the City.

Nonresidential uses in the City, such as commercial and office, provide valuable revenue to the City and provide jobs and services for the community and region. Most commercial uses in the City are concentrated along Interstate 5 (I-5) and the major roadways. The City is almost entirely built out, although there are a few undeveloped large lot residential parcels scattered throughout the southern portion of the City.

Several patterns of development exist throughout the City of Laguna Hills. The next section more fully describes how land is used in the northern, central, and southern portions of the City. Surrounding land uses in adjacent communities are also described. Figure LU-1 depicts the location of the northern, central, and southern portions of Laguna Hills.

## NORTHERN LAND USES

The northern portion of the City is generally located between Ridge Route Drive and Lake Forest Drive. A variety of uses are located here, including a mobile home park designated as High Density Residential, open space and park areas, neighborhood and freeway commercial centers, and a designated Mixed Use area. The Mixed Use area provides

the City with various goods and services needed to support the local community, including administrative and professional offices, institutional and government uses, business support uses, restaurants, personal services, and retail stores.

## CENTRAL LAND USES

The central portion of Laguna Hills is generally located north of La Paz Road and south of Ridge Route Drive. This area of the City contains the City's downtown Urban Village, low, medium-low, and medium density residential neighborhoods. The medium density neighborhoods contain multi-family housing such as apartments and condominiums.

Pockets of this area also contain apartments and condominiums primarily southwest of Moulton Parkway. This area is designated as High Density Residential. Two apartment communities in this area, Rancho Moulton and Rancho Niguel, provide government-assisted affordable housing opportunities to Laguna Hills residents.

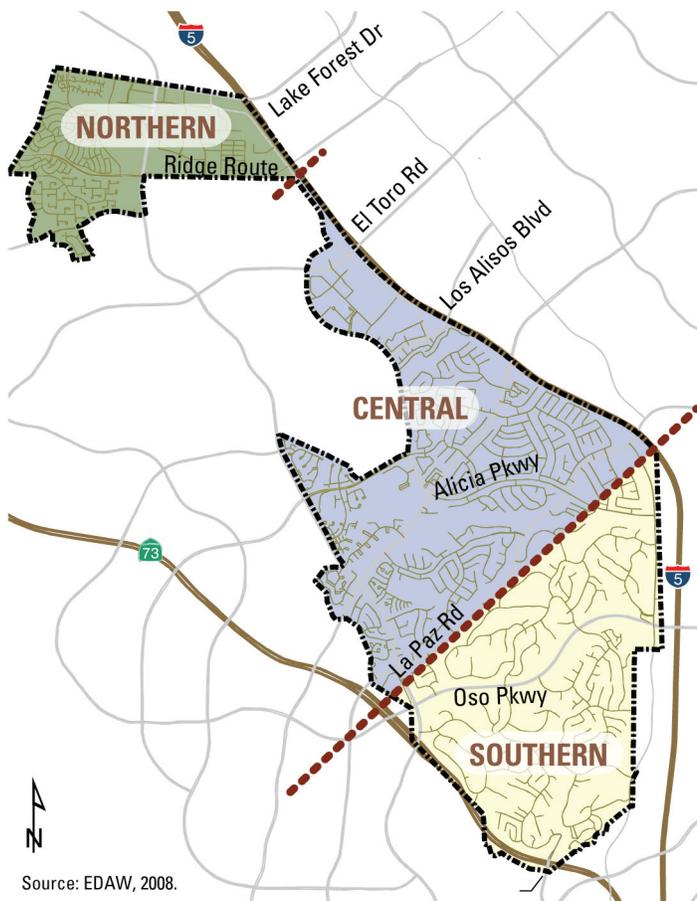


Figure LU-1  
North, Central, and Southern  
Areas of Laguna Hills

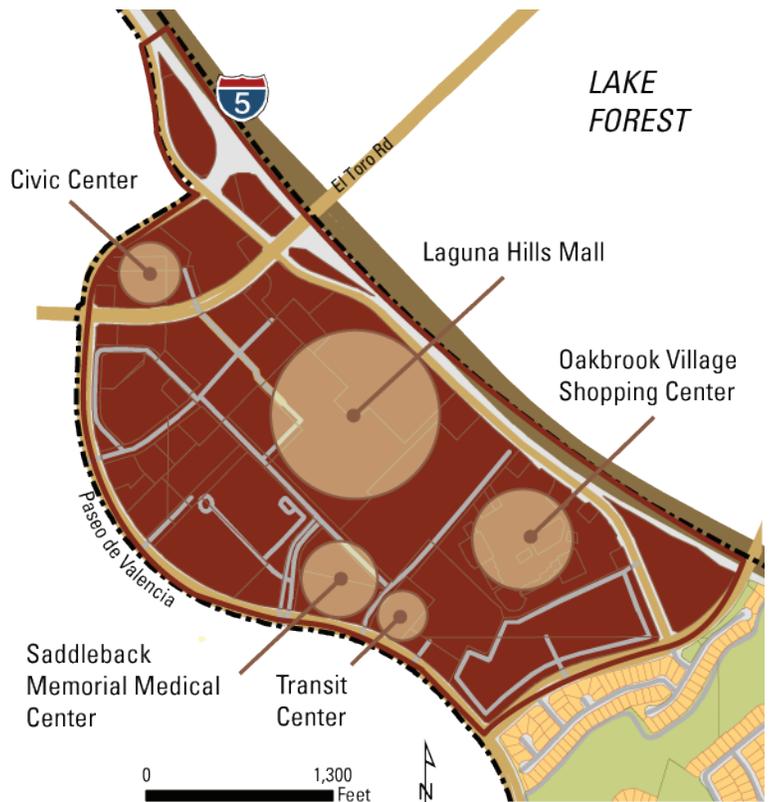
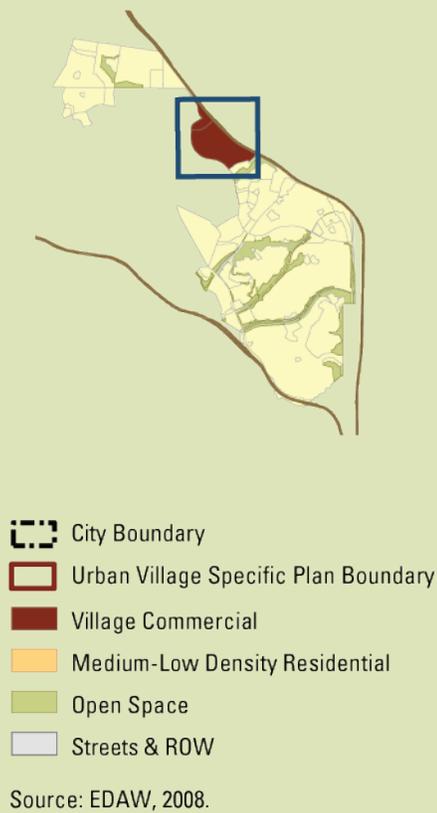
Land designated as Community Commercial is also integrated throughout this area, which provides valuable services to the surrounding neighborhoods. These sites provide retail, markets, commercial services, restaurants, commercial recreation, professional and business offices, financial institutions, and automotive sales. There are medium-intensity commercial sites along I-5 serving the needs of the motoring public both in Laguna Hills and surrounding areas.

This area of the City is also home to Laguna Hills High School, north of La Paz Road, as well as two elementary schools, The Community Center and Sports Complex, and several neighborhood parks. Cultural resources are located along Coastal Street, and a historic adobe structure is located near Aliso Creek.

### Urban Village

The civic and retail heart of Laguna Hills, the Urban Village, is also located in the central portion of the City (see Figure LU-2). This area is generally bounded by Paseo de Valencia on the north and west, Los Alisos Boulevard on the south, and I-5 on the east. This area is anchored by the Laguna Hills Mall and Saddleback Memorial Medical Center and is home to several retail stores as well as medical services and offices. The Laguna Hills Civic Center is also located within this area. The Urban Village Specific Plan (UVSP) guides new development in the Urban Village.

Figure LU-2  
Urban Village Area



## SOUTHERN LAND USES

The largest residential development in Laguna Hills is the Nellie Gail Ranch community. This community is bounded by I-5 on the east, State Route 73 (SR-73) on the west, and La Paz Road to the north. Located on 1,350 acres, Nellie Gail Ranch consists of 1,407 lots and is a mixture of tract and custom homes on large lots in an equestrian setting, with homes ranging from 1,700 to 17,000 square feet. The land use designation for this area is Estate Residential. Nellie Gail Ranch has an equestrian center, 20 miles of equestrian trails, and several parks and community areas, as well as substantial open space. The majority of Nellie Gail Ranch is developed, but there are a few vacant, buildable sites located throughout the community.

In addition to Nellie Gail Ranch, the southern portion of the City contains a few residential neighborhoods containing single-family detached homes, designated as Low and Medium-Low Density Residential. Community Commercial and Freeway Commercial uses serving local and regional residents are also located in the southern portion of the community.

## SURROUNDING LAND USES

The cities of Mission Viejo and Lake Forest border Laguna Hills on the east. These cities are primarily residential, although there are a number of offices and businesses providing shopping and employment opportunities. Immediately north of Laguna Hills is the City of Irvine. Irvine provides much of the employment opportunities in the region, including large business parks, a commercial airport, and a university. To the west and south of Laguna Hills are the cities of Laguna Woods, Aliso Viejo, and Laguna Niguel, which are also predominantly residential communities with areas dedicated to office, business park, and commercial developments.

West of Laguna Hills is the Laguna Coast Wilderness Park. This 6,500-acre regional open space preserve provides Laguna Hills residents with numerous recreation opportunities within a short distance from the City.

## Land Use Plan

The Land Use Plan describes the major concepts and land use system that guide future growth and development of Laguna Hills. The Land Use Plan for Laguna Hills builds upon the City's strengths by protecting established residential neighborhoods, yet providing opportunities to enhance and beautify the City by sustainable planning, integrating the City through physical and social connections, and strengthening the



City’s identity. Five major issue areas comprise these concepts, which provide the framework for the Land Use Plan. These issue areas are:

- Activity Centers and Community Connections
- Respect for Existing Neighborhoods
- Sustainable and Creative Infill Development
- Enhancing the Community’s Identity
- Fiscal Health and Economic Sustainability

These issue areas frame the direction the City will take in its land use goals, policies, and programs to implement the vision of Laguna Hills as captured in the Guiding Themes. These issues are interrelated and are woven throughout the Land Use Plan instead of being described in distinct sections.

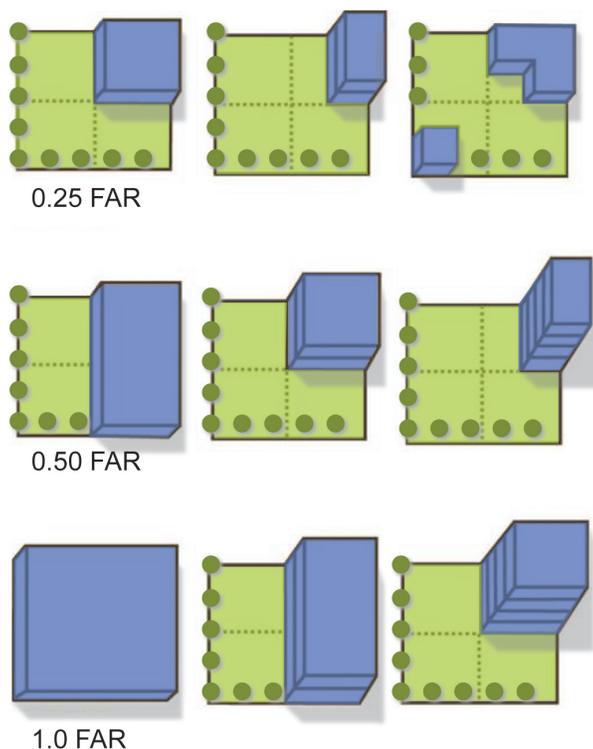
## LAND USE DENSITY AND INTENSITY

This element uses certain terminology to describe the 16 land use designations in Laguna Hills. The term “density” typically applies to residential uses and refers to the population and development capacity of residential land. Density is described in terms of dwelling units per acre of land, exclusive of existing or proposed streets and rights-of-way. Typical residential densities found within Laguna Hills are illustrated in Figure LU-3.



Figure LU-3  
Typical Residential Densities

For nonresidential uses, the term “intensity” describes the degree to which a property is or can be developed. The measure of intensity Laguna Hills has adopted is the floor-area ratio. The floor-area ratio, or FAR, describes the relationship between the total square footage of development on a lot and the area of that lot. The FAR is determined by dividing the gross floor area of all buildings on a lot by the land area of that lot (Figure LU-4).



Floor Area Ratio (FAR) =  $\frac{\text{Gross Building Area}}{\text{Lot Area}}$

Figure LU-4  
Floor-Area Ratio Description

FAR and factors such as building square footage, building height, and the percent of lot coverage are all interrelated. For example, a 20,000-square-foot building on a 40,000-square-foot lot yields a FAR of 0.50. This 0.50 FAR can accommodate a single-story building that covers half the lot or a two-story building with reduced lot coverage. Figure LU-5 illustrates different FAR calculations.

## LAND USE CLASSIFICATIONS

The Land Use Plan (Figure LU-6) graphically represents the planned distribution and intensity of land use in Laguna Hills. The colors shown on the map correspond to land use designations that describe the types of uses existing and planned in Laguna Hills. Given the built-out character of the community, only minor land use changes are expected to occur over the long term in Laguna Hills.

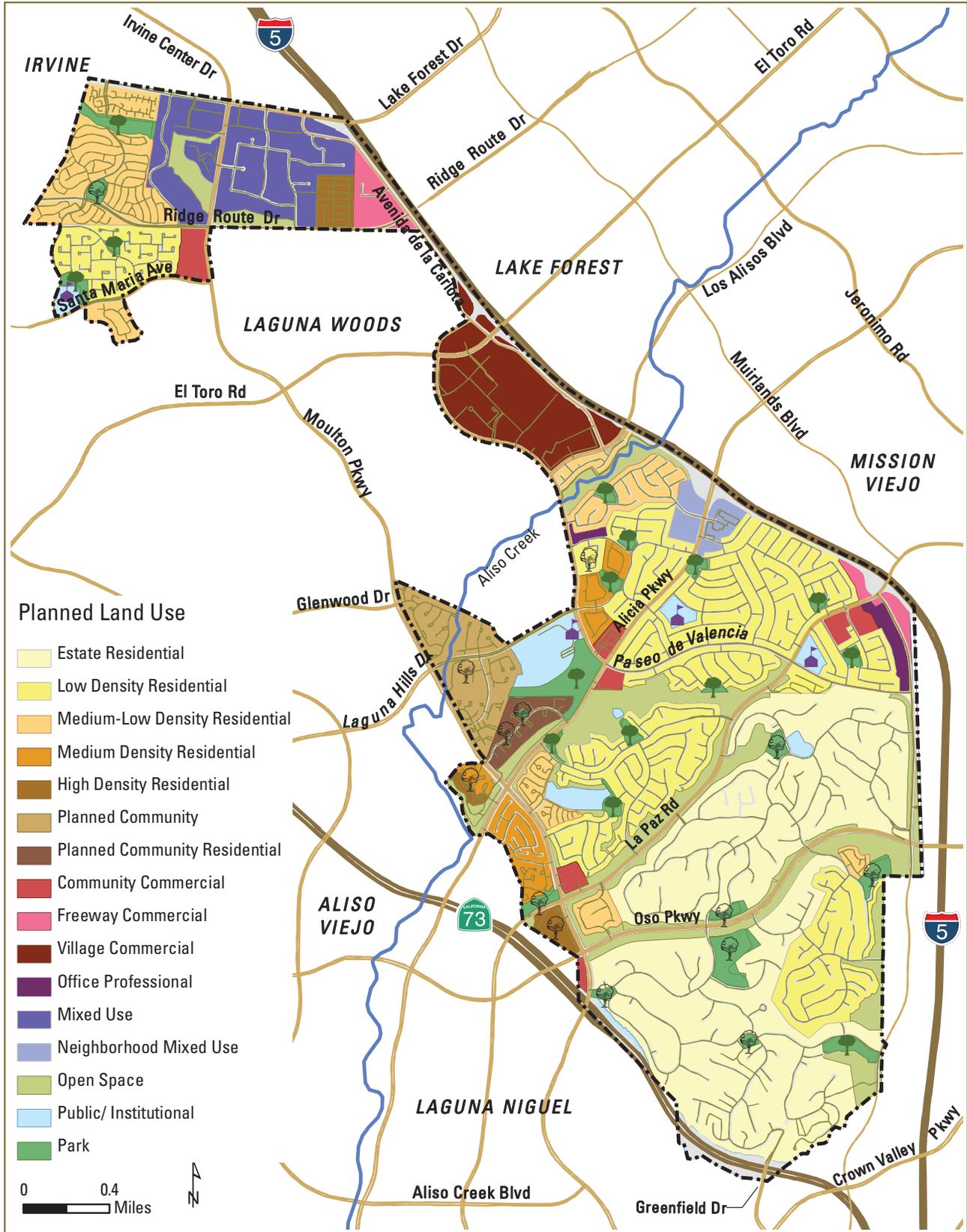


Building Floor Area = 160,000 SF  
Lot Area = 800,000 SF  
FAR = 0.20



Building Floor Area = 60,000 SF  
Lot Area = 150,000 SF  
FAR = 0.40

Figure LU-5  
Typical Floor-Area Ratio  
Calculations



Source: EDAW, 2008.

Figure LU - 6  
Land Use



Table LU-1 provides a description of each General Plan land use designation within Laguna Hills and the range of density or intensity of development allowed within each category.

Table LU-1 Land Use Designations			
	Land Use Designation	Density or Intensity	Description
<b>Residential Land Uses</b>			
	Estate Residential (ER)	0-3.5 dwelling units per acre	Estate Residential provides for low density, rural and equestrian-oriented, single-family residential neighborhoods in hillside areas. This designation is typified by large lot single-family homes that permit the keeping of large animals.
	Low Density Residential (LD)	3.0-6.5 dwelling units per acre	Low Density Residential provides for low density single-family detached residential neighborhoods. This designation is typified by medium to large lot single-family homes.
	Medium-Low Density Residential (MLD)	6.5-12.5 dwelling units per acre	Medium-Low Density Residential provides for medium-low density attached or detached residential neighborhoods. This designation is typified by small lot single-family homes, patio homes, duplexes, condominiums, and townhomes.
	Medium Density Residential (MD)	12.5-18.0 dwelling units per acre	Medium Density Residential provides for medium density multi-family residential neighborhoods. This designation is typified by condominiums and apartments.
	High Density Residential (HD)	18.0-30.0 dwelling units per acre	High Density Residential provides for intensive residential development compatible with surrounding urban development. This designation is typified by apartments and residential condominiums.

Table LU-1 Land Use Designations			
	Land Use Designation	Density or Intensity	Description
<b>Planned Community Land Use</b>			
	Planned Community (PC)	0.5-18.0 dwelling units per acre; 0.75 maximum FAR	Planned Community provides for a wide range of housing types, from estates on large lots to attached dwelling units (townhomes, condominiums, and clustered arrangements). This category permits the greatest flexibility for residential development. It also provides for high-intensity mixed use development. Appropriate land uses include but are not limited to residential, commercial, office, industrial park, civic, cultural, educational facility, and childcare facilities. This category is intended to facilitate a more efficient use of existing and future transportation systems, conserve energy resources, and develop residential densities that enhance the availability to provide affordable housing. The designation is characterized by a diversity of housing opportunities. The Planned Community district is located adjacent to major transportation corridors and is accessible to public transit facilities. A goal of this category is to foster around-the-clock activity by encouraging the mixing of activities thereby reducing the impacts on the transportation system.
	Planned Community Residential (PCR)	Maximum 600 dwelling units	Planned Community Residential provides for a wide range of medium-low density to high density multi-family housing types, which include apartments, attached townhomes, condominiums, and clustered multi-family arrangements. Appropriate land uses include residential and 10 to 13 acres of recreational land uses such as parks and open space.

**Table LU-1  
Land Use Designations**

	Land Use Designation	Density or Intensity	Description
<b>Commercial Land Uses</b>			
	Village Commercial (VC)	No maximum FAR restrictions	The Village Commercial designation is envisioned as a master planned area (Urban Village Specific Plan area) containing specific design standards and policies that enhance pedestrian and vehicle circulation within the currently developed area. The intent of this designation is to establish a community core where commercial, civic, and high density residential uses would be appropriate. The area will contain enhanced pedestrian areas that conveniently link commercial, residential, and civic activity areas. Typical uses include those associated with large regional malls, as well as a medical center, financial institutions, institutional and government uses, auto-related services, community facilities, professional offices, and high density residential uses.
	Freeway Commercial (FC)	Maximum 0.40 FAR	The Freeway Commercial designation provides for the development and maintenance of medium intensity commercial uses that serve the needs of the motoring public in the local community and the regional area. This designation is intended to provide an environment that takes advantage of the superior access and visibility provided by I-5. Typical uses include those uses allowed under the Community Commercial designation, restaurants, discount warehouse outlets, service stations, and hotels and motels.
	Community Commercial (CC)	Maximum 0.35 FAR	The Community Commercial designation provides appropriately located areas for the general shopping and commercial service needs of area residents. Typical uses include general retail, markets, commercial services, restaurants, automotive repair and service, hardware and home improvement centers, commercial recreation, professional and business offices, financial institutions, and automotive sales.

**Table LU-1  
Land Use Designations**

Office Land Uses	Land Use Designation	Density or Intensity	Description
	Office Professional (OP)	Maximum 0.50 FAR	The Office Professional designation provides for the establishment of office-based working environments for administrative and professional offices, as well as necessary support uses. Typical uses include administrative and professional offices, business-related retail and service functions, health care facilities, and vocational and trade schools.
Mixed Use Land Uses			
	Mixed Use (MU)	Maximum 0.38 FAR	The Mixed Use designation provides for areas where a variety of goods and services can be obtained within an overall planned environment. Within the Mixed Use designation, appropriate land uses include limited industrial and manufacturing uses, administrative and professional uses, institutional and government uses, business support uses, auto-related uses, eating and drinking establishments, personal services, and retail sales of durable goods and general retail sales.
	Neighborhood Mixed Use (NMU)	Maximum 0.38 FAR of .30 non-residential FAR and 0.08 residential FAR	The Neighborhood Mixed Use designation provides areas for a variety of different, compatible land uses to exist in proximity. The intent of the Neighborhood Mixed Use designation is to create attractive neighborhood-level centers that promote a more active, vibrant street life; increase pedestrian activity and reduce vehicular traffic; provide storefront style shopping streets; that provide a variety of compact, multi-family housing types close to jobs and services; and/or encourage walking and social interaction. Within the Neighborhood Mixed Use designation, appropriate land uses include mid-box anchors; administrative and professional uses; grocery and specialty stores; business support uses; eating and drinking establishments; cinemas; personal services; residential condos, apartments, and townhomes; and mixed use structures.

**Table LU-1  
Land Use Designations**

	Land Use Designation	Density or Intensity	Description
<b>Public/Institutional Land Uses</b>			
	Public/Institutional (P/I)	Maximum 1.0 FAR	The Public/Institutional designation provides areas to conduct public and institution activities, including local, State, and federal agencies; special districts; public and private utilities; and regional institutions. Appropriate uses include City facilities; public and private schools; fire and sheriff stations; hospitals; libraries; post offices; and other public, quasi-public, and institutional uses.
<b>Recreation Land Uses</b>			
	Parks (P)	No maximum FAR restrictions	The Park designation provides for recreational facilities, as well as to protect public health and safety. Park designations consist of active and passive parks. Active parks generally contain ball fields, play equipment, restrooms; and biking, hiking, and equestrian trails. Community gardens may also be considered for some parks.
	Open Space (OS)	Not intended for development	The Open Space designation provides for the preservation of environmental resources, aesthetic attributes, outdoor recreation, buffering of incompatible land uses, and the protection of public health and safety. No density or intensity standard is applied to this designation. Areas designated as Open Space include creek corridors, utility corridors, publicly maintained open space, and open space reserves and preserves.



## CONCEPTS OF THE CITY'S LAND USE PLAN

This section describes planning concepts that have been incorporated into the development of the Laguna Hills Land Use Plan. The concepts reflect extensive community input as articulated in the Guiding Themes as well as subsequent input by the community, City staff, and City officials. Several current planning concepts or trends are also described that are relevant to the community.

### Neighborhood Preservation

Laguna Hills' residents value the secure and small town atmosphere in the City and enjoy knowing their neighbors and their neighborhoods. Many residents attribute the unique feel of Laguna Hills to the City's established neighborhoods and feel strongly connected to their neighborhoods. The Land Use Plan provides goals and policies that serve to protect, preserve, and enhance existing residential neighborhoods in the City. Where new development is proposed in proximity to established neighborhoods, landscaping, buffering, and design techniques will be incorporated to protect the neighborhoods from the effects of nearby growth.

Preserving the City's residential neighborhoods and maintaining the City's housing stock are essential steps to retaining Laguna Hills' character, livability, and quality of life that so many residents enjoy.

### Current Planning Trends

Since the City adopted its first General Plan in 1994, several practices and trends have emerged in the urban planning and design fields. The underlying purpose of these planning concepts is to improve the quality of life in communities by providing greater housing choices, providing alternatives to driving, protecting environmental resources, creating a greater sense of community, and reducing environmental impacts. The Laguna Hills Guiding Themes, crafted by the community, encompass many of these planning concepts.

### Smart Growth

One of the most prominent planning concepts is smart growth. Principles of smart growth include creating a range of housing opportunities and choices; creating walkable neighborhoods linking to key activity centers and shopping centers; mixing land uses; providing a variety of transportation choices; fostering distinctive, attractive communities with a strong sense of place; encouraging community and stakeholder collaboration; and preserving open space and environmental resources.

Many of the principles of smart growth have been incorporated into the Laguna Hills General Plan. The overall goal of the City in embracing smart growth is to enhance the quality of life for the residents of Laguna Hills while embracing change in a positive, proactive sustainable manner. Some of the principles related to smart growth are more fully developed in the sections below.

## **Mixed Use Development**

Mixed use refers to the mixing of compatible land uses such as residential, commercial, and office in a vertical and/or horizontal configuration, which increases the balance of land uses within a given area. By integrating or mixing these compatible uses in proximity to one another, the City will create desirable places for people to live, work, shop, and play. The City has two mixed use designations—Mixed Use and Neighborhood Mixed Use. The Mixed Use designation allows a variety of office, public, light industrial, residential, and commercial establishments such as retail and restaurants in proximity. The goal of the Neighborhood Mixed Use designation is to create vital urban areas that accommodate housing opportunities, employment, retail, and amenities within walking distance, and will also create more vibrant areas of Laguna Hills at different times of the day. The Neighborhood Mixed Use designation excludes light industrial uses.

Mixed use buildings can be vertically mixed, with commercial space on the first floor and housing or office space above. Horizontal mixed use is also desirable at some locations, where commercial uses may be adjacent to offices or residences. Key to successful mixed use centers is creating pedestrian friendly environments within the centers and connections to neighboring uses through the use of trails, pathways, bikeways, and safe crosswalks.

## **Infill Development**

Redeveloping or reconstructing existing structures or buildings on underutilized parcels is generally referred to as infill development. Laguna Hills has several areas, including aging commercial properties, that present opportunities for quality infill development.

Infill development enhances community character, optimizes City investments in infrastructure and community facilities, supports increased transit use, promotes more walking- and bike-friendly neighborhoods, reduces vehicle trips and resulting air pollution, increases housing diversity, and enhances retail viability.

Careful planning for the integration of these uses into the fabric of the City's existing built-up areas and/or along existing commercial corridors will help provide housing opportunities and maintain the character in Laguna Hills.



The term “green” used in an environmental context describes environmental practices that are highly energy efficient and have a minimal impact on the environment.

## Sustainability

The most widely used definition of sustainability is “meeting the needs of the present without compromising the ability of future generations to meet their own needs.” For Laguna Hills, sustainability encompasses the concepts of community, environmental, and economic sustainability. Integrating goals, policies, and programs throughout the General Plan that promote sustainability will enhance the City’s natural resources, economic interests, and quality of life for present and future generations.

Laguna Hills embraces community or social sustainability by fostering community participation in civic and community events, improving the physical connections between neighborhoods and activity centers, providing access to a variety of housing opportunities, and creating vibrant places for people to connect and interact.

For environmental sustainability, Laguna Hills has crafted goals and policies that will promote energy conservation, reduce waste, incorporate smart growth and green building practices, and protect the City’s natural resources.

Economic sustainability encompasses sustaining economic growth in the City, expanding jobs and markets, relying on local businesses, and promoting an economically thriving city.

## Green Buildings

Green or sustainable buildings use resources such as energy, water, and materials much more efficiently than traditional buildings. Green buildings reduce impacts to human health and the environment during the building’s lifecycle, through better siting, design, construction, operation, maintenance, and removal.

Green buildings are designed to reduce the overall impact of the built environment on human health and the natural environment by:

- Using energy, water, and other resources efficiently;
- Protecting occupant health and improving employee productivity; and
- Reducing waste, pollution, and environmental degradation.

Numerous green building programs and rating systems currently exist, and more programs are under development all the time. The following section describes two such green building rating systems. The City will promote the use of green buildings and landscaping techniques using Leadership in Energy and Environmental Design (LEED), Green Point Rated, or other green building standards and rating systems that may be appropriate for Laguna Hills.

**Leadership in Energy and Environmental Design.** LEED is a building rating system, developed by the U.S. Green Building Council (USGBC). The LEED green building rating system is a nationally accepted voluntary benchmark for the design, construction, and operation of high performance green buildings. Though largely focused on energy efficiency, LEED promotes a whole-building approach to sustainability that also considers sustainable site development, water savings, materials selection, and indoor environmental quality. Projects are certified at one of four levels (standard, silver, gold, platinum) based on the total number of points.

LEED-certified buildings use key resources more efficiently compared to conventional buildings. LEED-certified buildings are healthier work and living environments, which contributes to higher productivity and improved employee health and comfort.

**GreenPoint Rated.** GreenPoint Rated is a program of Build It Green, a professional nonprofit membership organization that promotes healthy, energy- and resource-efficient buildings in California. GreenPoint rated is a third-party rating system for single-family and multi-family homes based on a set of green building measures. A GreenPoint Rated home is graded on five categories:

- Energy Efficiency
- Resource Conservation
- Indoor Air Quality
- Water Conservation
- Community

If a home meets minimum point requirements in each category and scores at least 50 total points, then it earns the right to bear the GreenPoint Rated label. GreenPoint Rated homes are verified to exceed State building and energy code requirements for health and environmental performance. Currently, standards have only been developed for newly constructed single-family homes and multi-family homes in California. GreenPoint Rated for remodeling and existing homes is under development.

## Urban Design

A wide variety of built and natural features contributes to the rich character of Laguna Hills. The Laguna Hills Mall area, the Civic Center, attractive residential neighborhoods, commercial corridors, neighborhood-serving shopping areas, employment centers, and open space areas all contribute to the mosaic of places and experiences that makes Laguna Hills unique. Careful urban design techniques can provide direction and guidance for development that enhances community character and natural beauty.

Incorporating urban design techniques that combine elements of urban planning, architecture, and landscape architecture in the Land Use Plan will:

- Enhance the City's unique identity and character and contribute to a positive City image;
- Stimulate investment and strengthen the economic vitality of the City;
- Contribute to a positive physical image and identity of the City;
- Maintain and protect the value of property; and
- Maintain a high quality of life without causing unnecessary high public or private costs for development or unduly restricting private enterprise, initiative, or innovation in design.

## Economic Development

Sustainable economic development and fiscal health are important goals for the City of Laguna Hills. Proactively pursuing economic development will provide more job opportunities for the City's residents and will produce more revenue, allowing the City to provide higher levels of service and provide community amenities and facilities. Economic development also increases opportunities for local businesses and property owners. Laguna Hills will also promote economic development as a way to improve the City's regional desirability, revitalize existing commercial areas, and enhance quality of life for all City residents.

The City has several strengths that make Laguna Hills a competitive and desirable business environment. The City's location within south Orange County and access to I-5 and SR-73 are significant assets for Laguna Hills. The City also has a strong job market with large office, professional, retail, and service employment centers. The City's jobs-to-housing ratio is 2.4, which is significantly higher than surrounding jurisdictions and Orange County as a whole. The Urban Village Specific Plan area, Alicia Gateway, and North Business Park areas provide multiple opportunities for residential development, mixed use, and commercial development. The City also has existing infrastructure in place to serve new development. Upgrading or expanding infrastructure may be necessary to facilitate additional growth.

The City recognizes that businesses are an important source of the City's economic well-being. Sales tax is the largest General Fund revenue source to the City (36 percent), and a significant contributor to the economic vitality of the City. Property taxes and motor vehicle in lieu fees also contribute significantly to the City's General Fund revenues at approximately 30 and 13 percent, respectively. Per capita retail sales remain consistently strong and are the second highest in the City's market area.

Retaining existing jobs and expanding and attracting new businesses are critically important to the City. The City will promote public-private partnerships, incentives, and a supportive business climate to retain and expand existing and attract new businesses.

New development or redevelopment in key areas will provide local opportunities and attract visitors and residents from the region, contributing to the financial base of Laguna Hills. The City will pursue additional shopping, entertainment, cultural activities, and performing arts venues in Laguna Hills to meet more needs locally, while benefiting the City and residents. Mixed use development will support small business enterprises and entrepreneurship as well as provide a variety of housing opportunities to the community. These development opportunities are available in the Urban Village Specific Plan area, Alicia Gateway, North Business Park, and Via Lomas areas. The City's aging commercial centers will also be redeveloped over time, providing additional economic opportunities.

The City will actively market suitable areas and sites with adequate infrastructure for new and expanding businesses and will collaborate with local and regional organizations to promote the City and advertise local events. As part of its economic development strategy, the City will also prioritize capital infrastructure requirements and pursue innovative financing mechanisms to enable timely implementation of such improvements.

## OPPORTUNITY AREAS

Opportunity areas represent sites within the City of Laguna Hills where future land use change is very likely to occur throughout the planning horizon of the General Plan. Each opportunity area has unique characteristics, opportunities, and constraints. The selection of the land use opportunity areas was the result of several months of collaboration and conversation between the public, City officials, City staff, and property owners. The selected opportunity areas represent sites in Laguna Hills that offer centrality and favorable market conditions and fulfill current needs for the City's commercial and housing markets in a changing economy. Finally, these sites offer the best potential for fulfilling the community's vision for Laguna Hills as described in the Guiding Themes.

As described in the following sections, this General Plan adjusts the land use designations in the opportunity areas. Outside of the opportunity areas, no major land use changes are anticipated to occur. The opportunity areas include Alicia Gateway, Via Lomas, and Moulton and La Paz.

## Alicia Gateway

The Alicia Gateway opportunity area is 40.4 acres located just west of I-5. Alicia Parkway bisects the opportunity area from north to south, while Hon Avenue and Paseo de Alicia split the area from east to west. Figure LU-7 depicts the location of the Alicia Gateway opportunity area.

Alicia Gateway currently contains a variety of office and retail uses, including retail stores, restaurants, local services, fast-food establishments, and two gas stations. The area also contains a business park, a used car lot, and a public storage facility. Single-family homes border the area on the north, south, and west. No residential development is currently located within the boundaries of Alicia Gateway.

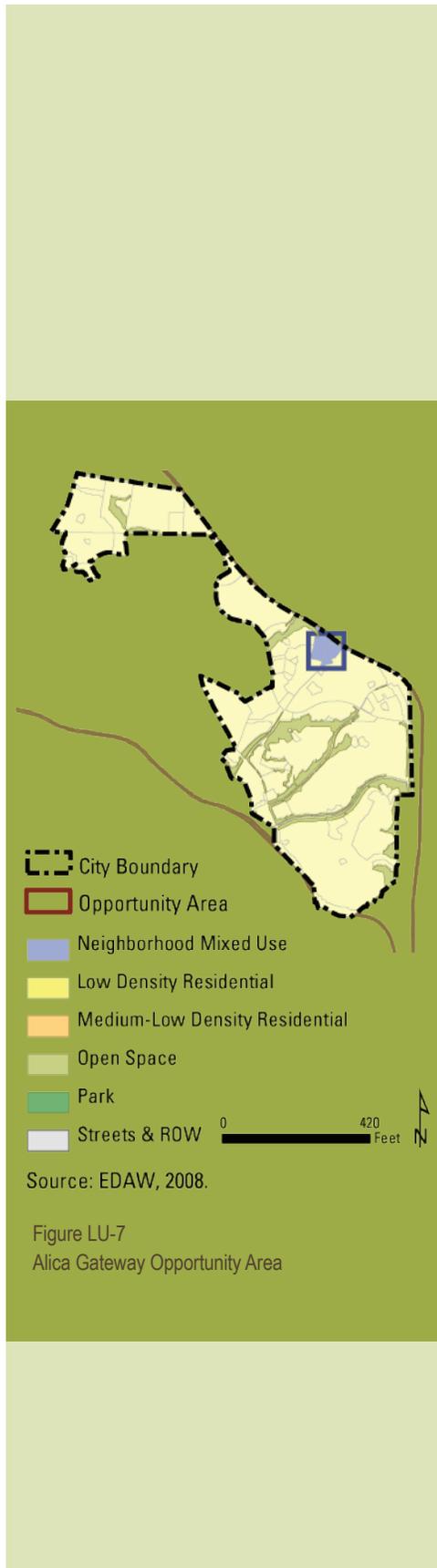


Figure LU-7  
Alicia Gateway Opportunity Area



Alicia Gateway is a prime point of entry for the City of Laguna Hills. The plan for this area offers the opportunity to redesign the site in a way that welcomes visitors and residents into the community. Residential units located above retail on upper stories could take advantage of excellent views created by the natural topography of the City.

The General Plan features a Neighborhood Mixed Use designation for the entire Alicia Gateway area. The Neighborhood Mixed Use designation will create a moderate density center and gathering place by promoting a mix of retail, housing, and office uses; walkable connections, plazas, and green space for community gatherings; high-quality design and

architecture; orientation of buildings toward the street and pedestrians; and accessibility to transit. The Neighborhood Mixed Use designation promotes the development of vertical and horizontal mixed use. Allowed uses include commercial, retail, office, and residential. Standalone residential is prohibited. The maximum height is three stories, and the expected housing density range is between 10 and 20 dwelling units per acre with a maximum of 110 dwelling units on this site.

The Land Use Plan for this opportunity area is based upon development objectives established in the goals and policies of the Land Use Element and is consistent with the vision established in the Guiding Themes. Figure LU-8 illustrates planning concepts for the Alicia Gateway opportunity area. Redevelopment in Alicia Gateway will provide new housing, shopping, and business opportunities for the residents of Laguna Hills. Quality urban design using sustainable principles will improve the character of the area and enhance the identity of the City. Gathering places will enrich the community and provide social opportunities. Existing residential neighborhoods will be preserved and respected, while greater connectivity will promote walking from nearby neighborhoods to Alicia Gateway.

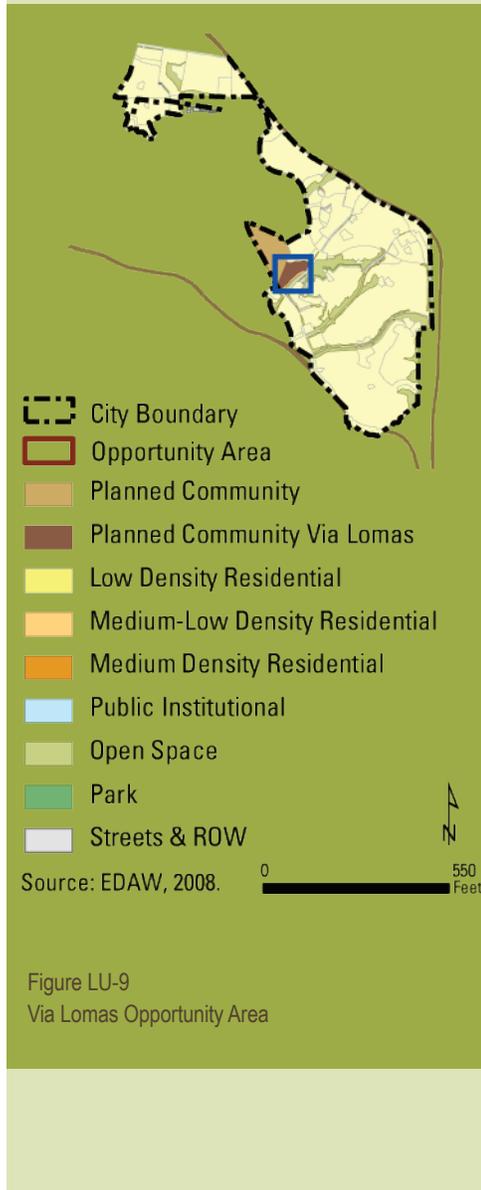


Figure LU-8  
Alicia Gateway  
Opportunity Area  
Planning Concepts

## Via Lomas

The Via Lomas opportunity area is located along Via Lomas in the west-central portion of the City and consists of 39 acres. Figure LU-9 depicts the location of the Via Lomas opportunity area.

The area is currently developed with 350 apartments and condominiums, consisting of one-story cluster condos and two-story apartments. A total of 102 units are within the Rancho Moulton and Rancho Niguel apartment complexes (51 units each). Both Rancho Moulton and Rancho Niguel were built in the early 1980s with Section 8 construction funds and provide affordable housing to low and moderate income residents. The Aliso Meadows condominiums have 248 units and provide an affordable home ownership opportunity for low and moderate income households.



The opportunity for this area is to redevelop the site, maintain the current number of existing rental opportunities on-site, provide additional homeownership opportunities, improve the quality of the housing stock, and add park and recreation opportunities. Additional development in the Via Lomas area would ensure a buffer area between the Via Lomas area and adjacent residential neighborhoods. Building height limitations would ensure that hillside neighborhoods surrounding the Via Lomas area retain their views and view corridors.

The General Plan designates this site as Planned Community Residential. This designation will allow a maximum of 600 dwelling units through a variety of different densities, which is an increase of 250 dwelling units over existing conditions. Building height will be a combination of two- and three-story structures. Additionally, up to about 13 acres of parks and recreation amenities will be added.

The land use plan for Via Lomas is based upon development objectives established in the goals and policies of the Land Use Element and is consistent with the vision established in the Guiding Themes. Redevelopment in Via Lomas will provide new housing and recreational opportunities as well as improve the overall character of the Via Lomas area. Sustainable building methods and energy efficiency principles will also enhance the environment. Figure LU-10 illustrates planning concepts for the Via Lomas opportunity area.

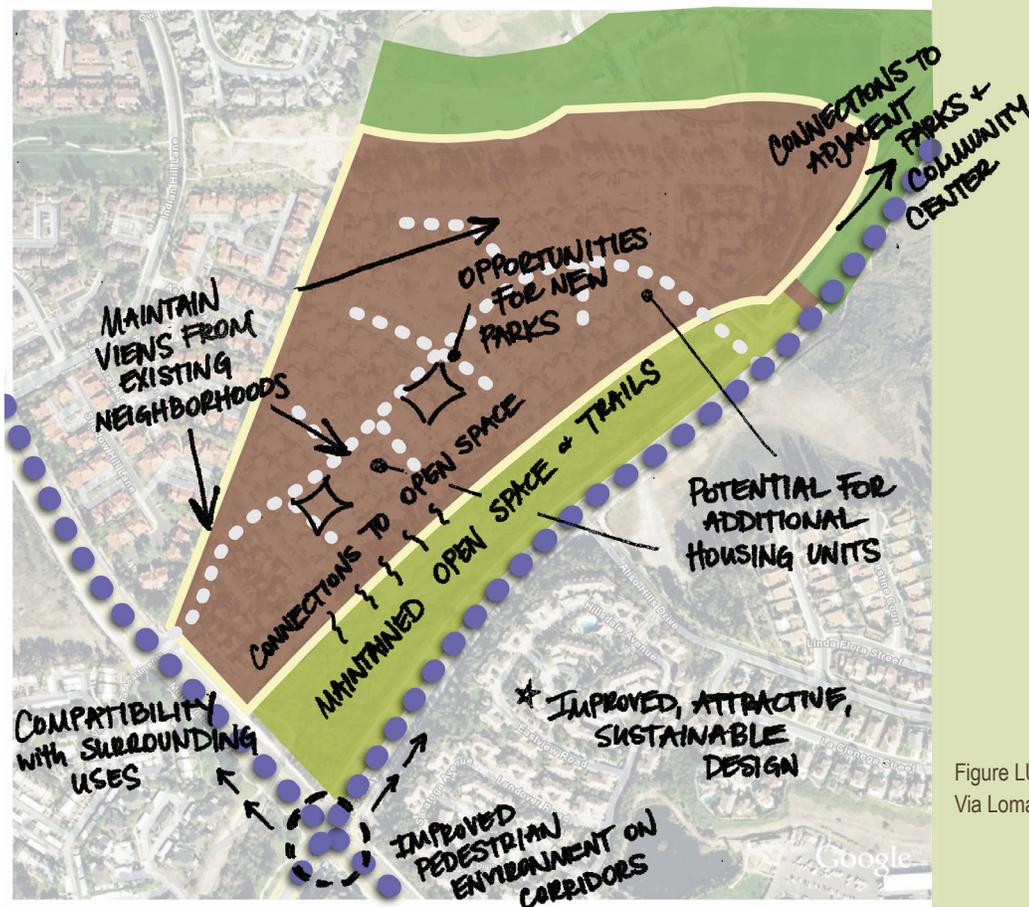
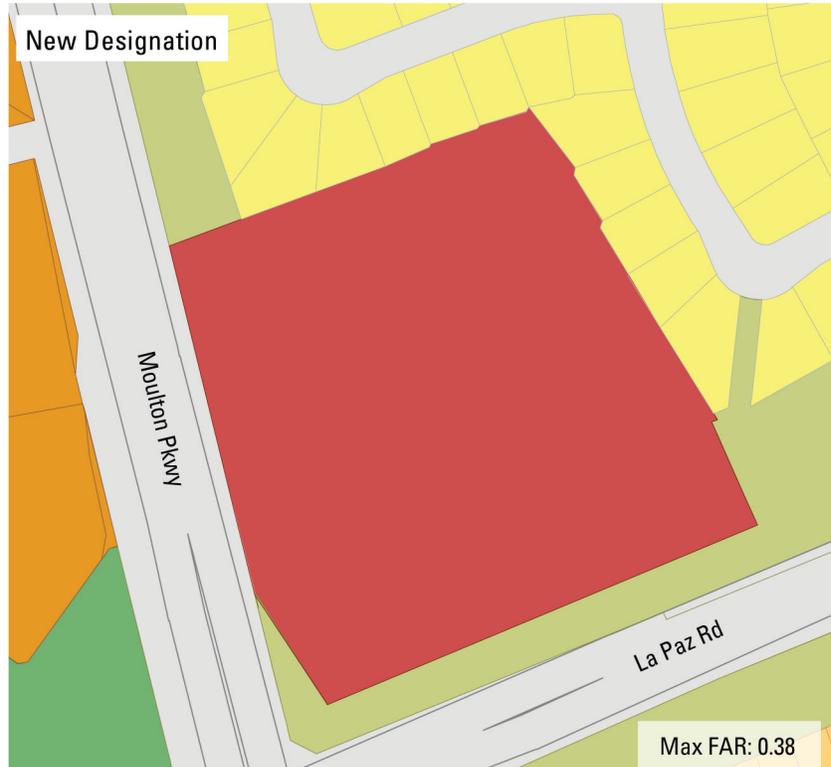


Figure LU-10  
Via Lomas Concept Plan

## Moulton and La Paz

The Moulton and La Paz opportunity area is located in southwest Laguna Hills and is bounded roughly by Moulton Parkway to the west, La Paz Road to the south, Alameda Avenue to the east, and the Moulton La Paz neighborhood to the north. Figure LU-11 depicts the location of the Moulton and La Paz opportunity area.

The predominant land use within the corridor is open space. Located near the southwest corner of this area is the Moulton/La Paz Center consisting of



commercial land uses, including neighborhood retail stores, restaurants, and professional offices. The General Plan designation for this area is Community Commercial.

The key opportunity in this area is to extend the Community Commercial land use designation about 150 feet south. This would result in the loss of approximately 2.2 acres of unimproved, dedicated open space. This open space primarily consists of dirt and interspersed eucalyptus trees. The extension of the Community Commercial designation could allow redevelopment of the area with a minor expansion of square footage to commercial buildings, and reorient commercial buildings toward the street. Reorientation would improve the pedestrian environment along La Paz Road and create an active presence on the street by placing parking behind buildings away from the street. No residential development is allowed in this opportunity area. Local and regional trails and

adequate drainage facilities at the corner of Moulton Parkway and La Paz Road will be retained and opportunities to enhance the visual appeal of the open space corridor will be explored.

The Land Use Plan for Moulton and La Paz is based upon development objectives established in the goals and policies of the Land Use Element and is consistent with the vision established in the Guiding Themes. Redevelopment may provide some additional square footage for new business opportunities, which would contribute to the City's fiscal health and economic sustainability. This area could also be reconfigured to stimulate pedestrian activity on adjacent streets. Sustainable building methods and energy efficiency principles will also enhance the environment. Figure LU-12 illustrates planning concepts for the Moulton and La Paz opportunity area.

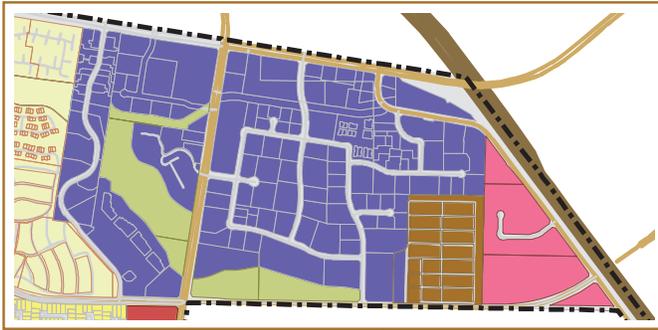


Figure LU-12  
Moulton/La Paz Opportunity  
Area Planning Concept

## FUTURE STUDY AREAS

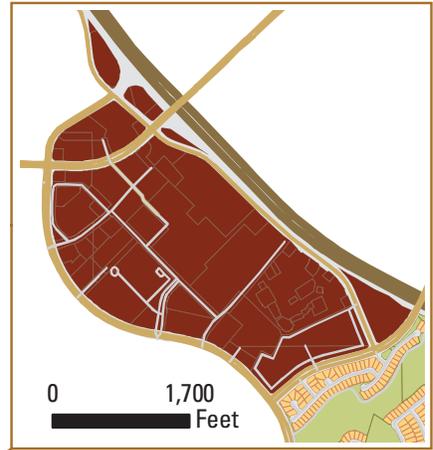
The City of Laguna Hills contains future study areas that have been considered for revitalization in the future. The Land Use Plan does not change any of the land use designations in the areas identified as future study areas. However, opportunities exist to redevelop, improve, or intensify some of the land uses in the future study areas. This section describes the North Business Park, Urban Village, La Paz Gateway, and Alicia Parkway/Aliso Hills Park Triangle future study areas. Figure LU-13 depicts the locations of the future study areas.

North Business Park



0 1,500 Feet

Urban Village



0 1,700 Feet

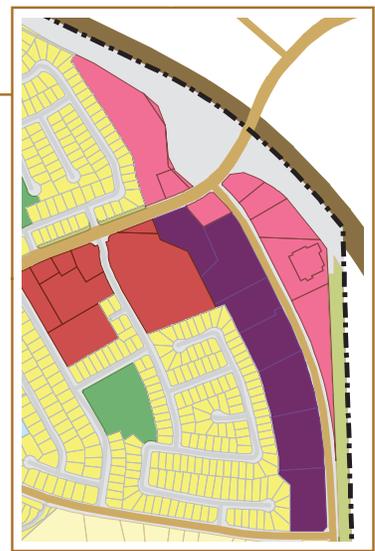


Alicia Parkway/  
Aliso Hills Park Triangle



0 450 Feet

La Paz Gateway



0 1,000 Feet

**Planned Land Use**

- |                                |                        |
|--------------------------------|------------------------|
| Estate Residential             | Freeway Commercial     |
| Low Density Residential        | Village Commercial     |
| Medium-Low Density Residential | Office Park            |
| Medium Density Residential     | Mixed Use              |
| High Density Residential       | Neighborhood Mixed Use |
| Planned Community              | Open Space             |
| Planned Community Residential  | Public/ Institutional  |
| Community Commercial           | Park                   |

- City Boundary
- Local Streets
- Major Streets
- Freeway/ Toll Road

Source: EDAW, 2008.

Figure LU - 13  
Future Study Areas



## North Business Park

The North Business Park future study area is located in the northern part of Laguna Hills and is generally bounded by Lake Forest Drive on the north, Avenida de La Carlota on the east, Ridge Route Drive on the south, and Mill Creek Drive on the west. The area is approximately 380 acres. The majority (262 acres) of this study area is designated as Mixed Use. To the east of this area and adjacent to I-5 is approximately 54 acres designated as Freeway Commercial. A mobile home park is also within the southern portion of the area.

Existing uses within the North Business Park area include offices, retail, restaurants, motels, furniture stores, and industrial businesses. These businesses provide important employment and services for the residents of the City and provide the City with valuable sales tax revenue. No land use designation changes are proposed in this area.

Since many of the facilities within this future study area are one-story tilt-up construction buildings, opportunities for intensification are possible. Larger and better designed buildings could be built, perhaps containing more than one story, subject to the established FAR requirements and other development standards for the area. Additionally, some of the buildings in the southern portion of the study area could be reoriented toward Aliso Creek.

## Urban Village

The Urban Village future study area is within the boundaries of the existing Urban Village Specific Plan (UVSP) area, which was adopted in November 2002. The UVSP regulates the development within the Urban Village area. This area consists of 240 acres bounded by Paseo de Valencia on the north and west, Los Alisos Boulevard on the south, and I-5 on the east.

The Urban Village area is the heart of Laguna Hills providing a mix of retail, office, financial, medical, residential, and transportation uses. The uses within this area provide numerous goods and services to the City's residents and also generate major sales tax revenues for the City. The Laguna Hills Transportation Center is located within this area, which is served by transit.

The General Plan Land Use designation for this area is Village Commercial. The purpose of the Urban Village area is to develop a community core in which a variety of public, regional commercial, recreational, and high density residential uses work in concert to create an urban village. The UVSP, which governs the land uses in this area, provides for a continuing mixture of land uses, including retail, residential hotel, medical offices, and general offices. These uses should be interconnected through safe pedestrian pathways and provide direct access to the transit center, civic center, and regional trails.

Opportunities in this area include intensification and redevelopment as already allowed under the UVSP. Additionally, the General Plan allows the addition of approximately 117,000 square feet of retail space, above and beyond that specified in the UVSP. Table LU-2 depicts the opportunities allowed under the UVSP and with the addition of retail space allowed under the General Plan.

<b>Table LU-2 Urban Village Specific Plan Area</b>			
<b>Development Potential</b>	<b>Urban Village Specific Plan</b>	<b>Future Study Area</b>	<b>Total</b>
<b>Retail (SF)</b>	183,000	117,000	<b>300,000</b>
<b>Residential Dwelling Units</b>	200	No additional proposed	<b>200</b>
<b>Hotel Rooms</b>	250	No additional proposed	<b>250</b>
<b>General Office (SF) (no medical office)</b>	380,000	No additional proposed	<b>380,000</b>
<b>Medical Office (SF) (no general office)</b>	138,000	No additional proposed	<b>138,000</b>

### **La Paz Gateway**

The La Paz Gateway future study area is located immediately west of I-5 primarily south of La Paz Road and adjacent to Cabot Road. The area consists of 49.9 acres and is designated as Community Commercial, Freeway Commercial, and Office Professional.

The La Paz Gateway future study area contains a variety of commercial and office uses. Commercial uses include retail stores, restaurants, gas station, gym, and hotel. Some of the commercial centers within the La Paz Gateway have surplus, vacant leasable space.

Opportunities within the La Paz Gateway area include revitalization and redevelopment. Buildings could be reconstructed and/or enlarged and reoriented to create more vibrant street life and to provide better pedestrian access from adjacent areas. The addition of iconic architecture would also serve to enhance the character of the area and the image of Laguna Hills. The upper portion of the La Paz Gateway future study area has excellent eastward views of hills and mountains that should be enhanced through any redesign and revitalization of the site.

### **Alicia Parkway/Aliso Hills Park Triangle**

The Alicia Parkway/Aliso Hills Park Triangle future study area is located at the southeast corner of the intersection of Alicia Parkway and Aliso Hills Drive. The area consists of a 2-acre flat triangular area along dedicated hillside open space and

recreation paths. The General Plan land use designation is Parks.

This future study area is centrally located within the City. Opportunities for this area include providing additional active parks or recreation facilities or an additional civic use that could connect to the nearby Laguna Hills Community Center. Another option may be community gardens.

## Expected Development Capacity

Table LU-3 identifies the development capacity associated with the planned distribution of land uses specified in the Land Use Plan. Over time, as properties transition from one use to another or property owners rebuild in the opportunity areas, land uses and intensities will gradually shift to align with the intent of the Land

Table LU-3 Expected Development Capacity						
Land Use Designation	Acreage	Density		Build-Out Capacity		
		du/ acre	FAR	Commercial (square feet)	Office (square feet)	Dwelling Units
<b>Residential</b>						
Estate Residential	1,094.42	5.0	--	--	--	5,472
Low Density	971.51	6.5	--	--	--	6,315
Medium-Low Density	380.08	12.5	--	--	--	4,751
Medium Density	115.46	18.0	--	--	--	2,078
High Density	57.78	30.0	--	--	--	1,733
Planned Community	139.81	18.0	--	--	--	2,517
Planned Community Residential	39.00	fixed	--	--	--	600
<b>Mixed Use</b>						
Mixed Use	262.31	3.5	0.30; 0.08 <sup>1</sup>	3,427,867	--	918
Neighborhood Mixed Use	61.53	3.5	0.30; 0.08 <sup>1</sup>	804,074	--	215
<b>Commercial</b>						
Community Commercial	101.57	--	0.35	1,515,452	--	--
Freeway Commercial	86.42	--	0.40	1,505,782	--	--
Village Commercial	226.17	--	--	375,000	518,000	200
Office Professional	26.03	--	0.50	--	566,933	--
<b>Public/Recreation</b>						
Public/Institutional	157.49	--	1.00	6,860,264	--	--
Parks	133.43	--	--	--	--	--
Open Space	393.22	--	--	--	--	--
Less ROW (subtract from total)	12.23	--	--	--	--	--
<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>4,234</b>	<b>--</b>	<b>--</b>	<b>14,488,439</b>	<b>1,084,933</b>	<b>24,799</b>

<sup>1</sup> Mixed Use designations have a maximum 0.38 FAR of 0.30 nonresidential FAR and 0.08 residential FAR. For this calculation, 0.08 FAR = 3.5 dwelling units per acre as reflected in the "du/acre" column.

Use Element. Table LU-3 summarizes the land use distribution, and the resultant residential and nonresidential levels of development that can be expected from full implementation of land use policies established by this General Plan. Given the largely built-out character of Laguna Hills and the good condition of most buildings, significant redevelopment activities may not occur over the life of this General Plan. However, within opportunity areas described in this Element, future land use changes are anticipated.

## Goals and Policies

The goals and policies section sets both broad and specific direction for the future of the City based on identified issues, as captured in the Guiding Themes and expressed by the community, City staff, and decision makers.

Five major issue areas are addressed in the goals and policies of the Land Use Element. These major issues are:

- Creating more active centers within the community through better physical and social connections;
- Protecting and enhancing established neighborhoods;
- Providing sustainable development opportunities in specific areas;
- Beautifying and enhancing the character of the community; and
- Promoting responsible economic development.

## ACTIVITY CENTERS AND COMMUNITY CONNECTIONS

The residents of the City value the existing character of Laguna Hills and seek to enhance the City's attributes by encouraging pedestrian-friendly design that promotes physical connections between places and neighborhoods, and social connections between residents. Laguna Hills values well-landscaped, secure, clean, and human-scaled neighborhoods and business districts that accommodate walking. It is important to provide linkages that connect neighborhoods to schools, community centers, parks, and commercial services. Areas identified for mixed use development are defined by pedestrian-oriented streetscapes, and frequented as local gathering places (i.e., cafes, restaurants, plazas). These areas support surrounding neighborhoods and contribute to a more compact and consistent pattern of development.

**Goal LU-1: Create diverse and vibrant activity centers and events that bring people together as a community.**

Policy LU-1.1: Encourage new mixed use developments in the Urban Village, and other strategic locations, that complement and enhance Laguna Hills' existing community character.

Policy LU-1.2: Encourage the compatible integration of residential and service retail uses in proximity to job centers.

Policy LU-1.3: Promote intensified and revitalized land uses in the Urban Village within traffic, parking, and transit capabilities.

Policy LU-1.4: Promote walkability throughout the community through enhanced pedestrian amenities, attractive streetscapes, plazas, and civic gathering areas.

Policy LU-1.5: Bring commercial buildings close to the street, in appropriate areas, to create a livelier pedestrian realm that encourages window shopping and increased interaction.

Policy LU-1.6: Increase opportunities for pedestrian and bicycle connections to activity centers by well-designed and shaded pathways.

Policy LU-1.7: Promote and advertise community events in creative ways that ensure all segments of the community are encouraged to participate.

Policy LU-1.8: Support events and activities that cross area and neighborhood boundaries to bring together all segments of the community.

## RESPECT FOR EXISTING NEIGHBORHOODS

Laguna Hills values the character of its existing neighborhoods, as they contribute to the extraordinary quality of life in the City. The goals and policies in this section identify how the City will continue to pursue proactive land use planning while protecting, maintaining, and enhancing existing neighborhoods. These policies ensure that new development complements and reinforces the unique characteristics of existing neighborhoods through sensitive infill and transitions in scale from adjacent centers and corridors.

### **Goal LU-2: Ensure development is compatible and interdependent with neighboring uses.**

Policy LU-2.1: Preserve the distinctive character of residential neighborhoods by applying adopted design standards to new renovation projects.

Policy LU-2.2: Improve connections with surrounding uses by enhancing landscaping, providing pedestrian connections, incorporating green areas, and planting street trees.

Policy LU-2.3: Pursue code enforcement actions to ensure proper maintenance of homes, buildings, yards, and neighborhoods in all areas of the City.

Policy LU-2.4: Protect existing neighborhoods from the encroachment of incompatible activities and land uses.

Policy LU-2.5: Require the use of buffers and transitional areas, such as increased setbacks and extensive landscaping, between new activities and existing land uses.

Policy LU-2.6: Discourage high traffic-generating uses such as drive-throughs adjacent to sensitive uses such as schools, medical and assisted care facilities, and residential neighborhoods.

Policy LU-2.7: Expand the use of transitional and buffer areas to buffer sensitive uses from freeways, arterials, point sources of water pollution, hazardous materials, and noise.

Policy LU-2.8: Minimize impacts to surrounding neighborhoods and land uses through context-sensitive site design and architecture.

## SUSTAINABLE AND CREATIVE INFILL DEVELOPMENT

Strategic growth and change in Laguna Hills will preserve existing viable neighborhoods while targeting new development to aging and underutilized commercial areas. The form of new development will be compact, mixed use and pedestrian oriented that will enhance the quality of life through improved connectivity with other parts of the City, greater access to amenities, enhanced safety, and greater housing and employment choices. New development will contain energy- and resource-efficient buildings and landscapes, access to effective public transit, and attractive pedestrian-friendly streets.

**Goal LU-3: Encourage infill development that involves the revitalization of property in an economically and environmentally sustainable manner.**

Policy LU-3.1: Encourage smart growth and sustainability principles as part of new development and redevelopment activities.

Policy LU-3.2: Encourage new development that uses land efficiently and offers flexibility to changing resident and shopping needs, contributing to the long-term vitality of the community.

Policy LU-3.3: Ensure safe, efficient pedestrian connections are made between adjacent neighborhoods, sidewalks, parking areas, and entrances to stores.

Policy LU-3.4: Incorporate open spaces, plazas, and outdoor dining areas into new development and redevelopment to provide visual relief and community gathering spaces.

Policy LU-3.5: Encourage public art and interactive landscape and design features to create interest and a sense of community.

Policy LU-3.6: Promote the design and placement of buildings to provide opportunities for solar and wind energy and passive cooling.

Policy LU-3.7: Support the upgrade of existing buildings and landscapes for energy efficiency, water conservation, and runoff reduction.

Policy LU-3.8: Encourage energy-efficient design features, including appropriate site orientation, use of light-colored or green roofing and building materials to reduce energy consumption related to heating and cooling.

Policy LU-3.9: Promote the use of green building and landscaping techniques consistent with Leadership in Energy and Environmental Design (LEED) and other relevant sustainability principles in both public and private development and redevelopment projects.

Policy LU-3.10: Create safe, inviting, and functional pedestrian and cyclist environments in new public and private development.

Policy LU-3.11: Provide incentives for development that enhance the environment, offer excellent urban design, and provide public amenities.

Policy LU-3.12: Incorporate Crime Prevention through Environmental Design (CPTED) measures and “visible spaces” into new developments as a means of promoting safe environments.

Policy LU-3.13: Use landscaping and urban design techniques to break up large parking areas and long monotonous walls in new development and redevelopment projects.

## **ENHANCING THE COMMUNITY’S IDENTITY**

Bolstering the unique attributes of Laguna Hills is an important goal for the City. The unique character helps retain residents and workers and attracts visitors to the community. Policies in this section strive to enhance the beauty, image, connectivity and character of Laguna Hills and provide more distinction to the City.

**Goal LU-4: Place a high priority on design, architecture, and landscaping that reflect the community’s identity and gracious lifestyle.**

Policy LU-4.1: Create distinctive gateway architecture, landscaping, and signs at major entries to the community and in community activity centers.

Policy LU-4.2: Create street frontages with architectural and landscape interest to provide visual appeal to the street and enhance the pedestrian experience in new development and redevelopment.

Policy LU-4.3: Expand the City’s way-finding program as needed to direct people to activity centers and distinct destinations.

Policy LU-4.4: Encourage public art, street furniture, and other improvements that communicate the City’s identity.

Policy LU-4.5: Continue to plant and maintain attractive drought-tolerant and native landscaping that enhances the character of Laguna Hills.

Policy LU-4.6: Ensure site design respects natural topography and takes advantage of views of scenic resources such as natural open spaces, creeks, and the hillsides.

Policy LU-4.7: Ensure that civic and cultural structures and activity centers create a clear identity for Laguna Hills.

Policy LU-4.8: Encourage developers to create unique project identities that enhance the overall character of the City.

## **FISCAL HEALTH AND ECONOMIC SUSTAINABILITY**

A strong economic base is essential to the livelihood and livability in Laguna Hills. The City strives to promote fiscally responsible economic development that creates and maintains jobs in the City and increases tax revenues to provide valuable services and facilities to the City’s residents. Replacement of aging infrastructure and revitalization of targeted areas allows the community to evolve, providing residents with new living, working, and shopping choices.

**Goal LU-5: Maintain a fiscally viable and livable community that ensures a high quality of life for all Laguna Hills residents and business owners.**

Policy LU-5.1: Identify and pursue funding sources to supplement the general fund, and ensure that service levels are maintained.

Policy LU-5.2: Maintain, follow, and periodically review a set of financial policies that are intended to safeguard financial assets, including budget surpluses; maintain the integrity of financial accounting systems; and ensure the long-term fiscal viability of the City.

Policy LU-5.3: Allocate funds to infrastructure improvements in targeted areas.

Policy LU-5.4: Continue to look for ways to streamline processes for revitalization and redevelopment projects.

Policy LU-5.5: Encourage public-private partnerships to improve existing infrastructure to accommodate desired projects.

**Goal LU-6: Expand the variety of services, shopping, and entertainment opportunities in the community.**

Policy LU-6.1: Encourage and promote the development of attractions desired by the community, such as upscale shopping, entertainment, cultural activities, and performing arts venues so that more needs are met locally.

Policy LU-6.2: Work closely with the private sector to update and expand the Laguna Hills Mall.

Policy LU-6.3: Work with property owners, developers, and local business groups to upgrade, revitalize, and beautify the City's aging commercial centers to attract desired new tenants.

Policy LU-6.4: Consider the needs of specific groups (such as families, teens, and seniors) as future retail, dining, and entertainment venues are proposed.

**Goal LU-7: Facilitate the creation and expansion of private sector businesses and associated local career choices for Laguna Hills residents.**

Policy LU-7.1: Collaborate with local businesses, the Laguna Hills Mall, merchant associations, the Orange County Business Council, and the Chamber of Commerce to promote and advertise local events.

Policy LU-7.2: Promote attractive employment generating business park uses that support a sound and diversified economic base compatible with the City's overall character.

Policy LU-7.3: Promote economically vital neighborhood commercial areas and mixed use areas that foster small business enterprises and entrepreneurship.

Policy LU-7.4: Encourage private property owners to revitalize, upgrade, and beautify aging and underperforming commercial and business areas.

Policy LU-7.5: Work with the business community to attract high end users to major commercial centers.

Policy LU-7.6: Actively engage the business community with City departments to ensure the needs of the business community are being heard and addressed.

Policy LU-7.7: Work to resolve the complex issues associated with multiple ownerships in commercial and business centers that hinder revitalization.

Policy LU-7.8: Attract and retain a balance of businesses that provide a full range of quality career choices, serving entry level as well as highly trained workers.

Policy LU-7.9: Identify incentives to target and attract businesses that diversify the City's tax and employment bases.

## Summary of Approach

The goals, policies, and programs in the Land Use Element will help the City evolve into a more integrated, walkable, beautiful, sustainable, and cohesive community, while protecting and enhancing existing neighborhoods. Table LU-4 identifies the five major issues guiding the Land Use Element. These major issues represent the direction the City will take in its land use goals, policies, and programs to implement the vision of Laguna Hills as captured in the Guiding Themes and expressed in the Land Use Plan.

**Table LU-4  
Description of Actions to Address Land Use Issues**

Issues	Element	Section	General Plan Policy			
			Policy	Programs	Figure	Table
<b>Activity Centers and Community Connections</b>	Land Use	Activity Centers And Community Connections	LU-1.1 through LU-1.8	LU-3, LU-10		
	Mobility	Walking and Cycling	M-3.1 through M-3.7	M-4 through M-7	M-3. (Bicycle Network)	Table M-2 (Bikeway Classification Description)
	Conservation and Open Space	Parks and Play	COS-2.1 through 2.5; COS-2.8	COS-6	COS-1 (Parklands) COS-3 (Trails Plan)	COS-3 (Public Parks) COS-4 (Private Parks) COS-5 (Trails)
<b>Respect for Existing Neighborhoods</b>	Land Use	Respect for Existing Neighborhoods	LU-2.1 through LU-2.8	LU-6		
	Housing	Neighborhood and Housing Preservation	H-1.1 through H-1.5	H-1 through H-5		
<b>Sustainable and Creative Infill Development</b>	Land Use	Sustainable and Creative Infill Development	LU-3.1 through LU-3.13	LU-3, LU-4, LU-8, LU-9, LU-10	LU-7 through LU-13 (Opportunity Areas)	LU-1 (Land Use Designation)
<b>Enhancing the Community's Identity</b>	Land Use	Enhancing the Community's Identity	LU-4.1 through LU-4.8	LU-7, LU-11, LU-12	LU-8	
	Mobility	Beautiful Streets	M-4.1 through M-4.3	M-11, M-12		
	Conservation and Open Space	Sustaining our Resources and Parks and Play	COS-1.14; COS-2.1; through COS-2.3	COS-1 through COS-5, COS-7, COS-8	COS-2 (Scenic Resources)	COS-1 (Significant Vista Points)

**Table LU-4  
Description of Actions to Address Land Use Issues**

Issues	Element	Section	General Plan Policy	Programs	Figure	Table
<b>Fiscal Health and Economic Sustainability</b>	Land Use	Fiscal Health and Economic Sustainability	LU-5.1 through LU-5.5; LU-6.1 through LU-6.4; LU-7.1 through LU-7.9	LU-13 through LU-15		

# Mobility



## Introduction

Mobility refers to the ability of people and goods to move safely and efficiently throughout a community. In Laguna Hills, the City's mobility system is composed of all travel modes and routes people use to move within and beyond Laguna Hills: freeways; local streets for vehicular, pedestrian and bicycle traffic; pedestrian and equestrian trails, and transit. The economic health and quality of life in Laguna Hills are directly tied to the City's ability to move people and goods safely and efficiently through the community.

Traffic congestion, accessibility, and safety are significant issues for the City's residents, employees, and businesses. Excessive congestion has significant economic and environmental costs and affects the health and well-being of the community. Since Laguna Hills is almost entirely built out, building new roads is unlikely. The Mobility Element seeks to improve mobility in the City by providing greater pedestrian, bicycle, and transit opportunities in Laguna Hills and better managing vehicular traffic.

The addition of pedestrian, bike, and public transit facilities will provide more physical connections between neighborhoods and activity centers, enliven the streets, and reduce dependence on vehicles.

The goals and policies of the Mobility Element emphasize the diverse needs of pedestrians, bicyclists, transit riders, and motorists, with an emphasis on connecting neighborhoods to key activity centers in the City.

## Purpose and Scope of the Mobility Element

The Mobility Element describes existing and future transportation conditions and systems. The Element establishes goals and policies that will guide the City's mobility system, including streets, transit facilities and services, bicycle and pedestrian facilities, and the recreational trails system. The text, maps, and diagrams are a basis for the development of the City's approach to maintaining and improving the mobility network.

## Background

The City of Laguna Hills is served by a well-established mobility network. The network includes a regional and local street system as well as Interstate 5 (I-5) and State Route 73 (SR-73). In addition, the City has a system of recreational trails that accommodate a variety of different users such as bikers, walkers, and equestrians. The City is also served by public transit and a system of bike trails and bike lanes. Although the City has an established multi-modal mobility network, local and regional traffic congestion, speeding, uncoordinated traffic signals, and overreliance on automobiles are issues that need to be addressed. The Mobility Plan addresses these issues and presents opportunities and solutions to these challenges.

## Mobility Plan

A well-designed local street system is the foundation of the mobility network in Laguna Hills. Streets provide primary travel routes for automobiles, but also form the backbone of Laguna Hills' transit, pedestrian, truck, and bicycle networks. Efficient movement within and through Laguna Hills and the region will be facilitated by developing and maintaining a well-designed, integrated mobility network. Easy and convenient access to vehicular, bus transit, pedestrian, and bicycle options within the City is essential to an efficient network. Coordination among the various modes is needed so that mobility and the design of City streets accommodate more options than just cars.

The City has established goals and policies to maintain and improve streets, and to encourage the use of alternative transportation options. The Mobility Plan emphasizes pedestrian paths, bikeways, recreational trails, and transit that connect neighborhoods to shopping, schools, civic uses, and other activity areas. The Mobility Plan describes the approach for achieving these objectives.

## EFFICIENT LOCAL AND REGIONAL SYSTEM

The street classifications in Laguna Hills are based on Countywide Master Plan of Arterial Highways classifications as maintained by the Orange County Transportation Authority and adopted by the City upon incorporation. These classifications and street standards have been incorporated into the existing circulation system design. The classifications use a hierarchy system that classifies streets based on the intended traffic volume capacity and character of travel (i.e., regional vs. local). The following section discusses the street standards in Laguna Hills. The street network in Laguna Hills is depicted in Figure M-1.





- Major
- Primary
- Secondary
- Smart Arterial
- Augmented Primary
- Augmented Secondary
- Major Streets
- Freeway/ Toll Road
- Local Streets
- City Boundary
- Proposed Deletion by MPAH

Source: Austin-Foust Assoc., Inc., 2008.

Figure M- 1  
Street Network



## Smart Arterials

The smart street is a specialized arterial highway implemented by OCTA. The purpose of these roads is to smooth traffic flow and improve street capacity through measures such as synchronizing traffic signals, providing bus turn-outs, improving intersections, minimizing access points, and adding travel lanes by removing on-street parking and roadway widening. Smart street arterials are typically 6 to 8 lane roadways with enhanced capacity to a standard arterial street. Moulton Parkway is classified as a 6 lane smart street as it runs through the City.

## Major Arterials

Major arterials are 6 lane divided roadways, with a typical right-of-way of 120 feet and raised landscaped median islands. The function of major arterials is to carry a large volume of regional traffic not handled by the freeway system. Unsignalized minor street and driveway access may be allowed, but signalized access is preferred, and left-turn restrictions are typically placed at unsignalized access locations. Curbside parking is not allowed. Major arterials can accommodate between 30,000 and 45,000 vehicle trips per day at level of service (LOS) C.

Major arterials in the City include:

- Alicia Parkway
- El Toro Road
- Lake Forest Drive
- Los Alisos Boulevard
- Moulton Parkway
- Oso Parkway
- Paseo de Valencia (El Toro Road to La Paz Road)

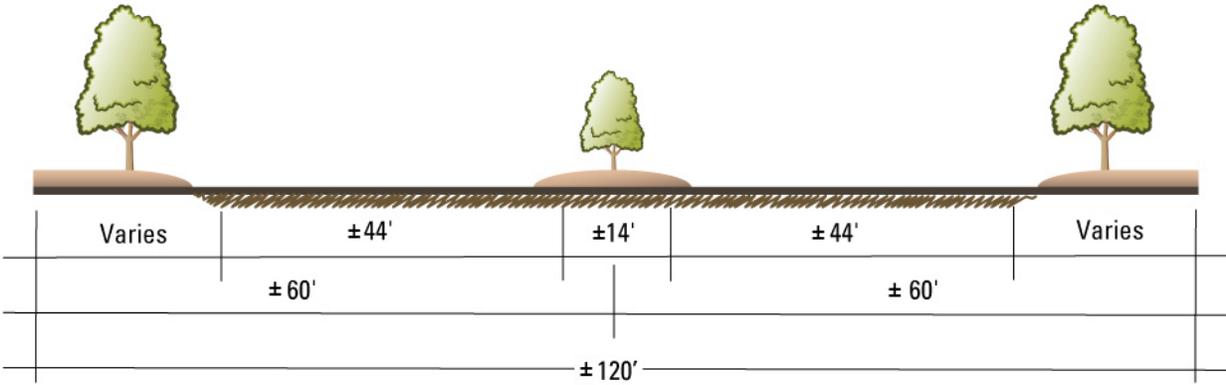
## Primary Arterials

Primary arterials are 4 lane divided roadways, with a typical right-of-way of 100 feet, with painted or raised landscaped medians. Like major arterials, primary arterials are designed to carry a large volume of traffic but at reduced capacities. Left-turn restrictions will generally be placed at minor unsignalized driveways. Curbside parking may not be appropriate in more heavily traveled segments, especially in segments with class II on-street marked bikeways. A primary arterial is designed to accommodate between 20,000 and 30,000 vehicle trips per day at LOS C.

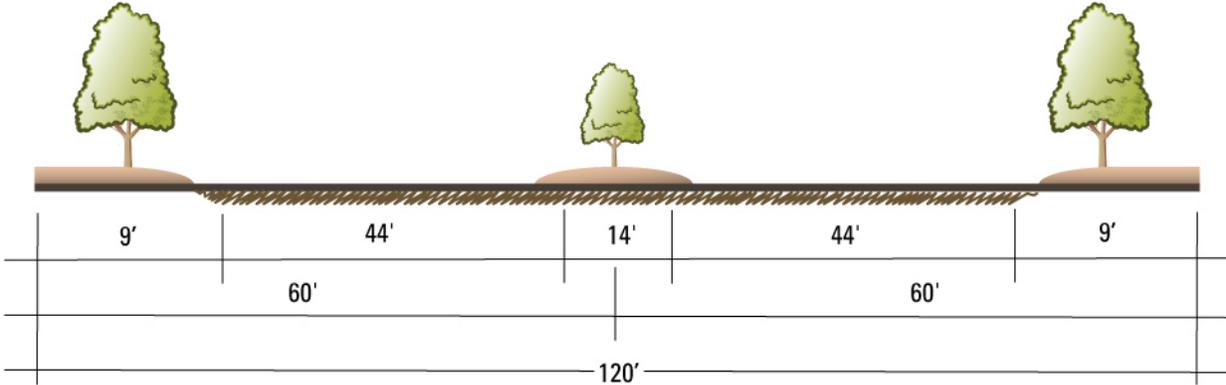
Primary arterials in the City include:

- Laguna Hills Drive
- La Paz Road
- Cabot Road (La Paz to Oso Parkway)
- Ridge Route Drive

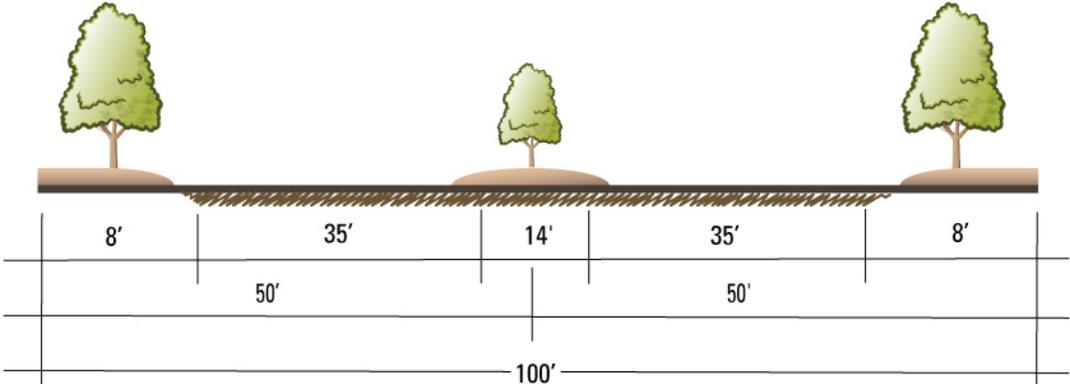
**SMART STREET ARTERIAL**  
6-8 Lane Divided Roadway



**MAJOR ARTERIAL**  
6 Lane Divided Roadway



**PRIMARY ARTERIAL**  
4 Lane Divided Roadway



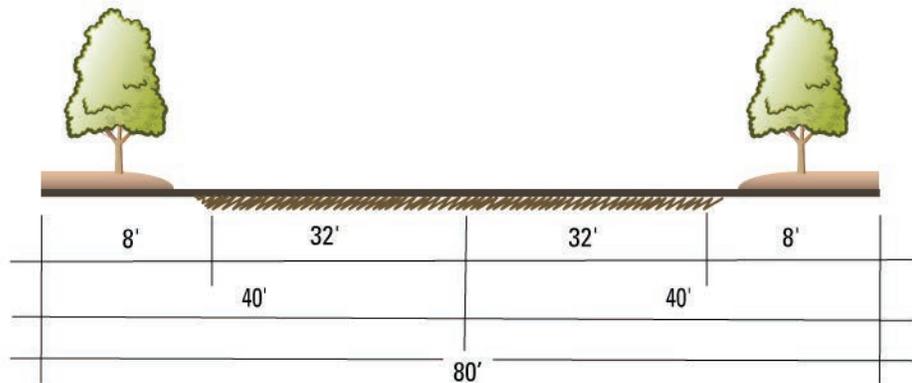
## Secondary Arterials

Secondary arterials are 4 lane undivided (no median) roadways, with a typical right-of-way of 80 feet. A secondary arterial serves as a collector, distributing traffic between local streets and major and primary arterials. Although some secondary arterials serve as through routes, most provide more direct access to surrounding land uses than major or primary arterials. A secondary arterial is designed to accommodate approximately 10,000 to 20,000 vehicle trips per day at LOS C.

Secondary arterials in the City include:

- Avenida de la Carlota Note: For the section of Avenida de la Carlota between El Toro Road and Los Alisos Blvd, the typical right-of-way can vary between 72 to 88 feet. The right-of-way will include a total of 4 traffic lanes (including a left turn lane) with up to 64 feet of roadway along with either two 12 foot landscape parkway/sidewalk or a single 12 foot landscape parkway/sidewalk. The single 12 foot landscape parkway/sidewalk will adjoin the westerly side of the street.
- Cabot Road (south of Oso Parkway)
- Paseo de Valencia (La Paz Road to Cabot Road)

### SECONDARY 4 Lane Undivided Roadway



## Collector (Commuter) Arterials

Collector or commuter arterials are 2 lane undivided, unrestricted access roadways, with a typical right-of-way width of 56 feet. A collector or commuter arterial functions primarily as a commuter facility but differs from a local collector street in its ability to handle through traffic movements between two arterials. A collector or commuter arterial is provided to accommodate up to approximately 10,000 vehicle trips per day at LOS C.

Collector arterials in the City include:

- Santa Vittoria Drive
- Mill Creek Drive
- Aliso Hills Drive

## Augmented Arterials

The Mobility Element applies Augmented Arterials to certain roadway locations as a capacity enhancement strategy. The intent is to customize such streets for Laguna Hills, while retaining the essential characteristics for consistency with the MPAH. Two roadway segments that are designated with the Augmented classification are as follows:

- La Paz Road between I-5 and McIntyre Street is designated as an Augmented Primary. The augmentation is in the form of auxiliary lanes on each side of the four-lane road. Such lanes provide space for weaving, merging and queuing, thereby enhancing the roadway to a representative ADT capacity of around 45,000 (compared to 20,000-30,00 for a standard Primary at LOS C).
- Cabot Road from La Paz Road to Nellie Gail Road is classified as an Augmented Secondary. The augmentation is in the form of a raised median complementing the four-lane road. The median provides an aesthetic and functional treatment, essentially allowing the arterial to function somewhat like a Primary Arterial, but retaining the Secondary classification. As a result, a representative ADT volume of 32,000 can be achieved (compared to 10,000 to 20,000 for a standard Secondary at LOS C).

## Regional Roads

The roadway network in Laguna Hills is connected to an efficient regional circulation system. I-5 is the major north-south transportation facility that defines the eastern boundary of the City of Laguna Hills. I-5 provides access to destinations throughout southern California and beyond. Within the City, access to I-5 is provided from Lake Forest Drive, El Toro Road, Alicia Parkway, and La Paz Road. Access to I-5 is also provided by Oso Parkway, just east of the City limits.

The San Joaquin Hills Transportation Corridor (SR-73) forms a portion of the City's western and southern border and is another north-south facility. SR-73 is a toll road, which extends between the Interstate 405 interchange in Costa Mesa to the north, and an I-5 interchange in Laguna Niguel to the south. SR-73 on- and off-ramps are located adjacent to the City limits at La Paz Road, Moulton Parkway, and Greenfield Drive.

The City will continue to coordinate with regional and State transportation planning efforts to provide and maintain safe and convenient access to the regional circulation system.

## Level of Service Standards

Evaluating the ability of the street network to serve Laguna Hills residents and businesses requires establishing suitable performance criteria. Performance criteria have a policy component that establishes a desired level of service, as well as a technical component that specifies how traffic forecast data can be used to measure the achievement of the criteria.

The technical evaluation of the roadway system in Laguna Hills is performed using volume-to-capacity (V/C) ratios. V/C ratios are calculated based on current or future average daily traffic (ADT) volumes and daily capacity values for the various types of arterials. A level of service scale is used to evaluate roadway performance based on V/C ratios. The level of service (LOS) levels range from “A” to “F,” with LOS A representing free flow conditions and LOS F representing severe traffic congestion. Descriptions of traffic flow characteristics associated with each level of service are provided in Table M-1.

<b>Level of Service</b>	<b>Volume to Capacity Ratio</b>	<b>Description</b>
A	0.00-0.60	Excellent operation. All approaches to the intersection appear quite open, turning movements are easily made, and nearly all drivers find freedom of operation.
B	0.61-0.70	Very good operation. An occasional approach phase is fully utilized. Many drivers feel somewhat restricted within platoons of vehicles.
C	0.71-0.80	Good operation. Major approach phases fully utilized. Most drivers feel somewhat restricted.
D	0.81-0.90	Fair operation. Drivers may have to wait through more than one red signal indication. Queues may develop but dissipate rapidly, without excessive delays.
E	0.91-1.00	Poor operation. Volumes at or near capacity. Vehicle may wait through several signal cycles. Long queues form upstream from intersection.
F	≥ 1.00	Forced flow. Represents jammed conditions. Intersection operates below capacity with low volumes. Queues may block upstream intersections.

Source: Transportation Research Board, Highway Capacity Manual Special Report 209, 2000.

Various level of service standards have been established to evaluate observed traffic conditions, future development plans, and street network modifications. At the regional planning level, the Statewide Congestion Management Program (CMP) specifies LOS E (V/C ratio less than or equal to 1.00) as the operating standard for CMP intersections in Orange County. There is only one CMP intersection in Laguna Hills, Avenida de la Carlota at El Toro Road.

At the local level, evaluation of volumes, capacities, and levels of service on the City street system is based on peak hour intersection data, since intersections are the primary limiting factor affecting traffic flow on City streets. The City uses peak hour intersection capacity utilization (ICU) values to calculate the performance of intersections within its jurisdiction. The City's performance standard for intersections is LOS "D" which is an ICU value of .90 or less.

This LOS "D" policy represents a desirable threshold for attaining acceptable mobility on the City's arterial street system over time. It is recognized however, that not all traffic growth is attributable to land use decisions made by the City and that specific intersections may have physical or other constraints that create difficulties in making the necessary improvements. Under such circumstances, a finding can be made that a specific location is a "critical intersection" with LOS able to degrade below "D." At the same time, any such critical intersections are to be monitored over time to determine if 1) improvements at nearby locations direct enough traffic from the critical intersection to bring it to an acceptable LOS or 2) changes occur that reduce traffic at the intersection or create opportunities for making physical improvements.

## Principal Intersections

There are Principal Intersections in the City that generally determine the overall performance of the City's roadway system, and are thereby considered to have strategic importance within the overall Mobility Plan. The intent is that these intersections be regularly monitored and that priority be given to them in implementing roadway improvements. The list of Principal Intersections is maintained by the City Engineer.

## TRAFFIC CALMING AND SAFETY

As traffic in the City and region increases, motorists seek alternatives to congested arterials by using local roads, particularly through residential neighborhoods, to avoid congestion. The City is committed to the preservation of its residential neighborhoods and has established policies that contribute to the preservation efforts. One of the ways to help control the movement of traffic through an area is through traffic calming techniques. Traffic calming measures can slow traffic on local streets or divert traffic from roadways not intended to accommodate high traffic levels. The effect of traffic calming is to create a safer, quieter environment for certain neighborhoods or areas of the City.

Traffic calming measures also help to create more human-scale places that are safer for pedestrians and cyclists. Figure M-2 shows examples of traffic calming techniques that may be employed in the City.

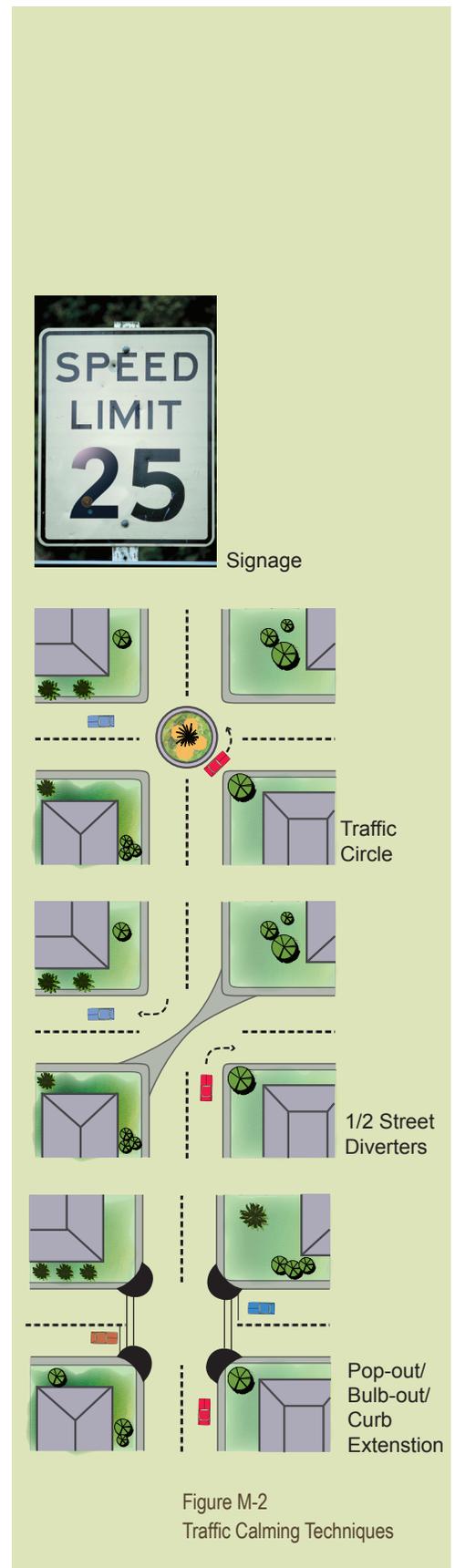


Figure M-2  
Traffic Calming Techniques



Landscaping, trees, sidewalks, and bike lanes also help serve as traffic calming techniques. Numerous traffic calming measures are available to slow traffic and enhance safety. The selection of appropriate traffic calming techniques for a given area will require a comprehensive site specific study by the City and/or appropriate local, regional, or state agencies.

Traffic calming measures can result in varying degrees of liability exposure to the City. Therefore, such measures must incorporate engineering design features and practices that do not result in unacceptable exposure for the City.

## WALKING AND CYCLING, AND BEAUTIFUL STREETS

### Walking

Walkability, access, and connections are essential components of a mobility system that easily and specifically accommodates pedestrians. Walkability is fostered by wide sidewalks, safe street crossings, features that encourage cautious driving, a pleasant and safe environment, and destinations to walk to. Walkways, safe crossings, paths, trails, and pedestrian short-cuts allow people to get from one destination point to another with ease. These features are important for providing connections to schools, parks, shopping, jobs, and between neighborhoods. Children, in particular, should be able to walk safely to school. Increased numbers of people walking along streets create a safer environment and thereby encourage others to also walk. High levels of pedestrian activity support active and vibrant urban communities.

In Laguna Hills, walkable environments will be created and enhanced by providing a pedestrian network that connects activity areas. Pedestrian improvements such as timed crosswalks, pedestrian grade separations from traffic, and enhanced lighting in areas with homes, jobs, shops, and schools can promote walkability and can help increase walking as a means of transportation and recreation. This reduces automobile travel and contributes to the overall health, vitality, and sense of community. The City will also strive to beautify certain streets within the community to add aesthetic appeal to various areas and enhance the City's overall identity.

### Bikeways

Bicycling for recreation and transportation is a practical option for many in Laguna Hills. Increasing cycling opportunities in the City is an important Citywide goal. To achieve this goal, the City will provide



a convenient network of bike paths and lanes that connect residences, jobs, shopping, services, transit, recreation, civic uses, and schools. Convenient and secure bicycle parking, showers at places of employment, and an educated driving public can make biking more attractive. The City has an existing system of bikeways that provide internal community links as well as bicycle access to many of the surrounding communities. Laguna Hills utilizes the standards developed by Caltrans to classify bikeways within the City. Table M-2 describes the bike standards as well as general locations within the City.

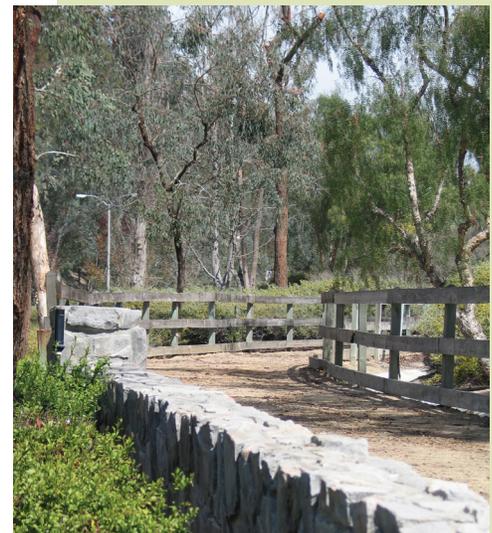
**Table M-2  
Bikeway Classification Description**

Type	Description	Location
<b>Class 1 – Bike Path</b>	Provides a completely separated right-of-way for the exclusive use of bicycles and pedestrians with cross flow minimized	Portions of Aliso Creek, the San Diego Freeway, Oso and Alicia parkways, Paseo de Valencia, and through Veeh Ranch Park.
<b>Class 2 – Bike Lane</b>	Provides a striped lane for one-way bike travel on a street or highway.	Portions of Moulton, Alicia, and Oso parkways, Paseo de Valencia, Ridge Route, Lake Forest and Laguna Hills Drives, Los Alisos Boulevard, and La Paz Road.
<b>Class 3 – Bike Route</b>	Provides for shared use with pedestrian or motor vehicle traffic.	Portions of Cabot Road, Moulton Parkway, and Avenida de La Carlota.

In addition to the bikeways listed in Table M-2 and illustrated in Figure M-3, several arterials in the City have sufficient right-of-way to accommodate additional bikeways and could fill in missing links in the City's bike network. The City will continue to explore opportunities to upgrade and expand the bike network. A comprehensive bike network will provide an alternative to driving and will connect neighborhoods to shopping, jobs, services, schools, other activity centers, as well as the regional transportation systems.

## Recreational Trails

Laguna Hills contains a network of pedestrian and equestrian trails that traverse portions of the City and connect to trails outside of the City, including nearby wilderness areas. Trails enhance community mobility and provide opportunities for recreation and exercise. A well-defined, interconnected trail system can also reduce dependence on the automobile for short local trips. The Conservation and Open Space Element describes the trail system.





- City Boundary
- Major Streets
- Local Streets
- Freeway/ Toll Road

Source: City of Laguna Hills, 2001.

Figure M- 3  
Bicycle Network



## TRANSIT AND TRANSPORTATION DEMAND MANAGEMENT

An effective and efficient transit network is an important component of the Mobility Element. Connecting neighborhoods, shopping, services, and recreation areas to transit will reduce reliance on vehicles and achieve environmental benefits. As opportunity areas redevelop and provide additional housing, appropriate and effective transit should be in place.

Public bus service in Laguna Hills is provided by the Orange County Transportation Authority (OCTA). OCTA transit routes provide access to residences, jobs, recreation areas, civic uses, shopping, and services throughout Laguna Hills, and connect to numerous other destinations in Orange County. Some of the routes also connect to Metrolink and Amtrak rail services just south of the City in Laguna Niguel and north of the City in Irvine, at the Irvine Transportation Center. OCTA routinely updates its long-range service plans to respond to necessary changes to service levels and route configurations. Currently, 10 fixed routes provide bus service to portions of Laguna Hills. Table M-3 and Figure M-4 detail OCTA bus routes that provide service to Laguna Hills as of 2008. All routes, except bus route 70, serve the Laguna Hills Transportation Center, which is located near the Laguna Hills Mall. A park and ride facility is also located at the Laguna Hills Transportation Center and in the Laguna Hills Mall parking lot.

<b>Route</b>	<b>Origin and Destination</b>
70	Sunset Beach – Dana Point
83	Anaheim – Laguna Hills
87	Rancho Santa Margarita – Laguna Niguel
89	Mission Viejo – Laguna Beach
91	Laguna Hills – San Clemente
177	Foothill ranch – Laguna Hills
187	Laguna Hills – Dana Point
188	Laguna Hills – Irvine
212	Irvine – San Juan Capistrano Express
216	San Juan Capistrano – Costa Mesa Express

Source: Orange County Transportation Authority, 2008.

Expanding transit and paratransit options, including promoting increased use of transit among City residents and employees is an important City objective. The City will coordinate with OCTA to expand and improve bus service within the City, especially as opportunity areas redevelop and additional housing, shopping, and services are added. Where appropriate as justified by ridership, the City will also encourage the provision of attractive, well designed, and appropriate transit amenities such as shaded bus stop or shelters. No advertisements shall be allowed on bus stops/shelters/benches within the City.

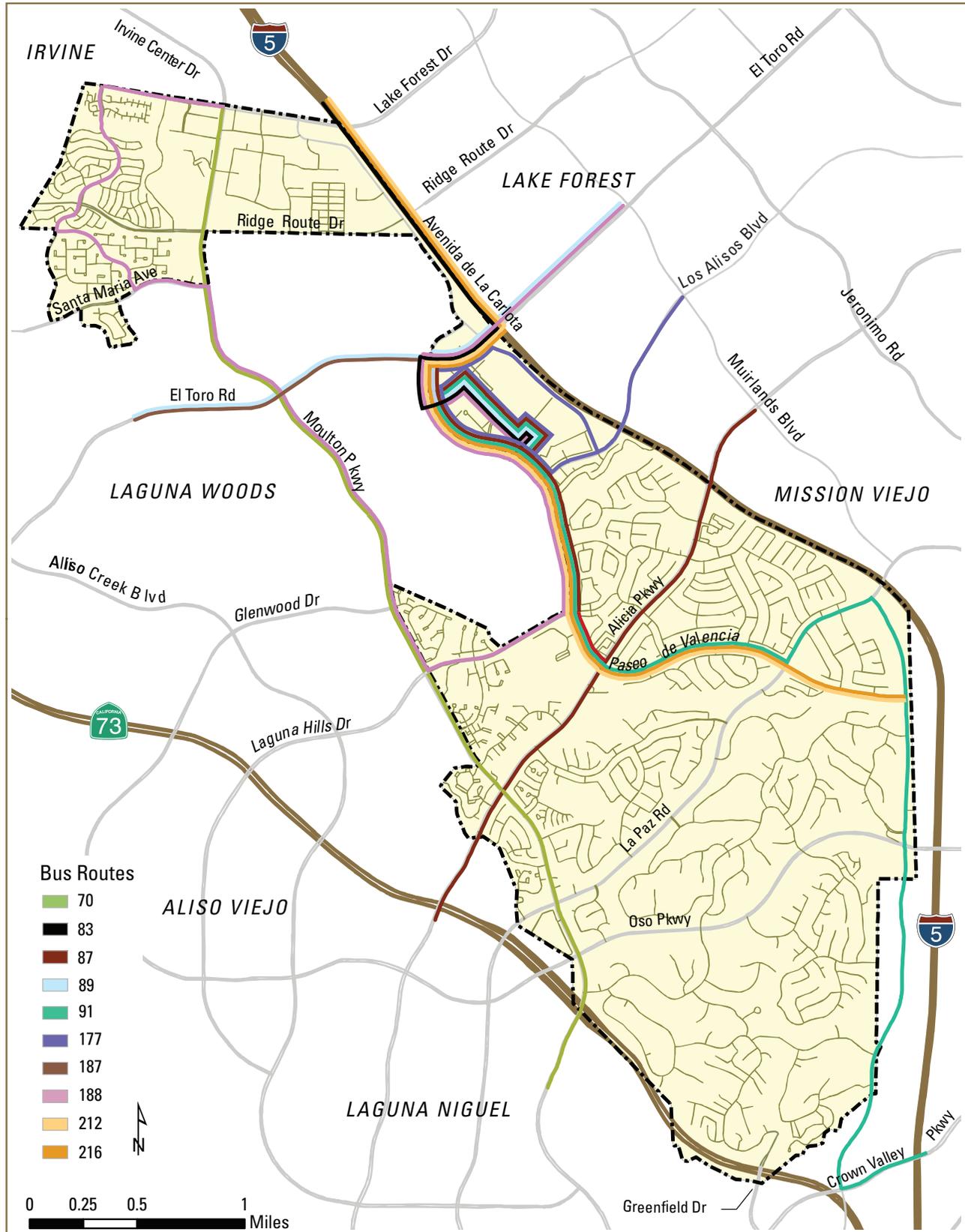


Figure M - 4  
Orange County Transportation Authority  
Bus Routes, 2008



Source: OCTA, 2008.

## Paratransit

The Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA) requires all public transit operations to provide paratransit (door-to-door) service to persons whose disabilities prevent them from using accessible fixed-route public transit. Paratransit services are transportation services such as carpooling, vanpooling, taxi service, and dial-a-ride programs. In Laguna Hills, OCTA provides shared-ride paratransit services via the ACCESS program for people who are unable to use the regular, fixed-route bus service because of functional limitations caused by a disability.

## Rail Service

Rail service is an important mobility option for residents of Laguna Hills to reach destinations outside of the City. Although the City of Laguna Hills is not directly served by rail, the Laguna Niguel/Mission Viejo rail station is located approximately ½ mile south of Laguna Hills, within the City of Laguna Niguel. The Irvine station is located approximately 3 miles north of the City on Barranca Parkway. Both Metrolink and Amtrak trains serve these stations. Metrolink provides daily service to these stations, including weekends, via the Orange County Line, and the Inland Empire - Orange County Line.

The OCTA Board of Directors approved the Metrolink Service Expansion Program (MSEP) in 2005 with the goal of improving the frequency of rail service between the Fullerton and Laguna Niguel/Mission Viejo stations. Service could be expanded to provide trains every 30 minutes between these stations. Included in the program are station enhancements at the two stations nearest Laguna Hills: Irvine and Laguna Niguel/Mission Viejo. Improvements to the Irvine Station, including a 1,500-space parking structure, have been completed. Future improvements have been identified for the Laguna Niguel/ Mission Viejo station.

## PARKING

Parking availability is important for the overall quality of life in Laguna Hills and the vitality of shopping and service areas. A lack of parking frustrates residents, businesses, and visitors, while too much parking wastes valuable land and impedes the City' economic, aesthetic, and environmental objectives. Greater management of parking spaces in the City can help achieve mobility, environmental, and community development goals. As portions of the City redevelop, additional parking may be necessary to accommodate greater intensity of development. It is important that parking demand generated by future development does not negatively impact adjacent uses and neighborhoods. The City will utilize a broad range of parking management tools and strategies to avoid excessive parking requirements and to prevent parking spillover effects.

## Goals and Policies

The goals and policies section sets both broad and specific direction for the future of the City based on identified issues, as captured in the Guiding Themes and expressed by the community, City staff, and decision makers.

Six major issue areas are addressed in the goals and policies of the Mobility Element. These major issues are:

- Providing an efficient street network within the community;
- Utilizing traffic calming and other techniques to improve safety for motorists, pedestrians and cyclists;
- Increasing cycling and walking in the community through expanded networks and amenities;
- Enhancing the character and identity of Laguna Hills;
- Encouraging alternatives to driving by promoting transit use and other innovative mobility strategies; and
- Providing appropriate parking and using creative parking solutions to manage parking.

### EFFICIENT LOCAL AND REGIONAL SYSTEM

Safe and convenient access to jobs, housing, and other activities in the community can be provided by a well-designed local street system that connects to a well-developed regional circulation system. Planning for the needs of Laguna Hills necessarily involves coordinating the related transportation needs and planning efforts of surrounding cities, Orange County, regional agencies, and the State and federal government.

**Goal M-1: Provide a safe and efficient local transportation system consistent with the general County standards and the regional system.**

Policy M-1.1: Consider and address regional traffic generation and impacts from development in surrounding communities when planning improvements to the local circulation system.

Policy M-1.2: Coordinate intersection signalization to encourage improved traffic flow on arterial streets.

Policy M-1.3: Require new development and redevelopment to minimize traffic impacts and to incorporate mitigation or payment of “fair share” of improvements.

Policy M-1.4: Work with neighboring cities to address impacts of new development that cross jurisdictional boundaries.

## TRAFFIC CALMING AND SAFETY

Policies in this section seek to enhance vehicular, pedestrian, and bike safety in Laguna Hills by providing better traffic management, traffic calming techniques, and enforcement of traffic laws. In particular, traffic calming techniques in appropriate locations can reduce vehicle speeds, discourage shortcutting traffic, and improve the pedestrian environment.

**Goal M-2: Implement improvements that foster improved traffic safety on the circulation system for all drivers, pedestrians, and cyclists.**

Policy M-2.1: Enhance traffic safety in the community using traffic engineering evaluations and site specific traffic calming measures determined appropriate for the selected location and street.

Policy M-2.2: Increase enforcement of traffic laws in high accident rate areas.

Policy M-2.3: Reduce congestion in areas surrounding schools, parks, and other activity centers by applying effective traffic management solutions.

Policy M-2.4: Protect residential neighborhoods from cut-through traffic and other traffic-related issues by continuing to implement appropriate traffic engineering measures.

## WALKING AND CYCLING

Walking and bicycling, for both recreation and commuting, play increasingly significant roles as alternatives to the automobile. A safe, accessible pedestrian and biking network will connect key activity centers within the community to promote walking and biking in Laguna Hills. A variety of techniques, such as street trees, bike racks, enhanced crosswalks, street furniture, and way finding signs, will contribute to an increased walking- and bike-friendly community.

**Goal M-3: Create a community where walking and cycling are practical, safe, and fun options for travel.**

Policy M-3.1: Continue to extend and maintain pedestrian paths, bikeways, and equestrian trails that connect to local and regional activity centers.

Policy M-3.2: Increase walkability by making sidewalk improvements, increasing shade trees, providing street furniture (such as benches and water fountains), and improving access ramps.

Policy M-3.3: Enhance lighting and crosswalks for safety, if needed, at the busiest locations and activity centers in Laguna Hills.

Policy M-3.4: Fill in gaps in the bikeway system and enhance the current system with more shade from trees, improved signage, and striping.

Policy M-3.5: Discourage frequent driveway curb cuts along Mobility Element roadways and encourage reciprocal access between properties to minimize the number of conflict points between autos, pedestrians, and cyclists.

Policy M-3.6: Make improvements that support safe routes to schools, parks, and neighborhood activity centers.

Policy M-3.7: Encourage the provision of bicycle facilities in activity centers, places of employment, and public transit systems.

## BEAUTIFUL STREETS

Beautifying the streets of Laguna Hills, through landscaping and other features, will contribute to a greater sense of place and bolster the City's identity. Enhanced streetscapes are also more pleasant for pedestrians and contribute to the overall walkability of the community.

### **Goal M-4: Enhance the City's streetscapes and beautify the overall driving experience in Laguna Hills.**

Policy M-4.1: Enhance major entryways, arterials, and the median islands adjacent to activity centers through the use of gateway features, signs, wayfinding markers, lighting, and landscaping.

Policy M-4.2: Create streetscapes that are interesting, attractive, and improve water quality.

Policy M-4.3: Preserve designated scenic vistas and views of natural and man-made landmarks as viewed from the City's arterials.

## TRANSIT AND TRANSPORTATION DEMAND MANAGEMENT

An efficient and successful transit system in Laguna Hills will contribute to reduced traffic congestion, reduce the need for costly roadway improvement projects, and improve air quality. Transit also provides mobility options to those residents who cannot drive or choose not to drive, such as youth and seniors.

Transportation demand management strategies will help to address a

variety of traffic problems and provide secondary economic, social, and environmental benefits. Transportation demand management strategies are some of the most cost-effective ways to improve mobility in the community.

**Goal M-5: Promote a variety of alternative modes of travel and creative solutions to reduce single occupancy vehicle travel.**

Policy M-5.1: Promote express bus routes and paratransit service to regional activity centers, such as college campuses, Metrolink, and John Wayne Airport.

Policy M-5.2: Encourage ridesharing and transit use through public education programs.

Policy M-5.3: Work with private developers to implement creative transportation demand management solutions, such as ride-sharing, carpooling, and flexible work schedules.

Policy M-5.4: Educate residents of all ages about local mobility choices.

Policy M-5.5: Work with local schools to improve and advertise nonautomotive options for youths and teens to get to school and after-school activities.

Policy M-5.6: Evaluate the transportation needs of seniors, including paratransit service for seniors and disabled persons.

Policy M-5.7: Where appropriate based on ridership, provide non-advertising transit shelters and benches that are appropriately located, well designed, comfortable, and attractive.

## **PARKING**

Vehicular parking is a necessary component of any land use. New development and redevelopment projects will provide sufficient parking to meet the generated demand. At the same time, the City will employ innovative parking management solutions to avoid excessive parking requirements that detract from the economic, environmental, and aesthetic objectives of projects. Reduced parking requirements may be provided in areas that are highly walkable and well served by transit.

**Goal M-6: Ensure adequate parking is provided for all uses in the community without unnecessarily impeding new development and redevelopment.**

Policy M-6.1: Reduce the amount of land devoted to parking, if feasible, by integrating multiple use and creative parking solutions that still provide adequate parking for all uses.

Policy M-6.2: Provide options for convenient and accessible parking that foster economic growth and protect the quality of life of the residential neighborhoods.

Policy M-6.3: Develop flexible and creative solutions for parking in the Urban Village that respect its proximity to transit and park and ride, and its mix of uses.

Policy M-6.4: Encourage parking in shared surface lots or parking structures to make the most efficient use of land.

Policy M-6.5: Identify solutions to neighborhood- and activity-specific parking issues through implementation of a broad range of parking management tools and strategies.

## Summary of Approach

The goals, policies, and programs in the Mobility Element will help the City to improve streets for safer automobile travel and for pedestrians, bikes, and transit users. The Mobility Element encourages safer travel and the use of alternative transportation options with particular emphasis on improvements to community connectivity through enhanced pedestrian and bicycle routes and greater transit use. Table M-6 identifies the six major issue areas guiding the Mobility Element. These major issues represent the direction the City will take in its mobility goals, policies, and programs to implement the vision of Laguna Hills as captured in the Guiding Themes and expressed in the Mobility Plan.

**Table M-4  
Description of Actions to Address Mobility Issues**

Issues	Element	Section	Policy	Programs	Figure	Table
<b>Efficient Local and Regional System</b>	Mobility	Efficient Local and Regional System	M-1.1 through M-1.4	M-1 through M-4, M-8	Figure M-1 (Street Network)	Table M-1 (Level of Service Description)
<b>Traffic Calming and Safety</b>	Mobility	Traffic Calming and Safety	M-2.1 through M-2.4	M-6, M-10	Figure M-2 (Traffic Calming Techniques)	
<b>Walking and Cycling</b>	Mobility	Walking and Cycling	M-3.1 through M-3.7	M-4 through M-7	Figure M-3 (Bicycle Network)	Table M-2 (Bikeway Classification Description)
	Conservation and Open Space	Parks and Play	COS-1.17, 2.1, 2.3, 2.8	COS-6	COS-3 (Trails Plan)	COS-5 (Existing Pedestrian/ Equestrian Trails and Multi-use Corridors within Laguna Hills)
<b>Beautiful Streets</b>	Mobility	Beautiful Streets	M-4.1 through M-4.3	M-11, M-12		
<b>Transit and Transportation Demand Management</b>	Mobility	Transit and Transportation Demand Management	M-5.1 through M-5.7	M-4, M-8	Figure M-4 (OCTA Bus Routes, 2008)	Table M-3 (OCTA Bus Routes Serving Laguna Hills)
<b>Parking</b>	Mobility	Parking	M-6.1 through M-6.5			



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# Conservation and Open Space



## Introduction

The presence of natural open spaces, well-designed parks, and appealing recreational trails and facilities greatly contributes to the quality of life in Laguna Hills. Some of the most valuable assets of the community include open space areas, such as the Aliso Creek Corridor, and the existing system of recreational trails and bikeways that serve to provide internal community linkages. The City recognizes the finite value of the area's environmental resources and is committed to their protection and enhancement as they help to define Laguna Hills' character and identity. The Conservation and Open Space Element sets forth goals and policies that allow the City to take an active role in the management of these resources for the benefit of residents for years to come.

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***“The purpose of conservation: The greatest good to the greatest number of people for the longest time”***

Gifford Pinchot, U.S. Forest Service

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## Purpose and Scope of the Conservation and Open Space Element

The purpose of the Conservation and Open Space Element is to identify natural, cultural, and open space resources, ensuring a high-quality living environment for residents of Laguna Hills. This Element provides goals, policies, and programs related to open space and conservation as well as a wide range of other topics that together comprise the natural setting of Laguna Hills, including biological, scenic, cultural, and historical resources. The goals and policies contained in this element also address global climate change and sustainable practices related to water conservation, energy conservation, air quality, and water quality.



## Background

Of the 4,234 acres of land that comprise Laguna Hills, approximately 590 acres are dedicated and used for a variety of open space and/or recreational purposes, including parks; pedestrian and equestrian trails; recreational facilities; natural open space corridors; hillsides; canyons; and various utility, roadway, and buffer easements. The majority of Laguna Hills is urbanized with residential developments, commercial shopping centers, schools, and other office/professional uses. Yet, there are coveted open spaces and recreational areas throughout Laguna Hills that function as an integral part of the community as they exhibit the City's natural environmental resources and offer "get away" areas for community members and their families. These natural amenities are highly valued by the community and the Conservation and Open Space Plan discusses how Laguna Hills can continue to protect, enhance, and preserve these resources for future generations.

## Conservation and Open Space Plan

The Conservation and Open Space Element sets forth an approach to protect and enhance Laguna Hills' natural, open space and recreational resources. The City has established goals and policies to conserve and preserve these environmental resources. The Conservation and Open Space Plan identifies the major issues and concerns surrounding these topics and establishes goals and policies that enable the just stewardship and the proper management of the community's environmental resources.

### SUSTAINING OUR RESOURCES

#### Water Supply, Conservation, and Quality

Water is considered a limited natural resource given climate conditions and because southern California communities rely on domestic water supplies imported from as far away as the Colorado River. Laguna Hills recognizes the critical nature of water resources relative to regional growth and is committed to protecting water quality and conserving water supplies for the City's current residents and visitors, as well as future generations.

#### Water Supply

Laguna Hills obtains water services from the Moulton Niguel Water District (MNWD) and the El Toro Water District (ETWD). Water



services are provided in the northern portion of the City by the ETWD and in the southern portion of the City by the MNWD. The division line runs through a neighborhood north of Alicia Parkway and south of Aliso Creek (see Figure CSF-2 in Community Services and Facilities Element). Water from both Districts comes from the Colorado River and the State Water Project (which draws water from the San Francisco-San Joaquin Bay Delta) and travels hundreds of miles to the local water districts through an intricate aboveground and underground delivery system operated by the Metropolitan Water District of Southern California.

Due to the nearly built-out nature of Laguna Hills, basic infrastructure and adequate capacities for water services currently exist. Both the MNWD and ETWD updated their Urban Water Management Plans (UWMPs) in 2005 and determined that current water supplies, facilities, and storage will be adequate to meet future demands with all areas under their jurisdictions. However, the City would continue to work with the Districts to implement their UWMPs and actively look for opportunities to promote the development of water efficient practices and to implement water conservation programs to ensure adequate water supplies for the future.

## Water Conservation

Water conservation represents the most cost-effective and environmentally sound way to reduce current and future demand. Residents of Laguna Hills can take many actions to reduce water use, such as using water-conserving toilets and washers, fixing leaks, planting low water use landscaping, and simply avoiding overwatering plants. Gardens and turf consume a high percentage of residential water. Landscaping with low water use plants represents an effective method of conserving water. The City continues to encourage the residents of Laguna Hills to reduce water consumption and promote water conservation through these methods above.

In addition, reclaimed or recycled water (water that has received at least secondary treatment and basic disinfection at a domestic wastewater treatment facility) can be used for landscape irrigation and industrial use. Within the boundaries of Laguna Hills, wastewater flows via gravity and pumping to the local wastewater treatment facilities operated by the South Orange County Wastewater Authority where it can be treated and made available through MNWD and EWD for nonpotable uses, primarily landscape irrigation. The City continues to support the expansion of reclaimed water use in the community and is committed to working closely with each water district to manage and conserve water resources within Laguna Hills.





## Water Quality

Maintaining water quality is essential for the health of residents and the sustainability of the environmental resources in Laguna Hills. The California Regional Water Quality Control Board implements federal and State laws to ensure the proper planning, management, and enforcement of water quality standards. These laws include the federal Clean Water Act, National Environmental Policy Act, California Water Code, California Environmental Quality Act, California Health and Safety Code, National Pollutant Discharge Elimination System, and other laws.

The most prominent concern affecting water quality for Laguna Hills is stormwater runoff. Stormwater runoff is one of the most common sources of water pollution. Stormwater that drains from streets, parking lots, businesses, private yards, and agricultural land may contain grease, oil, pesticides and herbicides, heavy metals, paint, household chemicals, and other pollutants. Polluted stormwater can affect plants and wildlife, as well as increase the cost of treating water.

As required under the Orange County National Pollutant Discharge Elimination System (NPDES) Stormwater Discharge Permits with the Santa Ana Regional Water Quality Control Board north of El Toro Road and the San Diego Regional Water Quality Control Board south of El Toro Road, Laguna Hills is required to develop and implement Best Management Practices (BMPs) to control the discharge of pollutants. These BMPs would be required of all new development and redevelopment both during and after construction, and consist of both structural and nonstructural measures, including retention basins, first flush diversion devices, porous pavements, public education, street sweeping, and neighborhood toxic waste collection plans.

In addition, the City encourages the incorporation and use of Low Impact Development (LID) standards in the design of new development and redevelopment as it occurs in Laguna Hills. LID is a stormwater management and land development strategy applied at the parcel scale that emphasizes conservation and use of on-site natural features integrated with engineered, small-scale hydrologic controls to more closely mimic predevelopment, or natural hydrologic functions. LID aims to decrease stormwater runoff by treating it at the source and can include actions such as minimizing paved areas and soil compaction, preserving natural open spaces, locating open space areas to absorb overflows, directing runoff to natural and landscaped areas and filtration devices, and harvesting or reusing rain water as an irrigation source. Examples of LID design techniques include the following:



- Bioretention (plant- and soil-based water retention)
- Vegetated swales
- Vegetated buffer strips
- Green rooftop systems
- Rooftop rainwater collection systems
- Stormwater cascades

The incorporation of one or more of these LID design techniques results in a decrease of impervious (paved) materials and an increase of permeable materials and water infiltration, ultimately decreasing stormwater runoff and reducing water pollution. These techniques should be limited to locations not susceptible to geotechnical instability. The City will continue to implement the required BMPs in accordance with the NPDES Stormwater Discharge Permit as well as encourage the use of natural drainage solutions and LID standards, such as vegetated swales and stormwater cascades to slow flows and filter out contaminants.

## Energy

Energy is essential to maintaining the existing quality of life, economic development, and sustainability of the region. Recognizing the sources of our energy—particularly those sources that are nonrenewable—and understanding the consequences associated with energy waste would assist in more efficient use. With limited, nonrenewable resources providing the major source of energy, Laguna Hills recognizes the importance of efficient energy use and conservation by all community residents.

### Electricity and Natural Gas

The primary sources of energy in Laguna Hills are electricity and natural gas. Southern California Edison and San Diego Gas & Electric (SDG&E) provide electricity services to Laguna Hills, while Southern California Gas Company and SDG&E are the providers for natural gas. Efficient energy use can be encouraged by changing customer behavior, rewarding use of energy-saving appliances, and employing building design and construction approaches that reduce electric power and natural gas usage.

### Alternative Energy Resources and Conservation

Laguna Hills residents, the business community, and institutions can use less energy through simple conservation techniques, thereby contributing to environmental enhancements locally and throughout the region. Energy requirements and pollutants associated with the generation of energy can be reduced through innovative architectural design, building construction, structural orientation, and landscaping. Alternative/ renewable energy sources, such as solar (both active and passive), provide opportunities to reduce reliance on more traditional sources. The Land



Use and Mobility Elements also discuss the importance of incorporating sustainable land use and transportation planning as well as urban design techniques that promote energy efficiency for existing buildings as well as new development and redevelopment projects. Refer to these Elements for further discussion.

The City implements standard State Title 24 energy performance requirements through building codes. In addition, the relationship between project design and future energy requirements will be considered when reviewing proposals for new public and private development and redevelopment projects. Promotion of utility company incentive programs to retrofit existing development with energy efficient lighting, air conditioning and heating systems can be beneficial, saving energy and residents money. The City also supports the purchase of high fuel efficiency vehicles when acquiring new City vehicles.

## Open Spaces and Limited Resources

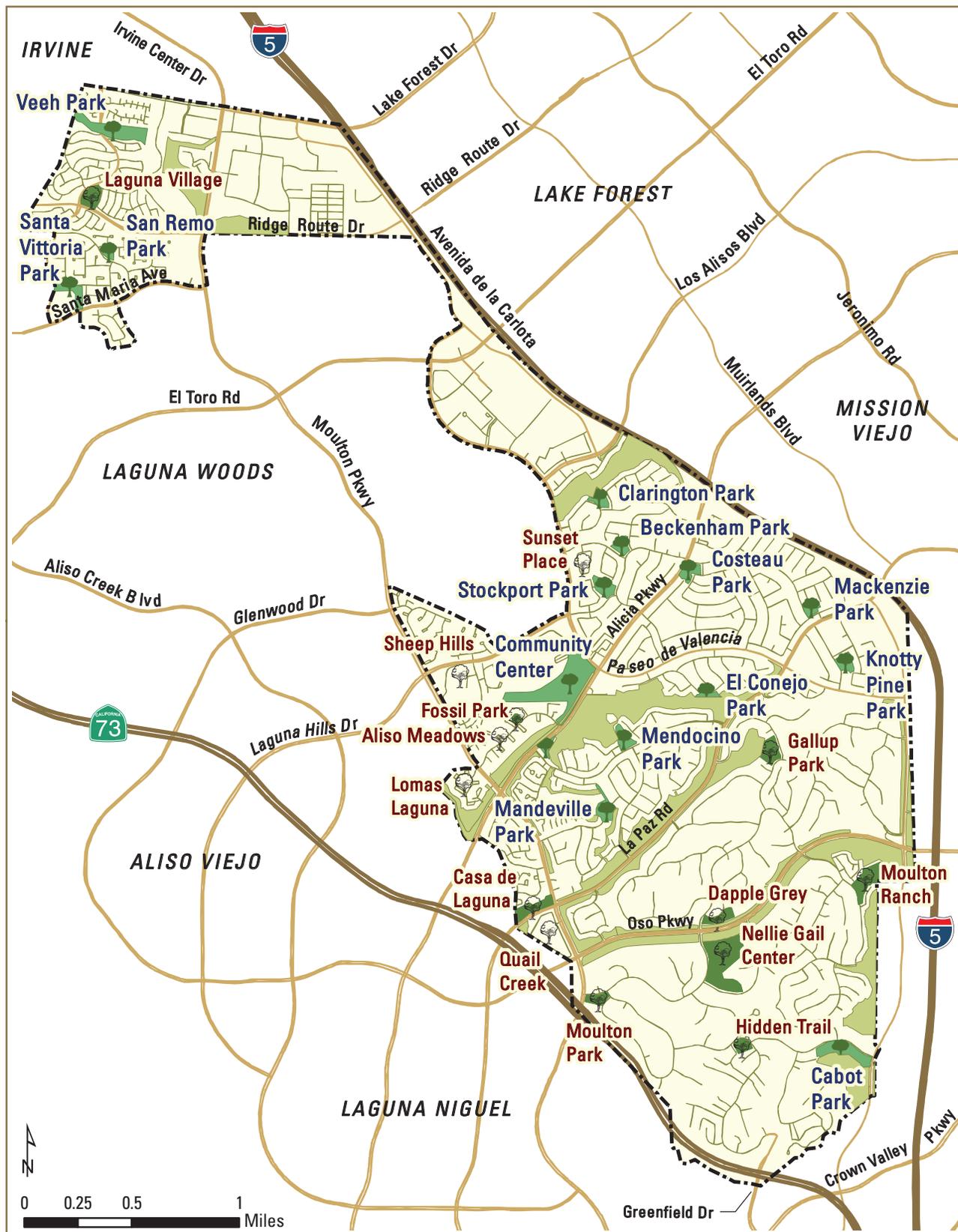
### Open Space

Open spaces within Laguna Hills are highly valued by the community as they represent a key component of the City's character. The open space areas within the City include both public and private parks; natural open space corridors; hillsides; canyons; and various utility, roadway, and buffer easements. The purpose of designating these open space areas is to preserve environmental resources and aesthetic attributes, and protect public health and safety. The City plants and maintains many trees in these areas as an aid to reduce green house gases and fight the effects of global climate change.

Because the City was primarily developed as a series of small residential communities, much of the open space consists of steep slopes captured between the residential areas and along utility corridors. Some of the open space is landscaped with ornamental plants; however, there are areas of disturbed European grasses and coastal sage scrub, as well as riparian areas adjacent to Aliso Creek and San Diego Creek. The largest open space area in the southern part of the City is the land through which the Edison Easement traverses (Figure COS-1). In north Laguna Hills, the area adjacent to Veeh Ranch Park is a large, privately owned open space, with man-made lakes, and is surrounded by riparian habitat.

Future connections between the City's open space and trails network and the regional network would serve Laguna Hills residents and visitors, as well as surrounding communities. Providing such connections requires careful collaboration with the applicable agencies responsible for planning, implementing, and managing the various components of





Source: EDAW, 2008.

Figure COS - 1  
Open Space and Parklands



the regional open space and trails network. In addition, opportunities for connections to the regional open space and trails network through developments adjacent to the network will be explored.

## Biological Resources

The majority of the City of Laguna Hills is urbanized; however, several areas within the community continue to function as important habitat for a variety of native vegetation and wildlife, including several sensitive species. Although the extent of native habitat is limited, various areas in and around residential areas and parks within the City are characterized by lush landscaping and ornamental plantings, or expanses of nonnative plant species that provide “greenbelts” of vegetative cover and separation between developed areas. Wildlife associated with the vegetation communities that occur within the City is also predominantly nonnative or common native species that have adapted to urban settings.

Most of the native habitat in the City is associated with the natural drainages of several creeks that occur within the City or adjacent to City boundaries. Aliso Creek traverses the City. Small tributaries to Oso Creek and Sulphur Creek flow along the City boundaries in the eastern and southern portions of the City. The San Diego Creek flows primarily outside of the City limits to the north; however, a tributary of this drainage connects to Veeh Reservoir in the northwestern portion of the City. Some of these drainages support native riparian vegetation communities,<sup>g</sup>



Scattered patches of disturbed native coastal sage scrub habitat occur within the City. Because these patches are disconnected, they are expected to provide habitat primarily for common or nonnative wildlife and are not expected to provide useful habitat to the many sensitive species that can be associated with this important southern California habitat. Common species expected to be associated with the disturbed coastal sage scrub within City boundaries include western fence lizard, western whiptail, gopher snakes, sparrows, California thrasher, wren, raptors, Audubon cottontail, deer mouse, brush mouse, and pocket gopher. Conversely, larger expanses of this vegetation community can be found west of the City among the hillsides in the Aliso Viejo area, or in small canyons southeast of the City. In these areas, the federally listed threatened coastal California gnatcatcher has been recorded. In addition, the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service (USFWS) has designated critical habitat for the coastal California gnatcatcher in open space approximately 2 to 3 miles southeast and southwest of the City, and approximately 3.5 miles north of the City.

As noted above, nonnative grasslands, disturbed habitat, and ornamental landscaping characterize the majority of the uplands within the City.

Wildlife species associated with these vegetation types in the City include common reptiles, birds, and mammals such as side-blotched lizard, blackbirds, cowbirds, horned lark, and mourning dove, and Beechey ground squirrel. Raptors foraging over these habitats, in particular nonnative grasslands, may include red-tailed hawk and northern harrier.

Despite the developed nature of Laguna Hills and the disturbed or nonnative condition of much of the City's landscape, some of the biological resources described above are considered sensitive by the resource agencies, including the CDFG, USFWS, U.S. Army Corps of Engineers (USACE), and Regional Water Quality Control Board (RWQCB). In particular, all federal or State jurisdictional waters, including vegetated wetlands, are regulated by the CDFG, USACE, and RWQCB and thus are considered sensitive or constrained resources when evaluating any proposed actions that may affect these jurisdictional waters, regardless of whether the habitat is disturbed.

If a project were to impact jurisdictional waters, permits would likely be required from the CDFG, USACE, and RWQCB. Native coastal sage scrub habitat, even if disturbed and disconnected, is considered sensitive habitat by the CDFG and USFWS. Although sensitive species (i.e., State or federally listed species, species considered rare or endangered by environmental organizations, State species of concern, or species protected by regulations such as the Migratory Bird Treaty Act) do not have high potential to occur within the City, the potential occurrence of these species could pose a constraint to proposed actions Citywide. Such species include Cooper's hawk, sharp-shinned hawk, least Bell's vireo, coastal California gnatcatcher, yellow warbler, yellow-breasted chat, and California mastiff bat, among others. Permit authorization from regulatory agencies would be required if a proposed project were to have the potential to impact sensitive species or their habitats. Permit requirements would be determined on a project-specific basis. Protective measures would need to be incorporated into project design and/or construction to minimize adverse effects. In addition, the City will continue to enforce policies to protect and preserve riparian areas, creek corridors and other drainages that support the biological resources discussed above.

## Scenic Resources

The City's scenic resources are preserved for the mutual enjoyment of community residents and visitors. The topography of Laguna Hills varies greatly from north to south. Elevations range from approximately 200 feet above sea level at the northern end of the City to over 650 feet above sea level atop prominent ridges in the Nellie Gail Ranch area. Due to this varied topography, view opportunities are present within Laguna Hills (Figure COS-2).



The unique character and aesthetic qualities of the canyons and hillsides in Laguna Hills make preservation of viewsheds and scenic resources an important consideration. The County of Orange Master Plan (Master Plan) contains a Scenic Highway Element that designated several roadways within the County as either Viewscape or Landscape Corridors. The criteria for designating scenic roadways are as follows:

**Viewscape Corridor:** A route that traverses a corridor within which unique or unusual scenic resources and aesthetic values are found. This designation is intended to minimize the impact of the highway and land development upon the significant scenic resources along the route.

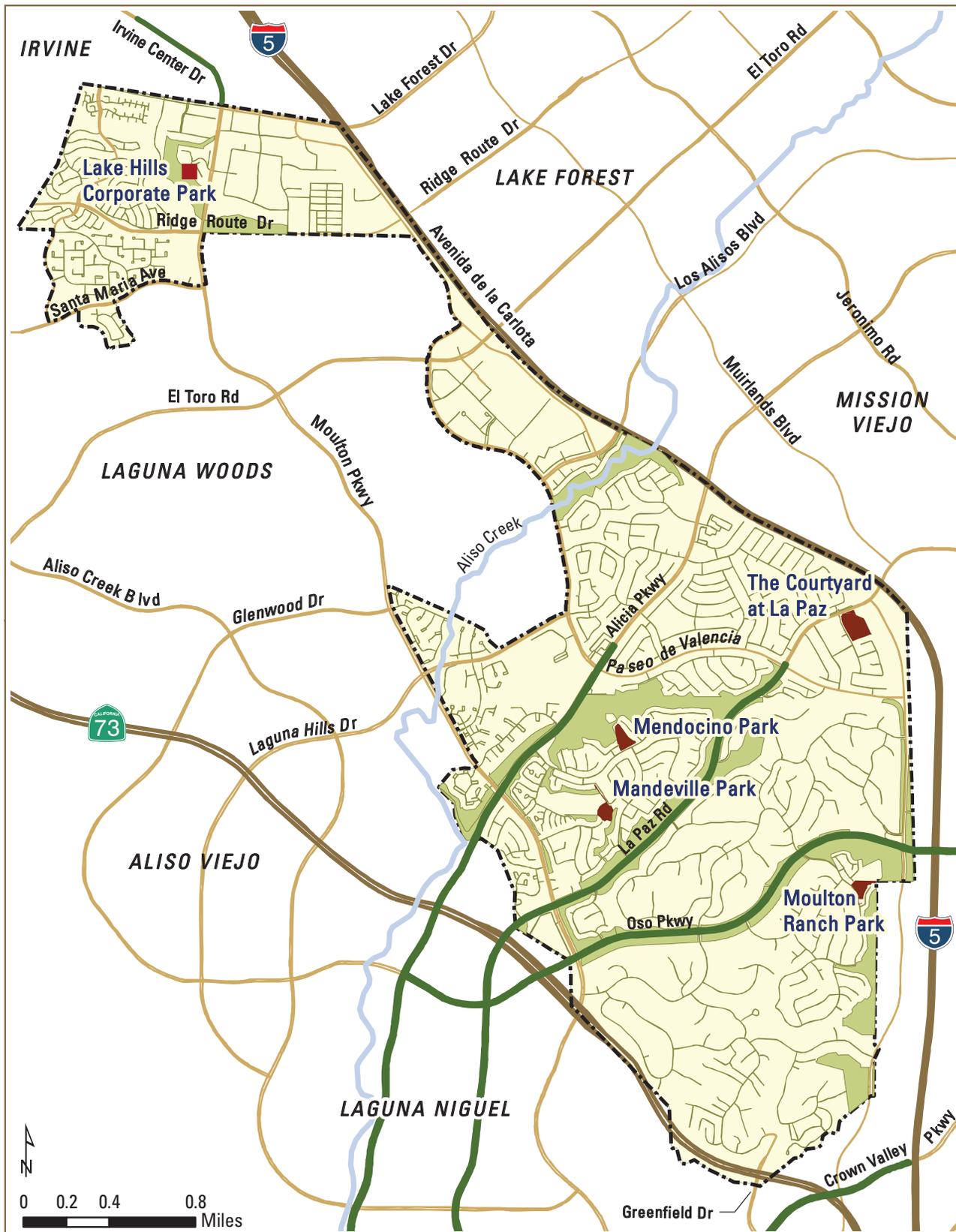
**Landscape Corridor:** A corridor that traverses developed or developing areas and has been designated for special treatment to provide a pleasant driving environment as well as community enhancement.

According to the Master Plan, there is no designated Viewscape Corridor within Laguna Hills. However, three roadways within the City of Laguna Hills have been identified and designated as Landscape Corridors. They are Alicia Parkway, La Paz Road, and Oso Parkway (Figure COS-2).

In addition to the Landscape Corridors discussed above, several scenic vistas are present throughout the City and represent locations where residents can obtain views and get an overall visual impression of the community. These scenic vistas are described in Table COS-1.

The Zoning Ordinance or any Specific Plan developed following adoption of this General Plan will include standards for development visible from major thoroughfares and identified view corridors. In addition, the City continues to protect and encourage the enhancement of scenic resources.





- Landscape Corridor
- Waterways
- City Boundary
- Major Streets
- Scenic Vistas
- Open Space
- Local Streets
- Freeway/ Toll Road

Source: EDAW, 2008.

Figure COS - 2  
Scenic Resources



Table COS-1 Significant Vista Points	
Location	Description
Moulton Ranch Park (private)	Moulton Ranch Park offers 180-degree views across I-5 toward Mission Viejo and beyond. Although Moulton Ranch park is a private park, there are no barriers to prevent public use.
Mandeville Park	Mandeville Park offers 120-degree view opportunities over the Moulton Niguel Water District toward Aliso Viejo, Laguna Niguel, and beyond.
The Courtyard at La Paz	Views from this shopping center include 120-degree views across I-5 toward Mission Viejo, Lake Forest, and the local mountains beyond.
Mendocino Park	Views from this park include 120-degree views to the north and west of the local mountains. The views and park are a common setting for weddings and neighborhood gatherings.
Lake Hills Corporate Park	This office park setting looks down on the Veeh Reservoir and provides sweeping 120-degree views to the north and east, including the evolving Orange County Great Park and the Santa Ana Mountains.

Source: City of Laguna Hills and EDAW, 2008.

## Cultural and Historic Resources

Cultural and historic resources refer to the celebration of the people and history that have ultimately shaped the community of the Laguna Hills into what it is today. Laguna Hills was built on one of the major land grants developed during the Rancho Era. Following Mexico’s independence from Spain in 1821, those who had served in the government or who had friends in authority, were given vast lands for cattle grazing. The 13,000-acre Rancho Niguel—which covered a good portion of the Saddleback Valley and would serve as the future site for Laguna Hills—was handed to Don Juan Avila. Decades later, the land was sold to Lewis Moulton in 1874, and the famous ranch was upgraded to cover some 22,000 acres. In the early 1960s, the sprawling Moulton Ranch was divided up and turned into communities, with one of those divisions representing Laguna Hills.

As Laguna Hills has evolved over time into a built-out city, the likelihood of finding new or undiscovered cultural and historic resources is limited. However, artifacts have previously been recovered from archaeological sites and areas in and around Laguna Hills. Thirty-one archaeological sites have been identified within a ½-mile radius of the City. Of these,

14 archaeological sites are located within the City boundaries and 17 are located outside of the City boundaries. In addition, 10 isolates are located within a ½-mile radius of the City boundaries. No isolates are located within the City boundaries.

Two of the 17 sites that are located within the ½-mile radius of Laguna Hills, but not within the City boundaries, were determined eligible for listing in the National Register of Historic Places (NRHP) or the California Register of Historical Resources (CRHR). Typical resources found at these sites are characterized by a low density shell midden, lithic flaking debris (chert and quartzite), flaked stone tools, groundstone (manos, pestles, and bowl), fire-affected rock, and human remains. The City recognizes the importance of these resources and seeks to identify and protect locally important sites, buildings, and memorabilia that reflect the history of the community.

Laguna Hills assesses and mitigates the potential impacts of private development and public facilities and infrastructure to significant cultural resources pursuant to the provisions of the California Environmental Quality Act (CEQA). Pursuant to the State CEQA Guidelines, historical resources are not limited to officially listed resources but also include resources found to be eligible for listing at the local, State, and federal levels. Cultural resources that reflect the history of a community, from descendants of the earliest Native Americans to later explorers, settlers, and immigrants, are important to the community and, therefore, warrant protection by the City. Furthermore, the accessibility of information about important cultural resources to the public for educational, religious, cultural, scientific, and other purposes should be supported and encouraged by the City.

## Paleontological Resources

Paleontological resources, or fossils, are the remains and/or traces of prehistoric (i.e., older than approximately 10,000 years) plant and animal life. Fossils provide direct evidence of ancient organisms and document the patterns of organic evolution and extinction that have characterized the history of life over the past 3.4 billion years. Paleontological resources, like archaeological resources, represent a limited, nonrenewable, and sensitive scientific and educational resource.

The geologic formations present within the Laguna Hills area consist of Sespe Formation, Vaqueros Formation, Monterey Formation, Capistrano Formation, Niguel Formation, Non-Marin Terrace deposits, and Young Alluvium (including slopewash and artificial fill). As shown in Table COS-2, the paleontological resource sensitivity of these formations ranges from no sensitivity to high sensitivity.

Table COS-2 Paleontological Sensitivity within Laguna Hills	
Geologic Formation	Resource Sensitivity
Sespe Formation	Low
Vaqueros Formation	Moderate to High
Monterey Formation	High
Capistrano Formation	High
Niguel Formation	High
Non-Marin Terrace deposits	High
Young Alluvium, Slopewash, Artificial Fill	Low to No Sensitivity

Source: LSA Associates 1994

Given the relatively high resource sensitivity of these underlying geologic formations, hundreds of Pleistocene fossils have been recovered in the Laguna Hills area from the Costeau Pit in the 1960s, and from the excavation for the Laguna Hills Community Center and Sports Complex in 1989 and 1999. Pleistocene taxa from alluvial and terrace deposits include amphibians, reptiles, birds, and mammals (including ground sloth, dire wolf, sabertooth cat, mammoth, mastodon, horse, camel, antelope, and bison). A collection of these recovered fossils, including the extinct California walrus, can be found in a display case at the Laguna Hills Community Center that serves as an educational tool for community members of all ages.

In addition, the City has highlighted the importance of these fossil resources within the community by incorporating them into the overall theme of the Community Center and associated recreational areas, such as the Prehistoric Playground, Fossil-Reef Park, and Costeau Park. The City is committed to promoting and expanding these links between recreation and education and will continue to explore opportunities to link sites of paleontological interest with other environmentally sensitive areas.

Again, given the urbanized nature of Laguna Hills, the likelihood of finding new or undiscovered paleontological resources is low; however, the City assesses and mitigates the potential impacts of private development and public facilities and infrastructure to paleontological resources pursuant to the provisions of CEQA. Pursuant to Section 15065 of the State CEQA Guidelines, a lead agency must find that a project may have a significant effect on the environment where the project has the potential to eliminate important examples of the major periods of California prehistory, which includes the destruction of significant paleontological resources. The City will continue to review



future development proposals to ensure that cultural resources (including prehistoric, historic, and paleontological) are conserved in compliance with CEQA requirements.

## Mineral Resources

Pursuant to the California Mining and Reclamation Act, the California Geological Survey designated areas within the southern and western portions of Laguna Hills as Mineral Resource Zone (MRZ) 1, and areas in the northern and eastern portion of the City as Mineral Resource Zone (MRZ) 3. The two mineral resource zones are defined as follows:

MRZ 1: Areas where adequate information indicates that no significant mineral deposits are present, or where it has been determined that little likelihood exists for their presence.

MRZ 3: Area containing mineral deposits of which the significance cannot be evaluated from the available data.

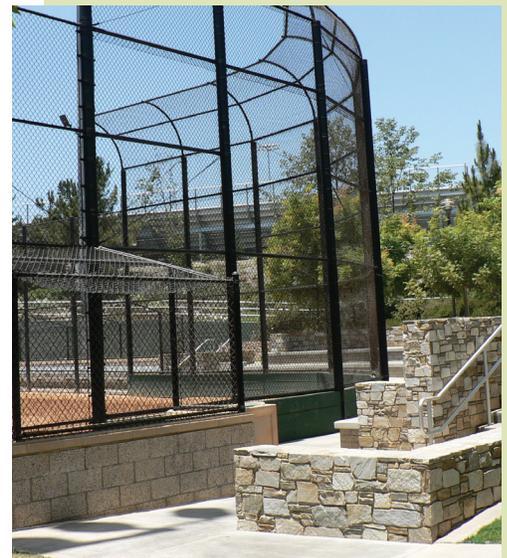
The California Surface Mining and Reclamation Act (SMARA) of 1975 does not require local governments to protect land designated as MRZ 1. The remainder of the City is designated MRZ 3, indicating that the significance of mineral resources could not be evaluated from available data. The City is responsible for recognizing lands designated as MRZ 3 and, if significant aggregate resources are ultimately found, State policy favors conservation and development of those resources. Due to the built-out nature of Laguna Hills, areas suited for mineral extraction are extremely limited; however, should mineral resources be discovered in the future, the City will maintain awareness and comply with State policies regarding protection and extraction.

## PARKS AND PLAY

### Community Parks

Parks fulfill a number of important functions; they are the green, “breathing” spaces of the City, a place for children to play and explore, a staging area for civic functions, and a “get-away” for sports and relaxation that is close to home and work. Parks also help to preserve natural features of the landscape and habitat areas vital to the City’s environmental health and sense of place.

There are 14 public parks within Laguna Hills. Amenities at each include sports fields, ballparks, tennis courts, picnic shelters, Playgrounds, playgrounds, walking trails, fountains, restrooms, and lighting. Nearby golf courses, regional parks, and open space in the coastal foothills offer additional outdoor recreation opportunities.





Various recreation programs are available to City residents, including youth and adult sports leagues; seasonal or special events and classes; cooking, dance, and art classes; gallery exhibits; wellness series and lectures; and fossil exhibits, among other programs. Most recreation programs are coordinated from the Community Center. A list of parks within the Laguna Hills city limits is provided below in Table COS-3 and shown in Figure COS-1).

Table COS-3 Public Parks			
Park Name	Acres	Location	Amenities
Beckenham Park	2.75 acres	Off Alicia Parkway, turn north on Costeau. At intersection of Wilkes/ Camberwell and Beckenham.	Picnic Tables and Shelter. Lighting. Playground. Drinking Fountain. Walkways. Benches. Open Field.
Cabot Park	8.6 acres	At intersection of Cabot Road and Rapid Falls Road	Parking Lot. Restrooms. Playground. Drinking Fountains. Baseball Field. Sports Field. Picnic Tables. Benches. Bike Rack. Walkways. Equestrian Trail.
Clarrington Park	3.49 acres	Off Alicia Parkway. Turn on Hon to Georgia Sue, left to park.	Playground. Picnic Tables. Walkways. Open Field. Access to Regional Trail. Lighting.
Costeau Park	3.67 acres	At intersection of Alicia Parkway and Costeau St.	Basketball Court. Picnic Tables. Playground. Drinking Fountain. Lighting. Benches. Bike Rack. Walkways. Baseball Field. Volleyball Sand.
El Conejo Park	2 acres	Off Paseo de Valencia near La Paz. Turn on Alisal to Linda Vista, go right. Turn left on El Conejo.	Playground. Benches. Picnic Tables. Lighting. Walkways. Open Field. Bike Rack. ½ Basketball Court.
Knotty Pine Park	3.85 acres	At intersection of McIntyre and Knotty Pine.	Volleyball Sand. Playground. Walkways. Drinking Fountain. Picnic Tables. Bike Rack. Open Field.

**Table COS-3  
Public Parks**

Park Name	Acres	Location	Amenities
Laguna Hills Community Center and Sports Complex.	30.6 acres	At intersection of Alicia Parkway and Paseo de Valencia.	The 43,000-square-foot Community Center includes a gymnasium, fossil exhibit, Rotating Art Gallery, and Technology Branch of the Orange County Public Library. The Center also provides a large banquet facility referred to as the "Heritage Room," a full-functioning catering kitchen, two classroom facilities, an Art Room, and a Physical Activity Room. The Sports Complex features a softball field, baseball field, soccer fields, skate park, roller hockey rink, snack bar, picnic shelters, and a prehistoric themed playground.
Mackenzie Park	2.85 acres	At intersection of Pike and Mackenzie.	Tennis Court. Walkways. Picnic Tables. Drinking Fountain. Open Field. Playground.
Mandeville Park	3.34 acres	On Mandeville east of Moulton.	Playground. Walkways. Picnic Tables. Drinking Fountain. Open Field. Exercise Circuit.
Mendocino Park	3.93 acres	Intersection of Aliso Hills and Alameda Av.	Playground. Walkways. Benches. Drinking Fountain. Picnic Tables. Open Field. Access to Trail System.
San Remo Park	1.6 acres	At intersection of San Remo and Santa Maria.	Playground. Volleyball Sand. Handball Court. Tennis Court. Benches. Walkways.
Santa Vittoria Park	2.87 acres	At intersection of Santa Maria and Santa Vittoria.	Playground. Volleyball Sand. Handball Court. Tennis Court. Benches. Walkways.
Stockport Park	3.99 acres	At intersection of Wilkes and Stockport.	Picnic Tables. Volleyball Sand. Sports Field. Lighting. Drinking Fountain. Playground. Walkways.
Veeh Park	11 acres	At intersection of Santa Vittoria and Lake Forest.	Basketball Court. Picnic Tables. Playground. Drinking Fountain. Open Field. Benches. Walkways.

Source: City of Laguna Hills and EDAW, 2008.

In addition to public parks, Laguna Hills also contains recreational areas and parks that are designated as private. Most of these private parks have a playground and open grassy areas with picnic tables and benches. These are identified in Table COS-4. Residents and sports organizations have expressed a need for additional public recreational areas, such as sports fields and neighborhood activity centers, to increase physical activity and help foster healthier lifestyles within the community. The City also recognizes the need to improve connections and access to these areas for all community members, from youth and teens to senior citizens and persons with disabilities. The City continues to seek out opportunities to improve and expand these recreational areas and use them to support events and activities that enhance community connections and bring various segments of the community together.

<b>Table COS-4 Private Parks</b>		
<b>Park Name</b>	<b>Acres</b>	<b>Location</b>
Casa de Laguna	5.25 acres	La Paz Rd and Moulton Pkwy
Dapple Grey	3.47 acres	Dapple Grey and Nellie Gail Road
Fossil Park	1 acre	Via Lomas Neighborhood
Gallup Park	5.17 acres	Gallup Circle and Nellie Gail Road
Hidden Trail	2.44 acres	Hidden Trail Road and Stage Line Drive
Laguna Village	4.57 acres	Ridge Route and Mill Creek Dr
Moulton Park	2.77 acres	Moulton and Nellie Gail Road
Moulton Ranch	8.22 acres	Meadow Crest Drive and Bridlewood Drive
Nellie Gail Equestrian Center	20.11 acres	Nellie Gail Rd and Empty Saddle Drive
Sheep Hills	8 acres	Laguna Hills Dr and Moulton Pkwy
Quail Creek	2 acres	La Paz Rd and Moulton Pkwy
Bella Vista	.5 acre	Bridlewood Dr and Oso Pkwy
Lomas Laguna	2 acres	Moulton Pkwy and Alicia Pkwy
Sunset Place	.5 acre	Paseo de Valencia and Avenida Sevilla
Aliso Meadows	1 acre	Via Lomas Neighborhood

Source: City of Laguna Hills and EDAW, 2008.

## Regional and Wilderness Parks

Several regional and wilderness parks are easily accessible to the residents of Laguna Hills. Regional parks frequently encompass large areas of land and may include special recreation features such as lakes, trails, and natural open space. These parks play an important part in providing a wider spectrum of recreation opportunities for the residents of the community. Aliso and Wood Canyon Regional Park and Laguna Niguel Regional Park are both located just to the south of the City boundary. Crystal Cove State Park, Laguna Coast Wilderness Park, Salt Creek Corridor Regional Park, Arroyo Trabuco Regional Park, O'Neil Regional Park, Mason Regional Park, Thomas F. Riley Wilderness Park, and Caspers Wilderness Park are additional regional recreation sites within a short drive from Laguna Hills.



## Recreational Trails

Recreation is proactive: it promotes wellness of individuals of all ages. The residents of Laguna Hills have become increasingly aware of the benefits of and need for leisure time to regularly exercise the mind and body. Promoting a spirit of play is also important in maintaining a healthy, quality lifestyle.

Currently, the trail system within Laguna Hills is maintained by the City, the County of Orange, the Nellie Gail Ranch Owners Association, and Lomas Laguna Homeowners Association. This system of trails provides both internal trails for walking, biking, and horseback riding as well as external links to trails that lead into nearby wilderness areas and adjacent cities. The trails in Laguna Hills are classified as Pedestrian/Equestrian Trails or Multi-use Corridors. Table COS-5 provides a description of the existing trail types, uses, locations, and linkages to adjacent communities.



## Pedestrian/Equestrian Trails

Sidewalks contribute to the walkability of Laguna Hills. Due to the built-out nature of Laguna Hills, these suburban sidewalks constitute the majority of pedestrian by-ways provided within City limits. In addition to sidewalks, many portions of the City are suitable for equestrian uses, which have been long established. The Nellie Gail Ranch Owners Association has built, and continues to maintain, a system of trails in the southeast portion of the city that are primarily intended for equestrian uses. The trail network provides an internal network of private trails intended for Nellie Gail residents but also provides connections to County trails leading into larger wilderness parks in adjacent communities. Signal buttons at equestrian height are provided at several intersections along the trails and there are four tunnels beneath major arterials in the City to provide safer linkages for equestrians.

**Table COS-5**  
**Existing Pedestrian/Equestrian Trails and Multi-Use Corridors within Laguna Hills**

Trail/Corridor		Uses Permitted	Description of Trail/Corridor	Linkages to Adjacent Communities
Aliso Creek	T	Pedestrian/Equestrian/ Off-road Bicycle	County Trail from Paseo de Valencia to I-5 to Clarington Park. Trail located on southeast bank of Aliso Creek.	Trail ends to the west at Paseo de Valencia into Laguna Woods. Trail ends to the east at I-5 into Mission Viejo.
Cabot Road	T	Pedestrian/Equestrian/ Off-road Bicycle	County Trail located on east side of Cabot Road from the south City limits to Oso Parkway to the north.	Trail connects to County Trail located at the south side of Oso Parkway.
	T	Pedestrian/Equestrian	Private Nellie Gail Trail on west side of Cabot Road that traverses to connect with another Nellie Gail trail along the north side of Oso Parkway.	None.
Laguna Hills Drive	T	Pedestrian/Equestrian/ Off-road Bicycle	County Trail located to the north of Laguna Hills Drive from Paseo de Valencia to the western City Limit.	Trail connects to Aliso Creek Trail and into Aliso & Woods Canyon Park.
La Paz Road	MU	Bicycle/ Pedestrian/ Equestrian	County Trail located on north side of La Paz Road from the Nellie Gail tunnel crossing, west under Moulton Parkway, continuing north to the County Aliso Creek Trail into Aliso & Woods Canyons Park.	Trail connects to Aliso Creek Trail and into Aliso & Woods Canyon Park.
Moulton Parkway	T	Pedestrian/Equestrian/ Off-road Bicycle	County Trail from Moulton Parkway and Laguna hills Drive and traversing south to La Paz Road.	Trail connects to Aliso Creek Trail and into Aliso & Woods Canyon Park.
San Joaquin Hills Transportation Corridor	T	Pedestrian/Equestrian/ Off-road Bicycle	Private Nellie Gail trail from Moulton Parkway just east of Pinestrap Circle. Trail interrupted by fenced-no access area owned by Caltrans. Trail continues just west of Greenfield Drive.	Trail links to County Trail from Laguna Niguel to Aliso & Wood Canyon Park.
Oso Parkway	T	Pedestrian/Equestrian/ Off-road Bicycle	Trail on south side of Oso Parkway from Moulton Parkway to Cabot Road.	Trail connects to southbound County Trail east of Cabot Road in Mission Viejo.
Paseo de Valencia	T	Pedestrian/Equestrian	Trail on east side of Paseo de Valencia from just south of Aliso Creek to Laguna Hills Drive. Trail connects to County Aliso Creek Trails.	None.
La Paz Road /Oso Parkway Connector	T	Pedestrian/Equestrian/ Off-road Bicycle	Private Nellie Gail Trail from Oso Parkway, between Falcon Hills and Nellie Gail, linking to La Paz Road Trail.	Trail links to the Aliso Creek Trail by way of the La Paz Trail.

Source: City of Laguna Hills Bikeways, Trails, and Open Space Master Plan

\* Trail Type designated by the City of Laguna Hills and defined as:  
T = Pedestrian/Equestrian Trails; MU = Multi-Use Corridors

While most of the pedestrian/equestrian trails are maintained by the County or are privately maintained, opportunities exist for additional City trails and linkages that would increase the livability of the community by connecting parks, open space, schools, and other community activity centers. Opportunities also exist to provide an enhanced trail system that will link adjacent communities and provide opportunities for long-distance equestrian use. Figure COS-3 illustrates the existing collection of trails and multi-use corridors within the City and also identifies areas where potential opportunities exist to increase community connections and provide the missing links in the current network of trails. The City will continue to maintain and make improvements to the existing trail system as a whole to encourage more active use and promote walkability and community connections.

### **Multi-Use Corridors**

Multi-Use corridors include pedestrian and equestrian uses, but also have adequate right-of way to accommodate bikeways. Multi-Use corridors can either be composed of a bikeway and pedestrian/equestrian trail separated by a fence or median, or a bikeway with a soft shoulder wide enough to be used as a pedestrian/equestrian trail. Several arterials have been identified as having the additional right-of-way needed to accommodate bikeways, and are therefore eligible to be multi-use corridors. The proposed multi-use corridors identified in Figure COS-3 are not meant to represent the only possible corridors for this type of recreational trail; rather, they serve as examples of opportunities which could add significant value and enhance the connectivity of the existing trail system. The City will conduct a Recreational Trails Gaps Analysis Report to evaluate the missing links in existing trail system in order to identify areas where linkage opportunities exist that would further increase the livability of the community.

### **Bikeways**

The City has an existing system of bikeways that provides internal community links as well as bicycle access to many of the surrounding communities. The Mobility Element provides a more detailed description of the City's bikeways.



- City Boundary
- Major Streets
- Local Streets
- Freeway/ Toll Road

Figure COS - 3  
Trails Plan



Source: City of Laguna Hills, 2001.

## Community Gardens and Local Agriculture

A core principle of sustainability involves meeting basic human needs, such as food, shelter, and water, via renewable sources as close to their consumption as possible. Community farms and gardens are places where neighbors and community members can gather to cultivate plants, vegetables, and fruits. Such gardens can improve nutrition, physical activity, community engagement, safety, and economic vitality for a neighborhood and its residents.

Although the City of Laguna Hills has limited options for agriculture because of its urbanized nature, it can help support the availability of sustainable local food choices by supporting local farmers markets and providing opportunities for community farms and gardens to be located in public spaces. The City is committed to improving access to healthy and local foods and continues to seek out opportunities to incorporate community gardens and local agriculture into areas of Laguna Hills.

## AIR QUALITY AND GLOBAL CLIMATE CHANGE

### Air Quality

Laguna Hills is located in the South Coast Air Basin (Basin), which consists of four counties: San Bernardino, Riverside, Los Angeles, and Orange, including some portions of the area once referred to as the Southeast Desert Air Basin (Figure COS-4).

The Basin is currently classified as a federal and State nonattainment area for ozone ( $O_3$ ), particulate matter smaller than 10 microns in diameter ( $PM_{10}$ ), and particulate matter smaller than 2.5 microns in diameter ( $PM_{2.5}$ ). This means that the measured concentrations of these pollutants have exceeded the federal and State standards. The Basin is classified as a federal attainment/maintenance area and a State attainment area for carbon monoxide (CO). If an area is redesignated from nonattainment to attainment, the federal Clean Air Act requires the preparation of a maintenance plan that demonstrates how the air quality standard would be maintained for at least 10 years; the area is then designated as a “maintenance” area. The entire Basin currently meets the federal and State standards for nitrogen dioxide ( $NO_2$ ), sulfur dioxide ( $SO_2$ ), and lead (Pb) and is classified as an attainment area for these pollutants.

In the Basin, the South Coast Air Quality Management District (SCAQMD) is the agency responsible for the administration of federal and State air quality laws, regulations, and policies. Included

Gardens, scholars say, are the first sign of commitment to a community. When people plant corn they are saying, let's stay here. And by their connection to the land, they are connected to one another.

- Anne Raver



in the SCAQMD’s tasks are monitoring of air pollution, preparation of the State Implementation Plan (SIP) for the District area, and the promulgation of its Rules and Regulations. The SIP includes strategies and tactics to be used to attain the National Ambient Air Quality Standards (NAAQS). The Final 2007 Air Quality Management Plan was adopted by the SCAQMD Governing Board on June 1, 2007. SCAQMD regulations require that any equipment that emits or controls air contaminants be permitted prior to construction, installation, or operation. The SCAQMD is responsible for review of applications and for the approval and issuance of these permits.

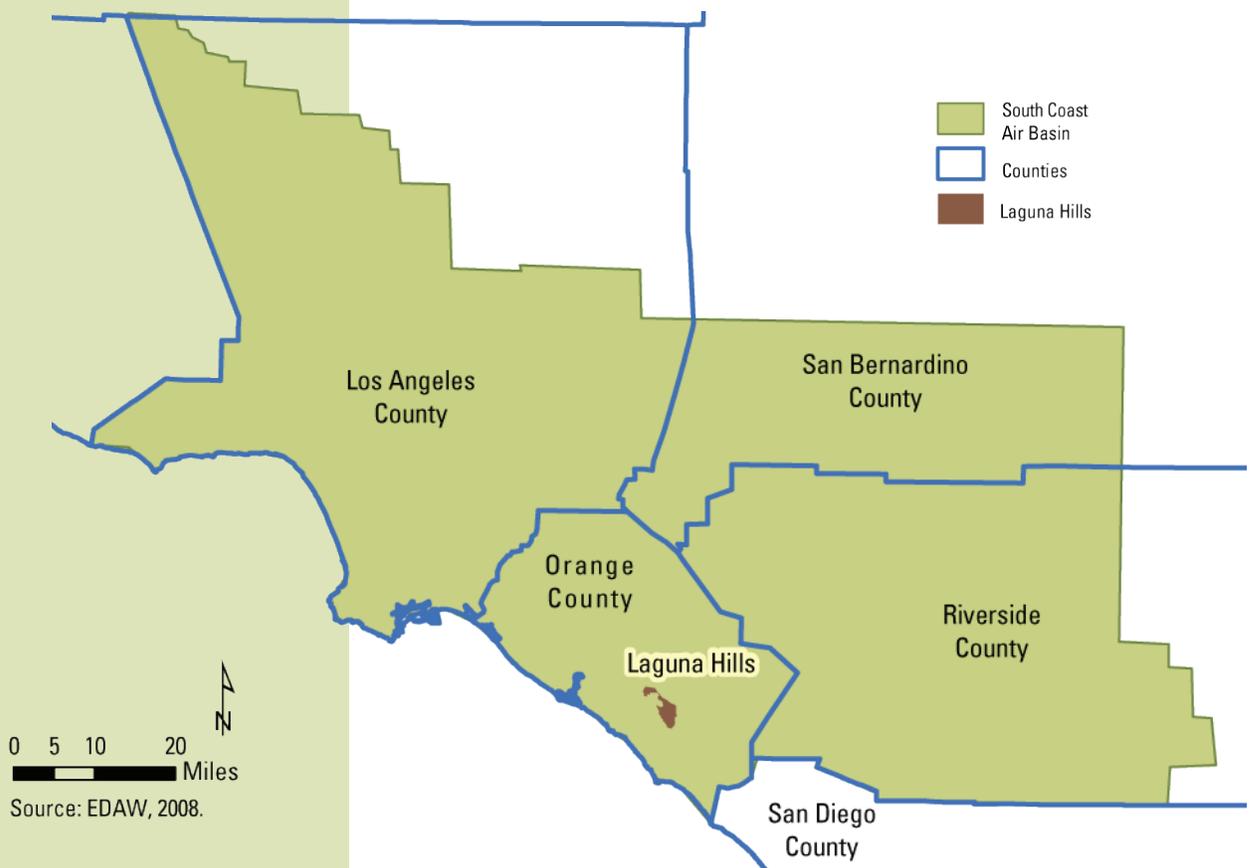


Figure COS-4  
South Coast Air Basin

Motor vehicles constitute the largest generator of air pollutant emissions in the Basin. In Laguna Hills, the areas adjacent to Interstate 5 (I-5) and State Route 73 would be subject to freeway pollutants. The railroad line parallel to I-5 that includes freight, passenger, and transit traffic represents another source of mobile source emissions. The most significant regional sources of PM<sub>10</sub> and PM<sub>2.5</sub> are construction, demolition, and dust from vehicle use on paved and unpaved roads. Coarser particles are directly emitted from activities that disturb the soil, including entrained dust from travel on paved and unpaved roads, construction, mining, and

agricultural operations. Other sources include windblown dust, pollen, salts, brake dust, and tire wear. Combustion sources such as vehicles, diesel engines, and industrial facilities also emit PM<sub>10</sub> and PM<sub>2.5</sub>. The most significant regional sources of O<sub>3</sub>, NO<sub>2</sub>, and CO are automobiles and other on-road vehicles. O<sub>3</sub> is formed by the reaction of reactive organic gases (ROG) and nitrogen oxides (NO<sub>x</sub>), which are combustion products from gas and diesel engines. Other important sources of ROG are paints, coatings, and process solvents.

Laguna Hills continues to support the SCAQMD in their efforts to implement regional air quality plans. Further, the City will continue to educate the residents of Laguna Hills and encourage energy conservation strategies for improving air quality.

## Global Climate Change

The built environment is a primary contributor to climate change and greenhouse gas (GHG) emissions. The global scientific community has expressed very high confidence (i.e., at least 90 percent) that global warming is anthropogenic, i.e., caused by humans, and that global warming will lead to adverse climate change effects around the globe (IPCC 2007). The General Plan recognizes a shift to development decisions, growth, and infrastructure investments that addresses climate change by reducing GHG emissions and responding to the potential effects of global warming.

Because it provides a comprehensive, long-term framework for development, investment, and growth in the City, the General Plan is the logical place to address climate change. The General Plan policies addressing land use patterns, future growth, mobility, green building, City operations, and other issues will affect the rate of GHG emissions in the City for the long term. The Guiding Themes and policies of focused revitalization, efficient transportation, green building, and sustainable connections promote a more energy efficient built environment that reduces GHG emissions.

The specific impacts of climate change are highly regional and even local in nature. The City will plan for adaptation to the effects of climate change, including greater drought conditions that reduce drinking water supplies; increased risk of hazards like flooding and wildfires; and increased instance, severity, and duration of heat waves. Because climate change is bringing about previously unrecorded conditions, the City's adaptation policies will be based on projections from the best available scientific modeling.

Neither mitigation nor adaptation alone can eliminate all climate change impacts, but together they can significantly reduce the risks of

climate change. Emissions levels during the next few decades will determine whether the climate is stabilized at a safe level. Near-term action is particularly important given the cumulative nature of GHG emissions (reductions in the near term result in a lower eventual atmospheric concentration than the same reductions delayed several decades into the future). To stabilize global warming at a relatively safe level and increase the likelihood of avoiding the catastrophic effects of climate change, substantial emissions reductions must occur within the lifetime of the City's General Plan. Without substantial emissions reductions in the near term, the resulting increase in temperature is projected to cause catastrophic and irreversible changes, including the melting of major ice sheets, large-scale plant and animal extinction, widespread drought, and failure of agricultural crops. Because the impacts of GHG emissions in the next few decades are long term and potentially catastrophic and irreversible, mitigation policies implemented now will have an impact far into the future. Furthermore, since not all climate change effects are avoidable, it is important to begin adapting to these effects now. The City's landscape initiatives and annual tree planting and maintenance programs help to address climate change.

## Goals and Policies

The goals and policies section sets both broad and specific direction for the future of the City based on identified issues, as captured in the Guiding Themes and expressed by the community, City staff, and decision makers.

Three major issue areas are addressed in the goals and policies of the Conservation and Open Space Element. The major issues are:

- Managing and protecting limited environmental resources, including open space areas, through conservation and preservation;
- Maintaining and enhancing existing recreational facilities and trails while enhancing community connections; and
- Improving local and regional air quality and addressing global climate change by reducing emissions and promoting energy efficiency.

## SUSTAINING OUR RESOURCES

Laguna Hills' natural amenities are highly valued and the community is devoted to protecting its environmental resources and open spaces for future generations. This includes policies that promote both water and energy conservation, ensure adequate water supplies and acceptable water quality standards are met, enhance and protect open spaces and limited resources, and encourage recycling.

**Goal COS-1: Manage limited resources so that future generations can enjoy the environmental and scenic wealth this community has to offer.**

## Water Supply and Quality

Policy COS-1.1: Reduce water consumption by encouraging the use of low water use landscaping, water efficient plumbing, and water reclamation techniques in public and private projects.

Policy COS-1.2: Coordinate with regional water service providers to plan for emergency water services and drought.

Policy COS-1.3: Encourage the use of natural drainage improvements to retain and detain stormwater runoff, minimizing volume and pollutant concentrations.

Policy COS-1.4: Promote the use of LID standards in the design of new development and redevelopment.

Policy COS-1.5: Support the expansion of reclaimed water for irrigation of public and private landscaping.

## Energy

Policy COS-1.6: Reduce the amount of energy consumed in public and private projects by promoting conservation, efficiency, recycling, and renewable resources.

Policy COS-1.7: Integrate energy conservation measures, design, and materials into all new public and private development or redevelopment that meet or exceed State standards.

Policy COS-1.8: Consider fuel efficient vehicles to achieve greater energy efficiency when purchasing new City vehicles.

Policy COS-1.9: Employ green purchasing practices as part of the City procurement process.

Policy COS-1.10: Support development of alternative energy sources to achieve greater energy independence.

## Open Spaces and Limited Resources

Policy COS-1.11: Enhance connections to Aliso Creek and Veeh Reservoir from adjacent neighborhoods, while protecting them from human caused impacts.

Policy COS-1.12: Maintain unique and diverse open spaces for purposes of protecting scenic resources, passive recreation, and habitat protection.

Policy COS-1.13: Preserve riparian areas, creek corridors, and other drainages that support biological resources.

Policy COS-1.14: Protect and enhance views from parklands to the hillsides, natural canyons, Veeh Reservoir, Aliso Creek, and other scenic resources.

Policy COS-1.15: Recognize that archaeological and paleontological resources are nonrenewable resources worthy of preservation.

Policy COS-1.16: Ensure compliance with State policies and regulations regarding protection and extraction of mineral resources.

Policy COS-1.17: Coordinate with utility providers when development projects propose secondary land uses such as open space, trails, and recreational land uses in utility company property or easements.

Policy COS-1.18: Coordinate with utility providers when development projects propose environmental mitigation land in and adjacent to utility company property or easements.

## Recycling

Policy COS-1.19: Reduce the amount of solid waste generated by City operations, residents, and businesses.

Policy COS-1.20: Encourage recycling and reuse of construction and demolition materials to encourage maximum diversion of waste from landfill areas.

Policy COS-1.21: Achieve maximum waste recycling in all sectors of the community.

## PARKS AND PLAY

Residents of Laguna Hills recognize the need for opportunities for increased physical activity and have a desire to maintain and increase access to parks and recreational amenities to foster healthy lifestyles within the community. Laguna Hills focuses on the needs of all community members, including seniors, children, persons with special needs, and residents of all ages. The policies below ensure long-term provision of recreational opportunities, as they represent an important component of the community's identity.

**Goal COS-2: Expand and maintain the City's integrated parks, recreation, and trails system to meet the needs of residents of all ages.**

Policy COS-2.1: Expand and improve the network of trails that provides interesting and safe access to parks, schools, neighborhood commercial areas, activity centers, and regional recreational opportunities.

Policy COS-2.2: Strengthen community ties by improving access to enriching civic activities at parks and recreational facilities throughout Laguna Hills.

Policy COS-2.3: Make improvements (e.g., staging areas, water fountains, benches, trail markers, trash cans, brush maintenance, lighting) to the trail system that encourages more active use.

Policy COS-2.4: Patrol parks, trails, and recreation areas to deter crime and discourage unwanted after-hours activities in proximity to residential areas.

Policy COS-2.5: Support events and activities that cross community and neighborhood boundaries to bring together various segments of the community.

Policy COS-2.6: Improve access to healthy and local food by encouraging community gardens, farmers markets, and farm-to-school programs.

Policy COS-2.7: Promote and expand the link between recreation and educational activities by exploring opportunities tied to sites of paleontological or archaeological interest and other environmentally sensitive areas.

Policy COS-2.8: Provide interesting and safe connections between the Community Center, civic institutions, schools, and parks through interpretive trails and enhanced pedestrian links.

Policy COS-2.9: Determine the need for special facilities for seniors and the disabled to increase enjoyment and accessibility to parks and trails.

Policy COS-2.10: Promote special facilities and activities for youths and teens that focus on educational enrichment and skills training.

## **AIR QUALITY AND GLOBAL CLIMATE CHANGE**

Air quality in Laguna Hills, as part of the larger South Coast Air Basin, currently does not meet State and/or federal standards. The City is committed to improving air quality and addressing climate change to the degree feasible at the local level by creating policies and supporting programs that reduce air quality emissions and enable residents, business owners, and visitors to employ sustainable and energy efficient practices.

**Goal COS-3: Make meaningful choices to improve local and regional air quality and address climate change.**

Policy COS-3.1: Continue to preserve important native trees and plant new low water use landscaping and trees.

Policy COS-3.2: Reduce the amount of air pollution emissions from mobile and stationary sources attributable to City operations.

Policy COS-3.3: Educate the public about the use of energy efficient heating and cooling equipment and other appliances such as swimming pools, water heaters, fireplaces, and refrigerators.

Policy COS-3.4: Encourage businesses to use clean and innovative technologies to reduce air pollution.

Policy COS-3.5: Elevate public awareness regarding private pollution sources and pollution reduction measures.

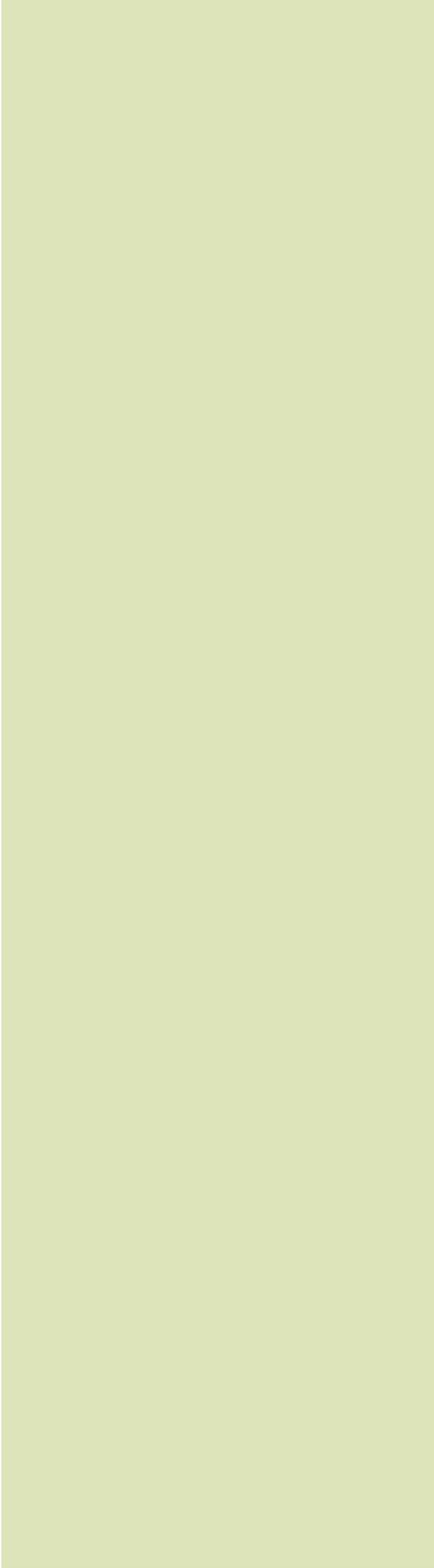
Policy COS-3.6: Work with Caltrans and OCTA to employ the use of berms, landscaping, and other techniques to minimize the health impacts on Laguna Hills residents from traffic increases on adjacent regional freeways.

## Summary of Approach

The goals, policies, and programs in the Conservation and Open Space Element will help the City protect its environmental resources and provides methods to improve energy efficiency; promote water conservation; reduce air pollution; and preserve the existing parks, open spaces, and the network of trails that are so highly valued in Laguna Hills. Table COS-6 identifies the three major issue areas described in the Goals and Policies section. These major issues represent the direction the City will take in its conservation and open space goals, policies, and programs to implement the vision of Laguna Hills as captured in the Guiding Themes and expressed in the Conservation and Open Space Plan.

**Table COS-6**  
**Description of Actions to Address Conservation and Open Space Issues**

Issues	Element	Section (s)	Policy (ies)	Programs	Figure	Table
<b>Sustaining Our Resources</b>	Conservation and Open Space	Water Supply and Quality, Energy, Open Spaces and Limited Resources.	COS-1.1 through COS-1.21	COS-1 through COS-5, COS7, COS-8	Figure COS-1 (Parks and Open Spaces); Figure COS-2 (Scenic Resources)	Table COS-1 Significant Scenic Vista Points in Laguna Hills; Table COS-2 Paleontological Sensitivity within Laguna Hills.
	Land Use	Sustainable and Creative Infill Development	LU-4.1 through LU-4.8; LU-3.7 through LU-3.9	LU-3, LU-4, LU-8 through LU-10		
	Mobility	Beautiful Streets; Transit and Transportation Demand Management;	M-4.3; M-5.2; M-5.3; and M-5.5	M-4, M-8, M-11, M-12		
<b>Parks and Play</b>	Conservation and Open Space	Parks and Play	COS-1.12; COS-2.1 through COS-2.10	COS-6	Figure COS-1 (Parks and Open Spaces); Figure COS-3 (Trails Plan)	Table COS-3 (Public Parks within Laguna Hills); Table COS-4 (Private Parks within Laguna Hills); Table COS-5 (Existing Pedestrian/ Equestrian Trails and Multi-Use Corridors)
	Mobility	Walking and Cycling	M-3.1 through M-3.7	M-4 through M-7	Figure COS-3 (Trails Plan)	Table M-4 (Bikeway Classification Description)
<b>Air Quality and Global Climate Change</b>	Conservation and Open Space	Air Quality and Global Climate Change	COS-3.1 through COS-3.6	COS-7, COS-8	Figure COS-4 (South Coast Air Basin)	



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# Community Services and Facilities



## Introduction

The capacity and quality of the public services and facilities that serve Laguna Hills significantly affect the quality of life enjoyed by those who live, work, and own property in the City. Moreover, community buildings, libraries, services, and facilities enhance the identity of the community and reinforce commitment to the public. The City provides a variety of services and infrastructure but also contracts with appropriate agencies and special districts to serve the City's residents and businesses. Building, maintaining, and improving upon the quality of public infrastructure and services for residents and business owners would ensure that Laguna Hills is a city prepared for the future. The Community Services and Facilities Element intends to integrate the planning of community facilities into the development process. The various goals and policies established in this element will ensure that adequate consideration is given to the provision and maintenance of these necessary services and facilities.

## Purpose and Scope of the Community Services and Facilities Element

The purpose of the Community Services and Facilities Element is to assess the current status of community services as well as evaluate their long-term provision to ensure that adequate services and facilities are both planned and provided proportionate with the projected growth, as well as development and redevelopment, as it occurs within the City. The Community Services and Facilities Element also establishes the City's plan to provide and maintain infrastructure and public services for future growth, without diminishing services to existing development. Community services collectively refer to law enforcement, fire protection, water, sewer, solid waste, electricity and natural gas, communication, and animal care services. Community facilities collectively refer to schools, libraries, parks, and recreational facilities.

## Background

Laguna Hills is a developed community with established community facilities and infrastructure that are necessary to support urban development. The quality of life experienced by residents of the community is directly related to how effectively these services are provided. The City's infrastructure and public services systems have been designed to accommodate the anticipated population increases and future land development within the City; however, emphasis must continually be placed on the maintenance and improvement of these systems. The City continues to be committed to providing a high level of community services and facilities. The Community Services and Facilities Plan discusses these services and sets forth goals and policies for development to ensure that community facilities are adequate to keep Laguna Hills running smoothly, encourage economic development and investment, and protect and enrich the lives of all community members.

## Community Services and Facilities Plan

The City's community services and facilities have a direct impact on the safety, health, and overall quality of life for Laguna Hills residents. The overarching purpose of the Community Services and Facilities Plan is to ensure that residents and businesses of Laguna Hills enjoy adequate access to a variety of services and infrastructure in order to function and thrive for generations to come. The central concept in the provision of infrastructure and community services is the establishment of a set of performance and service standards. All new development and redevelopment will be required to meet these standards as detailed in Table CSF-1. In cases where the performance standards are not met due to impacts from existing development, the City will work with appropriate agencies to ensure that the standards can be met at the earliest feasible date. Figure CSF-1 depicts the location of the community facilities in Laguna Hills.

Table CSF-1 Community Services and Facilities Service Standards	
Service or Facility	Service Standard
Park Facilities	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>5 acres of active or passive park land per 1,000 residents</li> </ul>
Schools	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Provide adequate capacity to meet projected enrollment</li> </ul>
Fire Protection and Emergency Services	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>First fire engine or emergency unit to reach the scene within 5 minutes 90 percent of the time</li> </ul>
Police Services	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Average response time of 5 minutes for emergency calls</li> <li>Preventative patrol times of 40 percent and 50 percent of an officer's workday</li> </ul>
Water Service	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Establish adequate fire flow and sufficient water storage for emergency situations with the Orange County Fire Authority</li> </ul>
Sewer/Wastewater Service	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Require unrestricted flow during both average and peak conditions</li> </ul>
Solid Waste Disposal	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Weekly pick-up of residential solid waste</li> <li>Street sweeping to meet NPDES requirements</li> </ul>
Flood Control and Stormwater Drainage	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Require adequate facilities to protect structures and roadways from 100-year flood</li> </ul>

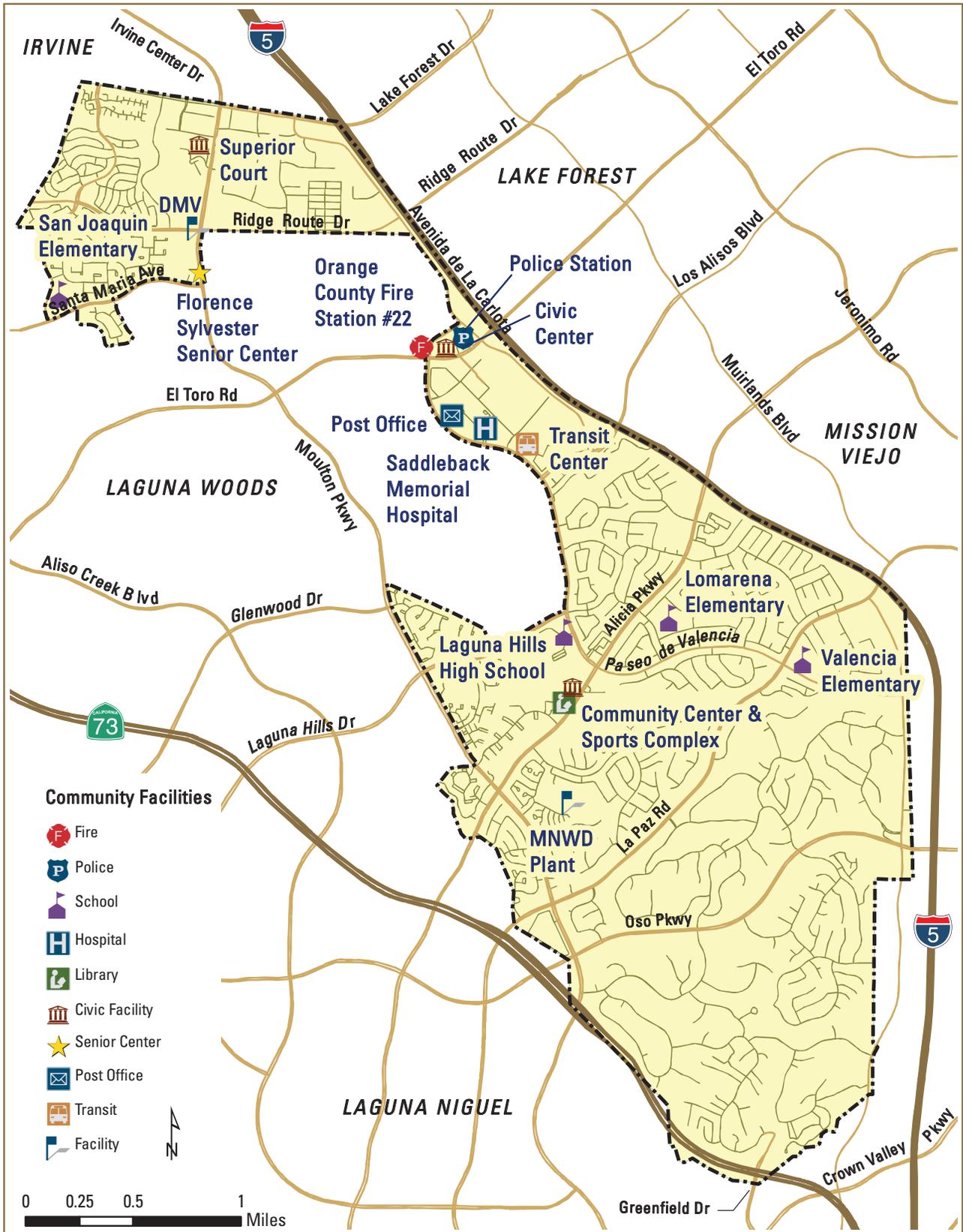
## COMMUNITY FACILITIES

### Recreational Facilities and Programs

A variety of recreation programs is available to City residents, including youth and adult sports leagues; seasonal or special events and classes; cooking, dance, and art classes; gallery exhibits; wellness series and lectures; fossil exhibits; and other programs. Recreation programming is the responsibility of the Community Services Department. Most recreation programs are coordinated from the Laguna Hills Community Center and Sports Complex.

The Laguna Hills Community Center is the focal point of the City's recreational, leisure, and cultural interests. The 43,000-square-foot building includes a gymnasium, fossil exhibit, Rotating Art Gallery, and Technology Branch of the Orange County Public Library. The Center also provides a large banquet facility referred to as the "Heritage Room,"





Source: EDAW, 2009.

Figure CSF - 1  
Community Facilities



a full-functioning catering kitchen, two classroom facilities, an Art Room, and a Physical Activity Room. The Sports Complex features a softball field, baseball field, two soccer fields, skate park, roller hockey rink, snack bar, picnic shelters, and a prehistoric themed playground.

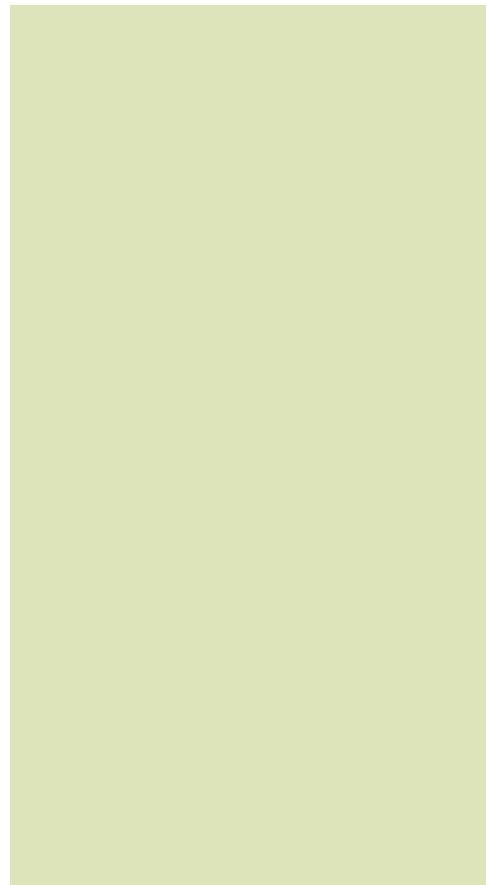
Laguna Hills also offers a range of classes and activities for all members of the community. These classes are announced in *City Views*, a document published quarterly by the City. *City Views* includes an activity schedule with classes and activities for all ages, such as special community events, dance, sports and fitness, cultural arts, personal development, and other social activities. These activities take place in a number of locations throughout the City, including the Community Center as well as parks and schools.

Additionally, the Florence Sylvester Senior Center operated independently by the Orange County Community Foundation provides a range of services and programs for the community's senior citizens. At this center, lunches are provided daily from Monday through Friday, as well as an occasional dinner period and professional entertainment during the meals. Wellness programs are developed and administered through the senior center, including screenings and other assessments by nurses and public health professionals. Lecture series and other programs are regularly scheduled at the senior center.

These community programs provide opportunities for residents to come together and be involved actively in the community. The City will continue to support community events and activities that bring together various segments of the community and actively seeks ways to improve and enhance current community programs.

## Community Parks

Parks are places where Laguna Hills residents can gather to have fun, celebrate occasions, or just relax and enjoy being outdoors in their city. There are 13 public parks within Laguna Hills and they provide places of adventure and discovery, peace and tranquility, and recreation and play. These parks offer a sense of enjoyment, a strong community spirit, and a sense of community belonging and identity. Amenities at each park can include sports fields, ballparks, tennis courts, picnic shelters, tot lots, playgrounds, walking trails, fountains, restrooms, and lighting. Nearby golf courses, regional parks, and open space in the coastal foothills offer additional outdoor recreation opportunities. There are parks within the City designated as private, which are generally maintained by homeowners associations or private entities. Laguna Hills also has a number of recreational trails, including pedestrian and equestrian trails, and bikeways. Currently, the community-wide standard for the provision of park lands is 5 acres of active or passive park land per 1,000 residents.



For a complete discussion on these parks and recreational trails, please refer to the Conservation and Open Space Element.

## Animal Care Services

The City of Laguna Hills promotes responsible pet ownership and is committed to supporting and improving the quality of animal care services for all residents of the community, and their pets. Animal care services for Laguna Hills are provided under contract by OC Animal Care, a division of the Orange County Community Resources Department (OCCR). OC Animal Care is a division of Public Health Services and provides shelter, pet licensing and patrol services to 19 contract cities and all the unincorporated areas of the County. The OC Animal Care Center, located in the City of Orange approximately 19 miles from Laguna Hills, houses and provides medical care for lost and found dogs, cats, and exotic animals. OC Animal Care also offers pet adoption services, shelter tours, and community outreach services. In addition, free public education presentations are provided upon request to city and county agencies, schools, businesses, and other public and private groups on the topics of responsible pet ownership, careers in animal care, dog bite prevention, and animal laws and regulations. The City, in coordination with OC Animal Care, is committed to investigating opportunities to further improve regional animal care services, including a new shelter and spay and neuter programs.



## SCHOOLS

Excellent schools are an asset to any city and are an integral part of the community they serve. Laguna Hills is located within the Saddleback Valley Unified School District (SVUSD) and four SVUSD schools are located within the City: Valencia Elementary School, Lomarena Elementary School, San Joaquin Elementary School, and Laguna Hills High School. The nearest junior high school is La Paz Intermediate School in Mission Viejo. Some residents of Laguna Hills may also have children attending de Portola Elementary School or Los Alisos Intermediate School. Nearly all these schools are operating at or above 90 percent of existing capacity, with San Joaquin operating at 105 percent capacity.



Many facilities at these schools have recently undergone, or will soon undergo, significant renovations to modernize and better serve students. When completed, facilities should be more than adequate to serve the student population of Laguna Hills for the upcoming years. Though student growth at all schools generally increased between 1987 and 2004, the system observed a leveling or slight decline of student population since then, consistent with trends elsewhere in the district, county, and State. Projected enrollment is expected to decrease even further in the future.

The Community Center has joint-use agreements with Laguna Hills High School to share facilities, particularly sports fields and recreation areas, for general public use outside of student activity hours. Public higher education classes, including adult education classes, are locally provided by the South Orange County Community College District. The nearest district campus is Saddleback Community College located in nearby Mission Viejo.

The City will continue to cooperate with SVUSD to update information in its master plans and long-range facility plans, and identify future facility sites, student generation formulas, and facility improvement plans. The City will also assist the SVUSD in their review of development proposals to ensure that the proposals are consistent with school facilities requirements, and offer accessible facilities that complement the surrounding land uses.

## FIRE PROTECTION AND EMERGENCY SERVICES

The Orange County Fire Authority (OCFA) is contracted to provide fire protection and emergency services to Laguna Hills. OCFA provides fire suppression services, emergency medical, rescue, and fire prevention services for the City, as well as 22 additional cities and the unincorporated areas within the County. In addition, OCFA has an inspection service section that conducts fire safety inspections and enforces applicable fire codes and ordinances in Laguna Hills. The City is served by Fire Station #22, located on Paseo de Valencia in nearby Laguna Woods. Table CSF-2 provides a list of additional fire stations within the vicinity of Laguna Hills, Aliso Viejo, and Lake Forest (also shown in Figure CSF-1). Additional cities are available to assist Station #22 with supplemental resources in an event of great need.

The OCFA response goal is for the first engine to reach the emergency scene within 5 minutes 90 percent of the time. In the event of a medical emergency, OCFA transports patients to the Saddleback Memorial Medical Center located off Paseo de Valencia. The OCFA response goal for medical emergencies is for a paramedic to reach the scene within 5 minutes 90 percent of the time. OCFA has consistently met or exceeded these response goals. The City will continue to work with the OCFA to ensure that adequate resources are available for continued protection of the health, safety, and general welfare of the citizens of Laguna Hills and will continue to educate all residents about fire hazards and reducing the risk associated with wildland and structure fires.



**Table CSF-2  
Fire Stations Near Laguna Hills**

Station Name	Location	Distance from Laguna Hills (miles)
OCFA Fire Station # 22 Laguna Hills	24001 Paseo de Valencia Laguna Woods, CA 92637	0.9 North
OCFA Fire Station # 57 Aliso Viejo	57 Journey Aliso Viejo, CA 92656	2.3 Southwest
OCFA Fire Station # 19 Lake Forest	23022 El Toro Rd Lake Forest, CA 92630	2.3 Northeast
OCFA Fire Station # 39 No. Laguna Niguel	24241 Avila Rd Laguna Niguel, CA 92677	2.6 South
OCFA Fire Station # 24 Mission Viejo	25862 Marguerite Pkwy Mission Viejo, CA 92692	3.0 East
OCFA Fire Station # 51 Irvine Center Dr	18 Cushing Irvine, CA 92618	3.3 Northwest
OCFA Fire Station # 9 So. Mission Viejo	26312 Via Curacion Mission Viejo, CA 92691	3.8 Southeast
OCFA Fire Station # 38 Irvine	26 Parker Irvine, CA 92618	4.1 North
Laguna Beach Fire Station #3	2900 Alta Laguna Blvd Laguna Beach, CA 92651	4.5 Southwest

Source: Orange County Fire Authority 2008

## POLICE SERVICES

Laguna Hills takes pride in being one of the safest cities in Orange County, which can be attributed, in part, to the excellent provision of police services within the community. The City contracts its law enforcement services through the Orange County Sheriff's Department (OCSD) and is committed to providing responsive, professional, and caring law enforcement to all citizens. OCSD personnel are responsible for general patrol, traffic enforcement, traffic collision, and criminal investigation. The OCSD assigns a Chief of Police Services to oversee staff that operates locally from the Laguna Hills Police Service substation located at the Civic Center, as shown in Figure CSF-1.

The department's service standard is a 5-minute average response rate for emergency calls. The provision of preventative patrol time ranges between 40 percent and 50 percent of an officer's workday. The active police presence in areas of enhanced activities throughout the City, such

as schools and shopping centers, helps contribute to an overall feeling of safety for residents of the community.

The City administers services that partner with the OCSD, including Neighborhood Watch and Business Watch programs and emergency management operations. The OCSD also sponsors a Citizens' Disaster Preparedness Academy in Laguna Hills. The City will continue to coordinate with the OCSD to provide an adequate level of police services to maintain the current police visibility.

## WATER SERVICES

Laguna Hills obtains water and wastewater services from the Moulton Niguel Water District (MNWD) and the El Toro Water District (ETWD). These services are provided in the northern portion of the City by the ETWD and in the southern portion of the City by the MNWD. The division line runs through a neighborhood north of Alicia Parkway and south of Aliso Creek (Figure CSF-2). Water from both Districts comes from the Colorado River and the State Water Project (which draws water from the San Francisco-San Joaquin Bay Delta) and travels hundreds of miles to the local water districts through an intricate aboveground and underground delivery system operated by the Metropolitan Water District of Southern California.

Both the MNWD and the ETWD Urban Water Management Plans (2005) indicate that the districts expect to have adequate water supply available to meet the demand posed by growth within their jurisdictions. Encouraging good water service in the City will require maintaining current infrastructure and extending new infrastructure to serve new development projects. Because the City is almost entirely developed, water infrastructure is in place and few improvements will be required to accommodate new development. Development proposals and amendments will be reviewed for consistency with water infrastructure requirements established in development plans and agreements. For certain projects identified in the State Water Code, the City will require preparation of 20-year water supply assessments. The City will require adequate water supplies for fire flow as established by the OCFA, along with sufficient water storage for emergency situations, and will work with the water districts to update their Urban Water Management Plans to ensure the districts' overall ability to maintain adequate water supplies for the community on an ongoing basis.

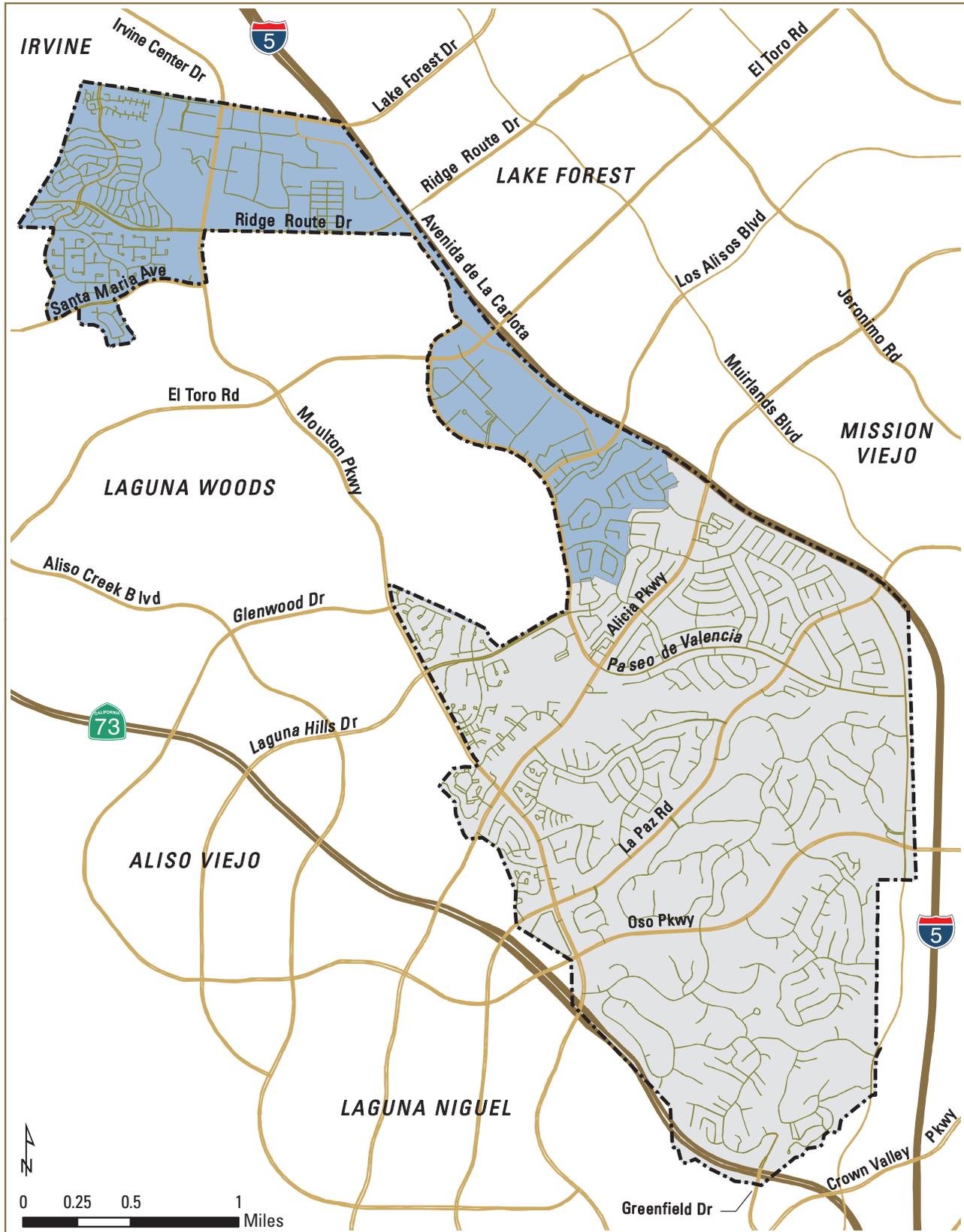
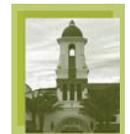


Figure CSF - 2  
Water Districts



Source: EDAW, 2008.

## SEWER SERVICES

Wastewater (including sewage) generated within Laguna Hills is also carried by the MNWD and ETWD wastewater collection systems to a Regional Treatment Plant operated by the South Orange County Wastewater Authority (SOCWA). Because Laguna Hills is largely urbanized and built out, and has few remaining vacant sites in the city, the remaining capacity at the regional treatment plant wastewater treatment facility is sufficient to serve potential new development and redevelopment. Development proposals and amendments will be reviewed for consistency with sewer infrastructure requirements established in development plans and agreements. New development and redevelopment activities will be required to cooperate with the MNWD or the ETWD to ensure the adequacy of existing wastewater infrastructure to service the City. The City will continue to cooperate with SOCWA in that agency's efforts to provide adequate wastewater treatment services for Laguna Hills. In addition, the City will continue to coordinate with the local water districts in planning and maintenance of wastewater collection facilities for the community.

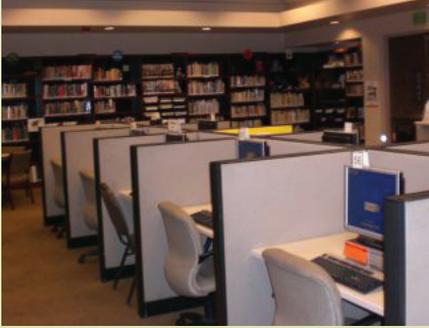
## SOLID WASTE DISPOSAL

Solid waste generated in Laguna Hills is collected by a private sector contractor. The City's solid waste is disposed of in the Prima Deshecha Landfill, located approximately 11 miles south of the City in San Juan Capistrano. The landfill is managed by the County of Orange, Integrated Waste Management Department (IWMD).

Regional household hazardous waste collection centers are located in Anaheim, Huntington Beach, Irvine, and San Juan Capistrano. Additional information pertaining to household hazardous waste collection is provided in the Safety Element.

The California Integrated Waste Management Act of 1989 requires diversion of 50 percent of solid waste generated within all California jurisdictions from regional landfills. To comply with this State regulation, the City implements a Source Reduction and Recycling Element (SRRE), which outlines the City's strategy for reducing solid waste generated within the City that may ultimately impact regional landfills. The SRRE identifies numerous programs that will assist the City to divert solid waste in compliance with State law. The City is working to reduce the disposed amount of solid waste through recycling and composting, source reduction, and public education. The City will continue to cooperate with the IWMD in efforts to maintain and expand regional landfill facilities to accommodate the County's growing population.





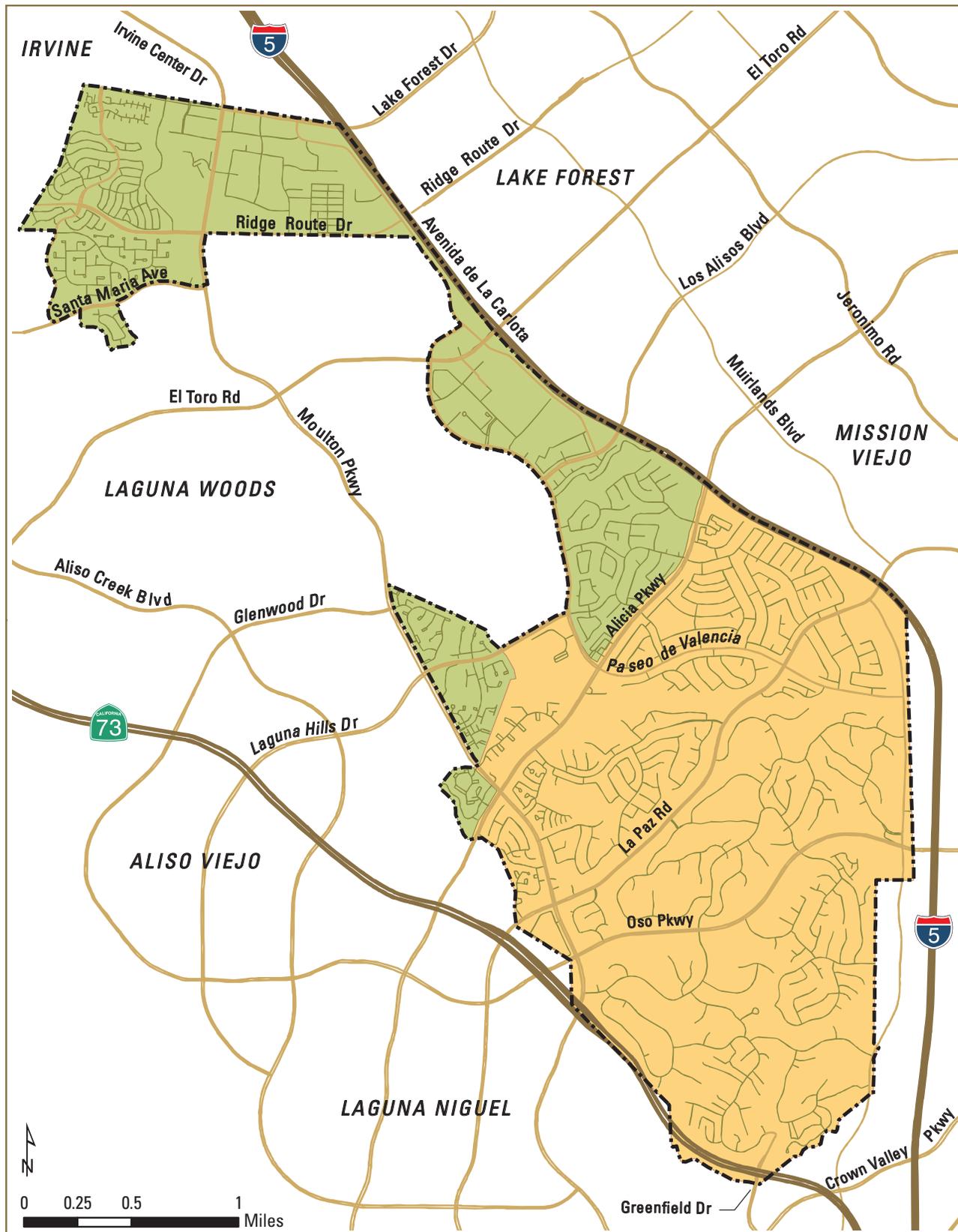
## LIBRARIES

Successful library systems serve to increase knowledge and enrich lives within the community by equitably connecting people to programs, services, and resources. Library services in Laguna Hills are provided regionally by the Orange County Public Library (OCPL) system. The Laguna Hills Technology Library is located inside the Community Center and Sports Complex. Rather than maintaining extensive local collections of traditional library materials, this branch was designed to support public computer and internet access also while providing a modest circulating collection of books, popular magazines, and major newspapers for all ages. As part of OC Public Libraries, Laguna Hills Technology Branch Library shares collection materials with the county's other 33 branches. Patrons are encouraged to browse the Online Public Access Catalog (OPAC) on-site or remotely via the Internet. Any books, magazines, or audiovisual materials that are not physically available at the Laguna Hills Technology Branch Library can be delivered from another branch for a small fee. Similarly, library materials may be returned to any other branch within the County system. Laguna Hills will continue to work with the OCPL to provide adequate library facilities, maintain and improve access to information, and foster community involvement and educational connections to further enrich the residents of Laguna Hills.

## ELECTRICITY AND NATURAL GAS

Fossil fuel products such as coal, natural gas, oil, and diesel are the primary fuel for generating electricity and for heating homes, water, and food. The global supply of these products is limited and the demand for electricity and fossil fuels continues to increase. Employing efficient energy efforts throughout the City and transitioning to nonfossil fuel alternatives will help to extend limited supplies, reduce the need for expensive new regional power generators and transmission lines, and contribute to Laguna Hills' economic sustainability and regional competitiveness.

The primary sources of energy in Laguna Hills are electricity and natural gas. Southern California Edison (SCE) and San Diego Gas & Electric (SDG&E) provide electricity services to Laguna Hills, while the Southern California Gas Company is the provider of natural gas (Figure CSF-3). SCE and SDG&E review new development and redevelopment projects on a case-by-case basis and evaluate existing infrastructure for its adequacy. At this time, neither SCE nor SDG&E has plans to underground any utility or transmission lines in Laguna Hills. Further, all Laguna Hills' energy providers, including SCE, SDG&E, and the Southern California Gas Company, indicated that their present facilities are adequate, and no major upgrades are planned within the City in the near future. The City will continue to collaborate with the providers to address energy needs within the community. Refer to the Conservation and Open Space Element for further discussion of energy resources and alternative energy and conservation.



- Southern California Edison
- San Diego Gas & Electric
- City Boundary
- Local Streets
- Freeway/ Toll Road
- Major Streets

Figure CSF - 3  
Electricity and Gas Providers



Source: EDAW, 2008.

## COMMUNICATIONS

As the ever-changing world of communications continues to evolve, residents and businesses have the ability to interact with the global community from anywhere within Laguna Hills. Advancements in technology have allowed for the creation of more efficient communication options and have opened the door for state-of-the-art services that facilitate a healthy business climate, making businesses more competitive and providing an edge in accessing and using important information. Furthermore, telecommunication technologies allow residents to establish home offices, which can decrease commutes, enhance neighborhood security, and provide flexibility for working parents.

Communications services in Laguna Hills included telephone, cable, and wireless communication services provided by several companies. Future communication technologies may expand into other fields. Infrastructure upgrades are being made by private providers to facilitate high-speed data transmission and interactive video capabilities. The City encourages constructing new office and industrial buildings with state-of-the-art telecommunication circuits to use these upgrades.

## FLOOD CONTROL AND STORMWATER DRAINAGE

The Orange County Flood Control Division (OCFCD) manages the maintenance and operation of an integrated system of storm drains, creek channels, retaining basins, dams, and other measures to protect the City from flooding and flood-related disasters. Major natural drainages serving the City include Aliso Creek, which flows parallel to Alicia Parkway providing drainage from I-5 to the Pacific Ocean, and Oso Creek, located at and just beyond the eastern boundary of the City. Several concrete-lined drainages are also located in various areas throughout the City (for further discussion on the hazards associated with flood events, refer to Safety Element).

Laguna Hills lies primarily in the Aliso Creek watershed area, although portions are in the San Diego Creek and San Juan Creek watershed areas as well. The National Pollutant Discharge Elimination System (NPDES) permit for these watershed areas requires that all runoff be treated so that pollutant levels at the stormwater outfalls are minimized to the maximum extent practicable. In addition, development within Laguna Hills has been planned and constructed in conformance with the National Flood Insurance Program, and the existing flood control and stormwater drainage systems have both been designed and created to accommodate the anticipated growth and future land development within Laguna Hills. The City intends to optimize the existing system and maintain



the community's drainage features in their natural condition. In an effort to achieve this, the City will also work closely with the OCFCD to construct and maintain flood control facilities for the community. In addition, the City requires adequate flood control facilities to protect all structures and major roadways from hazards associated with being near a 100-year floodplain and will require new development and redevelopment to be located to either avoid flood hazards or incorporate them into the overall design. The City will also encourage the use of Low Impact Development (LID) standards to reduce the amount of stormwater runoff and pollution. Refer to the Conservation and Open Space Element for a full discussion on LID design techniques.

## Goals and Policies

The goals and policies section sets both broad and specific direction for the future of the City based on identified issues, as captured in the Guiding Themes and expressed by the community, City staff, and decision makers.

Eleven major issue areas are addressed in the goals and policies of the Community Services and Facilities Element. The major issues are:

- Ceating and maintaining community facilities that meet the needs of residents while promoting connectivity;
- Providing superior school programs and facilities that are complementary to surrounding land uses;
- Providing fire protection and emergency services of the highest quality; providing effective and responsive police services and emphasizing community-based crime prevention strategies;
- Collaborating with local water supply districts to ensure high-quality and adequate water supplies are available within Laguna Hills;
- Providing adequate levels of sewage collection and treatment; collaborating with private providers of solid waste collection, disposal, and recycling services;
- Ensuring the provision of library resources that meet the learning needs of residents;
- Ensuring adequate energy supplies are available;
- Remaining in step with advancements in technology and communication; and
- Maintaining adequate drainage facilities and flood hazard protection for the community.

## COMMUNITY FACILITIES

Laguna Hills is dedicated to creating strong community connections and places emphasis on the creation of new community gathering centers and recreational opportunities that foster community traditions and bring the community together. The goals and policies below will enable the City to create programs that can achieve this connectedness through community facilities.

**Goal CSF-1: Establish and maintain a high level of community facilities and services to meet the needs of the community and enhance the quality of life in Laguna Hills.**

Policy CSF-1.1: Support events and activities that cross community and neighborhood boundaries to bring together various segments of the community.

Policy CSF-1.2: Investigate the need for additional community facilities in Laguna Hills, such as community centers, swimming pools, parks, sports fields, a library, and/or an amphitheater.

Policy CSF-1.3: Provide recreation opportunities at the Community Center in response to the changing needs of the community.

Policy CSF-1.4: Work closely with the Orange County Community Resource Agency and local providers to determine and meet community needs for quality animal care services.

Policy CSF-1.5: Promote pet owner education programs to encourage and improve responsible pet ownership.

## SCHOOLS

Education is a top priority in Laguna Hills. Although Saddleback Valley Unified School District is an independently governed agency, collaborative efforts between the City and the District are important to ensure that a quality educational system is sustained.

**Goal CSF-2: Provide high-quality education programs and adequate school facilities.**

Policy CSF-2.1: Collaborate with SVUSD, private schools, and other organizations to ensure that a range of educational opportunities is provided in superior, accessible facilities that complement surrounding land uses.

Policy CSF-2.2: Continue to investigate joint use opportunities with SVUSD, private schools, and other organizations.

## FIRE PROTECTION AND EMERGENCY SERVICES

Laguna Hills is committed to providing the highest level of fire protection and services to the community. The City will continue to collaborate with the Orange County Fire Authority (OCFA) to ensure that fire protection services are consistent with the performance standards stated earlier in the Plan.

**Goal CSF-3: Provide effective and responsive fire protection and emergency services.**

Policy CSF-3.1: Work closely with OCFA to determine and meet community needs for fire protection and emergency services. Ensure that sufficient stations, personnel, and equipment are provided to meet the needs of the City.

## POLICE SERVICES

To further reduce the likelihood of criminal activity in Laguna Hills, the City will continue to work closely with OCSD to maintain police visibility and community outreach programs.

**Goal CSF-4: Provide effective and responsive police services.**

Policy CSF-4.1: Work closely with OCSD to determine and meet community needs for police protection and services.

## WATER SERVICE

A safe and reliable water supply for drinking and for fire protection is important to the health and well-being of Laguna Hills. The City, along with the Moulton Niguel and El Toro Water Districts, will strive to maintain existing water supplies to meet current and future demand, and encourage water conservation.

**Goal CSF-5: Collaborate with water providers to provide adequate water supply, treatment, and distribution services to meet the community's needs.**

Policy CSF-5.1: Work closely with local and regional water suppliers and distributors to ensure that high-quality water is available for the community.

Policy CSF-5.2: Actively promote water conservation by City residents, businesses, and organizations.

## SEWER SERVICE

The City will continue to work in partnership with local providers of sewer services, the MNWD and ETWD, to provide adequate sewer and wastewater treatment services for Laguna Hills.

**Goal CSF-6: Collaborate with sewer providers to provide adequate sewer service to meet the community's needs.**

Policy CSF-6.1: Work closely with sewer providers to ensure that adequate sewer services are available for the community.

Policy CSF-6.2: Actively promote water conservation by City residents, businesses, and organizations as a means of reducing sewage generation.

## SOLID WASTE DISPOSAL

In addition to working with the City's franchised waste and recycling service provider to achieve the set service standards, the goals and policies below will allow Laguna Hills to actively participate in recycling programs and ultimately reduce the amount of solid waste produced by the City.

**Goal CSF-7: Collaborate with providers of solid waste collection, disposal, and recycling services to ensure a clean community and environment.**

Policy CSF-7.1: Work with local service providers to ensure adequate solid waste collection, disposal, and recycling services.

Policy CSF-7.2: Increase recycling, composting, source reduction, and education efforts throughout the community to reduce the amount of solid waste requiring disposal at landfills.

Policy CSF-7.3: Develop an education program designed to increase community participation in recycling, composting and other source reduction practices.

Policy CSF-7.4: Develop guidelines to promote waste reduction.

## LIBRARIES

Public libraries serve several community purposes, including education, recreation, and public access to information. The timely development and equipping of Laguna Hills' libraries will continue to be an important goal of the City.

**Goal CSF-8: Provide library resources and services that meet the needs of the community.**

Policy CSF-8.1: Work closely with the Orange County Public Library system to determine and meet community needs for library services, including adequate facilities, resources, and hours of operation.

## ELECTRICITY AND NATURAL GAS

While it has been determined that there is adequate energy infrastructure to support Laguna Hills for the time being, energy resources are becoming more and more limited and the City could be subject to energy shortages. The need for energy conservation has become increasingly important. The City is committed to working with local energy providers to meet the current demands and is also committed to educating the residents and businesses of Laguna Hills on how to help conserve energy.

**Goal CSF-9: Collaborate with providers of electricity and natural gas to ensure adequate energy supplies are available to the community.**

Policy CSF-9.1: Work closely with local service providers to determine and meet community needs for energy.

## COMMUNICATIONS

Part of becoming a City prepared for the future is keeping up with the pace of new technology. As the world of communications continues to advance, Laguna Hills continue to look for ways to integrate City services with the best technology available.

**Goal CSF-10: Collaborate with providers of cable, telephone, and other communication services to ensure adequate communication services are available to the community.**

Policy CSF-10.1: Work closely with local service providers to determine and meet community needs for cable, telephone, and other communication services.

Policy CSF-10.2: Encourage all new development to provide the technology to support multiple telecommunications facilities and providers, such as multi-media products, wireless technologies, and satellite communications.

## FLOOD CONTROL AND STORMWATER DRAINAGE

Since the existing flood control and storm water drainage system has been designed and constructed to accommodate anticipated population increases as well as future land development and redevelopment projects, the overall goals and policies below will optimize this existing system and maintain the natural drainage courses as they are, in their natural condition to ensure proper flood control and storm water drainage facilities.

**Goal CSF-11: Collaborate with providers of flood control and stormwater drainage facilities to ensure adequate drainage and flood protection for the community.**

Policy CSF-11.1: Work closely with the Orange County Flood Control District to maintain and provide necessary regional flood control facilities.

Policy CSF-11.2: Maintain City owned drainage facilities as necessary to promote flood protection.

## Summary of Approach

The goals, policies, and programs in the Community Services and Facilities Element will help the City meet the community's needs for a variety of infrastructure that contributes to the City's high quality of life, while providing community services that foster an inclusive, multi-generational, integrated community. Table CSF-3 identifies the 11 major issue areas described in the Goals and Policies section. These major issues represent the direction the City will take in its safety goals, policies, and programs to implement the vision of Laguna Hills as captured in the Guiding Themes and expressed in the Community Services and Facilities Plan.

**Table CSF-3**  
**Description of Actions to Address Community Services and Facilities Issues**

Issues	Element	Section	Policy	Programs	Figure	Table
<b>Community Facilities</b>	Community Services and Facilities	Community Facilities	CSF-1.1- CSF-1.5	CSF-1. through CSF-9	CSF-1 (Community Facilities)	CSF-1 (Service Standards)
	Land Use	Activity Centers and Community Connections	LU-1.8	LU-3, LU-4, LU-10		
<b>Schools</b>	Community Services and Facilities	Schools	CSF-2.1 and CSF-2.2	CSF-2	CSF-1 (Community Facilities)	CSF-1 (Service Standards)
<b>Fire Protection and Emergency Services</b>	Community Services and Facilities	Fire Protection and Emergency Services	CSF-3.1	CSF-3	CSF-1 (Community Facilities)	CSF-1 (Service Standards); CSF-2 (Fire Stations Locations)
	Safety	Urban and Wildland Fire Hazards	S-2.1 through S-2.5	S-2, S-5 through S-7, S-13	S-4 (Fire Hazard Areas)	
<b>Police Services</b>	Community Services and Facilities	Police Services	CSF-4.1	CSF-3	CSF-1 (Community Facilities)	CSF-1 (Service Standards)
	Safety	Law Enforcement and Criminal Activity	S-3.1 through S-3.4	S-7 through S-9		
<b>Water Services</b>	Community Services and Facilities	Water Service	CSF-5.1 and CSF-5.2	CSF-4	CSF-2 (Water Service Districts)	CSF-1 (Service Standards)
	Conservation and Open Space	Sustaining Our Resources	COS-1.1 through COS-1.5	COS-1 through COS-4		
<b>Sewer Services</b>	Community Services and Facilities	Sewer Service	CSF-6.1 and CSF-6.2	CSF-4		CSF-1 (Service Standards)

<b>Table CSF-3</b> <b>Description of Actions to Address Community Services and Facilities Issues</b>						
Issues	Element	Section	Policy	Programs	Figure	Table
<b>Solid Waste Disposal</b>	Community Services and Facilities	Solid Waste Disposal	CSF-7.1 through CSF-7.4	CSF-5		CSF-1 (Service Standards)
<b>Libraries</b>	Community Services and Facilities	Libraries	CSF-8.1	CSF-7		
	Conservation and Open Space	Recycling	COS-1.19 through COS-1.21	CSF-6		
<b>Electricity and Natural Gas</b>	Community Services and Facilities	Electricity and Natural Gas	CSF-9.1	CSF-8	CSF-3 (Energy Providers Service Boundaries)	
	Conservation and Open Space	Energy	COS-1.6 through COS-1.10	COS-8		
<b>Communications</b>	Community Services and Facilities	Communications	CSF-10.1 and CSF-10.2	CSF-8		
<b>Flood Control and Stormwater Drainage</b>	Community Services and Facilities	Floodwater and Stormwater Drainage	CSF-11.1 and CSF-11.2	CSF-9		CSF-1 (Service Standards)
	Conservation and Open Space	Sustaining Our Resources	COS-1.3 and COS-1.4	COS-3		
	Safety	Flooding and Stormwater Management	S-6.1 through S-6.3	S-2, S-12	S-3 (Dam Locations); S-4 (100-year Flood Hazard Zones)	

# Safety

## Introduction

Laguna Hills residents consider their City one of the safest and best places to live in Southern California. The City has a strong sense of community and is composed of established residential neighborhoods that are deeply valued by their residents. Laguna Hills also has a low crime rate and good schools, important indicators of a community's quality of life. However, this idyllic setting can be impacted by natural hazards that have the potential to cause death, injuries, property damage, and substantial economic and social dislocation. The Safety Element addresses these safety issues, with emphasis on the naturally occurring conditions that pose a risk to Laguna Hills and provides goals and policies aimed at reducing the City's risk from these hazards. The Safety Element assesses these safety issues and assigns vulnerability scores in **Appendix A**. Implementation programs aimed at accomplishing the identified goals and policies are included in **Appendix B**.

## Purpose and Scope of the Safety Element

All urban areas in California are subject to both natural and human-caused hazards. None of these hazards can be avoided entirely, but their impacts can be reduced through the recognition of safety risks and the application of policies designed to protect life and property to the greatest feasible extent.

The purpose of the Safety Element is to address existing or anticipated safety threats that may cause adverse effects in Laguna Hills. This Element specifically covers seismic and geologic hazards, fires, neighborhood safety, hazardous materials and waste, nuclear power, flood hazards, stormwater management, and climate change vulnerability. Emergency preparedness planning, such as identifying actions needed to manage crisis situations, is also addressed. By establishing goals and policies to minimize danger to residents and visitors, the Safety Element sets forth the framework that will regulate existing and proposed development in hazard-prone areas, promote urban design to ensure safe streets and neighborhoods, and establish methods to ensure safety and organization during emergency situations.

## Background

The City of Laguna Hills (City) strives to maintain a safe environment for all members of the community. However, numerous potential hazards that could affect life and property are present in and around the City. For example, Laguna Hills is in a seismically active region and residents could potentially be

exposed to dangers caused by earthquakes. The presence of hillside terrain and steep slopes could potentially cause residents and property to be vulnerable to fire hazards. The City can experience flooding and inundation from severe rain events and dam and reservoir failures. Further, climate change may exacerbate hazards, such as, but not limited to, flooding, extreme storms, air quality, drought, extreme heat,<sup>1</sup> warm nights,<sup>2</sup> and human health hazards. The City recognizes it may be vulnerable to a number of hazards and that maintaining a safe environment requires constant assessment of the City's needs regarding these hazards.

## Local Hazard Mitigation Plan

A Local Hazard Mitigation Plan (LHMP) identifies and profiles hazard conditions, analyzes risk to people and facilities, and provides hazard mitigation actions to reduce or eliminate hazard risks. A LHMP and Safety Element address similar issues, but the Safety Element provides a higher-level framework and set of policies, while a LHMP focuses on more specific mitigation, often short-term, actions. LHMPs focus on hazard mitigation-related actions, while the Safety Element also includes policies for emergency response, recovery, and preparedness.

The City is currently in the process of developing a LHMP, in accordance with the federal Disaster Mitigation Action of 200 and the Federal Emergency Management Agency (FEMA), to ensure hazard risks are minimized for community members, as well as infrastructure and buildings citywide. The mitigation actions in the LHMP will include both short-term and long-term strategies, and involve planning, policy changes, programs, projects, and other activities. When adopted by the City and certified by FEMA, the current LHMP will be incorporated into this Safety Element by reference, as permitted by California Government Code Section 65302.6.

Orange County also has an LHMP, which, focuses on addressing natural hazards impacting unincorporated areas and County facilities. The Orange County LHMP also provides a history of disasters in Orange County, including historical flooding events. The Orange County LHMP further lists a number of resources, including administrative and technical resources, that can support Laguna Hills in the event of a disaster. Laguna Hills contracts with a number of County agencies, including Orange County Fire Authority and Orange County Sheriff's Department.

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1. An extreme heat day in Laguna Hills is defined as a day when the high temperature is at least 90.1 degrees Fahrenheit (°F).

2. Warm nights in Laguna Hills is defined as temperatures above 65°F at nighttime.

# Safety Plan

Laguna Hills faces both natural and human-related hazards, including earthquakes, urban and wildland fires, geologic hazards, climate change hazards, and hazards caused by the use of hazardous and/or toxic materials. Protection from the risks of natural and human-caused hazards is essential in continuing to provide a sense of safety and well-being for the residents and visitors of Laguna Hills. In addition, safety is a significant consideration in attracting new businesses to the City. While the likelihood of occurrence for most of these natural and human-caused hazards is low, the consequences can be very serious. Understanding hazards, vulnerabilities, and preparing to deal with them on both an incident-related and ongoing basis are important objectives. Proper planning and preparation for potential hazards is an essential action to minimize the disruption, personal injury, and property damage associated with such hazards and resulting emergency conditions.

The City has established goals and policies to maintain community safety and reduce the risks associated with natural and human-caused hazards. The Safety Plan addresses these issues and provides strategies to minimize hazard potential and vulnerabilities and protect the overall well-being of the residents and visitors in the community.

## GEOLOGY AND SEISMICITY

### Geologic Hazards

#### Landslides, Mudflows, and Slope Instability

The topography of Laguna Hills includes several hills and valleys and therefore has the potential for slope instability and landslides. Slopes steeper than 25 degrees (approximately 2:1) are potentially subject to instability. Such areas may be prone to hazards such as surficial failures, mudflows, debris flows, rock falls, soil creep, and erosion. Failures of human-made slopes could also occur in some of the previously developed areas of the City. In addition, wildfires can destabilize hillsides and create hydrophobic soils, leading to an increased potential of landslides and debris flows. The potential for earthquake-induced landslides in hillside terrain is also present. Areas of known landslides or areas generally susceptible to landslides and slope instability within Laguna Hills have been identified and mapped by the California Geological Survey (CGS) (Figure S-1, *Deep-Seated Landslide Susceptibility*). Laguna Hills continues to update development standards and adopt the latest building and construction codes to guide future development throughout the City, including in areas that could be potentially vulnerable to landslides and slope instability.

Figure S-1, *Deep-Seated Landslide Susceptibility*, shows the areas that are vulnerable to landslides in Laguna Hills. Landslide susceptibility is a function of rock strength and slope angle. Landslide susceptibility is classified on a scoring system ranging from 0 to 10 using roman numerals. The lower classifications show low landslide susceptibility, and higher classifications signify very high landside susceptibility.

### **Shallow Groundwater**

Shallow groundwater is characterized as an area where the water table is within 20 to 30 feet of the ground surface at any time during the year. The areas described in the liquefaction discussion are also the areas most likely to encounter shallow groundwater that could interfere with construction. The shallowest water levels are found in Sulphur Creek (and its main tributary), Aliso Creek, and Oso Creek, where groundwater is estimated to be approximately 5 to 10 feet deep. At these depths, water can interfere with subsurface excavations (e.g., underground parking) and deep foundations (e.g., piles).

Additionally, some shallow perched water may be encountered within the more southerly portions of Laguna Hills. In the remaining creeks, the levels are expected to be closer to 20 feet deep.

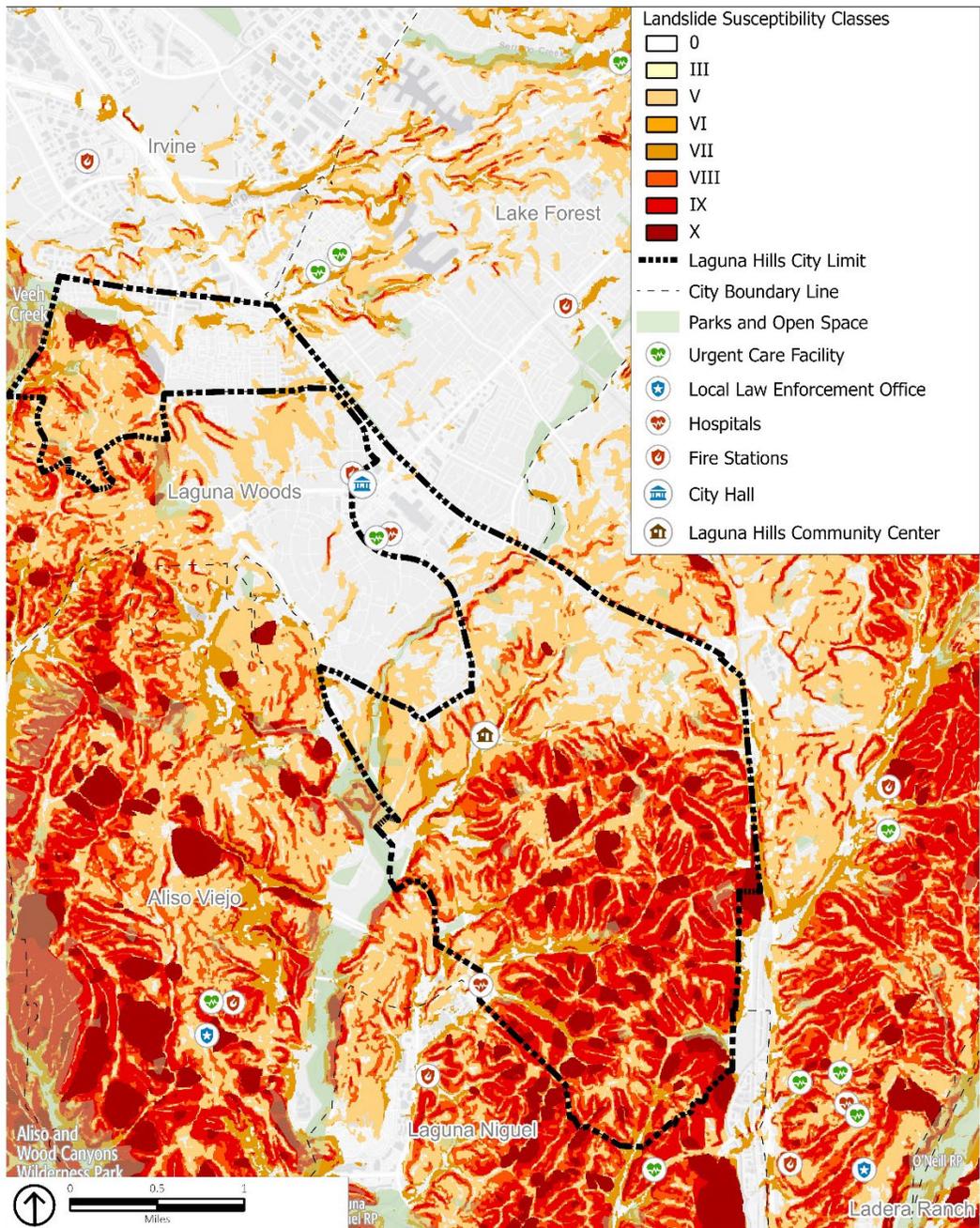
### **Unstable Soils**

Unstable soils include expansive, compressible, erodible, corrosive, or collapsible soils. Natural soil, colluvium, and young alluvial deposits may be susceptible to expansion; consolidation; collapsing; or hydro-collapsing, which occurs with the addition of water. For each of these factors, minor to severe damage to overlying structures is possible. Based on the reported soil types within and around Laguna Hills, it is possible that one or more of these soil characteristics are present during the necessary engineering, geology, and geotechnical investigations for new development and redevelopment projects.

Figure S-1  
Deep-Seated Landslide Susceptibility



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CITY OF LAGUNA HILLS



## Seismic Hazards

### Ground Shaking

Southern California as a whole is subject to potential ground shaking in the event of an earthquake. Ground shaking can result in extensive structural damage, injury, and death. Safety planning must prepare for both frequent moderate earthquakes and infrequent large earthquakes (both local and regional) since any type of ground shaking may affect standard construction and infrastructure.

Earthquakes of low to moderate magnitude have occurred infrequently in the region around the City based on instrumental recordings. The level of impact resulting from any seismic activity depends on factors such as distance from epicenter, earthquake magnitude, and characteristics of soils and subsurface geology. Figure S-2, *Regional Fault Lines*, depicts regional faults in the vicinity of Laguna Hills delineated by the United States Geological Survey. Figure S-2 shows the San Joaquin Hills thrust fault running along the northern border of the City. However, the major regional faults likely to generate significant earthquakes of a magnitude of 7 or higher are the San Andreas, San Jacinto, Elsinore-Whittier, and Newport-Inglewood faults. The Newport-Inglewood Fault Zone is the nearest major active fault and lies approximately three miles to the southwest of Laguna Hills. The San Joaquin Hills fault that underlies the City is believed to be capable of a large local earthquake, but it is considered unlikely to rupture in the near future. As development and redevelopment occur within Laguna Hills, the City will require a proper investigation of the expected level of ground shaking in a major earthquake based on the Uniform California Earthquake Rupture Forecast and the California Geological Survey's Probabilistic Seismic Hazard Map, and the level of risk to the buildings and other structures associated with seismic ground shaking.

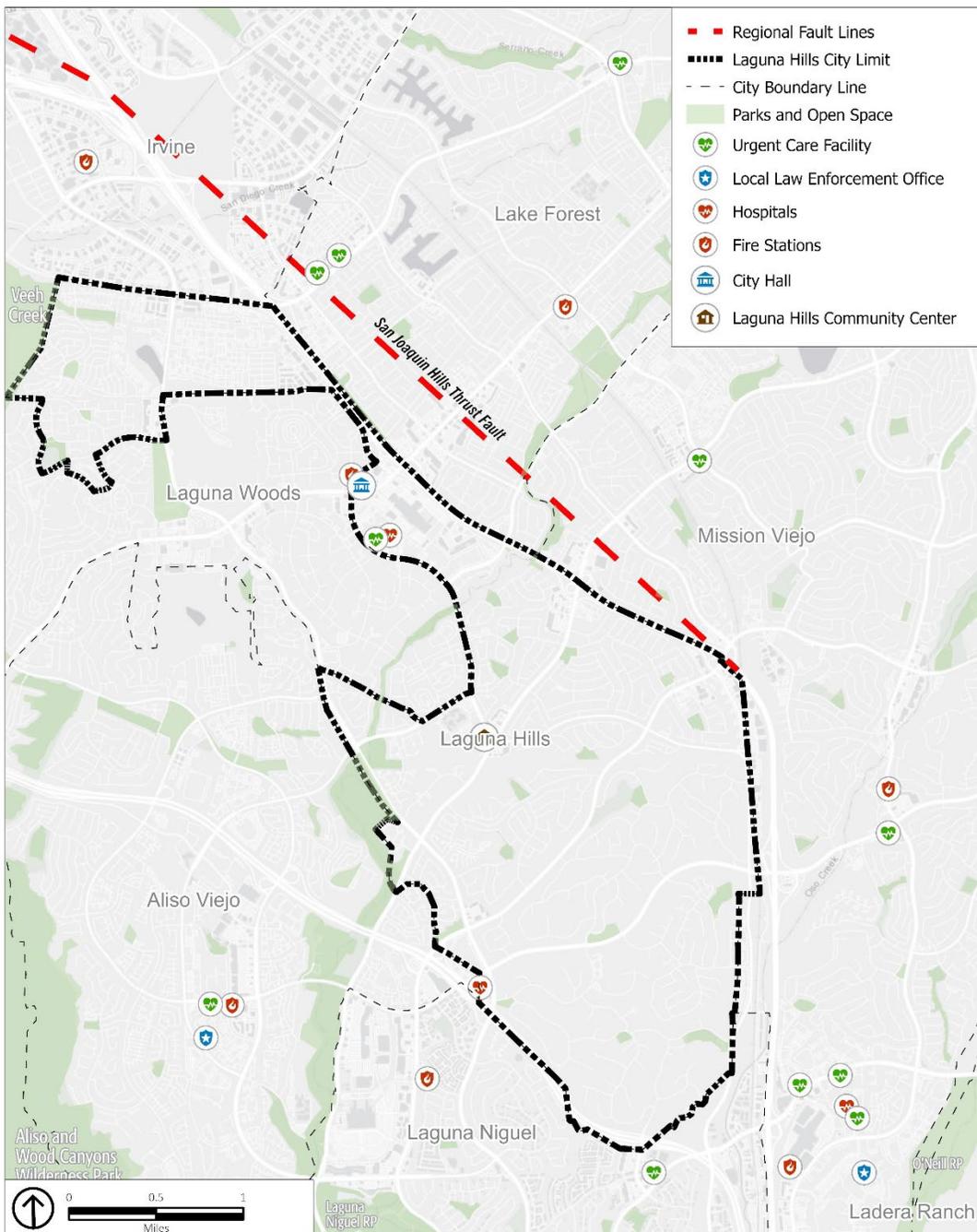
### Fault Rupture and Surface Deformation

Fault rupture is a ground movement that occurs during an earthquake. Although impact is limited, these ground movements can cause structures to collapse, make roads impassable due to offsets, and sever utility lines. In Laguna Hills, the chance of an earthquake leading to surface rupture hazards is minimal, but both "active" faults and "potentially active" faults should not be discounted as sources of potential seismic harm. Due to the absence of active faults in the City, the risk of damage from fault rupture during an earthquake is limited. In addition, no faults within or near the City are within State of California-established Alquist-Priolo Earthquake Fault Zones, which are subject to special land use controls and building standards.

Figure S-2  
Regional Fault Lines



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CITY OF LAGUNA HILLS



## Earthquake-Induced Liquefaction

Liquefaction occurs when severe ground shaking leads to loss of shear strength of a soil and is a function of soil type and groundwater. Soils that are poorly consolidated and combine with groundwater during an earthquake lose their shear strength and take on the properties of a heavy liquid. Liquefaction generally occurs within areas that have high groundwater (less than 20 to 30 feet below the surface), loose sandy alluvial deposits (usually of recent age), and the potential for significant ground shaking.

Portions of the City occupied by alluvial valleys have these characteristics, as mapped by the CGS (shown in liquefaction Figure S-3). In particular, the following areas within the City are susceptible to liquefaction:

- The northern portion of the City in drainages south of Lake Forest and along Ridge Route Drive.
- Aliso Creek (Laguna Hills Mall area) and tributaries to the south (including Alicia Parkway).
- Sulphur Creek and a tributary.
- Oso Creek along southbound Interstate 5 (I-5).

Laguna Hills recognizes that planning for a safe community requires consideration of all geologic hazards, including liquefaction. Incorporating proper geotechnical engineering techniques in development projects within these areas can reduce the risks associated with seismic hazards to people and property.

## Inundation due to Seismically Induced Ground Movement or Seiche

Seismically induced inundation refers to flooding that occurs when water retention structures fail during an earthquake. Often, inundation is triggered by damage from a seiche. A seiche is a wave that reverberates on the surface of water in an enclosed or semi-enclosed basin, such as a reservoir, lake, bay, or harbor, in response to ground shaking during an earthquake. Seismically induced inundation can also occur if strong ground shaking causes structural damage to aboveground water tanks.

There are several small reservoirs and water storage tanks located within, and just outside of City boundaries (Figure S-4, *Dam Inundation Areas*). These reservoirs and water tanks store water for various purposes, such as ensuring adequate water supply reserves, providing recreational opportunities, and/or providing non-potable water for irrigation. Table S-1 lists reservoirs within and near Laguna Hills.

Figure S-3  
Liquefaction Zones



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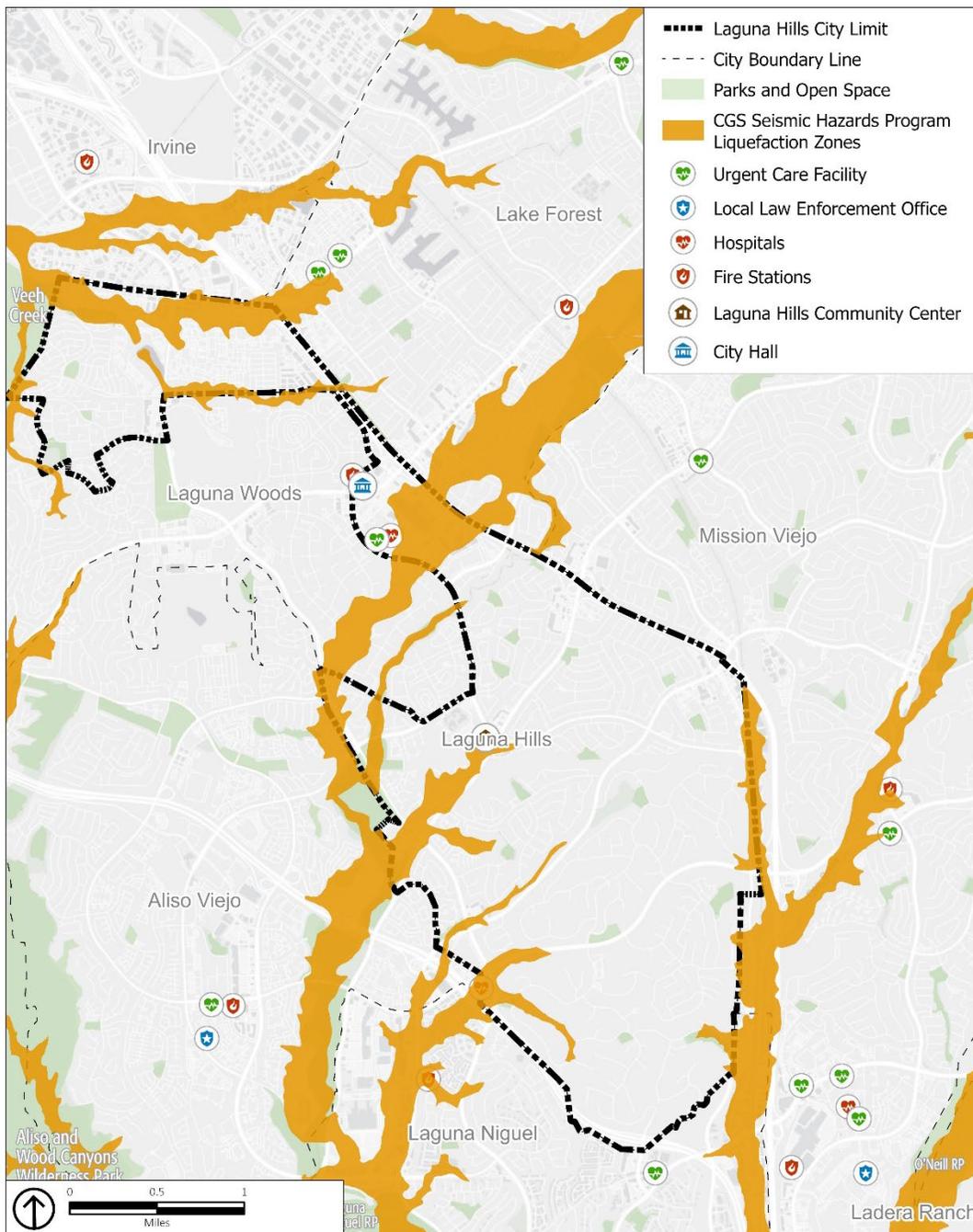
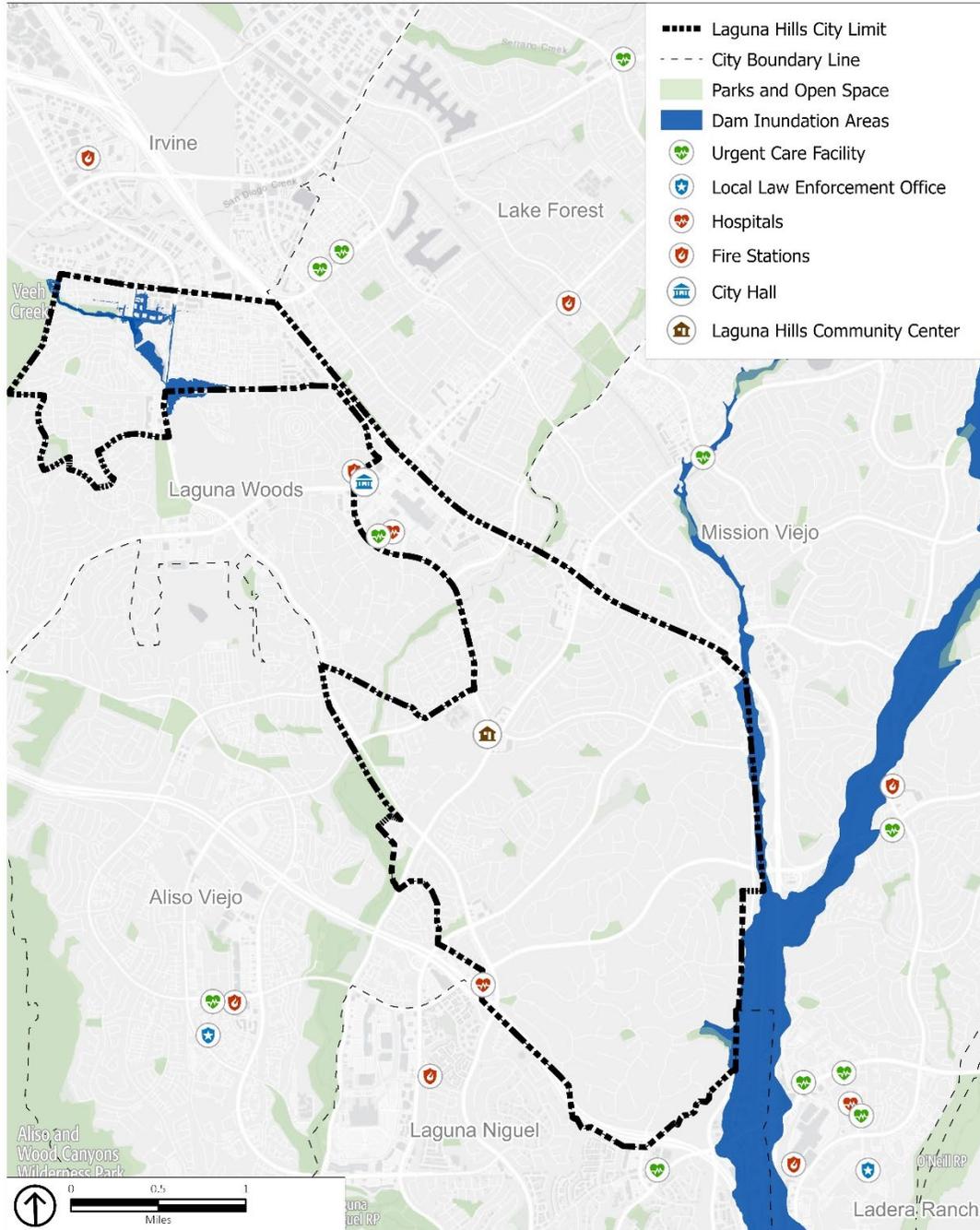


Figure S-4  
Dam Inundation Areas

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<b>Reservoir/Dam Name</b>	<b>Location (City or County)</b>
Veeh Reservoir	Laguna Hills
Rossmoor No. 1 Reservoir	Laguna Woods
Sulphur Creek Reservoir	Laguna Niguel
Upper Oso Reservoir	County of Orange
El Toro Reservoir	Mission Viejo
Lake Mission Viejo Reservoir	Mission Viejo
Upper Chiquita Reservoir	Rancho Santa Margarita

Source: Department of Water Resources, Division of Safety of Dams

The primary hazards that could cause failure of the reservoirs and their associated dams are strong earthquake ground shaking, seiche, and liquefaction; however, none of the sites listed above are associated with known faults or landslides. Water tank sites could also potentially be impacted by slope instability. The flood impacts of reservoir failures could be somewhat significant for Lake Mission Viejo, Upper Oso Reservoir, and El Toro Reservoir since water flows down Oso Creek and might also affect the southeastern most edge of the City adjacent to I-5. Local inundation and erosion effects could impact the area and water tanks immediately adjacent to the Veeh Reservoir and Rossmoor No. 1 Reservoir, depending on the amount of water impounded at the time of the reservoir failure. However, water from Sulphur Creek Reservoir in Laguna Niguel and Upper Chiquita Reservoir in Rancho Santa Margarita would likely not reach the City. Should any of the reservoirs or water tanks fail, persons and property in Laguna Hills could be subjected to inundation, flooding, and/or erosion. These potential hazards are addressed in the County of Orange and Orange County Fire Authority (OCFA) LHMP.

## **URBAN AND WILDLAND FIRE HAZARDS**

### **Urban Fires**

Urban fires have the potential to cause significant loss of life and property; however, improvements in architecture, building and landscape design and maintenance, construction materials, and emergency response have helped reduce the likelihood of catastrophic occurrences. Nevertheless, residents of Laguna Hills could potentially be exposed to structural fire hazards within the City for several reasons. OCFA, the agency responsible for providing fire services in the event of a fire emergency, noted the top causes of structural fires are triggered by electrical equipment, smoking, candles left unattended, smoke alarms deficiency, and arson. OCFA's Standard of Cover for fire services for urban areas include:

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*“Over 70% of residential fires occur in homes without a working smoke alarm. Be sure to test your alarm monthly, replace the batteries every 6 months, and replace your alarm every 10 years or as directed by the manufacturer”*

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- First-in engines should arrive on scene to medical aids and/or fires within 7 minutes and 20 seconds 80 percent of the time.
- First-in truck companies should arrive on scene to fires within 12 minutes 80 percent of the time.
- First-in paramedic companies should arrive on scene at all medical aids within 10 minutes 80 percent of the time.

Response times are based on receipt of the service call to a unit and its arrival on scene.

## Wildland Fires

While major wildfires pose a significant risk in the large, open space hillsides and areas in other parts of Orange County, the urbanized nature of Laguna Hills and the adjacent areas significantly reduces the threat of large, catastrophic wildfires within the City. Nevertheless, wildland fire hazards do exist. While there are no areas of Laguna Hills that are within designated Very High Fire Hazard Severity Zones (see Figure S-5, *Fire Hazard Severity Zones*), the northwestern neighborhoods of the City are adjacent to areas designated as High and Very High Fire Hazard areas by the California Department of Forestry and Fire Protection (CAL FIRE), including the open space in the Laguna Coast Wilderness Park in the City of Irvine. Due to the City’s proximity to these wildland areas, the northwest portion of the City is within a wildland-urban interface (see Figure S-6, *Wildland-Urban Interface*). In addition, areas within the southern portion of the City, as well as some hillside corridors with natural terrain and open areas, are also at risk for fire hazards. Historically, there have been few wildfires within and near Laguna Hills (see Figure S-7, *Historic Wildfires*).

According to California’s *Fourth Climate Change Assessment*, the frequency of wildfires and acreage of burn area are anticipated to increase because of climate change. Wildfires with conflagration potential can occur during any time of the year; however, wildfire potential is typically greatest during the months of August, September, and October with the presence of dry and hot Santa Ana winds and dry vegetation. Drought conditions further exacerbate fire hazard conditions, especially in areas susceptible to wildfires, as discussed previously.

OCFA has several community resources to educate residents on fire safety and on ways they can protect themselves from potential wildfire threats, such as creating defensible space around homes. Defensible space describes a bare or sparsely planted area around a home or building that is clear of dry grass, brush, and dead leaves, which acts as a fire break and gives firefighters a safe place to stand while protecting properties from approaching flames. The City will continue to support the public education efforts of the OCFA as well as integrate new technologies, such as using geographic information systems (GIS) for mapping fire hazard data from CAL FIRE, and fire prevention concepts, such as fire-resistant landscaping, into the design and construction of

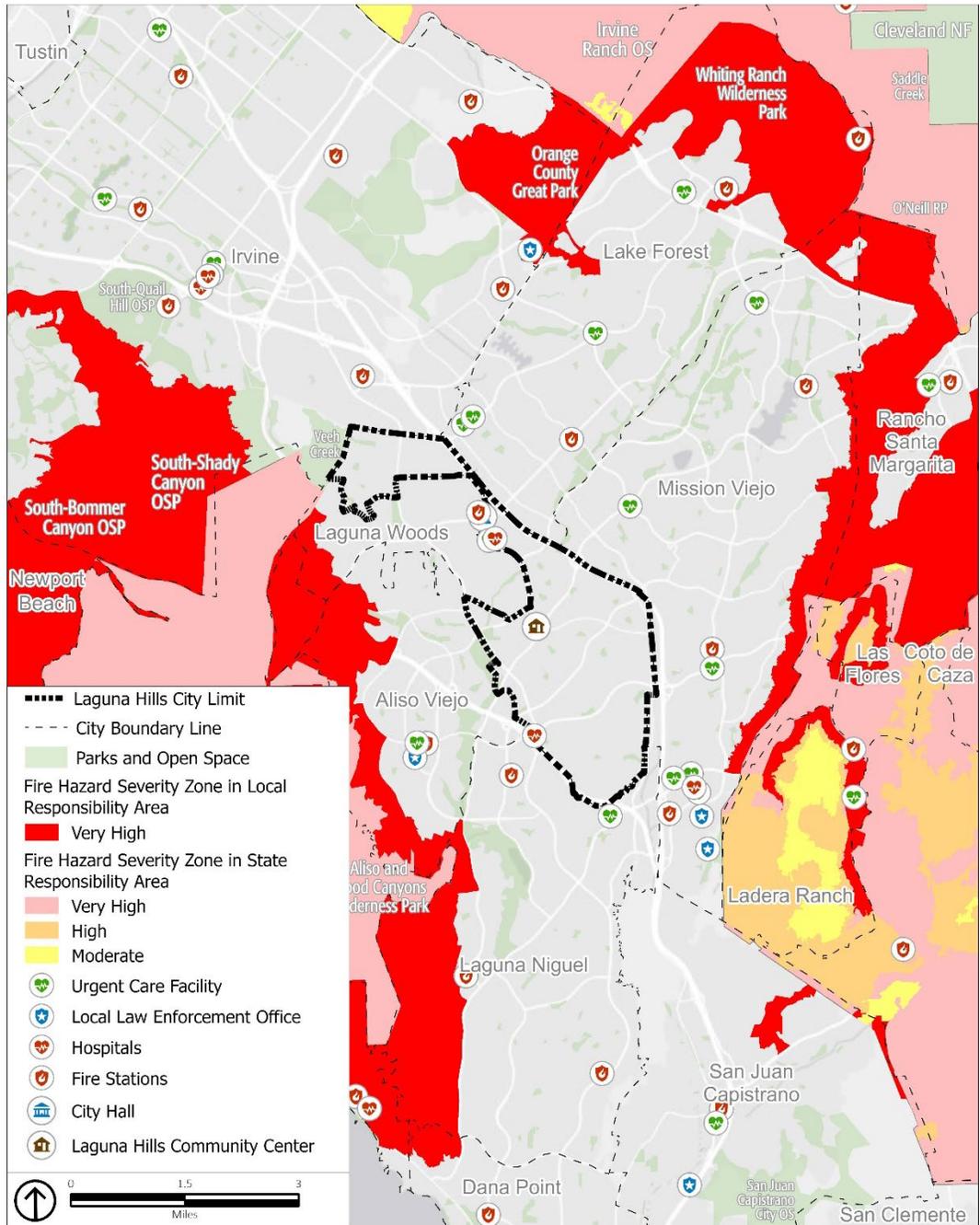
new development and redevelopment. The City also manages an annual weed abatement program, in accordance with Government Code Section 39560 et seq., in which all private properties and City open spaces are subject to direction to remove dry weeds and other debris that may contribute to a fire. The community and City operations responsibly respond to such direction, and the City has annually maintained a reduced local fire risk.

## **Wildfire Smoke**

Wildfire smoke consists of air pollutants and particulate matter (including fine particulate matter, PM<sub>2.5</sub>). PM<sub>2.5</sub> is particularly damaging to human health since particulate matter of this size can deeply penetrate lung tissue and affect a person's respiratory and cardiovascular systems. While poor air quality affects everyone, persons with weakened immune systems or preexisting conditions, children, seniors, and persons who spend a disproportionate amount of time outside are at an increased risk to wildfire smoke. The increase in wildfire frequency and size can contribute to periods of unhealthy to hazardous air quality, which leads to respiratory health impacts and worsens health impacts in persons with preexisting health conditions.

Figure S-5  
Fire Hazard Severity Zones

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Source: CalFire, City of Laguna Hills, PlaceWorks, ESRI

Figure S-6  
Wildland-Urban Interface



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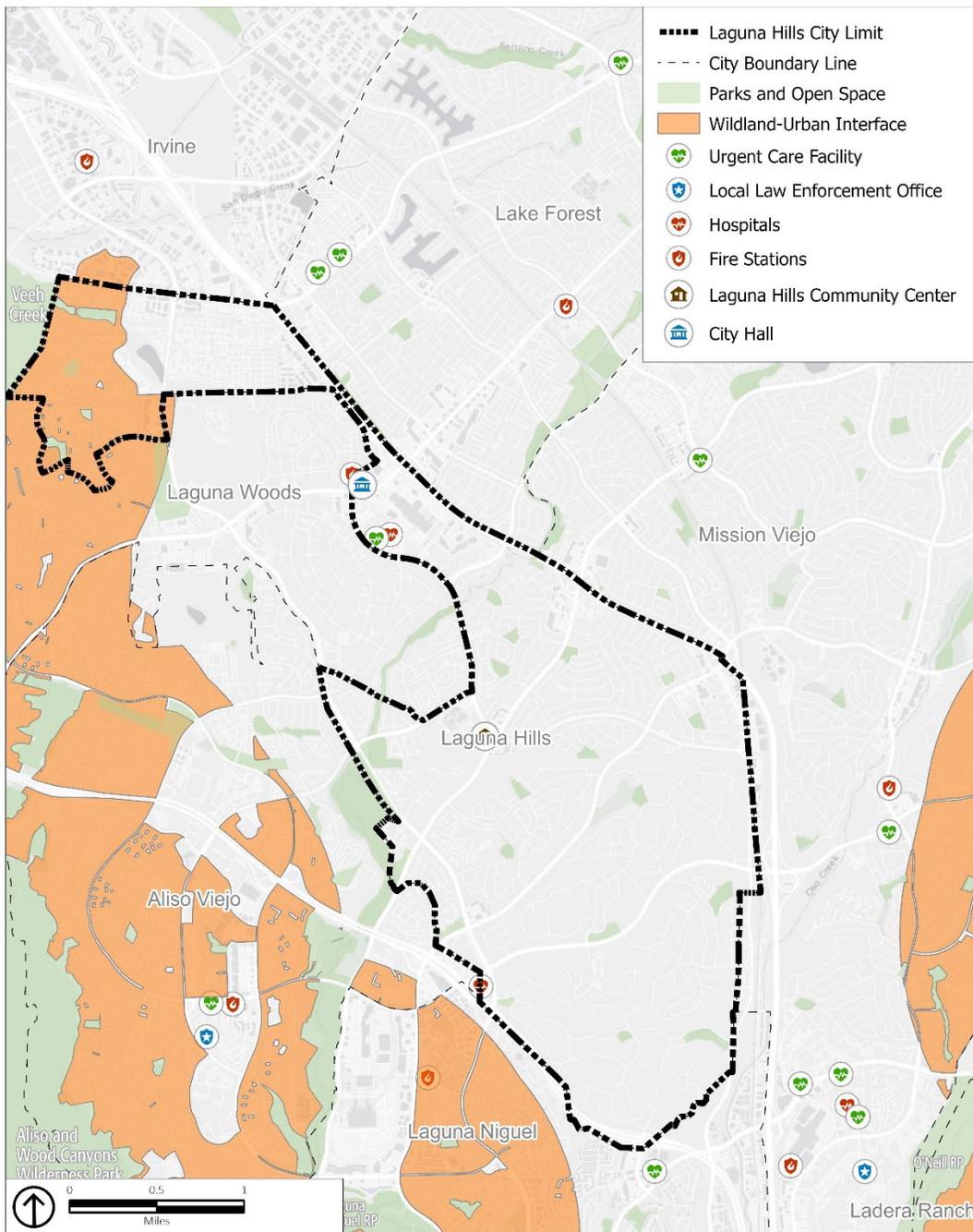
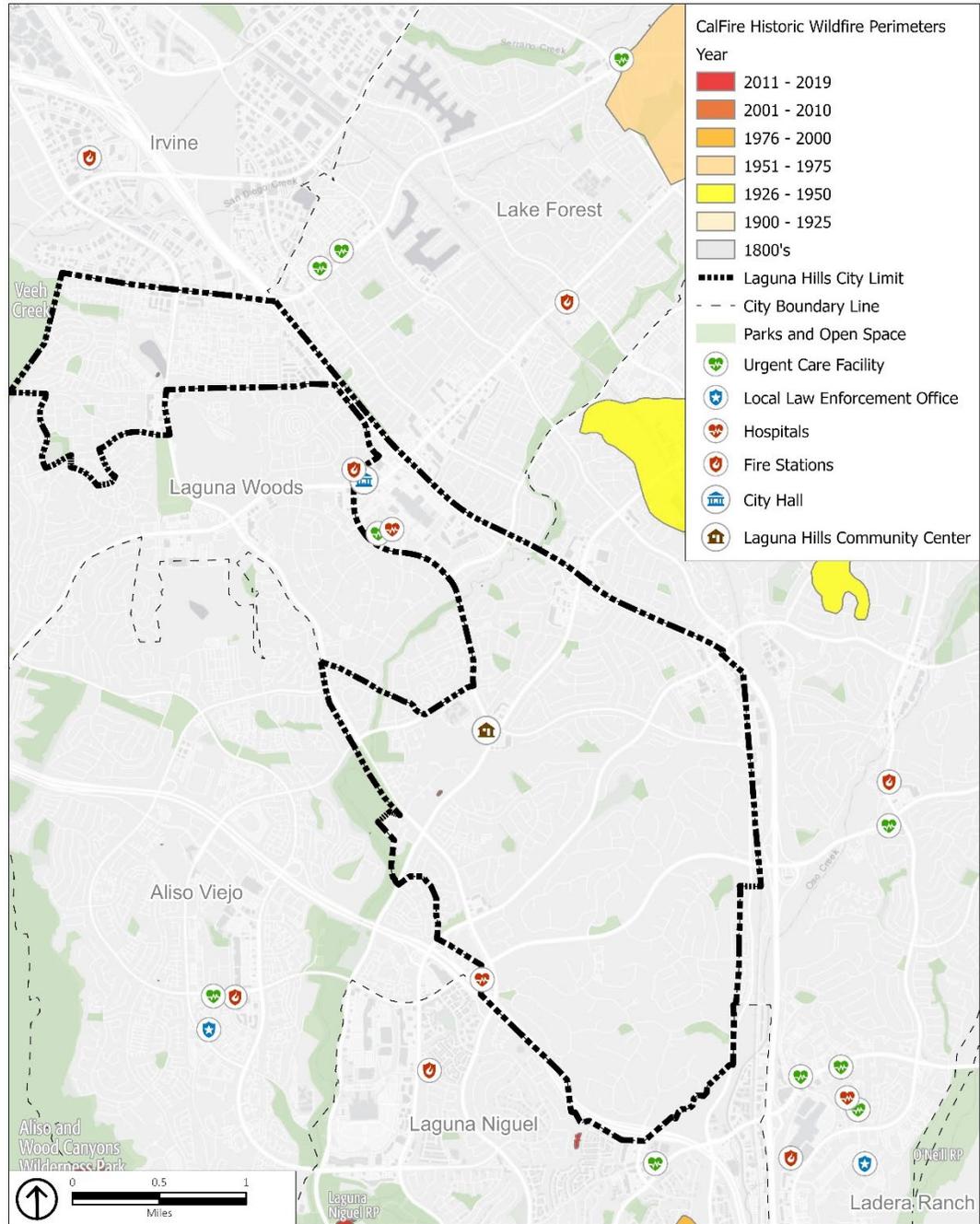


Figure S-7  
Historic Wildfires

SAFETY ELEMENT  
CITY OF LAGUNA HILLS



## LAW ENFORCEMENT AND CRIMINAL ACTIVITIES

### Crime and Neighborhood Safety

Laguna Hills sets high standards for neighborhood safety and maintains a low crime rate amongst cities in Orange County. The City is committed to maintaining this level of safety by providing superior police protection and crime prevention programs.

Police services are provided by the Orange County Sheriff's Department (OCSD). Deputies are responsible for general patrol, traffic enforcement, criminal investigations, and other law enforcement-related duties.

OCSD prides itself on maintaining a working partnership with the community of Laguna Hills to serve and protect its neighborhoods. Crime prevention and community-oriented policing programs, including Neighborhood Watch, Speed Watch, Business Watch, and school resource programs designed to educate and build a stronger partnership with our youth, as well as help residents of all ages take a proactive approach to crime prevention and protection. Refer to the Community Services and Facilities Element for further discussion of police services.

### Response Times

In accordance with the Laguna Hills Police Services annual report for 2019, emergency calls are all calls that have the potential to be life threatening. Priority 2 calls are serious crimes that just occurred, incidents likely to escalate to a crime against a person, or any incident where a delay would impede further investigation or put someone in jeopardy. During 2019, the average reconciled response time for emergency response calls was 4 minutes and 57 seconds and average response time for priority 2 calls was 15 minutes and 6 seconds from when the call was received to deputies arriving at the location. These response times are within standard and reflect an appropriate staffing level for Police Services.

### Crime Prevention through Environmental Design

Crime Prevention through Environmental Design (CPTED) is based on the premise that the proper design and effective use of the built environment can lead to a reduction in the fear of crime and incidence of crime. While traditional methods of policing are important to maintain security in Laguna Hills, CPTED guidelines can be used to prevent crime before it occurs. CPTED is a multi-disciplinary method of using physical and psychological strategies to deter crime.

While crime in Laguna Hills is low, the application of this method in the existing and new built environment can further reduce the opportunity for, and the likelihood of, crime. In addition, the development and redevelopment of certain areas within the City also allows the opportunity to incorporate CPTED principles into the design of development as well as operational aspects.

## **HAZARDOUS MATERIALS AND NUCLEAR POWER PRODUCTION**

### **Hazardous Materials and Waste**

A hazardous material is defined as any injurious substance, including pesticides, herbicides, toxic metal and chemicals, explosives, and nuclear fuels and materials. The use of these hazardous materials is common in commercial, industrial, and manufacturing activities. Because these materials are increasingly used in urban settings, there are activities within the City that expose residents to certain risks associated with hazardous materials. The use of combustibles, and the use, transport, and disposal of hazardous and toxic wastes pose certain risks to the general population of the City. Interstate 5 and the San Joaquin Hills Transportation Corridor (State Route [SR-] 73) are major transportation arterials that border Laguna Hills and it is likely that hazardous materials are transported along these roadways, thus potentially exposing people to potential catastrophic events. Hazardous materials require special methods of disposal, storage, and treatment, and the release of hazardous materials requires an immediate response to protect human health and safety and/or the environment.

OCFA provides 24-hour emergency response services to hazardous materials incidents occurring throughout Orange County, including Laguna Hills. In addition, the Safety and Environmental Services Section (SESS) of OCFA is responsible for gathering and maintaining inventories of chemicals stored, handled, and used within Laguna Hills. Once identified, SESS is responsible for compiling this information into a database, which can be accessed through the Community's Right to Know program. This program responds to all requests from the public for hazardous materials information and disclosure. In addition, OCFA has developed a Hazardous Materials Area Plan addressing day-to-day hazardous material operations as well as extreme emergencies. The role of Laguna Hills in the event of a hazardous materials emergency is focused on discovery, notification evaluation, and initiation of immediate on-scene action.

The City will continue to maintain permitting requirements that parallel County requirements for businesses within Laguna Hills that handle, store, or generate hazardous waste. In addition, common household items, such as medical waste (syringes), latex and oil-based paints, antifreeze, batteries, used motor oil, fertilizers, pesticides, herbicides, and electronic waste, such as used cell phones and computers, are considered hazardous waste, and cannot be

disposed of along with other residential trash. To ensure that household hazardous wastes are collected and disposed of in a safe manner, Orange County Waste and Recycling (Integrated Waste Management Department) developed a household hazardous waste collection program at Orange County landfills. Four permanent collection facilities are located throughout the County, with the nearest Household Hazardous Waste Collection Center (HHWCC) located approximately 5 miles north of Laguna Hills in the City of Irvine. The City of Laguna Hills will continue to support this program and supporting programs, as appropriate, to address the City's hazardous waste disposal needs.

## **Nuclear Power Production**

The San Onofre Nuclear Generating Station (SONGS) is located in San Diego County approximately 15 miles south of Laguna Hills within the Camp Pendleton military reserve. The U.S. Nuclear Regulatory Commission has identified the area surrounding SONGS, and every nuclear power facility, as an Emergency Planning Zone, and the State of California has defined the area outside and adjacent to the Emergency Planning Zone as a Public Education Zone. Laguna Hills is located outside of the Emergency Planning Zone but lies within the Public Education Zone. For areas within this zone, the State of California and Southern California Edison have created education programs to ensure that residents are prepared for any potential problems associated with the facility.

Radioactive by-products are primarily contained within the plant; however, small quantities of radioactive gas are released into the air and liquids into the Pacific Ocean. The releases are monitored by SONGS personnel; according to SONGS, radiation exposure due to material release is less than typical exposure from natural background radiation. The two most likely sources of radiation contamination are transportation accidents involving the transport of radioactive materials and uncontrolled releases at the plant site.

SONGS was granted Permanently Defueled Status in 2015 and is in the process of being decommissioned and dismantled. Dismantlement of the facility began in 2020 and decommissioning activities are anticipated to be completed by 2045. While the decommissioning process is regulated by the Nuclear Regulatory Commission (NRC), spent radioactive material continues to be stored onsite and the potential for accidental release is possible. Continued safety and emergency response policies and protocols are still needed until SONGS is fully decommissioned and the land returned to the U.S. Navy.

## FLOODING AND STORMWATER MANAGEMENT

Floods have the potential to cause extensive property damage and injury to the community. Some areas of Laguna Hills are determined to be within a Federal Emergency Management Agency (FEMA)-designated flood zone; therefore, the City participates in the Federal Flood Insurance Program to determine the mandatory insurance necessary for identified properties. As shown on Federal Insurance Rate Maps (FIRMs), flood areas that have a 1-percent annual chance of flooding (the “100-year floodplain”) are identified around Aliso Creek, Veeh Reservoir, Mill Creek, and in a zone northwest of Alicia Parkway in the southern portion of the City (Figure S-8). Additional zones in the periphery of these flood areas may pose a flood risk, but since they are outside the designated 1-percent annual chance floodplain, they do not require additional flood insurance. Lower risk areas are also located along the La Paz Channel on the eastern border of Laguna Hills, and along North Sulfur Creek around Moulton Parkway.

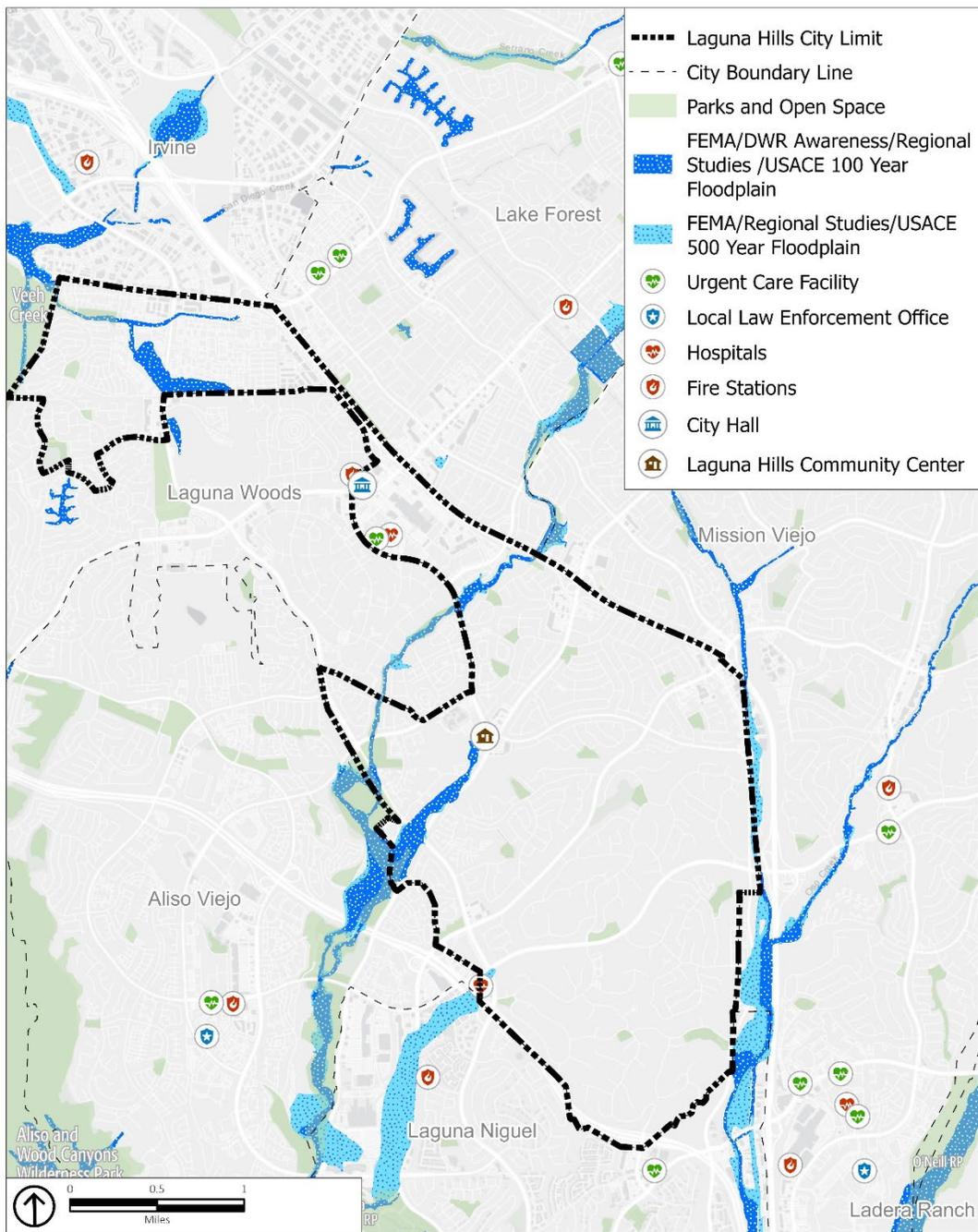
According to California’s *Fourth Climate Change Assessment* for the Los Angeles region, dry and wet extremes are anticipated to increase in the future, which can lead to increased flooding. While the short-term and long-term risks associated with climate change are uncertain, experts agree that increased heat and precipitation events increase the frequency and severity of flooding. Increases in flood events endanger public health and safety, damage property, and can lead to displacement and loss of life.

The County of Orange and the City maintain an extensive storm drain system that would normally divert any excessive rainfall into appropriate channels. However, a significant rain event could cause flooding in the zones identified below, or minor, localized flooding elsewhere in the City. Most of the City does not lie downstream from any Dam Inundation Area or major levees, so there is little risk of inundation from structural failures. However, strong seismic events and more intense precipitation events could result in impacts to a residential area surrounding Veeh Reservoir in the northwestern area of the City. Figure S-4 shows dam inundation areas within and surrounding the City.

The City will continue to coordinate with the Orange County Flood Control District to maintain the necessary flood control and stormwater management facilities. In addition to the City and County, the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers, the Federal Insurance Administration, FEMA, and the California Department of Water Resources manage and protect waterways and are responsible for flood-control infrastructure.

Figure S-8  
Flood Hazard Zones (100-year and 500-year)

SAFETY ELEMENT  
CITY OF LAGUNA HILLS



Source: DWR, FEMA, City of Laguna Hills, PlaceWorks, ESRI

## CLIMATE CHANGE VULNERABILITY

Changes to the global climate system are expected to affect future occurrences of natural hazards in and around Laguna Hills. Many hazards are projected to become more frequent and intense in coming years and decades, and in some cases, these trends have already begun. According to California's *Fourth Climate Change Assessment*,<sup>3</sup> the Los Angeles region, where Laguna Hills is located, is projected to experience various changes due to climate-related hazards.

### Air Quality

Pollution burden<sup>4</sup> throughout Laguna Hills ranges between 12 and 69, with the southern portion of the City (south of Paseo de Valencia) generally having less pollution burden and the northern portion of the City (north of Paseo de Valencia) having a higher pollution burden. Climate change can exacerbate poor air quality due to the increase of ozone, particulate matter, and other pollutants. Worsening air quality affects human health and compounds preexisting health problems, such as asthma, pulmonary disease, and cardiovascular disease. Health impacts from poor air quality are most often associated with senior citizens, persons with chronic illnesses, households in poverty, and populations that spend a significant amount of time outdoors, such as children, outdoor workers, and individuals experiencing homelessness.

### Drought

A drought occurs when conditions are drier than normal for a long period of time, making less water available for people and ecosystems. Drought conditions are projected to become more frequent and severe, as precipitation is expected to occur in fewer, more intense storms. With drought events becoming more severe and prolonged, soils can dry out and condense, leading to more surface runoff and flooding when it does rain.

The Moulton Niguel Water District (MNWD) and the El Toro Water District (ETWD) supply the City with potable water. Water from both districts comes from the Colorado River and State Water Project. Water service and infrastructure is further discussed in the Conservation and Open Space Element and the Community Services and Facilities Element. Both water districts include programs that can help residents respond to drought

<sup>3</sup> Bedsworth, Louise, Dan Cayan, Guido Franco, Leah Fisher, Sonya Ziaja. (California Governor's Office of Planning and Research, Scripps Institution of Oceanography, California Energy Commission, California Public Utilities Commission). 2018. *Statewide Summary Report. California's Fourth Climate Change Assessment*. Publication number: SUMCCCA4-2018-013.

<sup>4</sup> Pollution burden is based on CalEnviroScreen, which is a health screening tool developed by the California Office of Environmental Health Hazards Assessment that helps identify communities that are affected by pollution and environmental conditions caused by pollution. Pollution burden is reported as a percentile that is made up of many indicators that include exposure and environmental effects.

conditions. The ETWD provides conservation pricing, public education and outreach, and rebate programs. MNWD establishes water budgets for customers and price penalties for exceeding water budget. Both water districts can further prohibit water waste activities and restrict water use. MNWD provides an extensive system of recycled water for use by the City and major commercial properties for landscaping irrigation.

## **Extreme Heat and Warm Nights**

Climate change is projected to increase extreme heat events during the day and at night and average daily temperature. The number of extreme heat days in Laguna Hills, defined as a day when the high temperature is at least 90.1 degrees Fahrenheit (°F), is expected to rise from a historical annual average of five (5) days per year to 12 days per year by the middle of the century (2040-2069), and to an average of 25 days per year by the end of the century (2070 to 2099). The number of warm nights in Laguna Hills is also expected to increase, which is defined as temperatures above 65°F. Climate change is expected to increase the number of warm nights from a historical annual average of four nights per year to 41 warm nights per year by the middle of the century and 80 warm nights per year by the end of the century.

## **Human Health Hazards**

Climate-related human health hazards are usually diseases carried by animals (i.e., vectors), such as mice and rats, mosquitos, and ticks. Climate change can increase the rates of infections from these vectors because many of the animals that carry diseases are more active during warmer weather. This can lead to an increase of reported cases of vector-borne diseases, such as with the West Nile Virus, Lyme disease, hantavirus pulmonary syndrome, and influenza.

## **Extreme Storms**

Extreme storm events can include strong storms and high winds, which are anticipated to become more frequent and intense due to climate change. Laguna Hills is projected to experience a slight increase in overall annual precipitation levels, with precipitation expected to fall in fewer, more extreme events, such as atmospheric rivers. Heavy rainfall can contribute to an increased risk of landslides in hillside areas in and around Laguna Hills. The types of dangers posed by extreme storms may include injuries or deaths, damage to properties, roadway closures or damages, fallen trees, and fires sparked by lightning.

## **Vulnerability Assessment Results**

Under California law, the Safety Element is required to include a vulnerability assessment that looks at how populations and assets may be affected by climate change. The City conducted a Climate Change Vulnerability

Assessment in 2021 to analyze Laguna Hills' susceptibility to climate-related hazards. The Laguna Hills' vulnerability assessment, prepared in accordance with the most recent available guidance in the *California Adaptation Planning Guide*, assesses how eight different climate-related hazards (air quality, drought, extreme heat and warm nights, extreme storms, flooding, human health hazards, landslides, and wildfire) may affect 51 population groups and assets. Each population or asset received a score of low, medium, or high for each climate-related hazard. The Climate Change Vulnerability Assessment indicates that the City's populations and assets are most vulnerable to extreme heat and warm nights, extreme storms, landslides, and wildfire.

Most vulnerable populations in the city include households in poverty, persons experiencing homelessness, persons with chronic medical conditions, and seniors living alone. Results from the vulnerability assessment indicate that these populations rank high in vulnerability with at least six hazards. These populations are less likely to have the financial resources and social network to rely on and are more likely to have limited mobility to quickly evacuate (e.g., lack access to a vehicle).

Climate hazards affect populations differently. Populations especially vulnerable to poor air quality include seniors and persons with chronic medical conditions who have weaker immune systems, and populations that may be disproportionately exposed to poor air quality, such as children, outdoor workers, households in poverty, and undocumented persons.

Drought affects water availability and prices and disproportionately affects populations that have financial hardships. Populations especially vulnerable to extreme heat include children, seniors, households in poverty, outdoor workers, persons with chronic medical conditions, undocumented persons, and persons experiencing homelessness.

Populations most vulnerable to extreme storms, flooding, and landslides include populations that lack financial resources to prepare and respond to these hazards, such as weatherizing one's home; populations that have reduced mobility to prepare for and quickly evacuate in the event of a hazard; households on single-access roads that may be blocked during these hazards; and persons experiencing homelessness. Populations with weakened immune systems or populations that may be more exposed to vectors are most vulnerable to human health hazards. Lastly, wildfires can lead to property damage and wildfire smoke, which contributes to decreased air quality. Within the City, populations within the wildland-urban interface are more likely to experience property damage, personal injury, and loss of life, and populations throughout the City would be exposed to reduced air quality from wildfire smoke. Populations with weak immune systems or reduced mobility, populations with financial hardship, and persons living on single-access roads are most vulnerable to wildfires and smoke.

Citywide, energy delivery is vulnerable to multiple hazards, including severe weather, such as high winds, severe storms, landslides, and wildfire that could

disrupt energy service. Furthermore, energy delivery services, specifically electricity delivery, is subject to harm during extreme heat events. Extreme heat puts more stress on power lines and energy infrastructure, which can cause the energy grid to perform less efficiently. This, coupled with more electricity demand from air conditioning units, can lead to power shutoffs, which exacerbate extreme heat risks.

Additionally, hazards can damage infrastructure or block roadways, which affect the availability of services. For example, damage to roadways and bus stops can hinder or halt public transit service throughout the City.

Channels/streams, riparian habitat, and wetlands are most vulnerable to drought, extreme heat, and warm nights, which can decrease water availability and change the water chemistry of these resources. Channels, streams, and riparian habitat are also vulnerable to extreme storms and landslides, which can disrupt or block these resources.

The Safety Element includes goals, policies, and implementation measures to increase community resilience and help lower vulnerability scores, particularly for the populations and assets that received a score of high vulnerability in the Vulnerability Assessment. A full list of the Vulnerability Assessment results can be found in **Appendix A**.

## EMERGENCY PREPAREDNESS

All urban areas are faced with the possibility of major disasters that threaten life, safety, and property, and Laguna Hills is no exception. Laguna Hills is committed to providing the most effective and economical use of all available resources for the maximum benefit and protection of population and structures within the City.

As discussed throughout this element, Laguna Hills is exposed to multiple hazards, all of which have the potential to disrupt the community, and cause damage and casualties. In response to these realities, Laguna Hills operates under the Orange County Operational area, which has an Operational Area Emergency Operations Plan (EOP) and has conducted training exercises with the Office of Homeland Security and the State Office of Emergency Services to ensure that the plan serves as an extension to, and is consistent with, the guidelines provided in the statewide Standardized Emergency Management System (SEMS). The EOP takes the “all hazards” approach and determines the actions that need to be taken by the City to (1) prevent disasters where possible; (2) reduce vulnerability of residents to any disasters that cannot be prevented; (3) respond effectively to actual occurrences of disasters; and (4) provide recovery in the aftermath of any emergency involving extensive damage or other debilitating influence on the normal pattern of life within the community. The EOP is not intended for day-to-day emergencies, but rather for disaster situations where normal resources are exhausted or nearly exhausted. The EOP becomes activated when a threat to lives and property is so great that the City needs to expand beyond normal

day-to-day operations to meet the demands. While it is likely that outside assistance would be available in most large-scale disaster situations and plans have been created to facilitate the coordination of this mutual aid, the City is prepared to carry out disaster response and short-term recovery operations on an independent basis.

Two Emergency Operation Centers (EOCs) can be used as emergency facilities and shelters in the event of an emergency or disaster. They are as follows:

- **Primary Emergency Operation Center (EOC)** is located at:  
Laguna Hills Civic Center 24035 El Toro Road Laguna Hills, CA 92653
- **Alternate Emergency Operation Center (EOC)** is located at:  
Laguna Hills Community Center  
25555 Alicia Parkway Laguna Hills, CA 92653

Evacuation can be effective to minimize injury and death during a hazardous event. The City maintains evacuation routes, as shown in Figure S-9. Roadways identified as evacuation routes include primary thoroughfares through the City, which are classified as major, primary, secondary, and smart arterial streets by the Mobility Element. Many of the major roadways in the City connect to larger evacuation routes, including I-5 and SR-73. Figure S-10 shows residential parcels that have evacuation constraints, which is defined as residential parcels that have only one ingress or egress point. The lack of multiple roadway access points may increase difficulties in an evacuation. Evacuation routes through the City may be disrupted or blocked in the event of a hazard, such as flooding or wildfire. If an evacuation route becomes unusable, other evacuation routes may become congested.

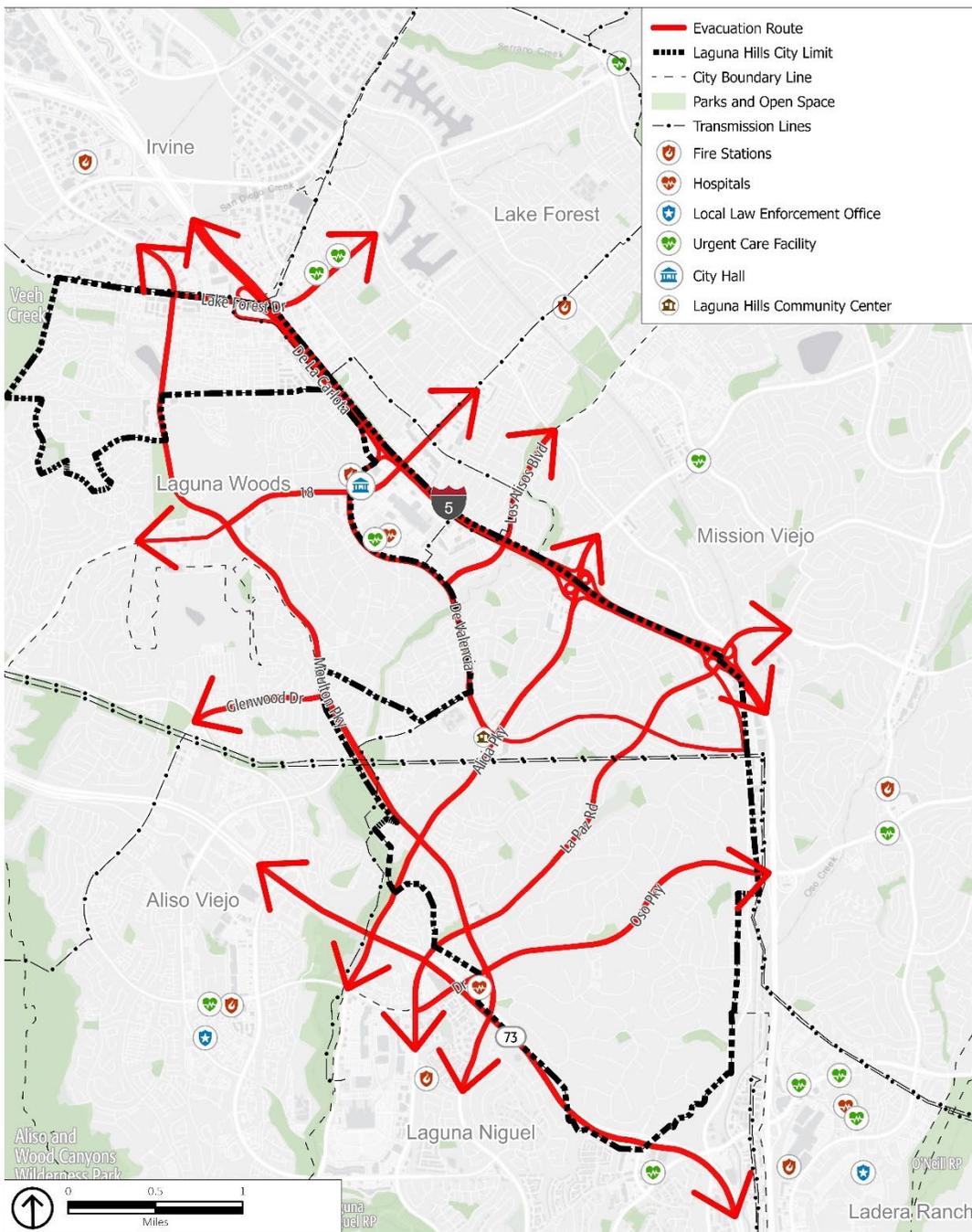
The City sponsors a Community Emergency Preparedness Academy to educate citizens about first-aid techniques and also offers training techniques to first responders for duties in the event of a hazard or disaster. The City will continually educate its residents on the need to adequately prepare for emergencies and will make the EOP a readily available document so the community can gain familiarity with the City's emergency plans and policies.

One community in the city, Nellie Gail Ranch, has an Emergency Preparedness Committee (EPC) to help organize and prepare for the earliest stages of disaster response. This committee is comprised of eight members and several volunteer teams that support emergency communications, first aid needs, and the needs of the equestrian community at the neighborhood and block levels. The EPC also established an Emergency Command Center that is active during an emergency to communicate with first responders to ensure effective distribution of fire, police, and rescue services. Several emergency preparedness articles are published throughout the year by the EPC to help residents prepare for different types of emergencies and disasters.

Figure S-9  
Evacuation Routes



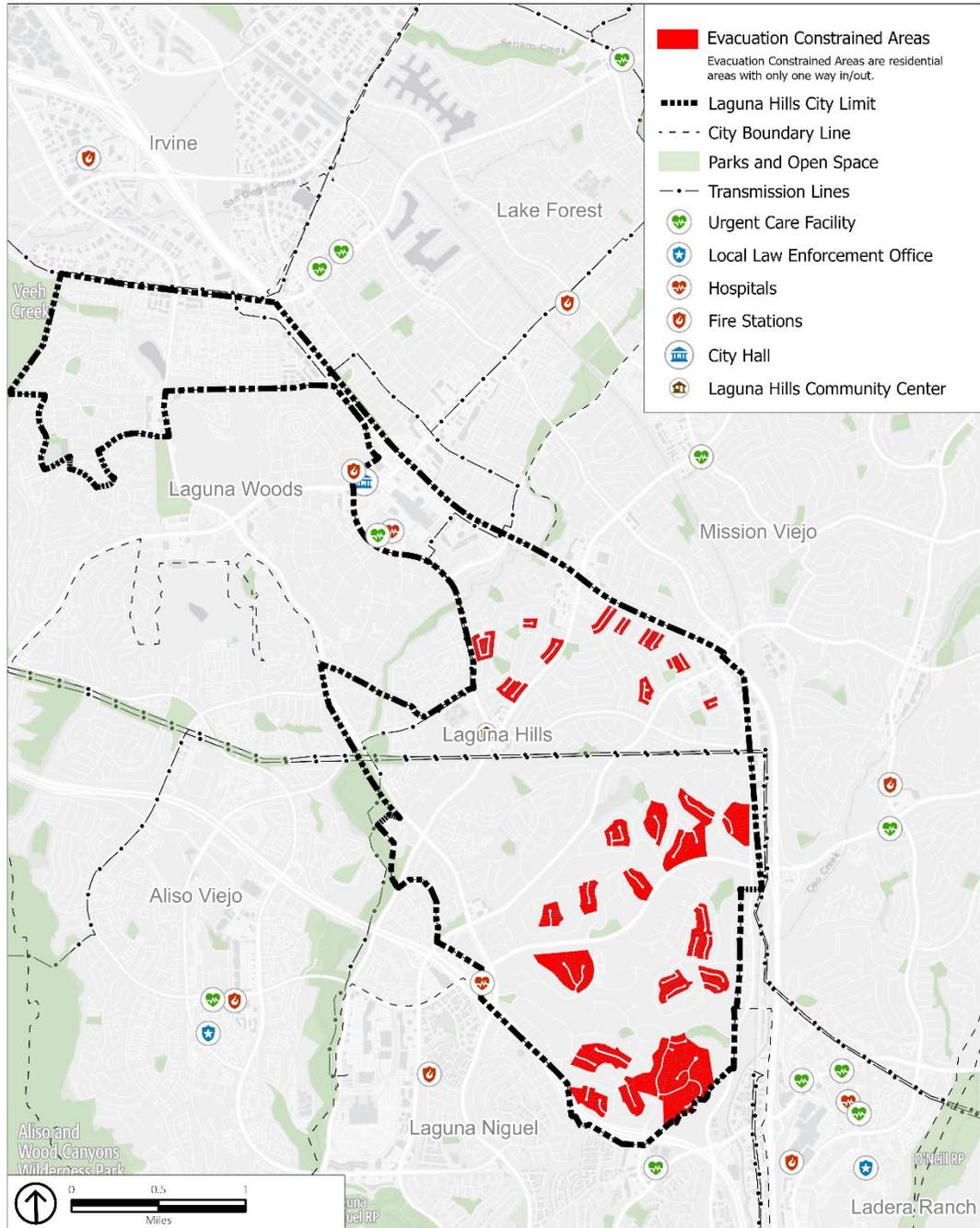
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Source: City of Laguna Hills, PlaceWorks, ESRI

Figure S-10  
Evacuation-Constrained Areas

SAFETY ELEMENT  
CITY OF LAGUNA HILLS



## Goals and Policies

This section sets both broad and specific direction for the future of Laguna Hills based on identified issues, as captured in the City’s Guiding Themes and expressed by the community, City staff, and decision makers.

Seven major issue areas are addressed in the goals and policies of the Safety Element. The major issues are:

- Reducing the risk and damage caused to residents from natural geologic and seismic hazards through proper land use planning and geotechnical investigations.
- Reducing the risks associated with urban and wildland fires through education and fire prevention measures.
- Providing effective law enforcement that helps maintain community safety and further reduces crime.
- Protecting the community from hazardous waste and nuclear power production risks.
- Reducing the risks associated with flooding and improper stormwater management.
- Reducing the impacts of climate hazards by reducing vulnerability and promoting adaptive capacity.
- Maintaining a high level of emergency preparedness to protect public health and safety in emergency situations.

### GEOLOGY AND SEISMICITY

Geologic and seismic hazards are constraints to development and could potentially pose safety risks to the residents of Laguna Hills. Because of the active seismic nature of the Southern California region, residents of Laguna Hills are vulnerable to seismic hazards due to the City’s proximity to nearby faults. Current and future residents could be exposed to geologic hazards such as landslides, particularly in hillside locations or areas of unstable soil. The goals and policies in this Section emphasize the need for careful investigation of geologic conditions to help assess their potential threats. The goals and policies will also ensure that Laguna Hills will regulate the standards for development and address the need for preventative land use planning and development requirements to minimize structural damage and protect residents from unforeseeable seismic and geologic hazards.

#### **Goal S-1: Reduce the risk of injury and the loss of life and property from seismic activity and geologic conditions.**

Policy S-1.1: Investigate specific geologic conditions underlying all proposed significant development proposals in areas where potential fault rupture, liquefaction, slope instability, ground failure, subsidence, or other geologic hazards are suspected.

Policy S-1.2: Apply current and proper land use planning, development engineering, building construction, and retrofitting requirements.

Policy S-1.3: Require that grading activities be designed, per City standards, to avoid obstructing or impeding the natural flow of stormwaters, causing accelerated erosion, or aggravating any existing flooding condition.

## URBAN AND WILDLAND FIRE HAZARDS

Since the City is potentially vulnerable to wildland fire and urban fire events, the City will continue to administer proper fire protection services and promote fire prevention measures through community education; design features, such as fire-resistant landscaping; and technological advances.

### **Goal S-2: Reduce the threat to life, structures, and the environment from urban and wildland fires.**

Policy S-2.1: Provide a sufficient level of fire protection service to reduce the risk from urban and wildland fires.

Policy S-2.2: Continue to involve the Orange County Fire Authority (OCFA) personnel in the development review process for new development and redevelopment activities.

Policy S-2.3: Work with OCFA Community Educators on public education efforts, including elementary and secondary school students, and training programs about fire hazard prevention measures and evacuation routes.

Policy S-2.4: Continue to work with OCFA to integrate new technologies and fire prevention concepts into the design and construction of new development projects and redevelopment activities.

Policy S-2.5: Continue to work with OCFA to reduce the risk of wildland fire hazards by requiring fire-resistant landscaping and incorporate site design and maintenance standards for new development located in areas of high wildfire risk.

Policy S-2.6: Enforce the California Fire Safe Standards and City's Building Code and Fire Code to support fire safety in new and existing developments. Require that new developments demonstrate compliance with local and state standards for fire safety.

Policy S-2.7: Encourage the use of fuel breaks and vegetation clearance to maintain emergency access on public and private roads.

Policy S-2.8: Ensure that infrastructure and assets that are essential for public health and safety are hardened against fire hazards and critical community services continue to function during and after a fire hazard event.

Policy S-2.9: Work with OCFA and water providers in the City to ensure adequate water supply and pressure is available to fight fires.

## LAW ENFORCEMENT

The City is committed to maintaining the low crime rate and further reducing the instances of criminal activity within the community. The City takes a proactive approach to crime prevention and the goals and policies below will enable the City to continue to maintain high quality and efficiency in police services as well as emphasize the pivotal role community involvement plays in crime prevention.

### **Goal S-3: Provide a safe, peaceful, and orderly community through effective law enforcement and community involvement.**

Policy S-3.1: Provide a sufficient level of law enforcement service to reduce the risk of criminal activity and terrorism.

Policy S-3.2: Continue to involve law enforcement personnel in the development review process for new development and redevelopment activities.

Policy S-3.3: Continue public education efforts and community outreach, including elementary and secondary school students, about crime and drug prevention measures.

### **Goal S-4: Maintain and design neighborhoods and buildings in a manner that can help reduce crime and provide security and safety for people and property.**

Policy S-4.1: Integrate appropriate Crime Prevention Through Environmental Design (CPTED) principles in the design or redevelopment of projects and buildings.

## HAZARDOUS MATERIALS AND NUCLEAR POWER PRODUCTION

To reduce or eliminate potential dangers posed by the misuse and mismanagement of hazardous materials, waste, and nuclear power production, the City will continue to establish and enforce measures to identify hazard areas and to review and regulate development and redevelopment where such hazards may occur. The City will also promote the proper disposal of hazardous waste materials by educating the community of the dangers of improperly handled hazardous materials and adhering to the guidelines set forth by OC Waste & Recycling and other applicable regulations.

### **Goal S-5: Protect life, structures, and the environment from hazardous materials.**

Policy S-5.1: Promote and support the proper disposal, handling, transport, delivery, treatment, recovery, recycling, and storage of hazardous materials in accordance with applicable federal, state, and local regulations.

Policy S-5.2: Encourage businesses and residents to use practices and technologies that will reduce the generation of hazardous wastes at the source.

Policy S-5.3: Continue to cooperate with the Orange County Fire Authority and Orange County Integrated Waste Management Department to address hazardous materials.

Policy S-5.4: Continue public education efforts regarding proper use, storage, and disposal of household hazardous materials.

Policy S-5.5: Coordinate with the County, Caltrans, rail line authorities, and other hazardous materials regulating agencies, to identify designated routes for the ground transportation of hazardous materials through Laguna Hills.

Policy S-5.6: Coordinate public education and emergency response activities addressing nuclear power production risks with other local, state, and federal agencies.

## FLOODING AND STORMWATER MANAGEMENT

The City of Laguna Hills will seek to protect its residents and visitors from flood hazards through structural planning and design, as well as facilitate efforts with local, state, and federal agencies, including special districts, to address flooding issues. Since the existing flood-control and stormwater drainage system has been designed and constructed to accommodate anticipated population increases as well as future land development and redevelopment projects, the following goals and policies will optimize this existing system and seek to maintain the natural drainage courses as they are, in their natural condition to ensure proper flood control and stormwater drainage facilities.

### **Goal S-6: Reduce injuries and danger to life, property damage, and public health hazards associated with flooding.**

Policy S-6.1: Cooperate with the Orange County Flood Control District to provide well-maintained regional flood-control facilities capable of accommodating, at a minimum, 100-year storm flows consistent with federal requirements.

Policy S-6.2: Require that new development and redevelopment minimize stormwater and urban runoff into drainage facilities by incorporating on-site design features, such as detention basins, water features, or other suitable strategies. Where feasible, support the use of common detention facilities serving more than one development.

Policy S-6.3: Prohibit new development in flood-hazard zones. When not possible, require construction and operation strategies that would minimize the flood damage to new buildings within flood zones.

Policy S-6.4: Continue to implement National Pollutant Discharge Elimination System (NPDES) stormwater permits issued by the state and regional water quality control boards.

Policy S-6.5: Require design and development practices for transportation and utilities infrastructure that would maintain the structural and operational integrity of essential public services during flooding.

Policy S-6.6: When feasible, locate new essential public facilities outside of flood hazard zones, including hospitals and health care facilities, emergency shelters, fire stations, emergency operation centers, and emergency communications facilities.

## CLIMATE CHANGE

As mandated by the State of California pursuant to (legislation references here), Laguna Hills will reduce the impacts of climate change to its residents, businesses, and visitors through goals and policies that focus on reducing vulnerability and increasing resilience. Climate change affects multiple natural hazards, including wildfire, flooding, air quality, drought, extreme heat and warm nights, human health hazards, and extreme storms. The goals and policies in this Safety Element provide guidance to minimize exposure to natural hazards, which are exacerbated by climate change.

### Air Quality

**Goal S-7: A resilient community with healthy air quality that minimizes health risk from pollution sources.**

Policy S-7.1: Work with the South Coast Air Quality Management District to monitor air pollutants of concern in the City.

Policy S-7.2: Encourage the siting of new developments for sensitive receptors, such as schools, playgrounds, childcare centers, senior services and housing, and health care facilities, away from significant pollution sources. When this is not possible, consider appropriate mitigation measures to protect human health (e.g., enhanced indoor air filtration systems).

Policy S-7.3: Support training and workshop opportunities for residents to learn about strategies to promote safe indoor air quality and protect themselves from poor outdoor air quality, such as wildfire smoke.

Policy S-7.4: Prioritize new street tree plantings and increase the tree canopy to reduce community health impacts from exposure to elevated concentrations of diesel, ozone, and PM<sub>2.5</sub>.

## Drought

**Goal S-8: A resilient community able to adapt to short-term and long-term drought impacts, including reduced water supply.**

Policy S-8.1: Use the most current data to maintain a continuous understanding of drought impacts in Laguna Hills, including natural resources.

Policy S-8.2: Prepare for a reduced, long-term water supply resulting from more frequent and severe drought events, including working with state and regional water providers to implement extensive water conservation measures and ensure sustainable water supplies.

Policy S-8.3: Transition towards less water-intensive landscaping on City-owned properties and encourage native, drought-tolerant, and low-water use landscaping on private properties.

Policy S-8.4: Work with water agencies to ensure that vulnerable populations, including households with financial instability and persons that spend an extended amount of time outdoors have access to safe and affordable water.

Policy S-8.5: Install water-efficient irrigation at the City's trees to maintain a thriving urban forest.

Policy S-8.6: Coordinate with water agencies to explore ways to improve and increase storage capacity and generation efficiency.

## Extreme Heat and Warm Nights

**Goal S-9: A population and community resilient to extreme heat and warm nights.**

Policy S-9.1: Provide an equitable distribution of shade structures, trees, and drinking fountains at bus stops, City parks, and other public outdoor spaces.

Policy S-9.2: Weatherize City buildings and adopt standards encouraging private property owners to weatherize buildings to maintain a comfortable and healthy indoor temperature.

Policy S-9.3: Provide an equitable distribution of cooling centers throughout the City where residents and visitors seek relief from extreme heat and establish a temperature threshold for when these facilities open.

Policy S-9.4: Work with electricity providers to maintain access to electricity and prepare for potential brown-outs and black-outs during extreme heat events, to the extent feasible in the City.

Policy S-9.5: Support the restoration of natural habitats that are vulnerable and may be degraded from extreme heat, drought, and extreme storms.

## Human Health Hazards

**Goal S-10: A community and population safe from vector-borne health hazards.**

Policy S-10.1: Continue to collaborate with local and regional partners, such as the Orange County Mosquito and Vector Control District (OCVCD), to reduce vectors within the City.

Policy S-10.2: Distribute informational material for property owners on methods to reduce vectors, such as eliminating standing water and open refuse containers as provided by the OCVCD.

Policy S-10.3: Support the implementation of vector abatement measures in public spaces, including parks and along bicycle paths and sidewalks in a manner that maintains public and environmental health in coordination with OCVCD.

## Extreme Storms

**Goal S-11: A population and community resilient to extreme storm events.**

Policy S-11.1: Collaborate with regional partners to provide messaging to residents and visitors on emerging weather conditions and forecasted extreme weather.

Policy S-11.2: Coordinate with local and regional organizations to provide evacuation assistance and emergency housing to vulnerable populations, which includes, but is not limited to, seniors, persons experiencing homelessness, persons with chronic medical conditions, or persons with limited resources.

Policy S-11.3: Coordinate with local and regional organizations to provide low-cost weatherization programs for households with financial instability.

Policy S-11.4: Work with regional partners to reduce impacts of extreme storm events on public property and critical infrastructure and services.

Policy S-11.5: Ensure the community is prepared during times of power shutoff events.

## EMERGENCY PREPAREDNESS

The City recognizes that preparing for emergencies is essential to minimize the potential damage associated with a disastrous event. The City will work to provide proper response and preparedness by establishing preventative measures, implementing its local Emergency Operation Plan (EOP), and educating its residents on how to respond and recover in emergency situations.

**Goal S-12: Maintain a high level of emergency preparedness to limit damage and risks to public health and safety from natural and other disasters.**

Policy S-12.1: Coordinate with local Homeowners Associations, businesses, and surrounding jurisdictions to create public-private partnerships and support the development of local preparedness plans and multi-jurisdictional cooperation and communication agreements for emergency situations.

Policy S-12.2: In coordination with the Orange County Fire Authority and Orange County Sheriff's Office, educate residents and businesses regarding appropriate actions to safeguard life and property before, during and immediately after emergencies, in languages appropriate to the demographics of City residents.

Policy S-12.3: Participate in federal, state, and local hazard preparedness programs, emergency response education programs, and evacuation plans.

Policy S-12.4: Ensure emergency evacuation routes are clearly identified with adequate signage throughout the City.

Policy S-12.5: Ensure evacuation transportation services are available for populations with limited mobility or populations that lack access to a personal vehicle.

Policy S-12.6: Establish equitably distributed resilience hubs<sup>5</sup> at existing facilities throughout the City that provide safe refuge from hazards and disasters, including, but not limited to, poor air quality, wildfire smoke, flooding, storms, and extreme heat. Facilities should be easily accessible, have a reliable energy supply, and available for all persons.

Policy S-12.7: Incorporate an adopted Local Hazard Mitigation Plan into this Safety Element by reference, as permitted by California Government Code Section 65302.6 to ensure that emergency response and evacuation routes are accessible throughout the City.

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<sup>5</sup> As defined by the California Adaptation Planning Guide (2020), resilience hubs are “well-used, existing community-serving facilities that are upgraded to provide local communities with shelter and electricity during extreme heat events, poor air quality, and disasters”.

## Summary of Approach

The goals, policies, and programs in the Safety Element will help the City to minimize the threat of both natural and human-caused hazards on the community, protect public health, maintain safe neighborhoods, and provide timely and effective response in the event of an emergency by continually assessing the City's needs and taking proactive measures to ensure Laguna Hills is a safe environment in which to live, learn, work, and play. Table S-2 identifies the seven major issue areas described in the Goals and Policies section. These major issues represent the direction the City will take in its safety goals, policies, and programs to implement the vision of Laguna Hills as captured in the Guiding Themes and expressed in the Safety Plan.

**Table S-2  
Description of Actions to Address Safety Issues**

Issues	Element	Section	Policy	Programs	Figure	Table
<b>Geology and Seismicity</b>	Safety	Geology and Seismicity	S-1.1 and S-1.3	S-1 through S-4	S-1 (Landslide Zones); S-2 (Fault Locations); S-3 (Liquefaction Zones) S-4 (Flood Hazards)	S-1 (Reservoirs and Dams in/ near Laguna Hills)
<b>Urban and Wildland Fire Hazards</b>	Safety	Urban and Wildland Fire Hazards	S-2.1 through S-2.9	S-2, S-5 through S-7	S-5 (Fire Hazard Zones)	
	Community Services and Facilities	Fire Protection and Emergency Services	CSF-3.1	CSF-3	CSF-1 (Community Facilities)	CSF-1 (Fire Station Locations)
<b>Law Enforcement and Criminal Activities</b>	Safety	Law Enforcement and Criminal Activities	S-3.1 though S-3.3; S-4.1	S-7		
<b>Hazardous Materials and Nuclear Power Production</b>	Safety	Hazardous Materials and Nuclear Power Production	S-5.1through S-5.6	S-7, S-9, S-11		
<b>Flooding and Stormwater Management</b>	Safety	Flooding and Stormwater Management	S-6.1 through S-6.6	S-2, S-10	S-4 (Flood Hazards)	
	Community Services and Facilities	Flood Control and Stormwater Drainage	CSF-11.1 and CSF-11.2	CSF-9		
	Conservation and Open Space	Sustaining Our Resources	COS-1.3 and COS-1.4	COS-3		
<b>Climate Change</b>	Safety	Air Quality	S-7.1 through S-7.4	S-7, S-14, S-17, S-18		
		Drought	S-8.1 through S-8.6	S-17, S-18		
		Extreme Heat and Warm Nights	S-9.1 through S-9.5	S-11, S-13, S-16, S-18		
		Human Health Hazards	S-10.1 through S-10.3	S-7, S-18		
		Extreme Storms	S-11.1 through S-11.5	S-13, S-16		
<b>Emergency Preparedness</b>	Safety	Emergency Preparedness	S-12.1 through S-12.6	S-11, S-15, S-16		

## Appendix A: Vulnerability Assessment Results Matrix

In 2021, Laguna Hills completed a Climate Change Vulnerability Assessment consistent with California Government Code Section 65302(g)(4) as part of the update to the Safety Element. This analysis assesses the extent to which the diverse populations and assets in Laguna Hills are vulnerable to different hazards that may be created or made worse by climate change. The primary categories of populations and assets assessed include populations, buildings and infrastructure, important economic assets, natural systems, and key community services. The assessment follows the recommended process in the *California Adaptation Planning Guide*, which is the state's guidance for how local communities should conduct climate adaptation planning efforts, including vulnerability assessments. As defined by the *California Adaptation Planning Guide*, climate change vulnerability is considered the degree to which natural, built, and human systems are susceptible to harm from exposure or stresses associated with climate change and from the absence of adaptive capacity.

Table A-1 shows the results of the vulnerability assessment prepared for Laguna Hills, in accordance with Senate Bill 379, as codified by California Government Code Section 65302(g)(4)(A). For each population or asset that may be vulnerable to each climate-related hazard, the population or asset is scored on a scale of low, medium, and high. The vulnerability scores reflect the severity of climate-related impacts on the populations and assets in Laguna Hills, as well as the ability of Laguna Hills' populations and assets to resist and recover from these hazards.

**Table A-1. Vulnerability Assessment Results**

	<b>Populations and Assets</b>	<b>Air Quality</b>	<b>Drought</b>	<b>Extreme Heat &amp; Warm Nights</b>	<b>Extreme Storms</b>	<b>Flooding</b>	<b>Human Health Hazards</b>	<b>Landslides</b>	<b>Wildfire</b>
Population	Children (Under 10)	High	--	High	Low	Low	Medium	Low	High
	Cost-burdened households	Medium	Low	Low	Medium	Medium	Medium	Medium	Low
	Households in poverty	High	High	High	High	High	High	High	High
	Low-income households	Medium	Medium	Medium	High	High	Medium	High	Medium
	Low-resourced people of color	Medium	High	Medium	High	High	High	Medium	High
	Outdoor Workers	High	Medium	High	Medium	Medium	Medium	Medium	High
	Persons experiencing homelessness	High	High	High	High	High	High	High	High
	Persons with chronic medical conditions	High	Low	High	High	Medium	High	High	High
	Persons with disabilities and/or cognitive function	Medium	Low	Medium	Medium	Medium	Medium	High	Medium
	Persons with limited English proficiency	Low	Low	Low	Medium	Medium	Low	Low	Low
	Renters	Low	Medium	Low	Medium	Medium	Low	Low	Low
	Seniors (65 years of age or older)	High	Medium	High	Medium	Medium	High	High	High
	Seniors living alone	High	Medium	High	High	High	High	High	High
	Undocumented persons	High	Low	High	High	High	High	Medium	Medium
	Persons living on single access roads	Low	--	Low	Medium	High	Low	High	High

	Populations and Assets	Air Quality	Drought	Extreme Heat & Warm Nights	Extreme Storms	Flooding	Human Health Hazards	Landslides	Wildfire
Infrastructure	Bicycle and equestrian paths	--	Low	Low	Low	Low	--	Medium	Medium
	Communication facilities	--	--	Low	Low	--	--	Medium	--
	Electrical transmission and distribution lines	--	--	High	Low	--	--	High	--
	Flood control and stormwater drainage	--	--	--	Medium	High	--	Medium	Medium
	Gas transmission and hazardous liquid pipelines	--	--	--	--	--	--	Medium	--
	Major Roadways and Highways	--	--	Medium	Medium	Medium	--	High	Low
	Bus routes	--	--	--	Medium	Low	--	High	--
	Parks and open space	Medium	Medium	Low	Medium	Low	Low	Low	Medium
	Union Pacific Railroad corridor/Metrolink	--	--	Medium	Medium	High	--	Medium	--
	Water and Sewer System	--	Low	--	Medium	Medium	--	Medium	--
Buildings	City Hall and Civic Center	--	--	Low	Low	--	--	--	--
	Community and recreation centers	--	Medium	Low	Medium	Low	--	Medium	--
	Government and administration facilities	--	--	Low	Medium	--	--	--	--
	Laguna Hills Technology Library	--	--	Low	Medium	--	--	Medium	--
	Memorial Care Saddleback Medical Center	--	--	Medium	Low	--	--	--	--
	Laguna Hills Police Station	--	--	Low	Medium	--	--	--	--
	Schools	--	--	Low	Medium	--	--	Medium	--
	Transit Center	--	--	Low	Medium	--	--	--	--

	Populations and Assets	Air Quality	Drought	Extreme Heat & Warm Nights	Extreme Storms	Flooding	Human Health Hazards	Landslides	Wildfire
Economic Drivers	Commercial plazas and strip malls	Medium	--	Medium	Medium	Medium	Medium	Medium	Medium
	Education	Medium	--	Medium	Low	Low	Medium	Low	Medium
	Healthcare	Medium	Low	Medium	Medium	Medium	Medium	Low	Low
	Major Employers	Medium	Low	Medium	Medium	Medium	Medium	Medium	Low
Ecosystems and Natural Resources	Scenic Resources	--	Medium	--	Low	Low	--	Low	High
	Sensitive vegetation communities	--	Medium	Medium	Medium	Medium	--	Low	--
	Water channels, streams, and riparian habitats	--	High	High	High	Medium	--	High	Low
	Wetlands	--	High	High	Medium	Low	--	Medium	Low
Key Services	Communication services	--	--	Medium	High	Medium	--	Medium	Medium
	Emergency medical response and fire protection	Medium	--	Medium	Low	Low	High	Medium	Low
	Energy delivery	Low	Low	High	High	--	--	High	High
	Government administration and community services	Low	--	Low	Low	Low	Low	Medium	Low
	Non-Profit/ Non-Governmental Organization Services	Low	--	Low	Low	Low	Low	Low	Low
	Public safety response	Low	--	Low	Low	Low	Medium	Medium	Low
	Public Transit	Medium	--	Medium	High	Medium	Low	High	Medium
	Educational Services	Medium	--	Medium	Medium	Medium	Low	Low	Medium
	Solid waste removal	Medium	--	Low	Medium	Medium	Low	Medium	Medium
	Water and Wastewater Services	--	High	Medium	Low	High	Low	Medium	High

## Appendix B: Implementation Programs

Safety		2022 - 2024	Annual	Bi-annual	Ongoing
<p><b>S-1. Geologic Hazard Assessments</b></p> <p>Pursuant to state law, geologic and/or geotechnical studies are required for proposed new development projects in areas identified as susceptible to landslides and liquefaction, and binding mitigation strategies must be adopted. Compliance with the recommendations set forth in site-specific geologic and/or geotechnical studies will be made a condition of the site development permit for subsequent projects. In addition, the City may require applicants to incorporate measures to stabilize and maintain slopes on a site-by-site basis, such as, but not limited to, proper planting, irrigation, retaining walls, and benching.</p> <p>Figures S-1 through S-4 in the Safety Element depict the location of known geologic/seismic hazards in Laguna Hills.</p>					○
Implements policy(ies):	S-1.1, S-1.2				
Responsible department:	Community Development, Public Services				
Funding source:	Applicant provided				
<p><b>S-2. Natural Hazards Risk Reduction</b></p> <p>Reduce the risk to the community from hazards related to geologic conditions, seismic activity, flooding, and structural damage and wildfires by requiring feasible mitigation of such impacts on discretionary development projects. Assess development proposals for potential hazards pursuant to CEQA. Require measures to mitigate all identified significant public safety hazards.</p>					○
Implements policy(ies):	S-1.2				
Responsible department:	Community Development, Public Services				
Funding source:	Applicant provided				
<p><b>S-3. Slope Monitoring and Remediation</b></p> <p>Continually monitor and encourage remediation of unstable slope areas, particularly in areas characterized by the presence of crib walls or where evidence of instability exists.</p>					○
Implements policy(ies):	S-1.1, S-1.2				
Responsible department:	Community Development, Public Services				
Funding source:	General Fund for Public Properties, otherwise privately funded				

Safety		2022-2024	Annual	Bi-annual	Ongoing
<b>S-4. Building Codes</b> Continually update development standards and adopt the latest building construction codes to guide future development and redevelopment throughout the City, especially in areas with known geologic and seismic- related hazards and wildfire hazards.					○
Implements policy(ies):	S-1.2, S-2.6				
Responsible department:	Community Development				
Funding source:	General Fund, development fees				
<b>S-5. Orange County Fire Authority</b> Work closely with the Orange County Fire Authority (OCFA) to implement fire hazard education and fire prevention programs, including fuel modification programs and controlled burns. Coordinate with OCFA to ensure that response times and water pressure is adequate for firefighting purposes in all areas of the City, particularly in redevelopment projects/areas. Coordinate with OCFA to implement the Hazardous Materials Area Plan within Laguna Hills.					○
Implements policy(ies):	S-5.1, 5.2, 5.3, 5.4				
Responsible department:	Community Development, Public Services				
Funding source:	General Fund, OCFA property taxes				
<b>S-6. New Fire Prevention Technology</b> Support research and development of new technologies to prevent and suppress fires (e.g., foam treatments for new construction and other means). If appropriate, encourage OCFA to use such technologies to improve fire safety in Laguna Hills.					○
Implements policy(ies):	S-2.4				
Responsible department:	Community Development, OCFA, Public Safety				
Funding source:	General Fund				

Safety		2022- 2024	Annual	Bi-annual	Ongoing
<p><b>S-7. Public Education Programs</b></p> <p>Use public education activities to accomplish the following objectives:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Raise public awareness of fire safety issues, including urban and wildland fire prevention, where to take pets during fire-related evacuations, and the benefits of fire-resistant slope cover. Continue to educate elementary and secondary school students about fire hazards and prevention measures.</li> <li>2. Coordinate with the Orange County Sheriff’s Department (OCSD) to increase public awareness about criminal activity and crime prevention activities. Continue to educate elementary and secondary school students about crime and drug prevention awareness.</li> <li>3. Educate the public regarding proper disposal of household hazardous waste (including medical wastes) and other safety concerns related to improper use or storage of hazardous materials.</li> <li>4. Ensure that residents are prepared for any problems associated with the San Onofre Nuclear Generating Station (SONGS). Coordinate education activities and make materials available to residents. Use forums, flyers, brochures, and the City’s website to accomplish these objectives.</li> <li>5. Raise public awareness regarding the City’s Emergency Operations Plan to ensure that residents and businesses are prepared to safeguard life and property during and after emergencies/disasters.</li> <li>6. Continue to work with the Orange County Fire Authority (OCFA) to raise public awareness on urban and wildland fire prevention and response, including evacuation when needed.</li> <li>7. Raise public awareness and provide training and workshop opportunities for residents to learn about how to protect themselves against wildfire smoke and poor indoor and outdoor air quality.</li> <li>8. Continue hosting a yearly Community Emergency Preparedness Academy through the Public Safety Department to provide education on emergency and disaster preparedness skills.</li> <li>9. Educate property owners and provide informational material, such as brochures and pamphlets, on methods to reduce vectors that may cause a risk to human health.</li> </ol>					
Implements policy(ies):	S-2.3, S-3.3, S-5.4, S-5.6, S-12.2, S-7.4, S-10.2				
Responsible department:	Community Development, Public Services, Public Safety, OCSD, OCFA				
Funding source:	General Fund				
<p><b>S-8. County Hazardous Waste Reduction Program</b></p> <p>The City shall promote the use of the County of Orange’s Household Hazardous Waste Collection Centers for the proper disposal of hazardous waste. Continue to identify locations where residents can properly dispose of hazardous waste and advertise these locations at public counters and on the City’s website.</p>					

Safety		2022-2024	Annual	Bi-annual	Ongoing
Implements policy(ies):	S-5.1, S-5.2, S-5.3, S-5.4				
Responsible department:	Community Services, Administration/Finance				
Funding source:	General Fund				
<b>S-9. Nuclear Power Risks Reduction</b> Participate in programs and emergency response exercises with federal and state agencies and Southern California Edison to minimize community risks related to nuclear power production at SONGS. Implement measures related to SONGS within the City's Emergency Operations Plan (EOP) to ensure that residents are prepared for any problems associated with the facility.					○
Implements policy(ies):	S-5.6				
Responsible department:	Community Development, Public Services, Police Services				
Funding source:	General Fund				
<b>S-10. Project-Related Flood Control and Stormwater Management and Comprehensive Drainage Studies</b> As a condition of project approval, require new development and redevelopment to provide adequate on-site and off-site stormwater and flood management facilities to control direct and indirect erosion and discharges of pollutants and/or sediments. To determine the facility needs and best management practices (BMP), the City will require, when necessary, a hydrological/drainage analysis be performed by a state-licensed and City-approved engineer, with the cost of said analysis the responsibility of the project applicant.					○
Implements policy(ies):	S-6.2; S-6.3; COS-1.3				
Responsible department:	Public Services				
Funding source:	Development fees				
<b>S-11. Emergency Operations Plan</b> Implement the City's Emergency Operations Plan (EOP) according to requirements and provisions of the State Emergency Management System and National Incident Management System. Ensure that the EOP establishes community emergency shelter facilities and is easily available to the public. Ensure that the EOP establishes emergency evacuation routes, consistent with the General Plan, and cooling centers. Work with nearby jurisdictions to enhance multi-jurisdictional coordination during emergency situations. Coordinate with the Orange County Sheriff's Department and the Orange County Fire Authority on countywide emergency planning efforts, including the County's Local Hazard Mitigation Plan.					○

Safety		2022-2024	Annual	Bi-annual	Ongoing
Implements policy(ies):	S-9.2, S-11.5, S-12.1, S-12.3, S-12.6				
Responsible department:	All departments				
Funding source:	General Fund				
<b>S-12. Community Emergency Preparedness Academy</b> Continue to educate and promote Laguna Hills residents and businesses in eight-week training programs focusing on survival and recovery from disasters.					○
Implements policy(ies):	S-12.2				
Responsible department:	Public Safety				
Funding source:	General Fund				
<b>S-13. Essential Infrastructure and Buildings</b> Harden essential infrastructure and buildings, such as resilience hubs, power and electricity infrastructure, stormwater infrastructure, and encourage maintenance procedures around essential infrastructure and buildings, such as vegetation clearance, to withstand hazardous and emergency events. Coordinate with local and regional organizations, such as non-profits and religious organizations, to provide low-cost weatherization programs and financial support to property owners and residents that have financial instability.					○
Implements policy(ies):	S-2.7, S-2.8, S-6.5, S-9.2, S-11.3, S-11.4				
Responsible department:	Community Development and Public Services				
Funding source:	General Fund				
<b>S-14. Siting of Critical Facilities and Sensitive Receptors</b> Encourage the siting of essential public services and buildings outside of areas that are susceptible to hazards, such as wildfire and flooding, Encourage the siting of new developments for sensitive receptors, such as schools, playgrounds, childcare centers, senior services and housing, and health care facilities, away from significant pollution sources.					○
Implements policy(ies):	S-2.8, S-6.3, S-7.3				
Responsible department:	Community Development and Public Services				
Funding source:	General Fund, development fees				

Safety		2022-2024	Annual	Bi-annual	Ongoing
<b>S-15. Resilience Hubs</b> Work with local school and community centers to establish resilience hubs that can serve as gathering places during emergencies and hazardous conditions. Ensure that these resilience hubs are adequately hardened to maintain access to water and electricity.					○
Implements policy(ies):	S-9.2, S-12.6				
Responsible department:	Community Development and Public Services				
Funding source:	General Fund				
<b>S-16. Emergency Accessibility</b> Work with OCFA to provide and maintain emergency evacuation transportation programs for persons with limited mobility or populations that may lack access to a personal vehicle.					○
Implements policy(ies):	S-11.2, S-12.1, S-12.3, S-12.5				
Responsible department:	Public Safety and Public Services				
Funding source:	General Fund				
<b>S-17. Vulnerability Assessment</b> Update the Vulnerability Assessment every three to five years to incorporate new technology, programs, and policies to improve adaptation to climate-related hazards. Integrate the results of the Climate Vulnerability Assessment into other City planning documents where feasible, such as elements throughout the General Plan and specific plans. Review and update resiliency strategies to ensure compliance with state laws and community needs.					○
Implements policy(ies):	S-7.1, S-8.1				
Responsible department:	Community Development				
Funding source:	General Fund				

Safety		2022-2024	Annual	Bi-annual	Ongoing
<p><b>S-18. Natural Infrastructure</b>                      Encourage the use of existing natural features and ecosystem processes, or the restoration thereof, when considering climate adaptation and resilience projects and when weatherizing infrastructure and properties and open space. This includes, but is not limited to, the conservation, preservation, or sustainable management of any form of aquatic or terrestrial vegetated open space, such as parks, rain gardens, and urban tree canopies. It also includes systems and practices that use or mimic natural processes, such as permeable pavements, bioswales, and other engineered systems, such as levees that are combined with restored natural systems, to provide clean water, conserve ecosystem values and functions, and provide a wide array of benefits to people and wildlife.</p>					●
Implements policy(ies):	S-7.5, S-8.2, S-8.3, S-8.5, S-8.6, S-9.1, S-10.3				
Responsible department:	Community Development, Public Services				
Funding source:	General Fund / Development Fees				

# Noise



## Introduction

Noise is unwanted sound that interferes with living, working, and enjoying daily life. Exposure to excessive noise can affect general well-being and contributes to annoyance and undue stress. The Noise Element is intended to reduce unwanted sounds for the health, safety, and welfare of the community. Removing or reducing significant sources of noise where feasible will improve the quality of life for Laguna Hills residents, workers, and visitors.

## Purpose and Scope of the Noise Element

The purpose of the Noise Element is to identify and assess existing noise sources in the community, and to discuss the City's role in ensuring comfortable and safe noise levels in the future. As a part of the General Plan process, citizens and City officials identified goals for the future relating to balancing land uses in the City, in part to minimize incompatibilities and exposure to excessive noise

while providing the range of uses needed to maintain a high quality of life. The goals, policies, and programs will assist in achieving noise compatibility between land uses.

The State of California recognizes the relationship between noise and noise sensitive uses and has adopted guidelines for noise elements that have been followed in the preparation of this Element.

## Background

Laguna Hill is located in an urbanized and developed area and is subject to numerous noise sources, primarily vehicular traffic on major roadways. The City is also subject to typical urban noise sources such as construction, police and fire department sirens, landscaping equipment, barking dogs, and car alarms.

Major noise sources in the City include traffic on Interstate 5 (I-5), State Route 73 (SR-73), and major arterials throughout the City. Truck traffic is prevalent on these roadways and generates higher noise levels relative to other vehicle types that travel

on local roadways. Train traffic on the Atchison, Topeka, and Santa Fe Railway (AT&SF) rail line, which runs parallel to I-5, is another source of noise in the City. The AT&SF rail line traffic includes daily passenger (Amtrak), transit (Metrolink), and freight service. The nearest airport is John Wayne International Airport, approximately 10 miles northwest of Laguna Hills. The distance from the airport results in no noise impact from aircraft overflight.

The City has land uses that are sensitive to noise and may be significantly affected by interference from noise. Noise sensitive land uses include residences, schools, churches, hospitals, convalescent (nursing) homes, hotels, and certain parks. Excessive noise exposure to human receptors can cause adverse physical and psychological responses, in addition to interfering with speech and concentration, and diminishing the quality of life.

In addition to humans, protected animal species and their habitats may be considered sensitive receptors if located near construction and operational noise sources, especially during the species' breeding seasons. The City of Laguna Hills is located within a region where there is the potential habitat for noise sensitive bird species, such as the coastal California gnatcatcher and least Bell's vireo, that nest or forage in upland scrub vegetation.

## EFFECTS OF NOISE ON PEOPLE

The effects of noise on people can include general annoyance, interference with speech communication, sleep disturbance, and in the extreme, hearing impairment or loss. While physical damage to the ear from an intense noise is rare, degradation of auditory acuity can occur within a community noise environment. Hearing loss occurs mainly due to chronic exposure to excessive noise, but it may be due to a single event such as an explosion. Table N-1 provides typical instantaneous noise levels of common activities.

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**Noise is generally defined as unwanted sound. Its effects can range from annoyance to health problems.**

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**Table N-1  
Common Noise Levels**

Noises	Sound Level (dBA)
Threshold of Pain	140
Rock Band, Leaf Blower, Car Horn	110
Gas Lawn Mower, Train Approaching (Engines)	90
Diesel Truck, Food Blender	80
Gas Lawn Mower, Vacuum Cleaner	70
Normal Conversation, Heavy Traffic at 300 feet	60
Large Business Office, Dishwasher in Next Room	50
Quiet residential area	40
Library	30
Normal Breathing	10
Lowest Threshold of Human Hearing	0

These are typical noise levels. Distance from the source will reduce the noise level. A 10 dB increase doubles perceived loudness. Continued exposure to noise above 85 dB can cause hearing loss. A single exposure to 140 dB noise can cause some hearing loss.

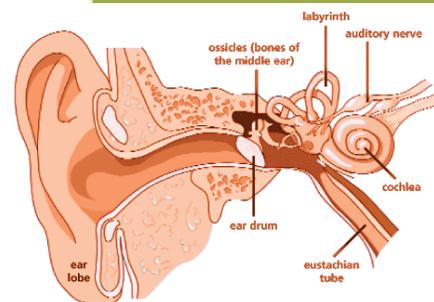
## Noise Plan

As Laguna Hills and surrounding communities continue to grow, noise levels associated with transportation- and nontransportation-related noise continue to increase. The City seeks ways to safeguard the community from excessive noise as the ambient noise level in the community rises. The goals, policies, and the Plan in this section describe the means to reduce the negative effects of noise in the City. Programs addressing noise, contained in the Implementation Program section of the General Plan, are an extension of the Noise Plan and contain specific actions that the City uses to protect the community from excessive noise.

## NOISE MEASUREMENT

Evaluating noise is complex. Noise levels are measured as decibels (dB) on a logarithmic scale that quantifies sound intensity in a manner similar to the Richter scale used for earthquake magnitudes. Thus, doubling the energy of a noise source (e.g., traffic volume) would not double the noise level.

The human ear is not equally sensitive to all frequencies within the sound spectrum. The most common method to characterize sound is the “A-weighted” sound level, or dB(A), which filters out noise frequencies not audible to the human ear, thereby weighting the audible frequencies. Therefore, the dBA is used for noise measurements and standards involving the human perception of noise.



In addition to instantaneous noise levels, noise levels measured over a period of time are used to assess noise limits and impacts. Noise levels measured over 1 hour are usually expressed as dBA  $L_{eq}$ , the equivalent 1-hour noise level. Time of day is also an important factor for noise assessment; noise levels that may be acceptable during the day may interfere with the ability to sleep during evening or nighttime hours. Therefore, 24-hour noise levels are used. The community noise equivalent level (CNEL) is the cumulative noise exposure in a community during a 24-hour period, which adds 5 dB(A) to evening sound levels (between 7:00 p.m. and 10:00 p.m.), and 10 dB(A) to the nighttime sound levels (between 10:00 p.m. and 7:00 a.m.). The day/night average sound level ( $L_{dn}$ ) is the same as the CNEL, except the 3-hour evening period is considered part of the daytime period.

In addition to noise measurement, traffic noise levels for freeways and arterials can be modeled using a traffic noise model with traffic volumes, mix, and speed characteristics.

## NOISE AND LAND USE PLANNING

Accumulation of noise from transportation and nontransportation sources determine the overall noise environment within a community. Transportation noise refers to noise from automobile use, trucking, airport operations and rail operations. Nontransportation noise typically refers to noise from stationary sources such as commercial establishments, machinery, air conditioning systems, compressors, and landscape maintenance equipment.

Regardless of the type of noise, noise levels are highest near the source and substantially decrease with distance. Most noise impacts can be avoided when noise sources, sensitive land uses, and information about the future noise environment are considered in land use planning and development decisions. Land uses that generate significant noise should be separated from uses that are particularly sensitive to noise.

To establish the compatibility of various land uses with exterior noise levels, the City uses CNEL in its planning guidelines. CNEL takes into account heightened sensitivity of persons to noise during evening and nighttime periods.

Figure N-1 illustrates Laguna Hills' land use compatibility guidelines.

Noise levels can be estimated and represented as noise contour lines, which indicate the area subject to a particular noise level. Figures N-2 and N-3 show the estimated existing and projected future noise contours in Laguna Hills, based on traffic volume counts and projected 2030 traffic volumes on the City's arterials.

LAND USE CATEGORY	COMMUNITY NOISE EXPOSURE						
	Ldn or CNEL, dBa						
	55	60	65	70	75	80	85
Residential - Single family, Duplex, Mobile Home	Green	Green	Green	Green	Green	Green	Green
Residential - Multi-Family	Green	Green	Green	Green	Green	Green	Green
Transient Lodging, Motels, Hotels	Green	Green	Green	Green	Green	Green	Green
Schools, Libraries, Churches, Hospitals, Nursing Homes	Green	Green	Green	Green	Green	Green	Green
Auditoriums, Concert Halls, Amphitheaters	Green	Green	Green	Green	Green	Green	Green
Sports Arena, Outdoor Spectator Sports	Green	Green	Green	Green	Green	Green	Green
Playgrounds, Parks	Green	Green	Green	Green	Green	Green	Green
Golf Courses, Riding Stables, Water Recreation, Cemeteries	Green	Green	Green	Green	Green	Green	Green
Office Buildings, Business Commercial, Professional	Green	Green	Green	Green	Green	Green	Green
Industrial, Manufacturing, Utilities, Agriculture	Green	Green	Green	Green	Green	Green	Green



**NORMALLY ACCEPTABLE**  
Specified land use is satisfactory, based upon the assumption that any buildings involved are of normal conventional construction, without any special noise insulation requirements.



**NORMALLY UNACCEPTABLE**  
New construction or development should generally be discouraged. If new construction or development does proceed, a detailed analysis of the noise reduction requirements must be made and needed noise insulation features included in the design.



**CONDITIONALLY ACCEPTABLE**  
New construction or development should be undertaken only after a detailed analysis of the noise reduction requirements is made and needed noise insulation features included in the design. Conventional construction, but with closed windows and fresh air supply systems or air conditioning will normally suffice.



**CLEARLY UNACCEPTABLE**  
New construction or development should generally not be undertaken.

Source: Guidelines for the Preparation and Content of Noise Elements of the General Plan, California Office of Planning and Research, 1998.

**Figure N-1**  
**Land Use Compatibility Guidelines**

The noise contours are used as a guide for land use and development decisions. Land uses within contours of 60 dB(A) or greater may be noise impacted depending on the use. When noise sensitive land uses are proposed within these contours, an acoustical analysis may be required. For a project to be approved in a noise impacted area, the analysis must demonstrate that the project is designed to attenuate noise to meet the City’s noise standards as defined in Table N-1. If the project is not designed to meet the noise standards, mitigation measures can be recommended in the analysis. If the analysis demonstrates that the noise standards can be met with implementation of the mitigation measures, the project can be approved with the mitigation measures required as conditions of project approval.

## NOISE STANDARDS

Table N-2 summarizes the City of Laguna Hills exterior and interior noise standards. The standards represent the maximum acceptable noise levels as measured from any residential property in the City. Accordingly, it is unlawful to cause the noise level on any residential property to exceed the exterior noise standards:

1. for a cumulative period of more than 30 minutes in any hour;
2. plus 5 dB(A) for a cumulative period of more than 15 minutes in any hour;
3. plus 10 dB(A) for a cumulative period of more than 5 minutes in any hour;
4. plus 15 dB(A) for a cumulative period of more than 1 minute in any hour; or
5. plus 20 dB(A) for any period of time.

In addition, it is unlawful to cause the noise level on any residential property to exceed the interior noise standards (see Table N-2):

1. for a cumulative period of more than 5 minutes in any hour;
2. plus 5 dB(A) for a cumulative period of more than 1 minute in any hour; or
3. plus 10 dB(A) for any period of time.

<b>Table N-2 Residential Noise Standards</b>		
	<b>Daytime Noise Standards (7:00 am to 10:00 pm)</b>	<b>Nighttime Noise Standards (10:00 pm to 7:00 am)</b>
<b>Exterior Noise Standards</b>	<b>55 dB(A)</b>	<b>50 dB(A)</b>
<b>Interior Noise Standards</b>	<b>55 dB(A)</b>	<b>45 dB(A)</b>

Source: Laguna Hills Municipal Code Chapter 5-24.

Note: Standards are based on measurements taken from any residential property in the City.



Note: Noise Contours are based on flat terrain and hard surfaces.



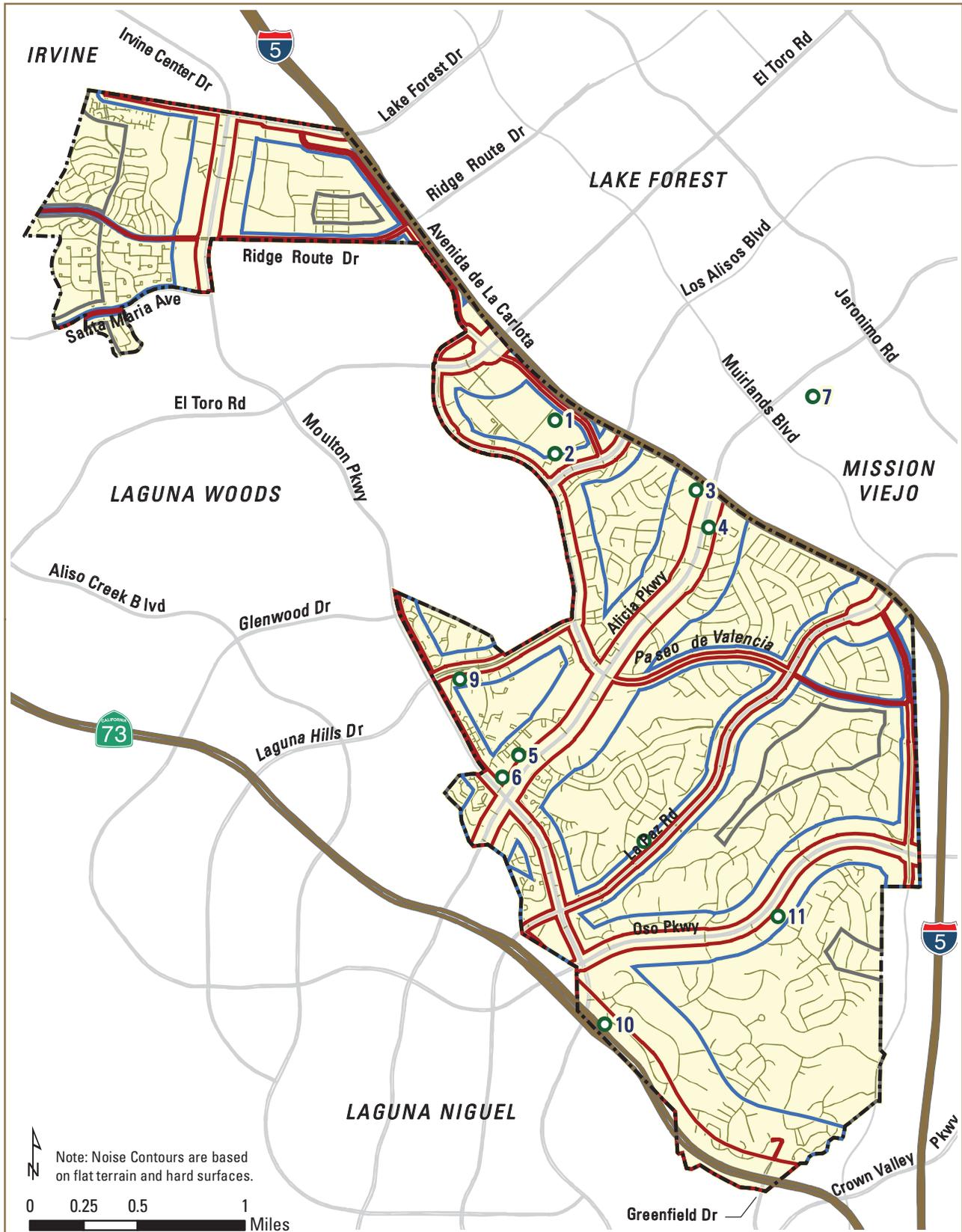
Noise Contours

- CNEL 70    — CNEL 60
- CNEL 65    ● Measurement Locations
- City Boundary
- Freeway/ Toll Road
- Major Streets
- Local Streets

Figure N - 2  
Noise Contours 2008



Source: Urban Crossroads, 2008.



Note: Noise Contours are based on flat terrain and hard surfaces.

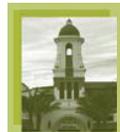
0 0.25 0.5 1 Miles

**Noise Contours**

- CNEL 70      — CNEL 60
- CNEL 65      ● Measurement Locations
- City Boundary
- Freeway/ Toll Road
- Major Streets
- Local Streets

Source: Urban Crossroads, 2008

Figure N - 3  
Noise Contours 2030



The nonresidential exterior noise standard is always 65 dBA. Exempt from these standards are activities at any public or private educational facilities, or public park or playground; emergency equipment or work; construction activities during the day on Monday through Saturday; certain agricultural operations; and landscaping and maintenance. Schools, hospitals, and churches are protected from noise sources that exceed the specified noise limits.

## TRANSPORTATION-RELATED NOISE

Laguna Hills contains a number of transportation-related noise sources including freeways, major roadways, and railroad operations. I-5, SR-73, the railroad, and major roadways create high levels of noise that affect the overall quality of life in the community and are the major contributors of noise in the City. Some locations, such as areas adjacent to I-5 at Los Alisos, are regularly impacted by transportation noise. Reducing transportation-related noise is necessary to improve the quality of life for noise sensitive land uses. Cost-effective strategies to reduce the influence of transportation-related noise sources are an essential part of the Noise Element.

## NOISE CONTROL AT RECEPTION SITES

The most efficient and effective means of controlling noise from transportation is to reduce noise at the source. However, the City has little direct control over noise produced by transportation sources because State noise regulations preempt location regulations. Because the City cannot control the noise at the source, City noise programs focus on reducing the impact of transportation noise reception sites.

The most effective way to mitigate transportation noise impacts on the City is by using the site development permit process and implementing CEQA. During the planning stages of the development process, potential impacts from transportation noise will be identified and mitigation measures will be required as needed to meet the City's noise standards. Site planning, landscaping, natural topography and design, and construction noise barriers are the most common method of alleviating vehicular traffic and train noise impacts. Setbacks and buffer areas can also be used to achieve small noise reductions. The City can also use weight limitations on certain roadways and designate truck routes to reduce traffic noise in specific locations.

The City also encourages the construction and use of alternative modes of transportation such as alternative fuel vehicles, transit systems, and transit-oriented development (higher density, mixed use development near major rail and transit stops) to reduce transportation-related noise. Alternative transportation modes can emit less noise per passenger than their automotive counterparts and can reduce traffic congestion.

## Noise Control at the Source

The California Vehicle Code contains noise regulations pertaining to the operation of all vehicles on public roads. These noise standards for cars, trucks, and motorcycles are enforced through coordination with the California Highway Patrol and the Orange County Sheriff's Department. The City also regulates traffic flow and coordinates with the California Highway Patrol and Orange County Sheriff's Department to enforce speed limits to reduce traffic noise.

## NONTRANSPORTATION-RELATED NOISE

The City contains a variety of land uses, many of which generate noise. Noise from non-transportation-related sources includes industrial areas that involve heavy equipment and machinery, and commercial areas such as restaurants, bars, and entertainment establishments. Mechanical equipment such as heating, ventilating, and air conditioning units also generates noise throughout the City. Residential areas are also subject to noise from the use of pool equipment, landscape maintenance equipment, barking dogs, and other noise sources. Finally, construction activities throughout the City can temporarily elevate noise.

Application of the City's noise regulations is the best means to control non-transportation-related noise. The Community Development Department and Orange County Sheriff's Department cooperate to identify development or activities that violate noise regulations. The City's municipal code gives the City the authority to enforce the noise standards through penalties and other abatement tactics.

Noise generated by new development is effectively controlled through the site development permit process, compliance with CEQA, and compliance with the City noise standards contained in this Noise Element and the City's noise regulations. During preliminary stages in the development process, potential noise impacts will be identified and mitigation measures imposed.

When reviewing proposed mixed use and nonresidential projects, noise generation and potential impacts to surrounding development are considered. An acoustical analysis is required for projects that will generate noise potentially affecting sensitive receptors. Where significant impacts are identified, mitigation measures will be required. Mitigation measures that could be applied when reviewing projects include acoustically treated and/or quiet designs for furnaces, fans, motors, compressors, pumps, and other mechanical equipment. The City may also require limited delivery hours and/or hours of operation to minimize impacts to adjacent residential or other noise sensitive uses. In addition, all City departments must comply with State and federal

Occupational Safety and Health Administration (OSHA) standards. Any new equipment or vehicles purchased by the City will comply with local, State, and federal noise regulations, and the City will encourage landscaping contractors to utilize up to date noise-reducing equipment.

## NOISE ORDINANCE

The City Noise Ordinance is designed to protect people from non-transportation noise sources such as construction activity, commercial and industrial operations, machinery, and pumps and air conditioners. Enforcing the ordinance includes requiring proposed development projects to show compliance with the ordinance, including operating in accordance with noise levels and hours of operation limits placed on the project site. The City also requires construction activity to comply with established work schedule limits. The ordinance is reviewed periodically for adequacy and amended as needed to address community needs and development patterns.

The City also has the opportunity to control noise and vibration transfers between adjacent land uses. Problems can arise when noise-producing uses are located immediately adjacent to sensitive uses, such as business park or light industrial uses near residences or schools. Additionally, increasing mixed use development throughout the City will place more sensitive residential uses alongside or above commercial uses, which could present challenges. The City's Zoning Ordinance or any Specific Plan developed following adoption of the General Plan will include specific standards that address noise and vibration transfer in mixed use development.

## Goals and Policies

The goals and policies section sets both broad and specific direction for the future of the City based on identified issues, as captured in the Guiding Themes and expressed by the community, City staff, and decision makers.

Three major issue areas are addressed in the goals and policies of the Noise Element. These major issues are:

- Using land use planning and development techniques to reduce noise and ensure compatibility between different land uses;
- Utilizing a variety of techniques and strategies to reduce transportation-related noise; and
- Requiring site design and other measures to reduce or maintain noise at acceptable levels for non-transportation-related noise.

## NOISE AND LAND USE PLANNING

Land use directly affects noise compatibility because higher noise levels associated with certain land uses can encroach upon more sensitive land uses. Noise-producing and noise sensitive uses will be planned and/or sufficiently buffered to ensure that sensitive uses are not exposed to unacceptable noise levels. Non-compatible land uses will incorporate noise attenuation and/or control measures in the development and design process to reduce noise.

### **Goal N-1: Reduce the effects of noise through proper land use planning and development techniques.**

Policy N-1.1: Use the City's noise/land use compatibility matrix (Figure N-1) as a guide for future planning and development decisions.

Policy N-1.2: Use transitional and buffer areas to separate excessive noise-generating uses from residential and other noise sensitive land uses.

Policy N-1.3: Limit future residential and other noise sensitive land uses in areas exposed to high levels of noise and/or utilize strategies to reduce noise experienced by sensitive uses at the point of reception.

## TRANSPORTATION-RELATED NOISE

Transportation-related noise sources are the major contributors of noise in Laguna Hills and affect the overall quality of life. Reduction of transportation-related noise through a variety of measures is necessary to deal with the detrimental effects attributable to excessive noise.

### **Goal N-2: Reduce the impact of transportation-related noise on residential areas and other sensitive land uses.**

Policy N-2.1: Reduce new transportation-related noise impacts to noise sensitive land uses through the use of noise control measures.

Policy N-2.2: Require noise-reducing construction techniques and site design measures for new development in areas impacted by transportation-related noise.

Policy N-2.3: Encourage new development to provide facilities that support the use of alternative transportation modes, such as walking, bicycling, carpooling and, where applicable, transit to reduce automobile traffic and its associated noise.

Policy N-2.4: Consider using low-noise pavement surfaces on Mobility Element roadways that reduce motor vehicle traffic noise.

Policy N-2.5: Control truck traffic routing to reduce truck traffic impacts on noise sensitive land uses.

Policy N-2.6: Use traffic calming design and traffic control measures as needed to reduce vehicular speeds and associated noise levels in residential neighborhoods.

## NONTRANSPORTATION-RELATED NOISE

Noise unrelated to vehicles, streets, and freeways also impacts the quality of life in Laguna Hills. Excessive noise from construction, business operations, and everyday activities negatively affects the community. Site design, regulation, and enforcement measures will reduce non-transportation-related noise.

### **Goal N-3: Reduce the impact of non-transportation-related noise on residential areas and other sensitive land uses.**

Policy N-3.1: Ensure noise sources from construction activities, entertainment venues, private development/residences, landscaping activities, and special events impacting noise sensitive lands use are maintained at acceptable levels.

Policy N-3.2: Require that commercial and mixed use structures be designed to prevent transfer of noise and vibration to residential and other noise sensitive land uses.

Policy N-3.3: Require commercial and mixed use developments to locate loading areas, parking lots, driveways, trash enclosures, mechanical equipment, and other noise sources away from residential development and, if necessary, to shield such noise sources with acoustic barriers.

## Summary of Approach

The goals, policies, and programs in the Noise Element will help the City reduce noise from transportation and non-transportation-related sources. The Noise Element encourages the use of land use compatibility measures and noise reduction techniques to ensure that redevelopment and new development are compatible with established uses. Table N-3 identifies the three major issue areas guiding the Noise Element. These major issues represent the direction the City will take in its noise goals, policies, and programs to implement the vision of Laguna Hills as captured in the Guiding Themes and expressed in the Noise Plan.

<b>Table N-3 Description of Actions to Address Noise Issues</b>						
Issues	Element	Section	Policy	Programs	Figure	Table
<b>Noise and Land Use Planning</b>	Noise	Noise and Land Use Planning	N-1.1 through N-1.3	N-1 through N-4	Figure N-1 (Land Use Compatibility) Figure N-3 (Future Noise Contours)	Table N-2 (Noise Standards)
	Land Use	Respect for Existing Neighborhoods	LU-2.7	LU-6		
<b>Transportation-Related Noise</b>	Noise	Transportation-related Noise	N-2.1 through N-2.6	N-1, N-3, N-5		
<b>Nontransportation-Related Noise</b>	Noise	Nontransportation-related noise	N-3.1 through N-3.3	N-5		

# Housing



## Introduction

The residents of Laguna Hills take great pride in their city. Preserving the City's small town feel by maintaining the existing housing stock and the scale and character of the community is particularly important to the City's residents. Residents also recognize the importance of providing housing opportunities for all members of the community by providing more diverse housing types. A variety of housing options will enable older and younger generations to remain in the community as well as those of all economic levels and those with special needs. Providing housing opportunities to all, on an equal basis, is important to the community.

Accordingly, this Housing Element identifies issues, strategies, and programs that focus on:

1. Neighborhood and housing preservation;
2. Housing availability;
3. Equal housing opportunity; and
4. Implementation and monitoring of the Housing Element.

The Laguna Hills Housing Element comprises the following major components:

- An analysis of the City's population, housing, and employment base, and the characteristics of the City's housing stock to define the nature and extent of unmet housing needs (Housing Needs Assessment).
- A review of potential constraints to meeting the City's identified housing needs (Constraints on Housing Production).
- An evaluation of opportunities that will further the development of new housing (Housing Resources).
- A plan to address the identified housing needs in Laguna Hills by reviewing past accomplishments, establishing goals and policies, and crafting programs that will enable the City to achieve housing objectives (Housing Plan).

## Purpose and Scope of the Housing Element

Every California city and county is required to include a housing element in its general plan

which establishes housing goals, policies, and programs that respond to community housing conditions and needs. The purpose of this Housing Element is to identify housing opportunities and solutions specific to the housing issues of the City of Laguna Hills (City).

## Related Plans and Programs

The City's 2013-2021 Housing Element is directly related to a number of State and federally mandated requirements for housing policy and planning. A description of these plans and programs follows.

### REGIONAL HOUSING NEEDS ASSESSMENT

State housing element law requires that Southern California Association of Governments (SCAG) determine the amount of housing needed in its region and allocate the need to each community. The allocation of housing need is based on statewide and local projections of population, employment, and housing need. State law requires cities to ensure that adequate sites, public facilities, and services are available to facilitate housing production commensurate with their housing need. Laguna Hills' Housing Element identifies programs to address its share of the region's housing need.

### HOUSING ELEMENT CYCLE

This Element has been prepared in compliance with the 2013-2021 planning cycle for cities within the SCAG region. The Housing Element covers an eight year planning period from October 15, 2013 - October 15, 2021, and the SCAG RHNA period from January 1, 2014 - 2021.

## Relationship to Other General Plan Elements

The Laguna Hills General Plan includes the following components: (1) Introduction to the General Plan; (2) seven elements, including, Land Use, Mobility, Conservation and Open Space, Community Services and Facilities, Safety, Noise and Housing; and (3) an Implementation Program. Background information and policy direction presented in one element are also reflected in other General Plan elements. For example, residential development capacities established in the Land Use Element are incorporated into the Housing Element.

This Housing Element builds upon other General Plan Elements and is consistent with the policies and proposals set forth by the General

Plan. For example, the Land Use Element identifies use designations at densities that will facilitate the provision of a range of residential housing products for all income groups. The Mobility Element plays a role in the location of residential development in relation to roads, transit, pedestrian, and bicycle facilities. The Noise Element establishes noise levels appropriate for residential uses. Whenever an element in the General Plan is amended, the Housing Element will be reviewed and modified, as necessary, to ensure the continued consistency between elements.

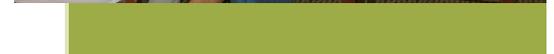
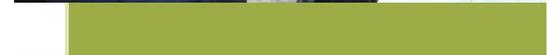
## Citizen Participation

California law requires that local governments make a diligent effort to achieve public participation from all economic segments of the community in the development of the Housing Element. Public participation played an important role in the formulation and refinement of the City's housing goals and policies and in the development of the housing plan for the City of Laguna Hills. Laguna Hills' residents had several opportunities to recommend strategies, review, and comment on the Housing Element. The following information details outreach efforts and citizen participation efforts by the City of Laguna Hills:

- Information posted on the City's website.
- Articles about the Housing Element update in the City's quarterly newsletter, which is sent to every household in the City.
- **City Council Meetings:** Two City Council meetings occurred on June 25, 2013, and October 8, 2013 in which the public had the opportunity to address decision makers directly regarding housing issues, goals, and policies, as well as other general comments and concerns regarding housing. These meetings were advertised in a manner consistent with City policy for public meetings.
- **Housing Stakeholder Workshops:** On February 7 and May 9, 2013, the City held workshops targeting residents, the general public, and various organizations that provide housing services to Laguna Hills. Table H-1 identifies the housing-related organizations that were invited to participate in the workshop.

## SUMMARY OF INPUT

During the meetings and workshops, participants were provided with an overview of the Housing Element update process and content. Participants, which included residents and other stakeholders, identified and discussed challenges, opportunities, and resources related to housing



in Laguna Hills. Comments received through the outreach activities have been considered in the development of the housing plan for the City of Laguna Hills.

Valuable input on the Laguna Hills Housing Element occurred during the Housing Stakeholder Workshops (summarized below). Although additional input was received, community input centered around two recurring themes: senior housing needs and affordable housing in Laguna Hills. Many community members and stakeholders commented on the aging population in the region and a need for additional senior housing in the City. Affordable housing concerns in Laguna Hills centered on understanding what constitutes affordable housing in Laguna Hills, where existing affordable housing is located, and the need to provide additional affordable housing opportunities in the City.

## Housing Stakeholder Workshops Summary

On February 7, 2013 and May 9, 2013, the representatives from the City of Laguna Hills Community Development Department held Housing Stakeholder Workshops targeting residents, the general public, and various organizations that provide housing services to Laguna Hills. Table H-1 identifies the housing-related organizations that were invited to participate in the workshops. Thirty-two stakeholders were mailed announcements and phoned by City Staff inviting them to attend the workshop.

### Participants

Representatives from the following organizations participated in the Housing Stakeholder Workshops:

- Kennedy Commission
- Orange County Association of Realtors (OCAR)
- Regional Center of Orange County

### Comments

During the Housing Stakeholder Workshops the following comments and ideas were provided by stakeholders:

- What about the housing recently approved for the Oakbrook Village project?
- Did the City have to change the zoning for the Oakbrook project because it is a residential project in a commercial area?
- Did the City Council change the plan a bit to allow less open space for the Oakbrook Village project? How were they able to do that?
- OCAR offers its support to the City in whatever way they can.
- What will the cost be to put together the Housing Element? What



Table H-1  
Housing Stakeholders

Kennedy Commission	Society of St. Vincent De Paul, Laguna Hills
Fair Housing Council of Orange County	Catholic Charities of Orange County
Salvation Army, Orange County	Jewish Family Service of Orange County
Shelter For the Homeless	Lutheran Social Services of Southern California
OC Partnership	Orange County Association of Realtors
Families Forward	Habitat for Humanity – Orange County
Southern California Association of Nonprofit Housing	Orange County Housing Authority
Mercy House	Orange County Housing and Community Services
Orange County Rescue Mission	Jamboree Housing Corporation
Friendship Shelter	Bridge Housing
South County Outreach	Legal Aid Society of Orange County and Community Legal Services
Regional Center of Orange County	Senior Legal Advocacy Program
Orange County Business Council	Public Law Center
Florence Sylvester Memorial Senior Center	Orange County Office on Aging
South Orange County Regional Chamber of Commerce	Orange County Housing Providers
Building Industry Association of Orange County	South County Senior Services

is the benefit of doing one? Are there funds from the State available for this?

- Does the City have a redevelopment agency? Does the City have any in-lieu fees for affordable housing? Has the City ever gotten involved in directly funding affordable housing?
- Home prices are going up. Rents are going up, too. Orange County has the 5th highest apartment rent in the State. Suggests the City create a plan for providing housing for seniors, low-income families, and disabled persons who want to live here.
- 17,000 disabled persons in Orange County, 186 with developmental disabilities in Laguna Hills. One hundred percent of individuals living on a maximum of \$890 per month. Without subsidy or voucher of some sort, living on own is impossible. The Regional Center of Orange County offers its support to the City in whatever way they can.
- The City needs to pave the way for people to develop the housing.
- The City's RHNA number is a minimum- a starting point. There is hope the City will go above and beyond that number. The Kennedy Commission offers its support in whatever way they can.

- Does the City have any apartment complexes applying for ownership or condominium conversion?
- Why doesn't the City have any information on its Hispanic population?

## Letters Received

The City also received one survey addressing housing issues from Age Well Senior Services since a representative was not able to attend the Workshop. The survey identifies affordable housing for the elderly as the housing-related challenge faced by their organization. Age Well Senior Services is a nonprofit organization providing critical services, resources, and programs to home bound and low income senior citizens living in South Orange County.

# Housing Needs Assessment

This section of the Housing Element describes the supply and demand for housing in Laguna Hills and is divided into subsections that address the characteristics of population, employment, households, special needs populations, and housing stock. This analysis provides the basis for developing a successful housing strategy that meets the needs of the community.

## Community Profile

The City of Laguna Hills is located in the San Joaquin Hills in southern Orange County, approximately 60 miles south of Los Angeles and 70 miles north of San Diego. Laguna Hills is bounded by the cities of Irvine and Lake Forest to the north; Interstate 5 and the cities of Mission Viejo and Lake Forest to the east; the City of Laguna Niguel to the south; and, the cities of Aliso Viejo and Laguna Woods to the west.

In 1991, the City of Laguna Hills incorporated with an original land area of 3,325 acres. Two subsequent annexations in 1995 and 2000 have increased the land area of the City to 4,234 acres or 6.6 square miles.

The City is predominantly residential in character and contains a variety of diverse residential neighborhoods, ranging from estate residences to high density districts. The City is also home to over 500 businesses and contains a strong commercial base anchored by the regional Laguna Hills Mall, the Oakbrook Village Shopping Center, and Saddleback Memorial Hospital.

## Population Characteristics

### POPULATION GROWTH TRENDS

According to the Census, the population of Laguna Hills was 30,344 in 2010 (Table H-2). The California Department of Finance estimates the population was 30,618 in 2012, representing a small increase in population from 2010-2012. However, overall population change from the 2000 Census to the 2012 Department of Finance estimates show a slight decrease in population of about 1.8 percent.

By contrast, all cities surrounding Laguna Hills had positive population growth between 2000 and 2012, except Laguna Woods, which showed a 1 percent decrease in population. The population growth rate in Orange County also exceeded that of Laguna Hills during this period.

Table H-2 Population Growth 2000-2012				
	2000	2010	2012	% Change 2000-2012
Laguna Hills	31,178	30,344	30,618	-1.8
Aliso Viejo	40,166*	47,823	48,988	22
Mission Viejo	93,102	93,305	94,196	1.2
Laguna Woods	16,507	16,192	16,334	-1
Laguna Niguel	61,891	62,979	63,691	2.9
Lake Forest	58,707	77,264	78,036	32.9
Orange County	2,846,289	3,010,232	3,055,792	7.4

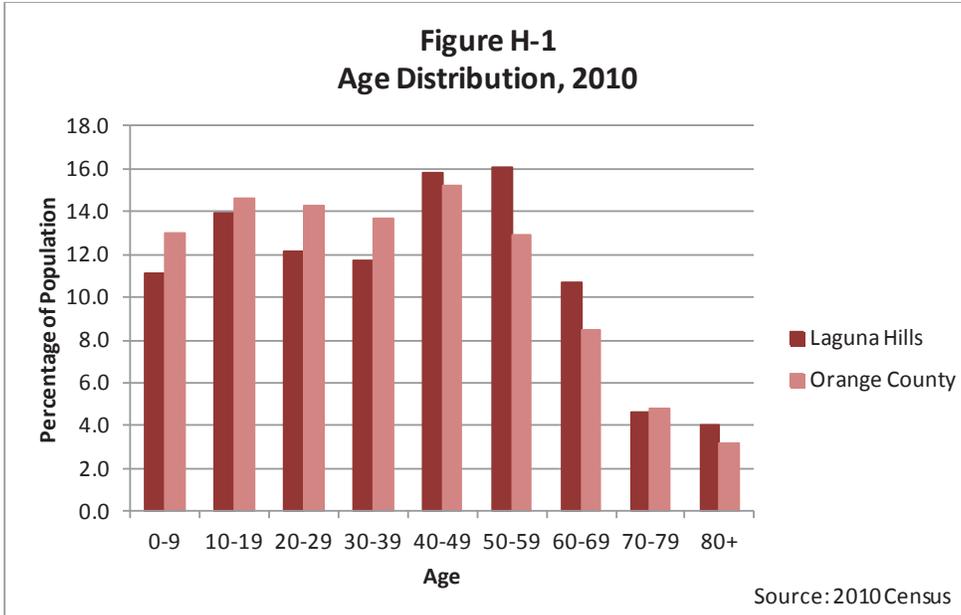
Sources: 2000 Census; 2010 Census; California Department of Finance.  
\*Date is for Aliso Viejo CDP because Aliso Viejo incorporated in 2001.

## AGE CHARACTERISTICS

The age distribution of a population is an important factor in evaluating housing and community development needs and determining the direction of future housing development. Typically, each age group has distinct lifestyles, family types and sizes, income and housing preferences. As people move through each stage of life, housing needs and preferences change. For example, young householders without children will have different housing preferences than middle-age householders with children or senior householders living alone. Consequently, evaluating the age characteristics of a community is important in determining the housing needs of residents.

As illustrated in Figure H-1, the 2010 population of Laguna Hills was older on average than that of the county as a whole, with a higher distribution of residents between the ages of 40-69. The median age for residents in Laguna Hills was 40.8 years, while the county median age was 36.2.

Since 2000, the median age has increased in the City. The median age for the City of Laguna Hills in 2000 was 37.7. A similar increase in median age can be seen in Orange County with the median age increasing from 33.3 years in 2000 to the 2010 median age of 36.2. The Orange County Business Council indicates that the population of Orange County is growing older rapidly, with Laguna Hills expected to experience a similar trend. This may indicate a need for more housing targeted to seniors, support for more accessible units, and/or assisted living facilities in Laguna Hills.



## RACE/ETHNICITY CHARACTERISTICS

The racial and ethnic composition of a population affects housing needs because of the unique household characteristics of different racial/ethnic groups. These characteristics tend to correlate with other factors, such as family size, housing location choices, and mobility. As shown in Table H-3, the majority (73 percent) of the 2010 population in Laguna Hills was White, with Asians making up the next largest ethnic group (13 percent). In Orange County, Whites constituted a lower proportion (61

Table H-3 Race and Ethnicity, 2010				
Race	Laguna Hills Residents*	% of Laguna Hills Population*	Orange County Residents*	% of Orange County Population*
White	22,045	72.7	1,830,758	60.8
Black or African American	420	1.4	50,744	1.7
American Indian and Alaska Native	101	0.3	18,132	0.6
Asian	3,829	12.6	537,804	17.9
Native Hawaiian and Other Pacific Islander	58	0.2	9,354	0.3
Some Other Race	2,470	8.1	435,641	14.5
Two or More Races	1,421	4.7	127,799	4.2
Total	30,344	100	3,010,232	100

\* A portion of each of the race categories may also contain those identifying as Hispanic.  
Source: 2010 Census

percent) of the population than in Laguna Hills. Twenty-one percent of residents in Laguna Hills of any race identified as Hispanic or Latino, compared with 34 percent of people county-wide (Table H-3a).

Table H-3a Population Identifying as Hispanic or Latino				
	Laguna Hills		Orange County	
	Number	Percent	Number	Percent
Total population	30,344	100	3,010,232	100
Hispanic or Latino (of any race)	6,242	20.6	1,012,973	33.7
Not Hispanic or Latino	24,102	79.4	1,997,259	66.3

Source: 2010 Census

## Employment Characteristics

### OCCUPATION AND LABOR PARTICIPATION

Employment has an important impact on housing needs. Different jobs and income levels determine the type and size of housing a household can afford. In addition, employment growth within a region typically results in an increase in housing demand.

Table H-4 Employment Profile, 2009-2011*				
Occupation of Residents	Laguna Hills		Orange County	
	Estimate**	Percent of Total	Estimate**	Percent of Total
Management, business, science, and arts occupations:	6,919	46.1%	564,052	39.5%
Sales and office occupations:	4,044	26.9%	381,501	26.7%
Service occupations:	2,090	13.9%	240,170	16.8%
Production, transportation, and material moving occupations:	834	5.6%	143,170	10.0%
Natural resources, construction, and maintenance occupations:	1,131	7.5%	99,272	7.0%
Total*	15,018	100.0%	1,428,165	100.0%

Source: 2009-2011 American Community Survey 3-Year Estimates  
 \*ACS numbers are estimates; there is a variable margin of error for all numbers.  
 \*\*Civilian employed population 16 years and over.

According to the American Community Survey (2009-2011) 16,678 Laguna Hills residents were in the civilian labor force, representing a labor participation rate of approximately 67 percent. (The labor force includes employed and unemployed persons aged 16 years and above.) Similar to Orange County, Laguna Hills residents were employed in three major occupation categories, management, business, science, and arts; sales and office; and service occupations (Table H-4). The first two categories tend to provide higher paying jobs than service occupations, which tend to be lower paying (Table H-5). According to the State Employment Development Department, the unemployment rate in April 2013 in Laguna Hills was 4.8 percent, lower than the countywide rate of 5.7 percent and the statewide rate of 9.0 percent.

Table H-5  
Average Yearly Salary by Occupation  
Orange County MSA, 2012

Occupations	Average Salary
Architecture and Engineering	\$87,056
Arts, Design, Entertainment, Sports, and Media	\$53,520
Building and Grounds Cleaning and Maintenance	\$26,141
Business and Financial Operations	\$73,187
Community and Social Services	\$51,991
Computer and Mathematical	\$85,644
Construction and Extraction	\$52,247
Education, Training, and Library	\$60,659
Farming, Fishing, and Forestry	\$23,058
Food Preparation and Serving Related	\$22,801
Healthcare Practitioners and Technical	\$81,240
Installation, Maintenance, and Repair	\$47,953
Legal	\$107,520
Life, Physical, and Social Science	\$72,501
Management	\$125,218
Office and Administrative Support	\$38,614
Personal Care and Service	\$26,502
Production	\$33,129
Protective Service	\$51,495
Sales and Related	\$45,147
Transportation and Material Moving	\$32,108
All Occupations	\$51,672

Source: State Employment Development Department, 2012

Table H-6 provides the employment structure of Laguna Hills. Approximately 15,300 jobs were located in the City in 2011. The largest employment classifications included educational services (18.4 percent); professional, scientific, and technical services (14.3 percent); retail (14.2 percent); and manufacturing (11.8 percent). Although specific wage levels are not available, wage data for the employment structure of Laguna Hills can be inferred from Table H-5. Of the largest employment sectors in Laguna Hills, professional, scientific, and technical services, and finance and insurance sectors appear to provide higher wages, while retail jobs appear to provide lower wages.

Table H-6 Employment Structure by North America Industry Classification System (NAICS) Sector, 2011		
Employment Sectors	Employment	Percentage
Agriculture	5	0.03
Arts, Entertainment, and Recreation	1,237	8.1
Construction	1,063	7
Education Services	2,809	18.4
Finance and Insurance	1,693	11.1
Information	230	1.5
Manufacturing	1,804	11.8
Other Services	690	4.5
Professional, Scientific, and Technical Services	2,180	14.3
Public Administration	485	3.2
Retail Trade	2,167	14.2
Transportation and Warehousing	520	3.4
Wholesale Trade	408	2.7
<b>Total</b>	<b>15,291</b>	<b>100.0</b>

Source: American Community Survey, 2007-2011.

# Housing Characteristics

## HOUSEHOLD TYPE AND SIZE

Household characteristics are important indicators of the type of housing needed in a community. The Census defines a household as all persons who occupy a housing unit, which may include families related through marriage or blood, unrelated individuals living together, or individuals living alone. People living in group quarters, such as retirement or convalescent homes, dormitories, or other group living situations, are not considered households.

In 2010, there were 10,469 households in Laguna Hills (Table H-7). Families constituted 74 percent of households in the City, a proportion slightly greater than that found in Orange County (71.4 percent). For Hispanic and Asian households within Laguna Hills, families accounted for 84 percent and 81 percent of those households, respectively (Table H-7a). Families with children represented 32 percent of households in Laguna Hills and 34 percent in Orange County. Single-person households represented approximately 20 percent of households in Laguna Hills, while single-person households in Orange County were slightly greater at approximately 21 percent.

Housing needs generally vary by household type. Families typically occupy single-family homes. However, some families are unable to purchase or rent a home and may reside in multifamily apartments, condominiums, or townhome units. Single-person households, typified by seniors or young adults, tend to reside in apartment units, condominiums, townhomes, or smaller single-family homes. The Laguna Hills housing stock (Figure H-2) provides a range of unit types. The housing stock comprises 56 percent single-family detached units, 26 percent single-family attached units, 11 percent multifamily units, such as apartments and condominiums, and 2 percent mobile homes or other units.

Household size identifies sources of population growth and household overcrowding. A city's average household size will increase over time if there is a trend toward larger families. In communities where the population is aging, the average household size may decline. The average household size in Laguna Hills in 2010 (2.86) was lower than the County average household size (2.99). For Hispanic and Asian households, household size was larger than the average household size for Laguna Hills as a whole, at 4.04 and 3.16, respectively.

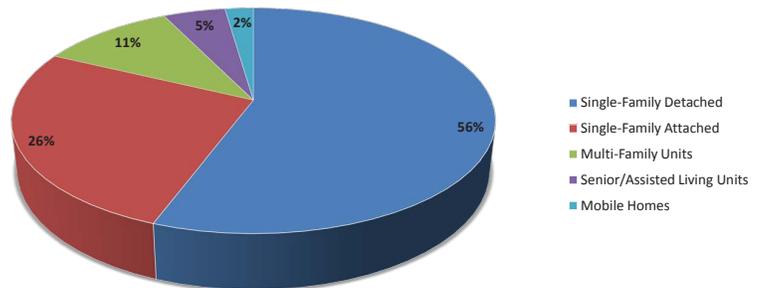
Table H-7 Household Characteristics				
Household Type	Orange County		Laguna Hills	
	Number of Households	Percent of Households	Number of Households	Percent of Households
Families	708,491	71.4%	7,733	73.9%
With Children	335,587	33.8%	3,327	31.8%
Single Persons	207,849	20.9%	2,041	19.5%
65 Years and Older	78,985	8.0%	822	7.9%
Other	76,441	7.7%	695	6.6%
Total Households	992,781	100.0%	10,469	100.0%
Average Persons per Household	3.0		2.9	

Source: 2010 Census

Table H-7a Asian and Hispanic Households in Laguna Hills				
	Hispanic Households*		Asian Households**	
	Number of Households	Percent of Households	Number of Households	Percent of Households
Families	1,227	84.0%	922	80.8%
Total Households	1,461	100.0%	1,141	100.0%
Average Persons per Household	4.0		3.2	

Source: 2010 Census  
 \*Households where householder identifies as Hispanic (any race)  
 \*\*Household where householder identifies as Asian only.

**Figure H-2  
Laguna Hills Housing Stock Composition**



Source: City of Laguna Hills, 2009

Figure H-2  
Housing Stock Composition

## HOUSEHOLD INCOME

The income earned by a household is an important indicator of the household's ability to acquire adequate housing. While upper income households have more discretionary income to spend on housing, lower and moderate income households are more limited in the range of housing that they can afford. Typically, as household income decreases, the incidence of overpayment and overcrowding increases.

HCD has developed the following income categories:

- Extremely low income households earn between 0 and 30 percent of the County Median Family Income (MFI), adjusted for household size;
- Very low income households earn between 0 and 50 percent of the County MFI, adjusted for household size;
- Low income households earn between 51 and 80 percent of the County MFI, adjusted for household size;
- Moderate income households earn between 81 and 120 percent of the County MFI, adjusted for household size; and
- Above moderate/upper income households earn over 120 percent of the County MFI, adjusted for household size.

Similarly, the U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development (HUD) uses Census data to develop special tabulation by HUD income group and household type. This data set is known as the Comprehensive Housing Availability Strategy (CHAS). The federal CHAS data separates California's very low income category into extremely low (0–30 percent MFI) and very low (31–50 percent MFI) incomes, and combines California's moderate income and upper income categories.

CHAS income distributions for Laguna Hills and Orange County are presented in Table H-8. According to CHAS data, almost 11 percent of the City's households in 2009 qualified as extremely low income (0–30 percent MFI), more than 10 percent as very low income (31–50 percent MFI), and greater than 12 percent as low income (51–80 percent MFI). More than 50 percent of renter households qualified as low income or below, compared with 24 percent of owner households. In Orange County, over 42 percent of households were considered low income or below, compared with 33 percent of households in the City of Laguna Hills. During the planning period, the extremely low income housing need is one unit, which is derived from presuming 50 percent of the very low income housing need (1 unit) from the Regional Housing Need Assessment.

Table H-8 Household Income by Income Group, 2009				
Income Group	City of Laguna Hills			Orange County
	Owner Households	Renter Households	Total Households	
Extremely Low Income	7%	24%	11%	11.7%
Very Low Income	6%	22%	10%	12.4%
Low Income	11.0%	12%	12%	18.3%
Moderate and Above	75%	42%	68%	57.6%
<b>Total</b>	<b>100.0%</b>	<b>100.0%</b>	<b>100.0%</b>	<b>100.0%</b>

Source: CHAS Data, 2005-2009.

There were several questions and comments from community members and stakeholders regarding affordable housing in Laguna Hills. City staff informed the General Plan Advisory Committee and the City Council about the location and quantity of affordable housing in Laguna Hills. The Housing Element contains programs that may benefit extremely low, very low, and low income households. Some of these programs include: Promote the Urban Village Specific Plan Area for Housing Opportunities; Promote Alicia Gateway for Housing Opportunities; Second Units; Section 8 Rental Assistance, and Partner with Affordable Housing Developers.

## OVERCROWDING

An overcrowded household is typically defined as one with more than one person per room, excluding bathrooms, kitchens, hallways, and porches. A severely overcrowded household is defined as one with more than 1.5 persons per room. Overcrowding results from either a lack of affordable housing and/or lack of available housing units of adequate size.

According to the American Community Survey estimates (2009-2011), approximately 390 households or 3.6 percent of the households in Laguna Hills were living in overcrowded conditions (Table H-9). Less than 1 percent of households experienced severely overcrowded conditions. The rate of overcrowding in Laguna Hills is significantly lower than the rate in Orange County, which is approximately 10 percent. In both the City of Laguna Hills and county-wide, owner-occupied households experienced overcrowded or severely overcrowded conditions less than renter-occupied households.

**Table H-9**  
**Overcrowded Households, 2009-2011\***

	Owner	Renter	Total	Percentage of Occupied Units
Occupied Units:	8,175	2,675	10,850	100.0%
Overcrowded Units	271	119	390	3.6%
Severely Overcrowded Units	45	20	65	0.6%

Source: 2009-2011 American Community Survey 3-Year Estimates  
\*ACS numbers are estimates; there is a variable margin of error for all numbers.

## OVERPAYMENT

State and federal standards for housing cost burden (overpayment) consider a household as overpaying for housing if it spends more than 30 percent of its gross income on housing. A household spending more than it can afford for housing has less money available for other necessities and emergency expenditures. Very low income households overpaying for housing are more likely to be at risk of becoming homeless than other households. Renter households overpay for their housing costs more often than owner households because of their typically lower incomes.

**Table H-10**  
**Overpayment by Income and Tenure, 2009-2011\***

Household Income	Renter			Owner			Total		
	Total HH	Overpaying HH	Percentage Overpaying	Total HH	Overpaying HH	Percentage Overpaying	Total HH	Overpaying HH	Percentage Overpaying
Less than \$20,000	433	418	96.5%	479	452	94.4%	912	870	95.4%
\$20,000 to \$34,999	510	489	95.9%	402	299	74.4%	912	788	86.4%
\$35,000 to \$49,999	305	305	100.0%	741	457	61.7%	1,046	762	72.8%
\$50,000 to \$74,999	617	334	54.1%	1,384	735	53.1%	2,001	1,069	53.4%
\$75,000 or more	700	226	32.3%	5,124	1,550	30.2%	5,824	1,776	30.5%
All Income Categories	2,675	1,772	66.2%	8,175	3,493	42.7%	10,850	5,265	48.5%

Source: 2009-2011 American Community Survey 3-Year Estimates  
\*ACS numbers are estimates; there is a variable margin of error for all numbers.

Table H-10 shows the number and proportion of households with housing cost burden by income range and tenure. According to the American Community Survey estimates (2009-2011), approximately 49 percent of Laguna Hills households overpaid for housing. Approximately 66 percent of renter households and 43 percent of owner households in the City use more than 30 percent of their incomes to cover housing costs. Not surprisingly, the percentage of households overpaying declines significantly as household income rises.

For Orange County, American Community Survey (2009-2011) data indicate that approximately 47 percent of households overpaid for housing, which is 2 percentage points lower than in Laguna Hills.

## Special Needs Populations

Certain segments of the population may have more difficulty in finding decent, affordable housing due to special needs or circumstances. Special circumstances may be related to one's employment and income, family characteristics, disability, and household size, among other things. As a result, certain segments of residents in Laguna Hills may experience a higher prevalence of overpayment, overcrowding, or other housing problems. "Special needs" groups include senior households, agricultural workers, female-headed households, disabled persons, large households, and the homeless.

### SENIOR HOUSEHOLDS

Senior or elderly households are those headed by individuals aged 65 or older. The special needs of the elderly are a function of their often lower or fixed incomes, disabilities or limitations, and dependency needs. There are four main concerns with this group of the population: limited and often fixed income; poor health and associated high health care costs; mobility limitations and transit dependency; and high costs of housing. In addition, housing for the elderly often requires special attention to design to allow greater access and mobility. Housing located within the vicinity of community facilities and public transportation also facilitates mobility of the elderly in the community.

According to the 2010 Census, Laguna Hills had 3,890 residents age 65 or older, representing 13 percent of the total population. Also in 2010, 2,210 senior households existed in Laguna Hills, constituting roughly 21 percent of the City's total households (Table H-11). Of these households, about 75 percent were owner households, while almost 25 percent were renter households.

**Table H-11**  
**Senior Households, 2010**

Householder Age	Owners		Renters		Total Senior Households	
	Number of Households	% of Senior Households	Number of Households	% of Senior Households	Number of Households	% of Senior Households
65 - 74 years	1,074	48.6%	135	6.1%	1,209	54.7%
75 - 84 years	438	19.8%	128	5.8%	566	25.6%
85 years plus	151	6.8%	284	12.9%	435	19.7%
<b>Total:</b>	<b>1,663</b>	<b>75.2%</b>	<b>547</b>	<b>24.8%</b>	<b>2,210</b>	<b>100.0%</b>

Source: 2010 Census

According to CHAS data, over 46 percent of all senior households were of extremely low, very low, or low incomes (Table H-12). Approximately 67 percent of total senior renter households were of extremely low, very low, or low incomes compared with 39 percent of senior owner households.

According to the Census, a substantial increase in the number of older people will occur during the 2010 to 2030 period, after the first Baby Boomers turn 65 in 2011. The older population in 2030 is projected to be twice as large as that in 2000, representing nearly 20 percent of the total U.S. population at the latter date. Orange County including Laguna Hills is expected to experience similar trends.

**Table H-12**  
**Senior Households by Income and Tenure, Laguna Hills, 2000**

Income Group	Senior Owner Households	% of Total Senior Households	Senior Renter Households	% of Total Senior Households	Total Senior Households	% of Total Senior Households
Extremely Low Income	<u>185</u>	<u>9.0</u>	<u>155</u>	<u>7.5</u>	<u>340</u>	<u>16.5</u>
Very Low Income	<u>205</u>	<u>10.0</u>	<u>130</u>	<u>6.3</u>	<u>335</u>	<u>16.3</u>
Low Income	<u>220</u>	<u>10.7</u>	<u>55</u>	<u>2.7</u>	<u>275</u>	<u>13.3</u>
Moderate Income and Above	<u>945</u>	<u>45.9</u>	<u>165</u>	<u>8.0</u>	<u>1,110</u>	<u>53.9</u>
<b>Total</b>	<b><u>1,555</u></b>	<b><u>75.5</u></b>	<b><u>505</u></b>	<b><u>24.5</u></b>	<b><u>2,060</u></b>	<b><u>100.0</u></b>

Source: CHAS Data, 2005-2009

California Department of Finance projections indicate that the population aged 65 and over in Orange County will increase from 282,479 in 2000 to 504,266 in 2020, an increase of over 78 percent. By 2030, the senior population will increase to 693,602, a 146 percent increase from 2000.

As the number of older people and life expectancies increase, the demand for a variety of senior housing options will also increase. In addition to traditional facilities that offer independent living units, demand for intermediate care and assisted living will also increase, as well as for facilities offering a full range of living arrangements.

Laguna Hills currently has two housing developments that provide housing for seniors. The Willows contains 152 ground level housing units and Villa Valencia contains 396 units with options for independent living, assisted living, and nursing care.

Concerns were voiced during the Housing Stakeholder meeting in February 2013 and other public meetings about an aging population in Orange County and Laguna Hills and the need to provide additional senior housing. The Housing Element contains programs that may benefit the senior population and could provide additional senior housing opportunities, including Senior/Disabled or Limited Income Repair Loan and Grant Program; Promote the Urban Village Specific Plan Area for Housing Opportunities; Promote Alicia Gateway for Housing Opportunities, and Second Units.

## **AGRICULTURAL WORKERS**

The special housing needs of farm workers result from their low wages and the seasonal nature of their employment. According to the American Community Survey (2009-2011) no residents of Laguna Hills were employed in farming, forestry, or fishing occupations. Therefore, demand for housing generated by agricultural workers in the City is nominal and could be addressed adequately by overall housing affordability programs in the City and County.

## **FEMALE-HEADED HOUSEHOLDS**

Single-parent families with children often require special attention due to their needs for affordable childcare, health care, and housing assistance. Female-headed families with children particularly tend to have lower incomes, thus limiting housing availability for this group. According to the American Community Survey (2009-2011), of the 7,723 family households in Laguna Hills, 973 were female-headed family households, or about 13%. In the 2009-2011 estimates, approximately 5 percent of all families in Laguna Hills were under the poverty level, with that

number jumping to 7.4 percent of female-headed families with children under 18. It is important to note, however, that only 2.6 percent of female-headed families were under the poverty level.

The Housing Element contains programs that could benefit single-parent, female-headed households. These programs include: Promote the Urban Village Specific Plan Area for Housing Opportunities; Promote Alicia Gateway for Housing Opportunities; Continuum of Care Funding and Consolidated Plan Participation; and Partner with Affordable Housing Developers. The Housing Element also contains programs targeted to low income households which may benefit female-headed households.

**Table H-13**  
**Female-Headed Family Households, 2009-2011\***

	Estimate	% under Poverty Level
Total Family Households	7,723	5.0%
Total Female-Headed Family Households	973	4.6%
Female-Headed Family HH with Children Under 18	405	7.4%
Female-Headed Family HH without Children Under 18	568	2.6%

Source: 2009-2011 ACS  
\*ACS numbers are estimates; there is a variable margin of error for all numbers.

## PERSONS WITH DISABILITIES

Disability is a physical or mental condition that substantially limits one or more major life activities. Physical disabilities can hinder access to housing units of conventional design, as well as limit the ability to earn adequate income. The American Community Survey defines six types of disabilities: hearing, vision, cognitive, ambulatory, self-care, and independent living difficulty. A more detailed description of each disability is provided below:

- Hearing difficulty: Deaf or having serious difficulty hearing.
- Vision difficulty: Blind or having serious difficulty seeing, even when wearing glasses.
- Cognitive difficulty: Because of a physical, mental, or emotional problem, having difficulty remembering, concentrating, or making decisions.
- Ambulatory difficulty: Having serious difficulty walking or climbing stairs.
- Self-care difficulty: Having difficulty bathing or dressing.
- Independent living difficulty: Because of physical, mental, or

emotional problem, having difficulty doing errands alone such as visiting a doctor’s office or shopping.

The 2011 American Community Survey 3-year estimates show approximately 2,185 people or approximately 7.2 percent of Laguna Hills residents reported having one or more disabilities (Table H-14). The senior population in Laguna Hills has a higher incidence of disability, with approximately 33percent of the population 65 and older reporting a disability.

Physical and mental disabilities can hinder a person’s access to traditionally designed housing units (and other facilities) as well as potentially limit the ability to earn income. The most obvious housing need for persons with disabilities is housing that is adapted to their needs. Most multistory single-family homes are inaccessible to people with mobility and sensory limitations. Housing may not be adaptable to widened doorways and hallways, access ramps, larger bathrooms, lowered

Table H-14 Disabled Population, 2009-2011*		
	Estimate	% of Total Population
Total Population (civilian noninstitutionalized)	30,288	100.0%
<5 Years with Disability	0	0.0%
5 to 17 years with Disability	93	0.3%
18 to 64 Years with Disability	816	2.7%
65 Years + with Disability	1,276	4.2%
Total Population with Disability	2,185	7.2%

Source: 2009-2011 American Community Survey 3-Year Estimates  
\*ACS numbers are estimates; there is a variable margin of error for all numbers.

Table H-14a Employment for Disabled Population Age 18-64, 2009-2011*		
	Estimate	% of Population Age 18-64
Total Population	20,057	100.0%
Employed with Disability	254	1.3%
Unemployed with Disability	57	0.3%
Not in Labor Force with Disability	505	2.5%
Total Population with Disability	816	4.1%

Source: 2009-2011 American Community Survey 3-Year Estimates  
\*ACS numbers are estimates; there is a variable margin of error for all numbers.

countertops, and other features necessary for accessibility. The cost of retrofitting a home often prohibits homeownership, even for individuals or families who could otherwise afford a home. Furthermore, some providers of basic home buying services do not have offices or materials that are accessible to people with mobility, visual, or hearing impairments.

**A recent change in state law required that the Housing Element discuss the housing needs of persons with developmental disabilities. As defined by federal law, “developmental disability” means a severe, chronic disability of an individual that:**

- Is attributable to a mental or physical impairment or combination of mental and physical impairments;
- Is manifested before the individual attains age 22;
- Is likely to continue indefinitely;
- Results in substantial functional limitations in three or more of the following areas of major life activity: a) self-care; b) receptive and expressive language; c) learning; d) mobility; e) self-direction; f) capacity for independent living; or g) economic self-sufficiency; and
- Reflects the individual’s need for a combination and sequence of special, interdisciplinary, or generic services, individualized supports, or other forms of assistance that are of lifelong or extended duration and are individually planned and coordinated.

The Census does not record developmental disabilities. According to the U.S Administration on Developmental Disabilities, an accepted estimate of the percentage of the population that can be defined as developmentally disabled is 1.5 percent. This equated to approximately 456 persons in the City of Laguna Hills with developmental disabilities, based on the 2010 Census population.

According to the State’s Department of Developmental Services, approximately 186 Laguna Hills residents with developmental disabilities sought services at the Regional Center of Orange County. Most of these individuals reside in a private home with a parent or guardian.

Many developmentally disabled persons can live and work independently within a conventional housing environment. More severely disabled individuals require a group living environment where supervision is provided. The most severely affected individuals may require an institutional environment where medical attention and physical therapy are provided. Because developmental disabilities exist before adulthood, the first issue in supportive housing for the developmentally disabled is the transition from the person’s living situation as a child to an appropriate level of interdependence as an adult.

## RESOURCES

The State Department of Developmental Services (DDS) currently provides community-based services to approximately 243,000 persons with developmental disabilities and their families through a statewide system of 21 regional centers, four developmental centers, and two community-based facilities. The Regional Center of Orange County (RCOC) is one of 21 regional centers in California that provides point of entry services for people with developmental disabilities. The RCOC is a private, non-profit community agency that contracts with local businesses to offer a wide range of services to individuals with developmental disabilities and their families.

Any resident of Orange County who has a developmental disability that originated before age 18 is eligible for services. Services are offered to people with developmental disabilities based on Individual Program Plans and may include: Adult day programs; advocacy; assessment/consultation; behavior management programs; diagnosis and evaluation; independent living services; infant development programs; information and referrals; mobility training; prenatal diagnosis; residential care; respite care; physical and occupational therapy; transportation; consumer, family vendor training; and vocational training. RCOC also coordinates the state-mandated Early Start program, which provides services for children under age three who have or are at substantial risk of having a developmental disability. According to the RCOC February 2010 Facts and Statistics data, the RCOC currently serves approximately 16,728 individuals.

The mission of the Dayle McIntosh Disability Resource Centers is to advance the empowerment, equality, integration and full participation of people with disabilities in the community. The Center is not a residential program, but instead promotes the full integration of disabled persons into the community. Dayle McIntosh Center is a consumer-driven organization serving all disabilities. Its staff and board are composed of over 50% of people with disabilities. Its two offices service over 500,000 people in Orange County and surrounding areas with disabilities. The Center's South County branch is located in Laguna Hills.

Vocational Visions, a non-profit organization located in Mission Viejo, has provided services to south Orange County residents with developmental disabilities in partnership with Saddleback Valley Unified School District since 1974 when the program began with 30 clients and staff of five. This organization currently has over 400 clients and a staff of over 100 people.

Vocational Visions has helped thousands of men and women with disabilities obtain employment, further education and reach both professional and personal goals. Effective treatment increases the level of functioning for many of these clients, thus maximizing their quality of life vocationally, economically, and socially. Services are provided to qualifying persons at no charge.

Vocational Visions is accredited by the Commission on Accreditation of Rehabilitation Facilities (CARF) and is the only family-based program in south Orange County. It offers eight comprehensive programs

**Table H-15 Persons with Disability by Type, 2009-2011\***

	Persons with a Disability	Percentage of Disabled Population
Total Disabled Population	2,185	100.0%
5-17 Years	93	4.3%
With a hearing difficulty	0	0.0%
With a vision difficulty	0	0.0%
With a cognitive difficulty	93	4.3%
With an ambulatory difficulty	28	1.3%
With a self-care difficulty	0	0.0%
18-64 Years	816	37.3%
With a hearing difficulty	153	7.0%
With a vision difficulty	143	6.5%
With a cognitive difficulty	384	17.6%
With an ambulatory difficulty	433	19.8%
With a self-care difficulty	170	7.8%
With an independent living difficulty	323	14.8%
65 Plus Years	1,276	58.4%
With a hearing difficulty	627	28.7%
With a vision difficulty	211	9.7%
With a cognitive difficulty	371	17.0%
With an ambulatory difficulty	802	36.7%
With a self-care difficulty	382	17.5%
With an independent living difficulty	643	29.4%

Source: 2009-2011 American Community Survey 3-Year Estimates

\*ACS numbers are estimates; there is a variable margin of error for all numbers.

including: Day Training Activity Program, Health Related Services Program, Emeritus Program, Adult Development Program, Work Activity Program, Vocational Rehabilitation Work Activity Program, Supported Employment, and South County Clubhouse.

Housing opportunities for disabled persons can be addressed through the provision of affordable, barrier-free housing. In addition to the development of new units, rehabilitation assistance can also be provided to disabled residents to make necessary improvements to remove architectural barriers to existing units. The Housing Element contains programs to create reasonable accommodations procedures and to consider the provision of universal design features. These programs address concerns from the Fall Prevention Center of Excellence and other stakeholders regarding incorporating universal design features and reasonable accommodations procedures into the Housing Element. Examples of universal design features include roll-in showers and grab bars, push/pull lever faucets, wide swing hinges, and additional stairwell and task lighting.

## LARGE HOUSEHOLDS

Large households (with five or more persons) are identified as a group with special housing needs based on the limited availability of adequately sized, affordable housing units. Large households are often of lower income, frequently resulting in the overcrowding of smaller dwelling units and, in turn, accelerating unit deterioration. The American Community Survey (2009-2011) estimates that 1,007 households in Laguna Hills have five or more members, representing 9 percent of all City households. Among the large households, 74 percent were owner households and 26 percent were renter households.

Typically, the availability of adequately sized and affordable housing units is an obstacle facing large households. Since only 9 percent of Laguna Hills households are large households, Laguna Hills' housing stock should be adequate to meet the needs of larger households. According to American Community Survey estimates (2009-2011), Laguna Hills had 3,285 three-bedroom housing units and another 4,484 housing units with four or more bedrooms. However, lower income large renter households may have greater difficulty securing adequately sized units than other large renter households.

## HOMELESS

According to HUD, a person is considered homeless if he/she is not imprisoned and:

- Lacks a fixed, regular, and adequate nighttime residence;
- The primary nighttime residence is a publicly or privately operated shelter designed for temporary living arrangements;
- The primary residence is an institution that provides a temporary residence for individuals that should otherwise be institutionalized;  
or
- The primary residence is a public or private place not designed for or ordinarily used as a regular sleeping accommodation.

Homelessness is a regional problem throughout Southern California. The Orange County homeless population includes families and individuals representing every race, age group, and community in Orange County. Much of Orange County's homeless population consists of working families and individuals. Many live in cars, parks, under bridges, motels, and in homeless shelters. Many homeless within the County remain hidden.

The City of Laguna Hills is part of the Orange County Continuum of Care System. HUD created the Continuum of Care process in 1994 to foster a single, coordinated, comprehensive planning process to create long-term solutions to the problem of homelessness and to serve as an application mechanism to apply for HUD homeless assistance program funds. Continuum of Care is an umbrella term that covers the planning process involving government agencies, service providers, and advocates in the creation of a plan to assess the needs of homeless people and to devise a plan for delivering housing and services to meet those needs. Once a plan is developed, "the Continuum" or "the CoC," as these planning bodies are generically called, apply for homeless assistance funds to develop and/or operate transitional housing, supportive services, and permanent housing for homeless people.

Orange County's Continuum of Care System comprises a network of public, private, faith-based, for-profit, and nonprofit service providers. County agencies such as the Housing and Community Services Department (HCS), Health Care Agency, Social Services Agency, and other county agencies provide direct services for the homeless and/or significant resources for agencies serving the homeless. The region's 34 municipalities also provide substantial resources for services that assist the homeless and those at risk of becoming homeless. A partnership exists between HCS's Homeless Prevention Programs, 211 (formally known as Info Link Orange County), and OC Partnership (formerly known as Shelter and Hunger Partnership) to conduct community forums to focus on the entire system of care. These forums provide regional and coordinated meetings that focus on all issues relating to the County's Continuum of Care System. Issues include temporary shelter and affordable housing, health care, case management, education,

legal issues, transportation, supportive services, legislation, funding, and other related issues. Numerous public/private partnerships and collaboratives have been and continue to be developed and have enabled Orange County to expand the system of care through year-round, regional planning and coordinated efforts to better assist the homeless. When combined, these coordinated efforts decrease fragmentation and strengthen Orange County’s Continuum of Care System.

The estimate of the number of homeless people in Orange County consists of a point-in-time count of the homeless, a needs assessment which estimates the number of homeless over a given year, and a housing inventory that identifies the number of beds available to house the homeless. The housing inventory is conducted annually, whereas the comprehensive needs assessment and the point-in-time count are biennial.

Table H-16 details the estimate of the homeless in Orange County. According to the point in time survey, 6,939 unduplicated persons were found to be homeless in shelters and on the streets in Orange County on January 22, 2011. According to HUD, counting only the homeless persons found in the point-in-time count could under-represent the number of individuals who experience homelessness during other times of the year. Point-in-time estimates capture a higher share of chronically homeless individuals and families who use shelters or transitional shelters for long periods of time and under represent people whose homelessness is episodic. To obtain an accurate annual estimation of the number of homeless persons in Orange County, the 2011 Orange County Homeless Census & Survey combined data from the point-in-time count with data on homeless persons who had become homeless within the last 7 days of the count and those who had previously experienced a homeless episode

Table H-16 Summary of Homeless Estimates	
Homeless Episodes Source	Estimate of Homeless
Point-in-time Count*	6,939 (one day)
Point-in-time Count Annualized	18,325 (annual)
Point-in-time Survey for Laguna Hills in 2008	20
Point-in-time Survey for Laguna Hills in 2011	8
*Point-in-time count occurred on January 22, 2011. Source: www.ocpartnership.net.	

within the past 12 months. This methodology resulted in an estimated total of 18,325 homeless incidents (incidents of homelessness) over a 12-month period in Orange County.

According to the 2007 needs assessment, total homeless episodes in Orange County amounted to 35,065 in 2006. This number is derived from 2006 caseload data collected from shelter providers and indicates the total number of times homeless persons were sheltered and turned away from shelters over a 12-month period. Also included is the total number of chronically homeless individuals (street homeless) that typically do not seek shelter.

The 2006 housing inventory survey identified 68 temporary shelters providing 3,400 beds for the homeless on any given night. These beds consist of 1,512 emergency shelter beds, 1,888 transitional shelter beds, and 1,875 permanent supportive housing beds. Most of these shelters are located in central and north Orange County. While shelters provide emergency and transitional housing for the homeless, most shelters provide services to designated subpopulations such as veterans, victims of domestic violence, and persons with HIV/AIDS, etc., which limits the availability of shelters to serve all populations.

Between 1996 and 2012, HUD has conditionally awarded Orange County \$169.9 million in homeless assistance grants under the SuperNOFA Continuum of Care Homeless Assistance Grant funding program. The SuperNOFA is an annual process and the grant award to the County of Orange, with Housing and Community Services as the lead agency, is a direct result of the County's partnership with cities and hundreds of nonprofit organizations to address the issue of homelessness in Orange County. The grant award provides transitional shelter and supportive services for families and individuals as well as permanent supportive housing for the disabled and special needs homeless populations.

The Constraints on Housing Production section did not identify any constraints to the provision of housing facilities for homeless in Laguna Hills. The City's Zoning Ordinance defines an emergency shelter as "housing with minimal supportive services for homeless persons that is limited to occupancy of six months or less by a homeless person, or as may be amended by Health and Safety Code Section 50801(e). No individual or household may be denied emergency shelter because of an inability to pay." The City permits supportive and transitional housing facilities for six (6) or fewer persons in all residential zones as a residential use. Emergency shelters are permitted by right in the Mixed Use zone and are subject to development and management standards. As of May 2013, the City has not received applications to construct emergency shelters, and none have been constructed.



Based on the information available, it is not possible to accurately estimate the number of homeless in Laguna Hills, although it does appear that a small number of homeless persons in Orange County lived in Laguna Hills at some point.

## Housing Stock Characteristics

A community’s housing stock is defined as the collection of all housing units located within the jurisdiction. The characteristics of the housing stock, including growth, type, age and condition, tenure, vacancy rates, costs, and affordability are important in determining the housing needs for the community. This section details the housing stock characteristics of Laguna Hills in an attempt to identify how well the current housing stock meets the needs of current and future residents of the City.

## HOUSING GROWTH TRENDS

The 2010 Census reported that Laguna Hills had 11,046 housing units. On January 1, 2012, the California Department of Finance reported that Laguna Hills had a total of 11,049 housing units (Table H-17). From 2008 to 2012, the housing stock decreased in Laguna Hills by approximately 104 units. As of January 2008, single-family homes constituted over 75 percent of the City’s housing stock. Multifamily units constituted 9 percent, while mobile homes constituted 3 percent of the City’s housing stock (Figure H-2).

Table H-17 Housing Stock Composition		
Housing Type	January 2012	
	Number	Percentage
Single-family Detached	6,431	58.2
Single-family Attached	1,927	17.4
Multifamily 2–4 Units	574	5.2
Multifamily 5+ Units	1,763	16.0
Mobile Homes and Other	354	3.2
<b>Total Units</b>	<b>11,049</b>	<b>100.0</b>

Source: State Department of Finance January 2012.

## TENURE

The tenure distribution of a community's housing stock (owner versus renter) influences several aspects of the local housing market. Residential stability is influenced by tenure, with ownership housing evidencing a much lower turnover rate than rental housing. Housing overpayment, while faced by many households, is far more prevalent among renters. Tenure preferences are primarily related to household income, composition, and age of the householder.

Table H-18 details tenure by housing unit type for Laguna Hills and Orange County for 2009-2011. Approximately 75 percent of Laguna Hills residents owned the units they occupied, while approximately 25 percent rented. This rate of homeownership is over 16 percentage points higher than the countywide rate.

**Table H-18**  
**Housing Tenure by Units in Structure, 2009-2011\***

	Laguna Hills		Orange County	
	Estimate	Percentage	Estimate	Percentage
<b>Owner-occupied housing units:</b>	<b>8,175</b>	<b>75.3%</b>	<b>585,483</b>	<b>59.2%</b>
Single-family (attached or detached)	7,472	68.9%	519,868	52.6%
2-4 units	218	2.0%	13,627	1.4%
5 or more units	299	2.8%	29,564	3.0%
Mobile home	186	1.7%	22,087	2.2%
Other	0	0.0%	337	0.0%
<b>Renter-occupied housing units:</b>	<b>2,675</b>	<b>24.7%</b>	<b>402,871</b>	<b>40.8%</b>
Single-family (attached or detached)	987	9.1%	115,384	11.7%
2-4 units	468	4.3%	73,012	7.4%
5 or more units	1,136	10.5%	208,179	21.1%
Mobile home	84	0.8%	5,778	0.6%
Other	0	0.0%	518	0.1%
<b>Total:</b>	<b>10,850</b>	<b>100.0%</b>	<b>988,354</b>	<b>100.0%</b>

Source: 2009-2011 American Community Survey 3-Year Estimates

\*ACS numbers are estimates; there is a variable margin of error for all numbers.

## VACANCY

A certain number of vacant units are needed to moderate the cost of housing, allow sufficient choice for residents, and provide an incentive for unit upkeep and repair. Specifically, vacancy rates of 1.5 to 2 percent for ownership housing and 5 to 6 percent for rental housing are considered optimal to balance demand and supply for housing.

In 2010, the Census indicated that the overall vacancy rate in Laguna Hills was 5.2 percent (Table H-19). Specifically, the vacancy rate for ownership housing was 1.0 percent, while the rental vacancy rate was 3.0 percent.

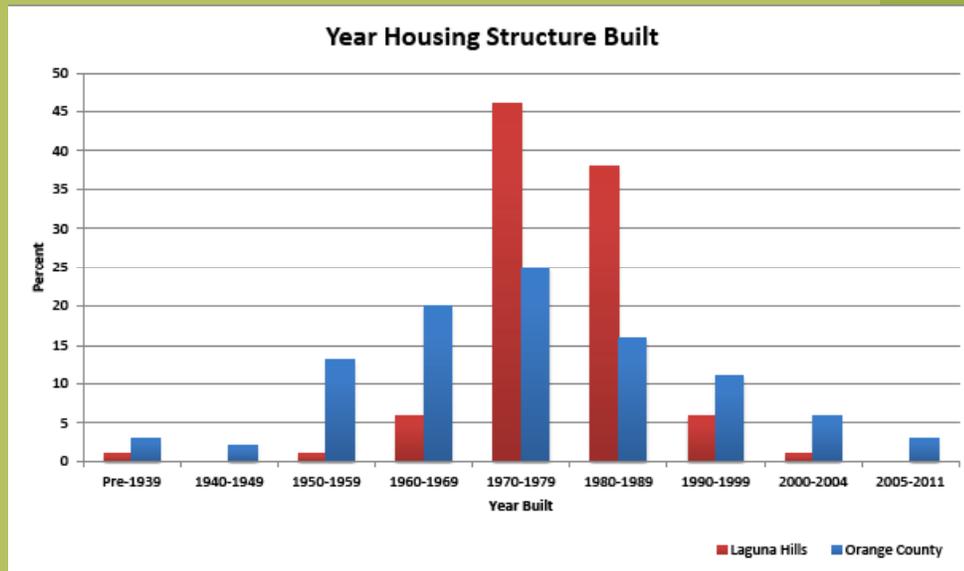
The low ownership housing vacancy rate in Laguna Hills is attributed to the lack of developable land for additional housing unit construction and pent-up demand for ownership housing opportunities.

Table H-19 Vacancy Rates, 2010		
	Number	Percentage
Total Housing Units	11,046	100.0%
Occupied	10,469	94.8%
Vacant	577	5.2%
For rent	335	3.0%
For sale only	110	1.0%
Rented or sold, not occupied	34	0.3%
For seasonal, recreational, or occasional use	46	0.4%
For migrant workers	0	0.0%
Other vacant	52	0.5%
Source: 2010 Census		

## AGE AND HOUSING STOCK CONDITIONS

The age of housing is commonly used as a measure of when housing may begin to require major repairs. In general, housing units over 30 years old are likely to exhibit signs of rehabilitation needs, such as new roofing, foundation work, and new plumbing.

As depicted in Figure H-3, the housing stock in Laguna Hills is newer than that of Orange County. About 49 percent of the City’s housing stock was constructed after 1980 versus 35 percent for Orange County.



Source: American Community Survey, 2009-2011

Figure H-3  
Year Structure Built

At the same time, about 51 percent of the housing stock in Laguna Hills was constructed prior to 1980. Therefore, nearly half of the housing stock is of sufficient age to be susceptible to deterioration, requiring maintenance or rehabilitation by the end of this planning period (2013-2021).

Citywide windshield surveys were conducted to identify general housing conditions within Laguna Hills. The majority of the City's housing stock is not considered substandard or in need of rehabilitation or replacement. However, many of the units within the Aliso Meadows Condominium Development may be considered substandard due to pest damage, dry rot, heating ductwork issues, and water heater closet issues. As of early 2008, the City has used Community Development Block Grant (CDBG) funds to renovate 136 housing units in the 248-unit Aliso Meadows Condominium Development. The City continues to use CDBG funds to renovate units with this development. The Housing Element contains the Housing Rehabilitation Program to rehabilitate the remaining units (approximately 112.)

## Housing Costs and Affordability

The cost of housing is directly related to the extent of housing problems in a community. If housing costs are relatively high in comparison to household income, there will be a correspondingly higher prevalence of



housing cost burden and overcrowding. This section summarizes the cost and affordability of the housing stock to Laguna Hills residents.

## HOMEOWNERSHIP MARKET

Prices for single-family homes and condominiums in Laguna Hills were collected using data provided by the Orange County Association of Realtors. Prices for single-family homes and condominiums in Laguna Hills during the period from January 1, 2012 to January 1, 2013, by housing type, number sold, price range, and median sale price are shown in Table H-20. According to the Orange County Association of Realtors, 433 homes and condominiums were sold during the 1-year period. The median resale price for condominiums was \$225,000 and the median resale price for single-family homes was \$580,000. The overall median sales price for both condominiums and single-family homes was \$425,000.

Market data for October 2012 housing prices for the City of Laguna Hills and nearby communities is shown in Table H-21. As the table indicates, after Laguna Niguel, Laguna Hills has the second highest median selling prices for single-family homes.

## RENTAL MARKET

With renters constituting approximately 24 percent of the City's households, it is important to understand the rental market in Laguna Hills. Rental price information was collected for five apartment communities in January 2013 by calling the apartment complexes identified in Table H-22. The rental range for one-bedroom units ranged from \$1,190 to \$1,525. Two-bedroom units were offered at rents ranging from \$1,325 to \$1,825. No apartment complexes offering market rate studio units or three-bedroom units or greater were identified.

## HOUSING AFFORDABILITY BY HOUSEHOLD INCOME

Housing affordability is dependent upon income and housing costs. Using set income guidelines, current housing affordability can be estimated. According to the HCD income guidelines for 2013, the Area Median Income (AMI) in Orange County was \$87,200 (adjusted for household size). Assuming that the potential homebuyer within each income group has sufficient credit, downpayment (10 percent), and maintains affordable housing expenses (i.e., spends no more than 30 percent of their gross income on the mortgage, taxes, and insurance), the maximum affordable home price can be determined for each income group. Table H-23 shows the maximum housing prices affordable to the



**Table H-20**  
**House and Condominium Sales**  
**January 1, 2012 through January 1, 2013**

Unit Type/Size	Number Sold	Range	Median Sale Price
Homes	249	\$265,000 - \$2,700,000	\$580,000
2 BR	7	\$319,199 - \$390,000	\$338,000
3 BR	68	\$265,000 - \$1,325,000	\$450,000
4 BR	119	\$362,000 - \$1,516,000	\$630,000
5+ BR	55	\$465,000 - \$2,700,000	\$925,000
Condominiums	184	\$85,000 - \$590,000	\$225,000
1 BR	32	\$121,000 - \$243,000	\$150,000
2 BR	81	\$85,000 - \$355,000	\$205,000
3+ BR	71	\$132,000 - \$320,000	\$275,000
<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>433</b>	<b>\$85,000 - \$2,700,000</b>	<b>\$425,000</b>

Source: Len Herman, Orange County Association of Realtors, June, 2013.

**Table H-21**  
**Housing Values, City of Laguna Hills and Surrounding Jurisdictions**  
**October 2012**

City	Zip Code	Single-family Units Sold	Median Sale Price	% Change from October 2011	Condo Units Sold	Median Sale Price	% Change from October 2011
Laguna Hills	92653	21	\$666,000	33%	26	\$270,000	24%
Aliso Viejo	92656	24	\$565,000	-8%	72	\$333,000	10%
Mission Viejo	92691 92692	118	\$508,000	10%	49	\$299,000	24%
Laguna Woods	92637	N/A	N/A	N/A	53	\$207,000	14%
Laguna Niguel	92677	84	\$671,000	0.6%	48	\$321,000	9%
Lake Forest	92630	58	\$511,000	6%	33	\$239,000	15%

Source: www.zillow.com

Table H-22 Apartment Rental Rates January 2013	
Apartment Complex	Rental Price Range
Alicia Plaza	
1 Br	\$1,190-\$1,340
2 Br	\$1,325-\$1,785
Alicia Village	
1 Br	\$1,215-\$1,360
2 Br	\$1,360-\$1,645
Villa Solana	
1 Br	\$1,410-\$1,505
2 Br	\$1,570-\$1,625
Creekside Laguna	
1 Br	\$1,525
2 Br	\$1,825
Prado at Laguna Hills	
1 Br	\$1,290-\$1,420
2 Br	\$1,595-\$1,705
Average	
1 BR	\$1,378
2 BR	\$1,626

various income groups. Households in the lower end of each category can afford less by comparison than those at the upper end. The market affordability of Laguna Hills' housing stock for each income group is discussed below.

**Extremely Low Income Households:** Extremely low income households earn 30 percent or less of the AMI. The maximum affordable rental payment ranges from \$406 per month for a one person household to \$531 per month for a family of five. The maximum affordable home purchase price for extremely low income households ranges from \$83,059 for a one-person household to \$128,780 for a five-person household (Table H-23).

**Very Low Income Households:** Very low income households are classified as those earning 50 percent or less of the AMI. The maximum affordable rental payment ranges from \$744 per month for a one-person household to \$1,051 per month for a family of five. The maximum affordable home purchase price for very low income households ranges from \$146,571 for a one-person household to \$229,396 for a five-person household (Table H-23).

Based on the rental data presented in Table H-22, extremely low and very low income households of all sizes would be unlikely to secure adequately sized and affordable rental housing in Laguna Hills. According to the Orange County Association of Realtors real estate sales data, no condominiums or houses were sold at prices affordable to extremely low and very low income households (Table H-20).

**Low Income Households:** Low income households earn 51 to 80 percent of the County AMI. The maximum home price that a low income household can afford ranges from \$239,186 for a one person household to \$377,869 for a five-person family. Affordable rental rates for low income households would range from \$1,249 for a one-person household to \$1,831 for a five-person household.

Table H-23  
Housing Affordability Matrix Orange County

Income Group	Income Levels		Housing Cost		Maximum Affordable Price	
	Annual Income	Affordable Payment	Utilities	Taxes and Insurance	Home	Rental
<b>Extremely Low (0–30% AMI)</b>						
One Person	\$20,250	\$506	\$100	\$100	\$83,059	\$406
Small Family	\$26,050	\$651	\$150	\$125	\$107,339	\$501
Large Family	\$31,250	\$781	\$250	\$150	\$128,780	\$531
<b>Very Low (31–50%)</b>						
One Person	\$33,750	\$844	\$100	\$125	\$146,571	\$744
Small Family	\$43,350	\$1,084	\$150	\$150	\$190,471	\$934
Large Family	\$52,050	\$1,301	\$250	\$175	\$229,396	\$1,051
<b>Low (51–80% AMI)</b>						
One Person	\$53,950	\$1,349	\$100	\$175	\$239,186	\$1,249
Small Family	\$69,350	\$1,734	\$150	\$200	\$312,037	\$1,584
Large Family	\$83,250	\$2,081	\$250	\$225	\$377,869	\$1,759 \$1,831
<b>Moderate (81–120% AMI)</b>						
One Person	\$71,650	\$1,791	\$100	\$225	\$319,557	\$1,691
Small Family	\$92,100	\$2,303	\$150	\$275	\$413,467	\$2,153
Large Family	\$110,550	\$2,764	\$250	\$325	\$497,866	\$2,514

Source: California Department of Housing and Community Development 2013; www.bankrate.com

Notes: 2013 AMI = \$87,200

Small Family = three persons; Large Families = five or more persons.

Utility costs for renters assumed at \$100/\$150/\$250 per month.

Monthly affordable rent based on payment of no more than 30% of household income.

Property taxes and insurance based on estimated averages for the region.

Calculation of affordable home sales prices assumes affordable payment, down payment of 30% annual income, annual interest rate of 4%, 30-year mortgage, and housing costs.

Based on the sales data provided by the Orange County Association of Realtors, low income households can afford some condominiums within Laguna Hills. However, no single-family homes were sold at prices affordable to low income households (Table H-20). Many low income households can afford rental housing within Laguna Hills (Table H-22).

**Moderate Income Households:** Moderate income households earn up to 120 percent of the County AMI. The maximum affordable home price for moderate income households ranges from \$319,557 for a one-person household to \$497,866 for a family of five. A moderate income household can afford rental rates of \$1,691 to \$2,514 per month depending on household size.

Based on these maximum affordable home prices and the real estate data provided by the Orange County Association of Realtors and presented in Table H-20, moderate income households could afford a number of condominiums sold in Laguna Hills, but moderate income households would have difficulty purchasing a single-family home that could accommodate their household size.

Moderate income households can comfortably afford rental housing within Laguna Hills (Table H-22). However, the number of apartment complexes offering three-bedroom units in Laguna Hills is limited, so moderate income households with large households may have difficulty finding housing.

This Housing Element includes a variety of programs designed to improve the adequacy and affordability of housing in Laguna Hills and to assist renters and homeowners who cannot afford housing (see the Housing Plan section).

Table H-24 presents a summary of housing affordability and availability in Laguna Hills. The table indicates that extremely low and very low income households cannot afford to rent market rate rentals in Laguna Hills. Low income and moderate income households in Laguna Hills can generally afford market rate rentals. Additionally, there were homes and condominiums available for purchase within all income category ranges according to sale prices over the previous year. It should be noted that at the extremely low and very low income levels, housing stock for sale is much more limited than at higher income levels.

Figure H-4 summarizes the availability of multifamily housing sites in Laguna Hills. The figure depicts the location of affordable condo sales (low income and above) during the 1-year period May 1, 2007, to May 1, 2008, affordable apartments (extremely low income and above), moderate income apartments, and all other multifamily units in the City.

Table H-24  
Summary of Housing Affordability and Availability

Income Group	Annual Income (Family of Four)	Monthly Rental Range	Available	Sales Price	Available
Extremely Low (0–30% AMI)	\$28,900	\$406 - \$531	No	\$83,059 - \$128,780	Yes
Very Low (31–50%)	\$48,150	\$744 - \$1,051	No	\$146,571 - \$229,396	Yes
Low (51–80% AMI)	\$77,050	\$1,249 - \$1,831	Yes	\$239,186 - \$377,869	Yes
Moderate (81–120% AMI)	\$102,350	\$1,691 - \$2,514	Yes	\$319,557 - \$497,866	Yes

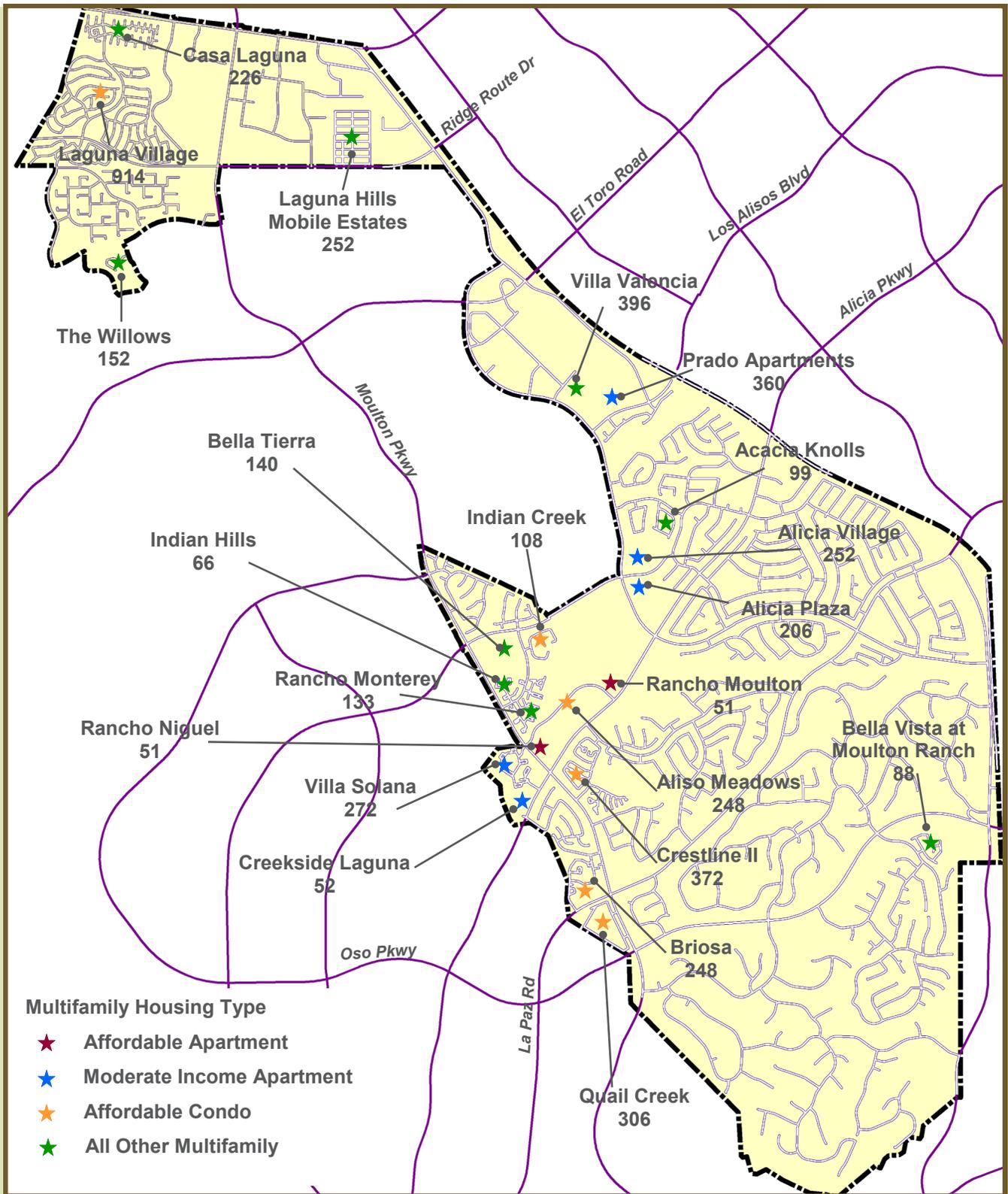
## At-Risk Rental Housing

Existing housing that receives governmental assistance is often a significant source of affordable housing in many communities. This section identifies the publicly assisted rental housing in Laguna Hills, evaluates the potential for those units to convert to market rates during a 10-year period (2013-2023), and analyzes the cost to preserve those units. Laguna Hills has two assisted housing developments that provide 102 affordable housing units (Table H-25).

### ASSISTED HOUSING INVENTORY

State housing element law requires cities to prepare an inventory including all assisted multifamily rental units that are eligible to convert to non-low income housing uses due to termination of subsidy contract, mortgage prepayment, or expiring use restrictions.

Table H-25 is an inventory of assisted rental housing projects in Laguna Hills. A total of 102 assisted units are provided by the Rancho Moulton and Rancho Niguel developments. Both Rancho Moulton and Rancho Niguel are projects built in the early 1980s with Section 8 construction funds. The projects were approved in one action by the County of Orange in 1980 as affordable to low and moderate income residents. Project approval included first-time homebuyer/renter qualifications, an anti-speculation program, and a method of assuring continued affordability of the units to low and moderate income individuals or families. Furthermore, project approval mandated that 29 percent of total units be made available to individual or families earning 80 percent and below AMI, 30 percent of total units be made available to individuals or families earning 81 percent to 100 percent of AMI, and 41 percent of total units be made available to individuals or families earning 101 to 120 percent AMI.



Source: EDAW, 2008

Figure H-4  
Multifamily Housing Sites, Laguna Hills



Table H-25  
Inventory of Assisted Rental Housing

Project Name	Type	Total Units	Assisted Units	Number of Bedrooms	Funding Source	Earliest Potential Conversion Date	At Risk?
Rancho Moulton	Family	51	51	40 – 2 BR 6 – 3 BR 5 – 4 BR	Section 8	2022	Yes
Rancho Niguel	Family	51	51	40 – 2 BR 6 – 3 BR 5 – 4 BR	Section 8	2024	No

Source: Orange County Housing Authority 2013.

## AT-RISK HOUSING

During the 2013-2023 planning period, the Rancho Moulton federally assisted housing project in Laguna Hills is at risk of converting to market rate housing. The Section 8 contract for Rancho Moulton was set to expire in 2012, and was recently renewed for 10 years. The new contract will expire in 2022, near the end of the planning period. This project, totaling 51 affordable units, is assisted with project-based Section 8 rental assistance. The Section 8 contract for Rancho Niguel was extended for 20 years in 2004 and is due to expire in 2024. The City continues to pursue the extension of affordability controls with the owners of the Rancho Moulton development.

The City will continue to monitor the status of at-risk units. Should a notice of intent to convert to market rate be filed, the City will work with potential purchasers to preserve the units and ensure that tenants are properly notified of their rights under California law.

## PRESERVATION OPTIONS

Preservation of the at-risk units can be achieved in several ways: (1) facilitate transfer of ownership of these projects or purchase of similar units by nonprofit organizations; (2) purchase of affordability covenant; and (3) provide rental assistance to tenants using funding sources other than Section 8.

### Transfer of Ownership

Long-term affordability of low income units can be secured by transferring ownership of these projects to nonprofit housing organizations. By doing so, these units would be eligible for a greater range of government assistance. Table H-26 presents the estimated



market value for the 51 units at Rancho Moulton Apartments and establishes an order of magnitude for assessing preservation costs. As shown, the total market value of these units is over \$10,089,000. Assuming a 5-percent down payment is made on the project, at least a \$504,000 down payment would be required to transfer ownership of these buildings to nonprofit organizations. Unless some form of mortgage assistance is available to interested nonprofit organizations, rental income alone from the low income tenants would not likely be adequate to cover the mortgage payment, and rental subsidy would be required.

### Purchase of Affordability Covenant

Another option to preserve the affordability of at-risk projects is to provide an incentive package to the owners to maintain the projects as low income housing. Incentives could include writing down the interest rate on the remaining loan balance, and/or supplementing the Section 8 subsidy amount received to market levels.

### Rent Subsidy

Tenant-based rent subsidies could be used to preserve the affordability of housing. Similar to Section 8 vouchers, the City through a variety of potential funding sources may provide a voucher to lower income households. The level of the subsidy required to preserve the at-risk affordable housing is estimated to equal the fair market rent for a unit minus the housing cost affordable by a very low income household. Table H-27 estimates the rent subsidies required to preserve the housing affordability for the residents of the 51 at-risk units. Based on the estimates and assumptions shown in this table, approximately \$356,000 in rent subsidies would be required annually.

Table H-26 Market Value of At-Risk Housing Units	
Project Units	Rancho Moulton
2 BR (954 sq. ft.)	40
3 BR (1,187 sq. ft.)	6
4 BR (1,420 sq. ft.)	5
Total	51
Annual Operating Cost	\$235,719
Gross Annual Income	\$1,042,872
Net Annual Income	\$807,153
Market Value	\$10,089,413

Table H-27  
Rent Subsidies Required

Project Units	Rancho Moulton
2 BR (954 sq. ft.)	40
3 BR (1,187 sq. ft.)	6
4 BR (1,420 sq. ft.)	5
Total	51
Total Monthly Rent Income Supported by Affordable Housing Cost of Very Low Income Households	\$61,391
Total Monthly Rent Allowed by Fair Market Rents	\$91,073
Total Annual Subsidies Required	\$356,184
Average Annual Subsidy per Unit	\$6,984
Average Monthly Subsidy per Unit	\$582

Average subsidy per unit is estimated with the following assumptions:

A 2-BR unit is assumed to be occupied by a three-person household, a 3-BR unit by a five-person household, and a 4 BR unit by a seven-person household.

Vacancy rate = 5%.

Based on 2011 AMI in Orange County, affordable monthly housing cost for a three-person very low income household is \$948, \$1,053 for a five-person household, and \$1,137 for a seven-person household. HUD 2013 fair market rent in the Orange County MSA is \$1,527 for a 2-BR, \$2,137 for a 3-BR, and \$2,379 for a 4-BR.

## REPLACEMENT COSTS

The cost of developing new housing depends on a variety of factors such as density, size of units, location and related land costs, and type of construction. A typical two-bedroom apartment costs approximately \$200,000 to develop. Assuming a three-bedroom apartment would cost 20 percent more to develop than a two-bedroom unit, and a four-bedroom unit would cost 20 percent more than a three-bedroom unit, the total cost of constructing 51 new units to replace at risk units would be approximately \$10,880,000.

## COST COMPARISON

The cost to build new housing to replace the 51 at-risk units was estimated at more than \$10,880,000. This cost estimate is higher than the cost associated with transfer of ownership (\$10,089,000). This analysis indicated that providing rent subsidies similar to Section 8 vouchers for 20 years (\$7,600,000) could cost less than building new housing and transferring ownership.

## ESTIMATES OF HOUSING NEEDS

The CHAS developed by the Census for HUD provides detailed information on housing needs by income level for different types of households in Laguna Hills. Detailed CHAS data based on the 2012

Census are displayed in Table H-28. Based on CHAS, housing problems in Laguna Hills include:

- Units with physical defects (lacking complete kitchen or bathroom);
- Overcrowded conditions (housing units with more than one person per room);
- Housing cost burden, including utilities, exceeding 30 percent of gross income; or
- Severe housing cost burden, including utilities, exceeding 50 percent of gross income.

## Disproportionate Needs

The types of problems vary according to household income, type, and tenure. Some highlights include:

- In general, renter households had a higher level of housing problems (40 percent) than owner households (16 percent).
- Small family renter households had the highest level of housing problems regardless of income level (56 percent).
- Approximately 70 percent of extremely low income renters, 76 percent of very low income renters, and 54 percent of low income renters had a housing problem.
- Approximately 51 percent of extremely low income owners, 33 percent of very low income owners, and 27 percent of low income owners had a housing problem.
- Approximately 100 percent of the extremely low and very low income large family owners and 92 percent of low income large family owners suffered from a housing problem.

## Constraints on Housing Production

Despite the great need for housing in general and the demand for affordable housing in particular, a number of constraints exist that could limit the development, preservation, and improvement of housing. These barriers or constraints include governmental, environmental, infrastructure, and market-related factors. These constraints may result in housing that is not affordable to extremely low, very low, low, and moderate income households; not available to households with special needs; or may render residential construction economically infeasible for developers. These factors are discussed in this section. Constraints on the production of housing related to the national economy cannot be effectively mitigated by local government and, accordingly, are beyond the scope of this section.

Table H-28  
Housing Assistance Needs of Low and Moderate Income Households in Laguna Hills

Household by Type, Income and Housing Problem	Renters				Owners			Total Households
	Elderly	Small Families	Large Families	Total Renters	Elderly	Large Families	Total Owners	
<b>Extremely Low Income (0–30% MFI)</b>	<b>155</b>	<b>325</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>600</b>	<b>185</b>	<b>120</b>	<b>545</b>	<b>1,145</b>
% with any housing problem	61.3	100	0	70	83.8	100.0	50.5	60.7
% with cost burden >30%	61.3	100	0	70	83.8	100.0	50.5	60.7
% with cost burden >50%	54.8	100	0	68.3	59.5	75	36.7	53.3
<b>Very Low Income (31–50% MFI)</b>	<b>130</b>	<b>270</b>	<b>70</b>	<b>535</b>	<b>205</b>	<b>55</b>	<b>520</b>	<b>1,055</b>
% with any housing problem	73.1	94.4	100	78.5	56.1	100.0	32.7	55.9
% with cost burden >30%	15.4	94.4	100	64.5	56.1	100.0	32.7	48.8
% with cost burden >50%	57.7	46.3	0	37.4	48.8	81.8	27.9	32.7
<b>Low Income (51–80% MFI)</b>	<b>55</b>	<b>135</b>	<b>15</b>	<b>305</b>	<b>220</b>	<b>195</b>	<b>930</b>	<b>1,235</b>
% with any housing problem	72.7	81.5	100	54.1	34.1	92.3	27.4	34
% with cost burden >30%	72.7	7.4	100	21.3	34.1	79.5	24.7	23.9
% with cost burden >50%	27.3	0	100	9.8	18.2	30.8	10.8	10.5
<b>Total Households</b>	<b>505</b>	<b>1,235</b>	<b>165</b>	<b>2,485</b>	<b>1,555</b>	<b>1,025</b>	<b>8,135</b>	<b>10,620</b>
% with any housing problem	46	56	52	40	22	35	9	16

Source: HUD Comprehensive Housing Affordability Strategy (CHAS), 2012.

Notes: Data presented in this table are based on special tabulations from sample Census data. The number of households in each category usually deviates slightly from the 100.0% count due to the need to extrapolate sample data out to total households. Interpretations of these data should focus on the proportion of households in need of assistance rather than on precise numbers.

## Governmental Constraints

The intent of local government regulations is to protect public health and safety, and to ensure a decent quality of life for the community. However, local policies and regulations affect the price and availability of housing and, in particular, the provision of affordable housing. Land use controls, site improvement requirements, fees and exactions, permit processing procedures, and other factors can constrain the maintenance, development, and improvement of housing.

State and federal regulations also affect the availability of land for housing and the cost of producing housing. Regulations related to environmental protection, building codes, and other topics have significant, often adverse, impacts on housing cost and availability. Perhaps one of the greatest constraints to the production of housing

affordable to lower income households is the chronic shortage of state and federal financial assistance for such housing.

While constraints exist at other levels of government, the City has little or no control over these regulations and no ability to directly mitigate their effects on housing. The City’s efforts, therefore, emphasize policies and regulations that can be mitigated by the City.

## LAND USE CONTROLS

The Laguna Hills General Plan and Zoning Ordinance provide for a wide range of residential land use designations/zoning districts in the City, as illustrated in Table H-29.

Table H-29 Residential Land Uses and Zones		
General Plan Land Use Designation	Maximum Use Intensity	Corresponding Zoning District
Estate Residential	3.5 du/ac	Estate Residential (ER)
Low Density	3.0 to 6.5 du/ac	Low Density Residential (LDR)
Medium-Low Density	6.5 to 12.5 du/ac	Medium-Low Density Residential (MLDR)
Medium Density	12.5 to 18.0 du/ac	Medium Density Residential (MDR)
High Density	18.0 to 30.0 du/ac	High Density Residential (HDR)
Mixed Use	20.0 du/ac	Mixed Use (MU)
Neighborhood Mixed Use <sup>1</sup>	.08 FAR residential	Neighborhood Mixed Use (MX-UN)
Planned Community <sup>2</sup>	0.5 to 18.0 du/ac	Laguna Hills Planned Community (PC)
Planned Community <sup>2</sup> Residential	up to 600 units	Planned Community - Via Lomas (PCR)
Village Commercial <sup>2</sup>	30 to 50 du/ac <sup>3</sup>	Village Commercial (VC)

1. General Plan Land Use Designation.

2. These nonresidential General Plan land use designations allow residential development.

3. The allowed development intensity is regulated based upon trip generation limits to ensure that the City's General Plan Circulation Element level of service standard "D" is not exceeded at any of the intersections within the area. du/ac = dwelling units per acre.

## ZONING DISTRICTS ALLOWING RESIDENTIAL DEVELOPMENT

The intent and purpose of the zoning districts allowing residential development are as follows:

- **Estate Residential (ER)** – The Estate Residential district is established to provide for low density, rural, and equestrian

oriented residential neighborhoods in hillside areas. This district is characterized by large lot single-family homes permitting large animal husbandry.

- **Low Density (LDR)** – The Low Density Residential district is established to provide for low density, single-family detached housing neighborhoods. Typically this district is characterized by medium to large lot single-family homes.
- **Medium-Low Density (MLDR)** – The Medium-Low Density Residential district is established to provide for medium low density attached or detached residential neighborhoods. This district is characterized by small lot single-family homes, patio homes, duplexes, condominiums, and townhouses.
- **Medium Density (MDR)** – The Medium Density Residential district is established to provide for medium density attached or detached residential neighborhoods. This district is characterized by condominiums, apartments, and townhouses.
- **High Density (HDR)** – The High Density Residential district is established to provide for high density attached or detached residential neighborhoods compatible with adjacent or abutting urban uses. This district is characterized by condominiums, apartments, and residential towers.
- **Mixed Use District (MXU)** – The Mixed Use district provides for areas where a variety of goods and services can be obtained within an overall planned environment. This zone permits commercial, recreational, residential, and light industrial uses.
- **Neighborhood Mixed Use District (NMU)** – The intent of the Neighborhood Mixed Use designation is to provide a variety of compact, multi-family housing types close to jobs and services; create a more active, vibrant street life; increase pedestrian activity and reduce vehicular traffic; provide storefront style shopping streets; and/or encourage walking and social interaction. Within the Neighborhood Mixed Use designation, appropriate land uses include mid-box anchors; administrative and professional uses; grocery and specialty stores; business support uses; eating and drinking establishments; cinemas; personal services; residential condos, apartments, and townhomes; and mixed use structures.
- **Planned Community (PC) and Planned Community Residential (PCR)** – The Planned Community districts provide the authority, regulations, and procedures whereby large land areas can be

planned, zoned, developed and administered as individual integrated communities.

- **Village Commercial (VC)** – The Village Commercial district is established to develop an urban core in which a variety of public, regional commercial, recreational, and high density residential uses work in concert to create an urban village. All development within the village commercial district is subject to the Urban Village Specific Plan.

The City's General Plan, which was updated in 2009, added additional development capacity in the Urban Village Specific Plan (UVSP) area of 117,000 square feet of retail space, and included an Implementation Program requiring that the information be inserted into the UVSP. The updated General Plan's Housing Element (Housing Element 2008-2014) also required that the UVSP be amended to establish a minimum residential density of 30 units per acre and reduce high open space standards that discourage affordable housing. In 2011, the City amended the UVSP to ensure consistency with the General Plan and to help implement the General Plan goals and policies.

Development standards for residential development established in the City's Zoning Ordinance are designed to protect and promote the health, safety, and general welfare of residents, as well as implement the General Plan. These standards also help preserve the character and integrity of existing neighborhoods.

The development standards in Table H-30 can have an effect on the ability of property owners to construct and maintain housing. The City has very few opportunities for new development, as there is little vacant, buildable land remaining in the City. Selected residential development standards in Laguna Hills were compared to those in jurisdictions surrounding Laguna Hills (Table H-31). The comparison indicates that the minimum open space percentage of 40 percent for the HDR district in Laguna Hills may be high compared to that for Laguna Niguel (25 percent) and that for Mission Viejo (80 sq. ft. of private open space), which could discourage the construction of high density residential projects in the City. The City will decrease the open space requirement for the HDR district. Additionally, maximum lot coverage in the MXU district in Laguna Hills may be considered low at 40 percent, which could also discourage the construction of mixed use projects in the City. The City will increase the maximum lot coverage requirement for the MXU district. These recommendations are included in the Programs section of this Housing Element. As illustrated in Table H-31, many residential development standards in some of the jurisdictions surrounding Laguna Hills are not specified to the same level of detail as



they are in Laguna Hills. Therefore, an exact comparison of residential development standards with Laguna Hills is not possible.

Overall, the City’s development standards for residential development have not constrained housing development in the City as development can still occur up to the maximum densities allowed by the General Plan and zoning regulations.



Table H-30 Basic Standards for Residential Development								
Characteristic of Lot, Location, Height	ER	LDR	MLDR	MDR	HDR	VC	MXU	NMU <sup>4</sup>
Minimum Lot Size (sq. ft.)	10,000	7,200	7,200	7,200	7,200	10,000	7,200	10,000
Minimum Lot Width (sq. ft.)								
Standard	80	60	60	50	50	100	60	50
Cul-de-sac	30	30	30	30	30	-	-	
Flag	20	20	20	20	20	-	-	
Minimum Lot Depth (sq. ft.)	100	80	80	100	100	100	100	100
Maximum Lot Coverage (%)	35	35	60	50	50	70 <sup>1</sup>	40	50
Maximum Density (du/gross acre)	0–3.5	3.0–6.5	6.5–12.5	12.5–18.0	12.5–18.0	50.0	20.0	10-20 <sup>2</sup>
Maximum Building Height (ft.)	35	35	35	35	35	75	35	40
Minimum Front Setback								
From Ultimate Right of Way	20	20	20	20	20	-	-	10 <sup>3</sup>
From Access Connection to Main Lot for Flag Lots	15	15	15	15	15	-	-	
From Parking Lot, Structure, or Building	-	-	-	-	-	20	20	
Minimum Side Yard Setback								
Interior	8	5	5	5	5		5	10
Street	10	10	10	15	15	10-	15	
Flag	10	10	10	10	10		0	
Minimum Rear Yard Setback								
Standard	25	20	25	25	25		20	10 <sup>5</sup>
Through	25	20	25	25	25		-	
Cul-de-sac/Gore Shaped Lots	15	15	25	25	25	20	-	
Laguna Terrace Tracts	-	15	15	15	15		-	
Minimum Open Space (percentage)	-	-	-	-	40	10	35	N/A

<sup>1</sup> Unlimited for projects with density over 30 du/ac. <sup>2</sup> 110 maximum units. <sup>3</sup> 10 ft. from parking lot, 20 ft. from parking structure, 10 ft. from building. <sup>4</sup> setbacks may be modified in connection with a precise plan of development as set forth in Section 9-29.050 of the City’s Development Code. <sup>5</sup> 20 ft. abutting residential. Sq. ft. = square feet; du/gross acre = dwelling units per gross acre. Source: City of Laguna Hills Municipal Code 2013.

**Table H-31  
Comparison of Residential Development Standards – Surrounding Jurisdictions**

Residential District	Development Standard	Irvine	Lake Forest*	Laguna Niguel	Mission Viejo
Estate Residential	Maximum Density	1.0 du/acre	Not specified	Not specified	3.5 du/acre
	Maximum Height	50 ft.	35 ft.	35 ft.	35 ft.
	Maximum Lot Coverage	25%	35%	Not specified	60%
	Minimum Open Space	Not specified	Not specified	Not specified	500 sq. ft. (private outdoor living space)
Low Density, Single-family Residential	Maximum Density	6.5 du/ac	Not specified	Not specified	6.5 du/ac
	Maximum Height	35 ft.	35 ft.	35 ft.	35 ft.
	Lot Coverage	50%	Not specified	Not specified	60%
	Minimum Open Space	Not specified	Not specified	Not specified	450 sq. ft. (private outdoor living space)
Medium Density Residential	Maximum Density	12.5 du/ac	Not specified	Not specified	14 du/ac
	Maximum Height	35 ft.	35 ft.	35 ft.	35 ft.
	Lot Coverage	Not specified	35%	Not specified	50%
	Minimum Open Space	Not specified	Not specified	Not specified	200 sq. ft. (private outdoor living space)
High Density Residential	Maximum Density	50 du/ac	43.5 du/ac	Not specified	30 du/ac
	Maximum Height	50 ft.	35 ft.	35 ft.	35 ft.
	Lot Coverage	Unlimited	Not specified	Not specified	50%
	Minimum Open Space	Not specified	Not specified	25%	80 sq. ft. (private outdoor living space)
Mixed Use	Maximum Density	50 du/ac	14.5 du/ac	No Comparable Zone	No Comparable Zone
	Maximum Height	70 ft.	35 ft.		
	Lot Coverage	65%	Not specified		
	Minimum Open Space	15% site landscaping	Not specified		

\* The City of Lake Forest has adopted major portions of the Orange County Municipal Code. Unless specified, regulations cited for Lake Forest are based upon the Orange County Municipal Code.

du/ac = dwelling units per acre., sq. ft. = square feet.

Land Uses Compared:

Estate Residential: Irvine = 2.1; Lake Forest = RE; Laguna Niguel = RS-2; Mission Viejo = RPD 3.5;

Low Density, Single-family Residential: Irvine = 2.2; Lake Forest = R1; Laguna Niguel = RS-3; Mission Viejo = RPD 6.5;

Medium Density Residential: Irvine = 2.3; Lake Forest = RS; Laguna Niguel = RS-4; Mission Viejo = RPD 14.0.

High Density Residential: Irvine = 2.4; Lake Forest = R2; Laguna Niguel = RM; Mission Viejo = RPD 30.0.

Mixed Use: Irvine = 3.1; Lake Forest = RP.

## PARKING STANDARDS

Excess parking requirements can reduce the number of housing units that can be achieved on a given site. The City's parking requirements are illustrated in Table H-32, while Table H-33 shows parking requirements for surrounding jurisdictions. The parking requirements in Laguna Hills are not considered overly excessive when compared with those in surrounding jurisdictions. For affordable housing projects qualified for a density bonus, the City has adopted the parking requirements mandated by state density bonus law (refer to Section 9-72.030 of the Laguna Hills Municipal Code).

## PROVISION FOR A VARIETY OF HOUSING

The City recognizes the need for a variety of housing types to meet the needs of the City's diverse population, particularly segments with special housing needs. The following analysis reviews the City's Zoning Ordinance to evaluate potential constraints to developing housing for persons with special needs. Table H-34 summarizes the key zoning provisions for various housing types in the City. As shown, the City's zoning provisions for special needs housing are flexible and offer ample opportunities for such uses.

## SINGLE-FAMILY DWELLINGS

Detached, single-family dwellings are permitted in all residential zones. As the City is nearly built out, only six vacant single-family home parcels remain within the Nellie Gail Ranch area.

## SINGLE-FAMILY ATTACHED DWELLINGS

Attached single-family dwellings are permitted in the medium-low, medium, and high density zoning districts of the City.

## DUPLEX DWELLINGS

Duplex dwellings are permitted in the medium-low, medium, and high density zoning districts of the City.

## MULTIFAMILY DWELLINGS

Multifamily developments are permitted in the medium-low, medium, and high density zoning districts of the City, subject to a site development permit. The maximum density in these districts ranges from 12.5 dwelling units per acre in the medium-low district to 30.0 dwelling units per acre in the high density residential zone. Multifamily development in the Urban Village Specific Plan area is permitted at a minimum density of 30.0 dwelling units per acre to a maximum density of 50.0 dwelling units per acre.



Table H-32 Parking Requirements for Residential Uses			
Use	Parking Requirement		
Single-family, detached Up to 4 BR Over 4 BR	2 garage spaces 2 garage spaces, plus 1 covered stall for every 2 BR over 4 BR		
Single-family, attached	2 assigned and covered parking stalls within a garage or parking structure, plus .3 stalls unassigned per dwelling unit		
Duplex	2 car garage (for each unit)		
Second Unit	1 covered parking stall per bedroom		
Mobile Home Park	1 covered and assigned parking stall, plus 2 visitor stalls per mobile home		
Senior Citizen Housing Complex	1 covered and assigned parking stall, plus 2 visitor stalls per dwelling unit, plus 1 stall for the resident manager		
Multifamily Units	Covered	Uncovered <sup>1</sup>	Visitor
1 BR or less	1.0	0.5	0.2
2 BR	1.0	1.0	0.2
3 BR	2.0	0.5	0.2
More than 3 BR	2.0	0.5 <sup>2</sup>	0.2

<sup>1</sup> Covered stalls shall be assigned; uncovered stalls shall not be assigned.  
<sup>2</sup> Plus 0.5 uncovered parking stalls per additional bedroom in excess of three.  
 Source: City of Laguna Hills Municipal Code 2013.

Table H-33 Regional Comparison of Parking Requirements				
Use	Requirement			
	Irvine <sup>1</sup>	Lake Forest	Laguna Niguel	Mission Viejo
Single-family	2.0/unit 3.0/unit for 4 BR or more	2.0/unit	2.0/unit	2.0/unit
Multifamily Units	1.5 2.0 2.0	1.5 2.0 2.5 <sup>2</sup>	1.5 2.0 2.52	1.5 2.0 2.5
1 BR or less				
2 BR				
3 BR or more				
Visitor	0.7/unit if resident garages 0.4/unit if resident carports Or 1.0/4 units	0.2/unit	0.5/unit	1.0/3 units
Second Unit	1.0/unit	1.0/unit	1.0/unit for units 640 sq. ft. or less 2.0/unit for units greater than 640 sq. ft.	1.0/unit or bedroom, whichever is greater

1. The Irvine Zoning Ordinance distinguishes between ownership and rental attached housing (multifamily). The more rigorous parking requirements were listed in this table for comparison purposes.  
 2. For each bedroom in excess of three, add 0.5 additional off-street parking spaces.

Table H-34  
Provisions for a Variety of Housing

Housing Type	Zone											PC	PCR	NMU		
	ER	LDR	MLDR	MDR	HDR	OP	VC <sup>1</sup>	FC	CC	MXU	C/PI					
Accessory Living Quarters/ Second Unit Housing	P	P	P	P	P											
Boarding House			C	C	C	S	P	S	S	S						
Community Care Facilities (≤6)	P	P	P	P	P					P	P	P	P	P	P	
Community Care Facilities (7+)						◇	◇				◇					
Duplex			P	P	P							S				
Family Day Care Home – Large	C	C	C	C	C		C			C	C	C	C	C	C	
Family Day Care Home – Small (≤8)	P	P	P	P	P		P			P	P	P	P	P	P	
Manufactured Housing (Mobile Homes)	S	S	S	S	S							S				
Mobile Home Park				C	C					C		S				
Multifamily Dwellings			S	S	S		P			C	C	S			P	
Single-family, Attached			P	P	S		P			S		S			P	
Single-family Detached	P	P	P	P	P							S				
Single Room Occupancy Housing Facility						S	C	S	S	C						
Transitional Housing	◇	◇	◇	◇	◇		◇			◇	◇	◇	◇	◇	◇	
Supportive Housing	◇	◇	◇	◇	◇		◇			◇	◇	◇	◇	◇	◇	
Emergency Shelter										◇						

P = Permitted; C = Conditional Use; S = Site Development Permit Required;  
T = Temporary Use; ◇ = Special Requirements (refer to Chapter 9-64 of the Zoning Ordinance); U = See Urban Village Specific Plan.

Accessory Living Quarters/  
Second Unit Housing A structure attached to or detached from a principal building or incorporated within such buildings located on the same lot and customarily incidental to the principal structure, including living areas such as employee quarters and second unit housing.

Boarding House A dwelling unit or part thereof in which, for compensation, lodging and meals are provided; personal and financial services may be offered as well.

Community Care Facility Any facility, place, or building that is maintained and operated to provide nonmedical residential care, day treatment, adult day care, or foster family agency services for children and/or adults, including but not limited to the physically handicapped, mentally impaired, incompetent persons, and abused or neglected children.  
Community care facilities for six or fewer individuals include: (1) residential care facilities for the elderly; (2) drug abuse and alcoholism recovery facilities; (3) intermediate care facilities; (4) dependent and neglected children homes (foster homes); (5) social rehabilitation facility; (6) congregate living health facility; (7) facilities for people with HIV or AIDS; (8) home for the mentally and physically disabled; and (9) transitional shelter care facilities/emergency shelters.

Duplex A building containing two single-family dwelling units totally separated from each other by a common wall (the wall may only go to the ceiling)

Multifamily Dwellings A building on a single lot containing two or more dwelling units, each of which is totally separated from the other by an unpierced wall extending from ground to roof or an unpierced ceiling and floor extending from exterior wall to exterior wall, except for a common stairwell exterior to both dwelling units.

Single-family, Attached Residential housing units where independent units are created but are attached by common walls such that not more than three units are so joined.

Single-family Detached A building containing one dwelling unit that is not attached to any other dwelling by any means and is surrounded by open space and yards.

Family Day Care Home – Large A home that provides family day care for 7 to 14 children, including children under the age of 10 years who reside at the home.

Table H-34 (continued)  
Provisions for a Variety of Housing

Housing Type	Zone										
	ER	LDR	MLDR	MDR	HDR	OP	VC <sup>1</sup>	FC	CC	MXU	C/PI
Family Day Care Home – Small	A home that provides family day care for 8 or fewer children, including children under the age of 10 years who reside at the home.										
Manufacturing Housing (Mobile Homes)	Factory built, single-family structures that meet the National Manufactured Home Construction and Safety Standards Act (42 U.S.C. Sec. 54010), commonly known as HUD (U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development) code.										
Mobile Home Park	A site containing spaces with required improvements and utilities that are leased for the long-term placement of manufactured houses and that may include services and facilities for the residents.										
Single Room Occupancy Housing Facility	A housing type consisting of one room, often with cooking facilities and with private or shared bathroom facilities.										
Emergency Shelter	Housing with minimal supportive services for homeless persons that is limited to occupancy of six months or less by a homeless person, or as may be amended by Health and Safety Code Section 50801(e). No individual or household may be denied emergency shelter because of an inability to pay.										
Supportive Housing	Housing with no limit on length of stay that is occupied by the target population, and that is linked to on-site or off-site services that assist the supportive housing resident in retaining housing, improving his or her health status, and maximizing his or her ability to live, and, when possible, work in the community, or as may be amended by Health and Safety Code Section 50675.14(b).										
Transitional Housing	Buildings configured as rental housing developments, but operated under program requirements that call for the termination of assistance and recirculation of the assisted unit to another eligible program recipient at some predetermined future point in time, which shall be no less than six months, or as may be amended by Health and Safety Code Section 50675.2(h).										

Notes:

1 The land use matrix for the Village Commercial district is provided in the Urban Village Specific Plan.

Zoning District Key:

- ER = Estate Residential                      LDR = Low Density Residential
- MLDR = Medium-Low Density Residential    MDR = Medium Density Residential
- HDR = High Density Residential            OP = Office Professional
- VC = Village Commercial                    FC = Freeway Commercial
- CC = Community Commercial                MXU = Mixed Use
- C/PI = Community/Private Institution

## MANUFACTURED HOUSING (MOBILE HOMES)

Manufactured housing offers an affordable housing option to many low and moderate income households. According to the California Department of Finance, there were 217 mobile homes in the City in January 2008. The City permits manufactured housing placed on a permanent foundation in all residential districts, subject to a site development permit. The City also conditionally permits mobile home parks in the MDR, HDR, and MXU districts.

## BOARDING HOUSE

The City’s Zoning Ordinance defines a boarding house as a dwelling unit or part thereof, at which, for compensation, lodging and meals are provided; personal and financial services may be offered as well. The City

permits boarding homes in the VC district. In the FC, CC, and MXU districts, boarding homes are permitted subject to a site development permit.

## ACCESSORY LIVING QUARTERS/SECOND UNIT HOUSING

Accessory living quarters/second unit housing provide complete independent living facilities for one or more persons, including permanent provisions for living, sleeping, cooking, and sanitation. These units may be an alternative source of affordable housing for lower income households and seniors.

California law requires local jurisdictions to adopt ordinances that establish the conditions under which second dwelling units are permitted (Government Code, Section 65852.2). A jurisdiction cannot adopt an ordinance that precludes the development of second units unless findings are made acknowledging that allowing second units may limit housing opportunities of the region and result in adverse impacts on public health, safety, and welfare. An amendment to the state's second unit law in September 2002 requires local governments to use a ministerial rather than discretionary process for approving second units (i.e., second units otherwise compliant with local zoning standards can be approved without a public hearing).

Second dwelling units are permitted in all residential zones in Laguna Hills pursuant to Section 9-68 of the Zoning Ordinance. Section 9-68 contains the following standards and criteria for accessory living quarters/second unit housing:

- The second unit is not intended for sale and may be rented.
- The lot must contain at least, but not more than, one single-family unit.
- Attached second units shall not exceed 30 percent of the existing dwelling unit living area.
- Detached second units shall not exceed one 1,200 sq. ft. of floor area.
- The second unit shall be compatible in materials, colors, and architecture to the primary dwelling unit.
- Second units must conform to development standards and all other applicable requirements of the zone in which developed.
- One parking spot per unit is required.
- The owner of both units shall occupy either the primary or the second unit.
- The owner shall record a use restriction with the Orange County Recorder's Office so that all present and future property owners

understand the obligations and limitations of these standards and criteria (Section 9-68 of the Zoning Ordinance).

The City's criteria and standards for second unit developments are not considered overly excessive. As of May 2013, four accessory living quarters/second units have been constructed in the City.

## **SINGLE-ROOM OCCUPANCY HOUSING FACILITY**

The City's Zoning Ordinance defines a single room occupancy housing facility (SRO) as a housing type consisting of one room, often with cooking facilities and with private or shared bathroom facilities. As of May 2013, no SRO has been constructed in the City.

The City provides opportunities for the location of SROs in nonresidential districts. SROs are permitted in the VC and MXU districts with a conditional use permit subject only to those restrictions or conditions that may apply to other residential uses of the same type in the same zone. In the OP, FC, and CC districts, SROs are permitted with a site development permit. Site development permits involving projects that have four or fewer residential units and non-residential uses of less than 20,000 square feet may be processed by the Community Development Director administratively. Anything above those thresholds must go to the City Council acting as the Planning Agency. However, whether a project goes to the City Council or is approved by staff (administratively), the findings are the same:

1. That the site design complies with standards of the development code;
2. That the site is suitable for the proposed development;
3. That the project is consistent with the general plan and applicable design guidelines;
4. That the site design and structural components are appropriate for the site and function of the proposed uses.

The findings for a site development permit do not require "that the use be compatible with surrounding uses/properties." Therefore, it is not considered discretionary from a "use" perspective.

Chapter 9-72 of the Zoning Ordinance describes housing development incentives that are available to developers of affordable housing, which could include SROs. Incentives include both fiscal and procedural incentives, such as:

- A 50% reduction in application fees;

- Waiver or reduction in building permit fees;
- Financial assistance for acquisition of property, mortgage assistance, sale of housing bonds, rent subsidies, or provision of improvements to serve the site;
- Combining all required applications for one review hearing;
- Fast-tracking; and
- Providing priority processing and scheduling for review.

The procedural incentives noted above ensure priority processing of SROs. With the City's already streamlined review process (1-2 months for administrative and 2-3 months for discretionary projects) and the ability for priority processing, no governmental constraint to developing SROs exists in Laguna Hills.

## **COMMUNITY CARE FACILITIES (SIX OR FEWER INDIVIDUALS)**

Community care facilities for six or fewer individuals consist of the following per the City's Zoning Ordinance:

- Residential care facilities for the elderly;
- Drug abuse and alcoholism recovery facilities;
- Intermediate care facilities;
- Dependent and neglected children homes (foster homes);
- Social rehabilitation facility;
- Congregate living health facility;
- Facilities for people with HIV or AIDS;
- Homes for the mentally and physically disabled;
- Supportive housing facilities; and
- Transitional housing facilities; and
- Facilities for wards of the juvenile court.

These facilities are permitted by right in all residential zones, with the exception of facilities for wards of the juvenile court which require a conditional use permit.

## **COMMUNITY CARE FACILITIES (SEVEN OR MORE INDIVIDUALS)**

Table H-35 shows where various community care facilities for seven or more individuals may be permitted or conditionally permitted in Laguna Hills. The table also indicates when a conditional use permit may be required.

## **LARGE FAMILY DAY CARE HOMES**

Large family day care homes, for 7 to 14 children under the age of 10 years are conditionally permitted in all residential zones of the City.

## SMALL FAMILY DAY CARE HOMES

Small family day care homes for eight or fewer children are permitted by right in all of the City’s residential districts.

Table H-35 Required Permit for Community Care Facilities (≥ Seven Individuals)			
Land Use	Zones	Permitted	Permits Required
Large Family Day Care (14 children maximum)	All Residential Zones	C	CUP*
Day Care Center	OP VC MXU	C C C	CUP CUP CUP
Residential Care Facility for the Elderly	VC MXU	C C	CUP CUP
Drug Abuse and Alcoholism Recover Facility (Community Treatment/Rehabilitation Facility)	VC MXU	C C	CUP CUP
Dependent and Neglected Children Homes (Foster Homes)	VC MXU	C C	CUP CUP
Facilities for People with HIV or AIDS	VC MXU	C C	CUP CUP
Homes for the Mentally and Physically Disabled	VC MXU	C C	CUP CUP
Facilities for Wards of the Juvenile Court	VC MXU	C C	CUP CUP
Social Rehabilitation Facility	VC MXU C/PI	C C C	CUP CUP CUP
Intermediate Care Facility/Nursing Facility	VC MXU	C C	CUP CUP
Supportive Housing	All Residential Zones	C	CUP
Transitional Housing	All Residential Zones	C	CUP

P = Permitted; C = Conditional Use; CUP = Conditional Use Permit.

Zoning District Key:

OP = Office Professional

VC = Village Commercial

MXU = Mixed Use

C/PI = Community/Private Institution

\*Refer to Chapter 9-92 of the Laguna Hills Zoning Ordinance for special process requirements.

## TRANSITIONAL CARE FACILITIES/ EMERGENCY SHELTERS

The City's Zoning Ordinance provides definitions for "supportive housing," "transitional housing," and "emergency shelter" that are consistent with the California Health and Safety Code. Supportive housing and transitional housing for six or fewer individuals are treated as residential uses subject only to those restrictions that apply to other residential uses in the same zone.

The following community care facilities are located in the City of Laguna Hills as of January 31, 2008.

- Adult residential facility (developmentally disabled) - 1 facility
- Child care center (commercial) – 3 facilities
- Large family day care homes – 8 homes
- Small family day care homes – 32 homes
- Infant centers (commercial) – 1 facility
- Residential care for the elderly – 43 facilities
- Alcoholism or drug abuse recovery, residential (state licensed) – 1 facility
- Alcoholism or drug abuse recovery, commercial/office (state licensed) – 3 facilities
- Sober living homes – 2 homes

As noted above, the City does not require permits for community care facilities serving six or fewer individuals. Therefore, additional community care facilities may exist within the City.

In accordance with SB2, the Municipal Code was amended to allow emergency shelters "by right" within the defined emergency shelter overlay area of the Mixed Use (MXU) district subject to objective development standards without a conditional use permit or other discretionary approval. The MXU district encompasses approximately 284 acres, 20% (55 acres) of which meets the overlay criteria for emergency shelters sites (See Figure H-4a). The MXU district is served by transit and commercial services. Development Code Section 9-64.040.(D) establishes the following standards for emergency shelters:

1. An emergency shelter shall be located at least five hundred (500) feet from any residential use, public or private park, public or private K-12 school, church, or other religious institution.
2. An emergency shelter shall be located at least three hundred (300) feet from other emergency shelters.

3. The cumulative total of the number of beds provided by all emergency shelters established within the mixed use zone shall not exceed twenty (20).
4. The maximum stay at the emergency shelter shall not exceed one hundred and eighty (180) consecutive days.
5. Off-street parking shall be provided in the ratio of one space for every three beds, plus one parking space for each staff member.
6. A client intake and waiting area shall be provided that is at least two hundred (200) square feet in size. A client intake and waiting area less than two hundred (200) square feet in size may be provided if it can be demonstrated that the size of the intake and waiting area is sufficient to accommodate the demand for the facility.
7. Lighting shall be provided in accordance with the standards set in Sections 9-40.170 and 9-44.060(I) of the Development Code.
8. An operational plan shall be provided prior to the issuance of a certificate of use and occupancy for review and approval by the Community Development Director. At minimum, the plan shall contain provisions addressing the following:
  - a. Security and Safety. The plan shall include provision of on-site management, facility rules, and procedures for maintaining a safe environment within and outside the shelter.
  - b. Management of Outdoor Areas. The plan shall describe procedures for admittance and discharge of clients, and describe measures aimed at minimizing the congregation of clients outside the shelter when not accepting clients.
  - c. Staff Training. The plan shall describe the staffing required for the shelter and outline required training programs that provide staff with the knowledge and skills to assist clients in obtaining permanent shelter.
  - d. Referral Service. The plan shall include provision of a kiosk providing information on other programs available to clients for obtaining permanent shelter, mental and health counseling, job placement, educational, legal, and other supportive services.

Factors 1 and 2 define the overlay area, and parcels meeting these criteria are shown in Figure H-4a.

A critical component of SB 2 is identifying the City's need for an

emergency shelter. Many jurisdictions determine this by estimating the homeless population using “point-in-time” counts of the number of people using existing shelters within their jurisdiction on a given day and time and averaging the data. Since Laguna Hills does not operate its own shelter or currently have an operating private, faith-based or non-profit shelter in the city to draw data from, the City has relied on data provided by the County to estimate the homeless population in Laguna Hills. Each year, the County conducts a point-in-time count of the homeless population at its shelters and conducts a demographic survey which includes a question about where the individual was living prior to becoming homeless. The Laguna Hills 2008-2014 Housing Element cites a 2008 survey, which showed that a total of 20 people served by Orange County shelters reported living in Laguna Hills prior to becoming homeless. The most recent survey available from 2011 indicates that this number has since dropped to eight. However, the more conservative need of 20 persons was used as the basis for planning for emergency shelters since the County’s point-in-time survey is taken once per year and a need of 20 persons will better take into account fluctuations in the homeless population throughout the year.

The standards for the MXU overlay area do not significantly constrain the location of emergency shelters within the MXU district because the overlay area contains approximately 55 acres of land and more than a sufficient number of parcels to accommodate the City’s need for emergency shelters.

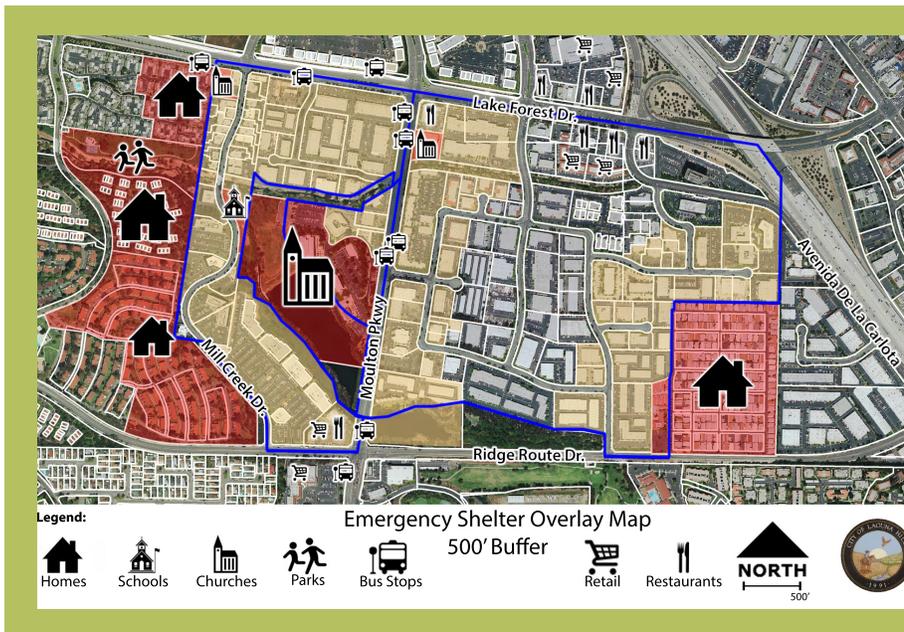


Figure H-4a  
Emergency Shelter Overlay Map

The MXU Zone contains primarily offices and businesses. No vacant land is available in this zone for construction of a new shelter. However, as identified in the City’s Land Use Element, the Mixed Use Zone contains underutilized parcels with one-story, tilt-up buildings. One-story tilt-up concrete buildings are very easy to convert to other uses, including emergency shelters and transitional housing. Additionally, larger and better designed buildings could be built, which would also provide opportunities for emergency shelters. This area is also served by transit and is located within an area providing significant employment resources.

## FARM WORKER HOUSING

No land within the City of Laguna Hills is designated for agricultural use. The 2000 U.S. Census identified zero persons employed in farm, fishing, or forestry occupations. Therefore, Laguna Hills has no specific need for farm worker housing.

## Housing for Persons with Disabilities

**Land Use Controls:** The Lanterman Development Disabilities Service Act (Sections 5115 and 5116) of the California Welfare and Institutions Code declares that mentally and physically disabled persons are entitled to live in normal residential surroundings. The use of property for the care of six or fewer persons with disabilities is a residential use for the purposes of zoning. A state-authorized or certified family care home, foster home, or group home serving six or fewer persons with disabilities or dependent and neglected children on a 24-hour-a-day basis is considered a residential use that is permitted in all residential zones.

As demonstrated in Table H-34 and discussions above, the City’s Zoning Ordinance complies with the Lanterman Act and permits small community care facilities (including adult and senior residential facilities, as well as small family homes) in all residential zones. Facilities for more than six persons are conditionally permitted in most the VC and MXU districts (Table H-34). Potential conditions for approval of a conditional use permit may include hours of operation, security, loading requirements, and management. Conditions would be similar to those for other similar uses in the same zones and would not serve to constrain the development of such facilities.

**Definition of Family:** The City’s Zoning Ordinance defines “family” as a group of individuals not necessarily related by blood, marriage,

adoption, or guardianship living together in a dwelling unit as a single housekeeping unit under a common housekeeping management plan based on an intentionally structured relationship providing organization and stability. This definition is not considered restrictive or constraining to the development of housing for persons with disabilities.

**Reasonable Accommodation:** Under state and federal laws, local governments are required to provide “reasonable accommodation” to persons with disabilities when exercising planning and zoning powers. The City has a formal policy for processing requests for reasonable accommodation for persons with disabilities and special housing needs.

## Development Fees and Entitlements

Various types of development impact fees and entitlement fees to cover the cost of processing permits to provide necessary services and facilities may add substantially to the cost of housing. These include road assessments, park, and permit/development processing fees. The City does not charge library development impact fees. Additionally, an applicant pays water, storm drain, and sewer fees directly to the provider(s). Development impact fees can be a constraint on housing development and compromise market rate affordability because the additional cost borne by developers contributes to overall increased housing unit cost. However, the fees are necessary to maintain adequate planning services and other public services and facilities in the City.

A typical new, single family unit that requires no discretionary review from the City would only be required to pay the City public park in-lieu fee of \$7,392. An infill, 4-unit, multifamily residential development project outside of the Urban Village area that required approval of a Major Site Development Permit would cost approximately \$8,392 per unit (\$4,000 site development permit deposit plus \$7,392 per unit for the public park in-lieu fee). In the Urban Village area, a recently approved 489 unit multifamily residential project (with mixed use commercial) will pay approximately \$7,902 per unit in development and entitlement fees (approximately \$160 per unit in entitlement processing fees, \$7,392 per unit for the public park in-lieu fee, and approximately \$350 per unit for the urban village traffic impact fee).

The City’s fee schedule is provided in Table H-36. Table H-37 compares various planning fees in surrounding jurisdictions with those in Laguna Hills. Planning fees in Laguna Hills are in most cases consistent with or lower than those in surrounding jurisdictions and, therefore, do not present a constraint to development.

**Table H-36**  
**Planning and Development Fees**

Impact Fees and Exactions	Fee/Deposit	
	Single-family	Multifamily
Roads (per unit costs)		
San Joaquin Hills Transportation Corridor	\$4,902	\$2855
Moulton Parkway	\$361	\$211
CARITS <sup>1</sup> Zone 2D	\$1751	\$1401
School (Saddleback Valley Unified School District Fees)	\$3.20/sq. ft. on new residential development except for areas already within community facilities districts.	
Water and Storm Drain Improvement Fees	Applicant pays directly to provider	
Sewer Impact Fees	Applicant pays directly to provider	
Processing and Permit Procedures		
Annexation/Detachment	\$6,000 deposit	
Conditional Use Permit	\$4,000 deposit	
Development Agreement	\$10,000 deposit	
Environmental Impact Report	\$10,000 deposit	
Extension of Time	\$1,000 actual cost deposit	
General Plan Amendment	\$6,000 deposit	
Lot Line Adjustment	\$1,000 deposit	
Precise Plan (Mixed Use District Only)	\$4,000 deposit	
Preliminary Project Review	\$600 set fee	
Site Development Minor (Administrative)	\$800 deposit	
Site Development Major (Planning Agency)	\$4,000 deposit	
Specific Plan	\$10,000 deposit	
Specific Plan Amendment	\$5,000 deposit	
Tentative Tract Map	\$6,000 deposit	
Tentative Parcel Map	\$4,500 deposit	
Variance to Planning Agency	\$3,500 deposit	
Zone Change	\$6,000 deposit	

Source: City of Laguna Hills Community Development Department 2013.

1 CARITS = Coastal Area Road Improvements and Traffic Signals Fee Program.

**Table H-37**  
**Planning Application Fees — Surrounding Jurisdictions**

Planning Case Type	Laguna Hills	Irvine	Lake Forest	Laguna Niguel	Mission Viejo
Conditional Use Permit	\$4,000 deposit	\$12,000 deposit; \$1,500 minor deposit	\$6,500 deposit	\$3,800 deposit; \$1,600 minor deposit	\$2,500
General Plan Amendment	\$6,000 deposit	\$12,000 deposit	\$10,000 deposit	\$5,000 deposit	\$5,000 deposit
Site Development Permit <sup>1</sup>	\$800 minor (administrative) deposit; \$4,000 major (Planning Agency), \$3,000 deposit	No comparable permit	\$2,500 administrative review; \$7,000 discretionary review	\$4,400 deposit; \$2,000 minor deposit	\$2,500 administrative action; \$4,200 planning commission action
Tentative Tract Map	\$6,000 deposit	\$4,000 deposit	\$8,000 deposit	\$1,425 screencheck; \$2,925 filing + \$20/each number of lots	\$3,900 filing
Variance	\$3,500 deposit	\$1,500 deposit	\$6,000 deposit	\$3,800 deposit	\$2,100 single-family dwelling; \$4,500 all others
Zone Change	\$6,000 deposit	\$12,000 deposit	\$10,000 deposit	\$5,000 deposit	\$5,000 deposit

Source: Cities of Laguna Hills, Irvine, Lake Forest, Laguna Niguel, Mission Viejo 2013.

<sup>1</sup> The City of Mission Viejo uses the term planned development permit, which is generally comparable to a site development permit in Irvine, Lake Forest, and Laguna Niguel.

## On- and Off-site Improvement Requirements

The City adopted the County of Orange subdivision ordinance and manual as the City's subdivision ordinance upon incorporation on December 20, 1991.

Commonly required on-site improvements for residential projects include the following:

- Internal circulation system – public/private roads, drives, curbs, gutters, vehicle (including fire protection and emergency vehicle) turnarounds
- Water and wastewater disposal systems

- Utilities systems
- Walls/fencing
- Landscaping
- Recreational facilities for multifamily projects
- Parking facility (covered/uncovered)

Commonly required off-site improvements for residential projects include the following:

- Traffic signalization
- Roadway improvements
- Water and wastewater disposal systems
- Schools (fee program)

The City's few vacant parcels are located in the Nellie Gail Ranch area, where there are likely to be very few site improvement requirements. Therefore, the costs of on-site and off-site improvements do not serve as constraints on development.

The City's street improvement requirement and/or dedication requirements are determined as part of the process for a tentative subdivision map and/or conditions of approval. Improvement and/or dedication requirements must be consistent with public streets in the area. The requirements are necessary to achieve the health and safety requirements of the City and are not considered a constraint to affordable housing development.

## Building Codes and Enforcement

Building and safety codes are adopted to preserve public health and safety and ensure the construction of safe and decent housing. These codes and standards also have the potential to increase the cost of housing construction or maintenance.

The City of Laguna Hills has adopted the 2010 California Building Code, which establishes construction standards for all residential buildings. The City amends the code as needed to further define requirements based on the unique local conditions. The code is designed to protect the public health, safety, and welfare of Laguna Hills' residents. Code enforcement in the City is performed proactively and on a complaint basis.

# Processing and Permit Procedures

The City's Zoning Ordinance defines requisite discretionary permits and establishes requirements for submission of applications for the discretionary permits. The City's Community Development Department prepares and maintains information and materials for each permit required by the Zoning Ordinance. These materials include application forms, questionnaires, and other information that addresses content of applications, fee information, and general processing procedures and requirements.

The City's established processing and permit procedures are designed to expedite project approvals to avoid unnecessary timing constraints on development. For a typical project, Community Development Department staff conduct an initial discussion with applicants/developers and provide information about the subject property's zoning, permitted uses, development standards, approval authority (administrative or discretionary), and required environmental documentation. During the next step of the process, initial plan review, Planning Staff review the project site plan and determine if the project complies with the Zoning Code, development standards and design guidelines. Project applicants then formally submit materials to the Community Development Department, where Planning Staff has 30 days to determine the completeness of the application. Once the application is deemed complete, the next step, plan check, is initiated. Initial plan check takes approximately 3 weeks. Plan check two, if necessary, takes 1–2 weeks, while subsequent plan checks require approximately 1 week of processing time.

Those discretionary permits pertaining most closely to provision of housing affordable to low and moderate income and special needs populations are general plan amendments, precise (specific) plans, conditional use permits, site development permits and variances. The permit, processing time, and approval bodies are described below. (Note that the Planning Agency refers to the City Council serving in its dual role as the planning commission, or hearing body for planning related matters.)

- **General Plan Amendments** – A general plan amendment may be proposed to change general plan land use designations. A general plan amendment may require a processing time of 12 months or more, depending in part on the environmental determination accompanying the amendment processing. The City Council is the

approval body for both major and minor general plan amendments, while the Community Development Director approves minor, technical general plan amendments.

- **Precise (Specific) Plan** – A precise (specific) plan is required for developments within the Mixed Use and Neighborhood Mixed Use districts whenever more than one variety of land use is proposed for a single property or a limited collection of abutting properties. Processing time is approximately 6 to 12 months or more, depending in part on the environmental determination. The City Council approves specific plans and amendments to specific plans.
- **Conditional Use Permit** – A conditional use permit is used to evaluate uses that may have a moderate to high potential for adverse impact to adjacent or abutting uses or the surrounding community due to operating characteristics. Processing time is approximately 3 to 4 months. Conditional use permits are approved by the Planning Agency.
- **Site Development Permit** – A site development permit is used to evaluate site planning and design considerations and is the lowest level planning permit for development projects. A site development permit is required for most development projects, is issued in absence of any other specified permit or approval, and may be required in addition to other approvals. A minor site development permit takes 4 to 6 weeks to review. A major site development permit takes 2 to 3 months to review and requires that a noticed public hearing be held prior to a decision on the application by the Planning Agency. The notice must be published/ provided at least 10 days prior to the public hearing. Minor site development permits are approved by the Community Development Director, while major site development permits are approved by the Planning Agency.

The Community Development Director has the authority to review and approve all site development permits meeting the following criteria:

- Developments of nonresidential uses and or buildings not exceeding twenty thousand (20,000 square feet whether in one or more structures on a single parcel;
- Four or fewer residential structures or dwellings in a single project;
- Temporary uses not involving use or public facilities or rights-of-way;
- Master sign programs for properties containing less than five nonresidential units;
- Change plans, or minor changes to any plan or permit previously approved provided such change does not exceed ten percent of the gross square footage of the original project;
- Site development permits for retaining walls that are greater than thirty (30) inches in height.

The Planning Agency has jurisdiction and review authority over all site development permits exceeding the criteria specified above. Additionally, the Community Development Director may forward any project over which he or she has authority or which he or she shall deem of sufficient interest on a broader land use policy scale to the Agency for their consideration. The Community Development Director reviews and makes recommendations regarding all site development permits forwarded to the Agency and insures all environmental and notice requirements are met.

Prior to issuing a site development permit, the Community Development Director or Planning Agency shall make the following findings:

- That the site design complies with standards of the development code;
- That the site is suitable for the proposed development;
- That the project is consistent with the general plan and applicable design guidelines; and
- That the site design and structural components are appropriate for the site and function of the proposed uses.

The findings relate back to whether or not the site is suitable for development and is limited to physical development of the site. Since the SDP process relies exclusively on the Development Code for determining whether or not the project complies with the Development Code, it also incorporates Chapter 9-72 of the Development Code which identifies housing development incentives available to a developer who may be seeking to develop affordable housing. These incentives are completely consistent with state law.

- **Variance** – A variance may be granted from any development standard or criteria affecting establishment of a use in a zoning district but may not be granted to approve a use which would otherwise be prohibited by a zoning district. A variance takes approximately 3 weeks to 3 months to review. The Planning Agency is the approval body for variances.

## SITE DEVELOPMENT PERMIT

For residential projects, a major site development permit that is approved by the Planning Agency is required as follows:

- Estate Residential district – manufactured housing
- Low Density Residential district – manufactured housing
- Medium-Low Density Residential district – manufactured housing

and multifamily dwellings

- Medium Density Residential district – manufactured housing and multifamily dwellings
- High Density Residential district – manufactured housing, multifamily dwellings, and single-family attached dwellings

The City has previously eliminated the conditional use permit process for the residential projects discussed above. Instead, the City uses the site development permit process to assess site planning and design issues.

## DISCRETIONARY PERMIT(S) PROCESSING TIMES

Laguna Hills does not have a separate Planning Commission (the City Council acts as its own Planning Agency) so the processing of all projects is more streamlined than in other municipalities. Permit processing times differ for various discretionary permits in the City. Typically in Laguna Hills, a project receives a final decision within 2 to 3 months of having submitted a complete application. Projects requiring an EIR generally take 6 to 9 months.

A general plan amendment may take 12 or more months to process should an environmental impact report be required. A precise plan (specific plan) may take between 6 to 12 months to process, depending on the required and appropriate environmental documentation. The precise plan is required for developments with more than one proposed land use for a single property or for a limited collection of abutting properties. The processing time for a conditional use permit is approximately 2 to 3 months, unless detailed environmental documentation is required that would lengthen the processing time. This permit evaluates uses that may adversely impact adjacent or abutting uses or the surrounding community due to operating characteristics of the proposed use. A major or discretionary (Planning Agency) site development permit takes 2 to 3 months to process in the City. This permit type is required for some residential (and nonresidential) development projects and is issued in absence of another specified permit or approval. A site development permit may be required in addition to other discretionary or ministerial permits. A discretionary variance application takes 2 to 3 months to process. The Planning Agency may grant a variance from any development standard or criteria affecting the establishment of a use in a zoning district, but may not be granted to approve a use that would otherwise be prohibited by a zoning district.

As indicated above, the processing time for various land use actions within the City depends on the type of development or action requested and whether environmental documentation is required and the scope of

that environmental documentation. Each development project does not necessarily require multiple discretionary actions (i.e., small scale projects consistent with general plan and zoning designations do not generally require general plan amendments, rezones, or variances).

The City does not have a backlog of development applications and is able to process applications in a timely manner. As already indicated, the City has very little vacant land available for development. Remaining parcels are designated as estate residential within the Nellie Gail Ranch area of the City. According to the City's Building Division, the majority of single-family residential development applications involve redevelopment/demolition of existing single-family homes and construction of much larger single-family homes. The City will continue to pursue the extension of affordability controls for 51 units, either in the existing Rancho Moulton housing development or as part of new or redevelopment activities in the Via Lomas area or other areas of the City. The City will annually prepare a "Risk of Assessment" report provided by the California Housing Partnership Corporation (CHPC). Projects determined high risk are those most likely to decline continued federal assistance because they currently have rents below market rate(s) and are owned by profit-motivated entities. Should a notice of intent to convert to market rate be filed, the City will work with potential purchasers to preserve 51 units in the existing development or in new development by finding an interested non-profit entity and securing funding to acquire and preserve the property. The City will use HCD resources listed on the HCD website, as well as other resources, to locate potential funding sources as needed for the preservation of affordable housing. The City will work with tenants of at-risk units and provide them with education regarding tenant rights, notification procedures, and conversion procedures. The City will also provide tenants in at-risk projects information from the Orange County Housing Authority regarding Section 8 rental assistance.

## Processing Times for New Housing

As indicated in the Housing Resources section, underutilized land in Laguna Hills will be used to meet the City's Regional Housing Need Assessment requirements. The underutilized areas include the Urban Village Specific Plan area and the Alicia Gateway. Within the UVSP area, high density, multiple family housing or single family attached housing can be constructed. Both multiple family and single family attached projects in the Urban Village area are permitted uses, subject only to a site development permit. A major site development permit is required for five or more residential units. A minor site development permit is required for four or fewer residential structures or dwellings in a single project. Development requests for the UVSP area would

likely involve more than five units; hence, a major site development permit would be required. A major site development permit would require 2 to 3 months for approval by the Planning Agency; 3 to 4 months if a negative declaration prepared; and, 6 to 9 months if an EIR is required. A minor site development permit would require 1 to 2 months for approval because limited environmental review is required and the Community Development Department Director is the approval authority.

Within the Alicia Gateway area, the existing Mixed Use Zone requires a conditional use permit for multiple-family housing and a site development permit for single-family attached housing. The processing time is typically the same for a major site development permit and a conditional use permit.

The City's processing and permit procedures do not appear to unduly constrain the development of housing. Nevertheless, the City will continue to monitor its development review procedures to ensure a streamlined processing procedure. Section 9-92 of the City's Zoning Ordinance details the specific application process and submittal requirements for various land use actions in the City.

## Measure M

In November 1990, Orange County voters approved the Revised Traffic Improvement and Growth Management Ordinance (Measure M). Measure M implemented a half-cent local transportation sales tax to fund transportation improvements. The Measure M sales tax includes an apportionment to local jurisdictions for street maintenance and improvements. The Orange County Transportation Authority (OCTA) is the agency responsible for administering proceeds of the Measure M sales tax.

On November 7, 2006, Orange County voters approved the renewal of Measure M, for an additional 30 years beginning in 2011 until 2041. Renewed Measure M is expected to raise \$11.8 billion to improve Orange County's transportation system.

Every year, OCTA determines if a local jurisdiction is eligible to receive Measure M turnback funds. Prior to the renewal of Measure M, the City received approximately \$500,000 per year in turnback funds. Under the Measure M Renewal, the City anticipates receiving an increased allocation of \$750,000 per year beginning in 2011. In addition, the Measure M renewal will enable the City to compete for discretionary Measure M funding, for which the City has historically been very successful. To date, the City of Laguna Hills has received approximately \$11.4 million from Measure M funds to improve its

transportation. Among the several requirements a local jurisdiction must satisfy to receive turnback funds, they must be in compliance with the requirements of a Countywide Growth Management Program. Each local jurisdiction is required to produce a Growth Management Element as part of its participation in the Countywide Growth Management Program. The Growth Management Element must contain eight elements. Three of these elements relate directly to the Laguna Hills Housing Element: a development phasing program; a development mitigation program; and a program addressing balanced housing options and employment opportunities within the City. The Laguna Hills General Plan Growth Management Element has as its goal to reduce traffic congestion, mitigate traffic impacts of new development by requiring new development to pay its fair share toward local and regional roadway/transportation improvements, and tie timing of new development to availability of facilities needed to support that development.

The City of Laguna Hills has based its approach to the Measure M requirement for adoption of a Growth Management Element on the Model Growth Management Element developed jointly by the County of Orange and the Orange County Division of the League of California Cities. The Growth Management Element of the Laguna Hills General Plan encompasses all required policy provisions necessary to comply with Measure M. The City Growth Management Element contains an implementation plan to ensure that required programs (Development Mitigation Program; Development Phasing Program; Annual Monitoring Program) in the Growth Management Element are applied consistently to the City development review process.

Implementation of the City of Laguna Hills Growth Management Element – Growth Management Program will result in a more equitable balance between housing opportunities and employment opportunities within the City, which will allow residents to live closer to their jobs and thereby reduce commuting distance and times. A complementary commitment of development mitigation, development phasing, and performance monitoring is necessary to achieve a coordinated land use development and transportation infrastructure. The City of Laguna Hills will ensure that the actions described below will be applied to applicable development projects and a citywide assessment of land use development/transportation infrastructure capacity will be conducted in conjunction with fee program implementation and capital improvement program development.

Development Mitigation Program – To compensate the public for any increased burden on public services attributed to new development, jurisdictions have the authority to impose reasonable fees or required

related improvements. The County of Orange and the City of Laguna Hills have imposed development fees on development transportation improvements within the City. The City of Laguna Hills Development Mitigation Program requires that development proposals be reviewed so new development may pay its share of costs associated with that development on existing and planned transportation facilities.

Development Phasing Program – The City of Laguna Hills will review traffic levels of service on City arterials, contrast operating levels of service with General Plan performance standards, and program necessary improvements in conjunction with the annual development of its Capital Improvement Program. This information will be shared with participating jurisdictions in applicable Growth Management Area Interjurisdictional Planning Forums.

The City of Laguna Hills will also maintain adopted traffic performance standards by outlining and coordinating necessary transportation improvements, including a 7-Year Capital Improvements Program, and Traffic Improvement/Public Facilities Development Agreements consistent with the Growth Management Element, and its implementing ordinances, plans, and programs. In addition, the City is an active participant in interjurisdictional forums for Orange County jurisdictions that address area-wide transportation improvement projects. Furthermore, the City of Laguna Hills endorses alternative transportation modes and strategies to reduce vehicular trips and has adopted programs to reduce trip generation, including a Transportation Demand Management Ordinance to assist in reducing trips to and from employment.

The goals and implementation programs described above enable the City of Laguna Hills to attain the most equitable balance possible between housing opportunities and employment opportunities within the City. This balance is maintained further by planning and housing opportunities affordable to low income and moderate income families within the Urban Village Specific Plan area of Laguna Hills because this additional housing opportunity is located close to a collection of land uses (existing and planned) that are employment intensive. The urban village context represents land uses within the area designated on the City of Laguna Hills General Plan land use map as Village Commercial that would create pedestrian-oriented mixed use retail, office service, and multifamily residential area.

## Regulatory Concessions and Incentives

To mitigate the impacts of government policies, rules, and regulations on the development and improvement of housing, the City offers a number of regulatory concessions and incentives to help offset the costs.

In 2005, the City amended its Zoning Ordinance to define specific housing development incentives, to implement General Plan Housing Element objectives, including incentives for the production of housing for very low to moderate income, and senior citizens in accordance with state density bonus law under Section 65915 of the Government Code. Chapter 9-72 of the City's Zoning Ordinance enumerates the housing development incentives approved by the City.

The City offers a density bonus and/or concessions or incentives for: (1) at least 10 percent of the total units of a housing development are affordable to lower income households; (2) at least 5 percent of the total units of a housing development are affordable to very low income households; (3) senior citizen housing developments; and (4) at least 10 percent of the total units in a condominium project or in a planned development are affordable to moderate income households.

The City also offers a density bonus for condo conversions, where 33 percent of the total units of the proposed condominium project are affordable to low or moderate income households, or 15 percent of the total units are affordable to low income households.

The City also provides opportunities to develop housing in certain nonresidential districts of the City, which includes boarding homes, community care facilities, emergency shelters, single room occupancy housing facilities, and mobile home parks. Chapter 9-72.030(C) of the Zoning Ordinance details the requirements and location of housing in nonresidential districts throughout the City.

Fiscal incentives available to developers of affordable housing include waiver or reduction in fees, low interest loans or subsidies, and financial or mortgage assistance for acquisition of property.

Procedural incentives available to developers of affordable housing include consolidation of applications for consideration at one hearing, fast tracking of all housing development projects, and priority processing and scheduling for review of housing projects.

## Market Constraints

Locally and regionally there are several constraints that hinder the ability to accommodate affordable housing demand in Laguna Hills. The high cost of land, rising development costs, and neighborhood

opposition make it expensive for developers to build affordable housing. These constraints may result in housing that is not affordable to low and moderate income households or may render residential construction economically infeasible for developers.

## LAND COSTS

The cost of land is another major impediment to production of affordable housing. Land costs are influenced by many variables, including scarcity and developable density, location, unique features, and the availability of public utilities. The cost of land in Laguna Hills reflects its proximity to major employment centers and the rapid appreciation of land cost throughout Southern California in the past decade. Besides the few vacant remaining parcels within the Nellie Gail Ranch section of the City, vacant land available for development of any type is nonexistent within the City.

## CONSTRUCTION AND LABOR COSTS

The cost of construction is dependent primarily on the cost of labor and materials. Construction factors such as type of construction, custom versus tract development, materials, site conditions, finishing details, amenities, square footage, and structural configuration can increase the cost of housing. Table H-38 summarizes the estimated construction costs based on type of development in the City of Laguna Hills.

Future costs are difficult to predict given the cyclical fluctuations in demand and supply that in large part are created by fluctuations in the state and national economies. Such fluctuations do not usually result in favoring development in one geographic area over another and, therefore, are not considered a major constraint to housing production.

Table H-38  
Construction Cost Estimates (2007)

Development Type	Cost per Square Foot
Single-family Residential	\$100 - \$1125
Townhomes/Condominiums	\$150 - \$180
Multifamily (garden style apartments)	\$200
Multifamily (stacked flats with structured parking)	\$250

Source: RBF Consulting as cited in the City of Orange 2006-2014 Housing Element.

## FINANCING

### Construction Financing

Prior to the recession of the early 1990s, and significant changes in lending practices following the savings and loan scandal of the late 1980s, developers could receive loans for 100 percent or more of a project's estimated future value. Now, construction and permanent loans are almost never available for over 75 percent of the future project value for multifamily developments. This means that developers must usually supply at least 25 percent of the project value.

The financing of a residential project, particularly affordable housing, is quite complex. No firm threshold determines an acceptable "return" on investment or the maximum equity contribution at which an otherwise feasible project becomes infeasible. Upfront cash commitment may not be problematic for some developers as long as the project can generate an acceptable net cash flow to meet the acceptable returns. Although financing costs impact project feasibility, these problems are generally equal across jurisdictions and thus are not a unique constraint to housing production in Laguna Hills.

### Mortgage Financing

The availability of financing affects a person's ability to purchase a home or to perform necessary maintenance and repairs. The availability of financing can also serve as a constraint to housing production. Many communities have experienced a pattern where households looking to purchase a home have had more difficulty in obtaining financing in lower income neighborhoods. The Community Reinvestment Act was passed in an effort to address this issue. In tandem with the Home Mortgage Disclosure Act (HMDA), lenders must now disclose information on the disposition of home loan applications by the income, gender, and race/ethnicity of the applicants.

The Federal Financial Institutions Council (FFIEC) compiles HMDA data according to the income characteristics of the census tracts where the dwelling units are located, based on the following FFIEC definitions. Income limits are determined based upon the MFI for the relevant Metropolitan Statistical Area (MSA). Low to moderate income tracts have a MFI below 80 percent of the MFI for the MSA. Middle income tracts have a median family income from 80 to 120 percent of the MFI for the MSA. Finally, upper income tract have a MFI above 120 percent of the MFI for the MSA.

Table H-39 illustrates the disposition of home purchase loans by census tract based upon information provided by the FFIEC for loan

applications in 2011. During 2011, 404 applications were filed for home purchase loans in the City of Laguna Hills. It is important to note that in many cases census tracts are not contiguous with the City's jurisdictional boundary. Therefore, some census tracts were excluded from this analysis because they contain a preponderance of nonresidential uses or contain only small geographic areas within the City of Laguna Hills and much larger geographic areas located within another jurisdiction.

Overall, the upper income census tracts showed the highest loan origination rate (68 percent).

Because income is often a limiting factor in securing home purchase loans, the percentage of loan originations was lower in both the middle and the low/moderate income census tracts, at 61 percent and 63 percent, respectively. Denial rates were 15 percent, 14 percent, and 23 percent, in the upper, middle, and low/moderate income census tracts, respectively.

Table H-39  
Disposition of Home Purchase Loans by Census Tract

Census Tract	Tract Income Level	Total Applications	% Originated <sup>1</sup>	% Approved but not Accepted	% Denied	% Other <sup>2</sup>
0423.27	Upper	96	66	6	17	11
0423.28	Upper	35	60	11	20	8
0423.33	Upper	36	78	5	8	8
Total Upper Income		167	68	7	15	9
0423.07	Middle	75	69	4	8	19
0626.21	Middle	105	53	15	20	11
Total Middle Income		180	61	10	14	15
0626.25	Low/Moderate	57	61	9	23	7
Total Low/Moderate Income		57	61	9	23	7
<b>City Total</b>		<b>404</b>	<b>63</b>	<b>9</b>	<b>52</b>	<b>10</b>

1. Originated applications are those approved by the lenders and bought by the applicants.

2. "Other" includes applications that were withdrawn by the applicants and those closed by the lenders due to incomplete information.

Source: Home Mortgage Disclosure Act (HMDA) data for 2011, FFIEC.

## Troubled Subprime Loans and Foreclosures

The growing use of alternative mortgage products (graduated payment mortgages, variable and adjustable rate mortgages, interest-only loans, "stated income" loans with no income verification, zero down payment loans, etc.) has allowed more individuals to qualify for home loans.

Loans with low initial payments often had provisions for substantial payment increases after several years (usually between 1 and 3 years). These loan products enticed many investors into the single-family market in the Orange County region, including Laguna Hills. The increasing availability of these loan products also allowed homebuilders to qualify many more households for home purchase and provided more business opportunities for virtually every profession linked to the homebuilding and residential real estate markets (mortgage brokers, real estate agents, title companies, etc.).

Rapidly rising housing prices since the late 1990s provided homebuyers and investors a sense of security that, even if loan payments adjusted upward significantly after an initial period, the growth in home equity would allow the borrower to either refinance or resell the home and thus avoid financial difficulties. The ability to “grow” one’s way out of potential financial trouble with equity growth changed dramatically after 2005, when home prices began to level off and then decline in many parts of the Orange County region for both new and existing homes.

Many borrowers who purchased homes in the past 2 years, particularly those with subprime loans, found that they owed more on their homes than their homes were worth. The changing mortgage market also affected borrowers without subprime loans in more expensive housing markets in California. In these more expensive markets (such as Laguna Hills), borrowers have to qualify for “jumbo” loans—relatively large loans that are not federally backed. A jumbo mortgage is a loan amount above conventional conforming loan limits set by Fannie Mae (FNMA) and Freddie Mac (FHLMC), federally chartered financial institutions that purchase the bulk of residential mortgages in the United States. Individuals who, 2 or 3 years ago, could qualify to purchase high-priced homes with jumbo loans have found it increasingly difficult to find willing lenders. They set a limit on the maximum dollar value of any mortgage they will purchase from an individual lender.

The confluence of flattening or declining home prices and the growing number of subprime and alternative loans resulted in a spike in defaults on home loans beginning in 2007. The number of defaults continued rising through 2008 and began to decline after the volume of troubled subprime and alternative mortgages funded between 2004 and 2006 resolved (either through refinancing, the sale of homes with troubled mortgages, or foreclosures). In 2011, almost forty percent of home sales were distressed sales in Laguna Hills. In January of 2013, the percentage of distressed sales made up less than ten percent of total sales in Laguna Hills.

The American Community Survey estimates that between 2009-2011,

approximately 50 percent of Orange County homeowners spent more than 30 percent of their gross income on housing. The high percentage of homeowners spending a disproportionate percentage of income on housing combined with a large number of troubled subprime loans suggest that homebuyers in the Orange County region will continue to face near-term challenges in making mortgage payments.

## Environmental Constraints

Laguna Hills is impacted by various environmental hazards that include steep slopes/hillsides, flooding, and earthquakes.

**Hillsides:** The City has special development regulations that apply to all property within the City having a slope gradient, whether natural or manufactured, of 15 percent or greater.

**Flooding:** Portions of the City's Open Space – 2 Drainage Facilities District may be located in the flood plain overlay zone established by the Federal Emergency Management Administration (FEMA) maps. The City does not allow any permanent building or structure development to occur within a floodplain except those that meet FEMA standards and criteria.

**Earthquakes:** There are no active or potentially active faults known within the City of Laguna Hills. However, the active Newport Inglewood Fault Zone is 3 miles southwest of the City.

Development in areas with known hazards must ensure that adequate precaution and mitigation are afforded to protect public health and safety. No vacant, developable land and no infill development is planned in the City that is located in proximity to areas subject to flooding or in areas subject to special hillside development regulations. Potential infill or redevelopment sites within the City are located in areas that are generally level. Infill and/or redevelopment activities within Laguna Hills would be subject to seismic activity, as is all of Southern California.

## Infrastructure Constraints

Another factor adding to the cost of new home construction is the cost of providing adequate infrastructure, such as streets, curbs, gutters, sidewalks, water and sewer lines, and street lighting. The cost of these additions or improvements is borne by developers and then, to the extent possible, added to the cost of new housing units, impacting affordability.

As redevelopment or infill development occurs within the City, infrastructure may need to be upgraded to accommodate intensification which could present a constraint to development.

## Housing Resources

State housing element law requires that a local jurisdiction accommodate a share of the region's projected housing needs for the planning period. This share, called the Regional Housing Needs Allocation, is important because state law mandates that jurisdictions provide sufficient land to accommodate a variety of housing opportunities for all economic segments of the community. Compliance with this requirement is measured by the jurisdiction's ability to provide adequate land to accommodate the RHNA. This section summarizes the resources available for the development of housing in Laguna Hills. The analysis includes an evaluation of the adequacy of the City's land inventory to accommodate Laguna Hills' regional housing needs goals for the 2013-2021 planning period. This section also analyzes the financial resources available to support housing activities and the administrative resources available to assist in implementing the City's housing programs. Finally, this section documents the City's accomplishments during the 2008-2014, Housing Element planning period.

## Available Sites for Housing

State law requires communities to play an active role in ensuring that enough housing is available to meet expected population growth in the Southern California region. Approximately every 8 years, the SCAG is authorized to set forth specific goals for the amount of new housing that should be planned in each jurisdiction over a specified time period, in this case 2013-2021. This section discusses how Laguna Hills will plan for the provision of housing for all economic segments by 2021.

## FUTURE HOUSING NEED

For the 2013-2021 Housing Element cycle, HCD projected a need for 412,137 new housing units in a six-county Southern California region (encompassing the counties of Los Angeles, Orange, Riverside, San Bernardino, Ventura, and Imperial). The SCAG is responsible for allocating this future housing need to the 193 jurisdictions within the region. In this capacity, SCAG developed a Regional Housing Needs Assessment that determines each jurisdiction's share of the forecasted growth. Laguna Hills' share of the regional housing need for the period 2013-2021 is allocated by SCAG based on a number of factors,



including recent growth trends, income distribution, and capacity for future growth.

The RHNA is divided into the four income groups established by HCD. Pursuant to state housing element law, a jurisdiction must demonstrate in its housing element that it has adequate residential sites at appropriate densities and development standards to accommodate its RHNA.

According to the RHNA, Laguna Hills has a RHNA of two additional units. This need for new housing is divided into two income categories as follows:

- Extremely low income (0-30 percent MFI) - one unit
- Low income (51 to 80 percent MFI) – one unit

## CREDITS TOWARD THE RHNA

The City has no units that can be credited toward the RHNA.

## RESIDENTIAL SITES INVENTORY

An important component of the Laguna Hills Housing Element is the identification of sites for future housing development and evaluation of the adequacy of this site inventory in accommodating the City's share of regional housing growth.

### Vacant Land

Because of the built out nature of Laguna Hills, the supply of vacant land suitable for residential development is very limited. A GIS and building permit analysis of land resources identified six vacant parcels located in the Nellie Gail Ranch area of the City. Each of the vacant sites has public infrastructure to accommodate development and is currently zoned for residential development. The capacity of each site was based on established land use controls and development standards. Figure H-5 depicts the location of available, vacant land suitable for residential development in the City.

Table H-41 quantifies the number and type of housing units that could be accommodated on the City's vacant residential land.

### Underutilized Land

Local governments with limited vacant land resources may rely on nonvacant and underutilized residential sites to accommodate their respective portion of the regional housing need. For the Housing Element, underutilized parcels are defined as property that is either

developed but could accommodate greater intensity or vacant land that is not currently zoned for residential uses. Underutilized land may address the City's future housing needs if the element describes the realistic development potential based on several factors, including existing uses, proposed uses, recent development trends, recent market conditions, and existing or proposed incentives.

Table H-41  
Vacant Sites Inventory

Vacant Site No.	APN	General Plan	Zone	Maximum Density	Potential New Units	Affordability
1	627-192-07	ER	ER	3.5 du/ac	1	Above moderate
2	636-211-05	ER	ER	3.5 du/ac	1	Above moderate
3	636-342-05	ER	ER	3.5 du/ac	1	Above moderate
4	636-351-10	ER	ER	3.5 du/ac	1	Above moderate
5	636-351-04	ER	ER	3.5 du/ac	1	Above moderate
6	627-482-05	ER	ER	3.5 du/ac	1	Above moderate
<b>Total</b>					<b>6</b>	<b>Above moderate</b>

Source: City of Laguna Hills Community Development Department, 2013.

## Urban Village Specific Plan

The Urban Village Specific Plan (UVSP), adopted in November 2002, is a 240-acre area bounded by Paseo de Valencia on the north and west, Los Alisos Boulevard on the south, and Interstate 5 on the east.

The UVSP provides for a continuing mixture of land uses, including retail, residential hotel, medical offices, and general offices. The UVSP allows residential development at high density development only, up to 50 dwelling units per acre. The UVSP area is designated in the City's General Plan and Zoning Ordinance as Village Commercial. All new development within the Village Commercial district is subject to the UVSP.

**Existing Use.** Existing uses include a mix of retail, office, financial, medical, residential, and transportation uses. The area currently consists of approximately 527,000 sq. ft. medical center, approximately 633,000 sq. ft. of office space and 1,124,000 sq. ft. of retail space. The employment base within the UVSP area contains approximately 5,000 workers. The existing 756 residential uses in the UVSP area include the Prado apartment complex (360 units) and the Villa Valencia senior citizen development (396 units).

The size of the UVSP area allows residential development and adjacent

uses will not impede residential development.

**Proposed Use.** The purpose of the UVSP area is to develop an urban core in which a variety of public, regional commercial, recreational, and high density residential uses work in concert to create an urban village. The UVSP area allows residential development at high density development only, at a maximum of 50 dwelling units per acre. This is in addition to the existing 756 units within the UVSP area, none of which will be removed as development/redevelopment occurs within this area. The City amended the UVSP in 2011 to establish a minimum residential development density of 30 dwelling units per acre in the UVSP area. No pre-established limit of residential units previously existed in the UVSP.

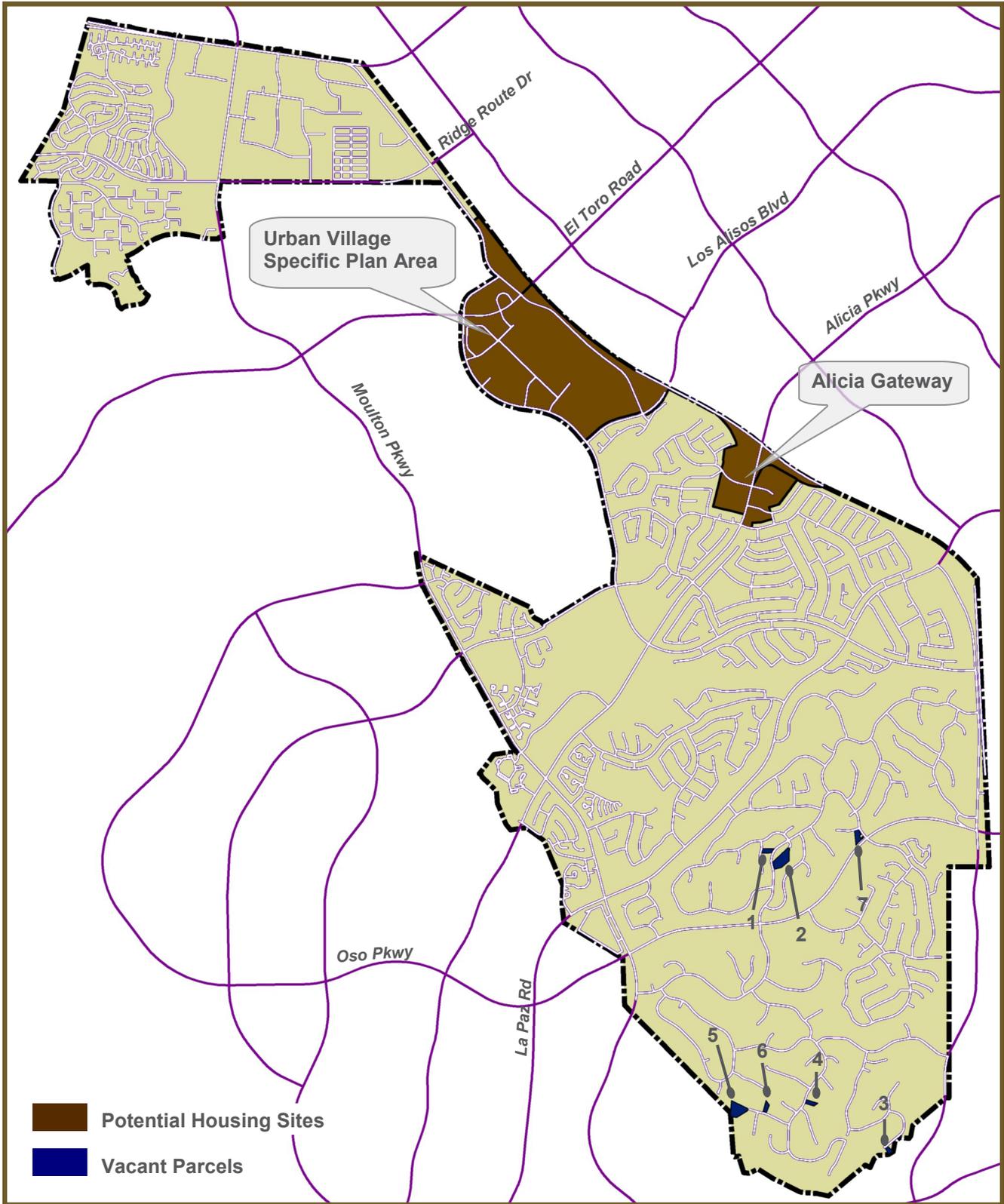
The allowed development intensity in the UVSP area is regulated based on trip generation limits to ensure that the City's General Plan Circulation Element Level of Service Standard D is not exceeded at any of the intersections within the area. A traffic study analyzed "trip budgets" available to accommodate new development within the UVSP area. At present, the remaining trip budget from the Urban Village area is 1,049 AM peak hour trips and 2,228 PM peak hour trips. Prior to redevelopment or new development, project proponents must provide an analysis that indicates that the proposed project does not exceed the remaining trip budgets allowed in the UVSP area.

The City has taken steps toward attracting residential development to the UVSP area. The City has worked with real estate and development interests to develop residential mixed use in the UVSP area. Over the past eight years, the City has held numerous meetings with property owners and residential builders to promote new residential development in the UVSP area.

In 2012, the City worked with the Fritz Duda Company (owner of the Oakbrook Village Shopping Center) for almost a year to approve plans for a two-phased, redevelopment project of a portion of the Oakbrook Village Shopping Center. The mixed-use, redevelopment project includes the development of up to 489 residential units (289 in Phase One and up to 200 in Phase Two) in multi-story residential buildings and up to 82,574 square feet of retail space (23,974 in Phase One and 58,600 in Phase Two).

The City continues to engage residential builders about development opportunities that exist in the UVSP area, and other locations in the community.

Figure H-6 depicts the parcels and acreage within the UVSP area, and potential development areas.



Source: EDAW, 2008

Figure H-5  
Housing Opportunity Areas



***Infrastructure Availability.*** Infrastructure and public services are readily available within the UVSP area. Water is provided to the UVSP area by El Toro Water District (ETWD). Water service is provided through a network of pipelines varying from 6 to 24 in. in size. ETWD will review proposed site-specific projects as they are proposed to determine if upgrades to existing facilities or construction of new facilities will be required. Wastewater services are also provided by ETWD with treatment provided by the ETWD Water Recycling Plant through a series sanitary sewer pipelines varying from 6 to 24 in. in size. ETWD will review proposed site-specific projects as they are proposed to determine if upgrades to existing facilities or construction of new facilities will be required. The recent update to the El Toro Water District's Water and Sewer Master Plan accounted for the potential water and sewer needs within the Urban Village Specific Plan. The District has adequate water supply and sewage treatment capacity to accommodate the development as proposed. Specific improvements to the water distribution system or sewer collection system that may be necessary to accommodate the development would be evaluated and defined at the time development occurs. The cost of any improvements necessary to provide water or sewer service to the development would be borne by the developer.

***Recent Development Trends.*** Several redevelopment projects have occurred in Laguna Hills during the past several years. The old Circuit City site at Avenida de la Carlota and El Toro has been redeveloped to add an additional 5,949 square feet of retail space that now serves as the new home to Ashley Furniture, Total Wine and More, and Chick-Fil-A. The Taj Mahal Office Complex was renovated to include expanding the complex by 6,100 square feet to provide medical office space. In April 2012, the City approved plans for the redevelopment of the Moulton Las Paz Shopping Center to include the addition of 29,098 square feet of general commercial space. The Center will be anchored by The Fresh Market, the chain's first store in Southern California and the second in the State.

***Market Conditions.*** Although the housing market in southern California has softened, home prices in Laguna Hills remain high. The median home price for single-family homes during the period January 1, 2012, to January 1, 2013, was \$580,000, while the median home price for condominiums was \$225,000. The City continues to experience high land and construction costs. Furthermore, as already noted, besides the vacant Estate Residential parcels within the Nellie Gail Ranch area, Laguna Hills contains no vacant residential land for new housing development. Therefore, conditions for redevelopment and reuse are favorable in Laguna Hills.



Source: EDAW, 2008

Figure H-6  
Urban Village Specific Plan Area



***Concessions and Incentives.*** The Regulatory Concessions and Incentives section of this Housing Element (see Constraints on Housing Production section) describes the numerous regulatory concessions and incentives available to developers of affordable housing in Laguna Hills. These concessions and incentives include density bonuses, opportunities to develop housing in certain nonresidential districts of the City, fiscal incentives, and procedural incentives. Refer to the Regulatory Concessions and Incentives section for a detailed discussion.

### ***Potential UVSP Area Housing Development Summary***

- Density: Minimum 30 dwelling units per acre; Maximum 50 dwelling units per acre; high density residential only
- Maximum Units: Maximum determined by trip limits
- Potential Units: At least 489
- Affordability: Extremely low income through moderate income and above

### **Alicia Gateway**

The Alicia Gateway area is a 40.4-acre site located just west of Interstate 5 and is bisected by Alicia Parkway from north to south, and Hon Avenue and Paseo de Alicia from east to west. The City's General Plan and Zoning Ordinance designate the site as Neighborhood Mixed Use. The site contains approximately 439,263 square feet of commercial development. No residential development is located within the current boundaries of Alicia Gateway. The area is generally surrounded by single-family homes on the east, south, and west.

***Existing Use.*** Existing land uses consist of a variety of commercial and office uses, including retail sites, restaurants, local services, fast food establishments, medical offices, and two gas stations. Additionally, the site contains a business park, a used car lot, and a public storage facility.

The southeast portion of Alicia Gateway contains a parcel of approximately 5.1 acres, containing approximately 20,777 sq. ft. of improvements supporting a used car lot and car repair services. The property owner of this site has engaged in extensive discussions with the City to discontinue the current use of automobile sales and services. Discontinuation of the present use is expected within the Housing Element planning period and redevelopment is anticipated to occur. Environmental constraints may be present on this site due to the current use.



Commercial Underutilized Sites (see Table H-41a)

Source: EDAW, 2008

Figure H-7  
Alicia Gateway



**Proposed Use.** The City's General Plan designates the entire Alicia Gateway as neighborhood mixed use. The neighborhood mixed use designation will create a moderate density center and gathering place. This designation will promote a mix of retail, housing, and office uses; walkable connections, plazas and green space for community gathering; high quality design and architecture; orientation of buildings toward the street and pedestrians; and accessibility to transit. The neighborhood mixed use designation promotes the development of vertical and horizontal mixed use. Allowed uses include commercial, retail, office, and residential. Standalone residential is prohibited. The maximum height is three stories, and the expected housing density range is between 10 and 20 dwelling units per acre with a maximum of 110 dwelling units on this site.

A preliminary traffic review of Alicia Gateway indicated that the mixture of uses proposed under the neighborhood mixed use designation (including 110 dwelling units) actually results in a slight decrease in traffic currently being generated. As a result, daily trip generation would not be expected to cause any adverse impacts to surrounding traffic operations.

Figure H-7 depicts the parcels and acreage within the Alicia Gateway area.

**Infrastructure Availability.** Infrastructure and public services are readily available within Alicia Gateway. Water and sewer service is provided by MNWD. MNWD has adequate wastewater treatment capacity and sufficient potable water capacity to serve the development of the area with a mixture of commercial and residential uses. However, some replacement of the transmission systems may be required to meet MNWD standards. It is expected that any proposed redevelopment would require an assessment of the adequacy of water and sewer services to determine if upgrades to existing facilities or construction of new facilities would be required.

**Recent Development Trends.** Several redevelopment projects have occurred in Laguna Hills during the past several years. The old Circuit City site at Avenida de la Carlota and El Toro has been redeveloped to add an additional 5,949 square feet of retail space that now serves as the new home to Ashley Furniture, Total Wine and More, and Chick-Fil-A. The Taj Mahal Office Complex was renovated to include expanding the complex by 6,100 square feet to provide medical office space. In April 2012, the City approved plans for the redevelopment of the Moulton Las Paz Shopping Center to include the addition of 29,098 square feet of general commercial space. The Center will be anchored by The Fresh

Market, the chain's first store in Southern California and the second in the State.

**Market Conditions.** As noted previously, although the housing market in southern California has softened, home prices in Laguna Hills remain high, as do land and construction costs. Additionally, besides the vacant Estate Residential parcels within the Nellie Gail Ranch area, Laguna Hills contains no vacant residential land for new housing development. The neighborhood mixed use land use designation may stimulate interest in residential development of this area by allowing mixed use residential development by right. Therefore, conditions for redevelopment and reuse are favorable in Laguna Hills.

**Concessions and Incentives.** The Regulatory Concessions and Incentives section of this Housing Element (see Constraints on Housing Production section) describes the numerous regulatory concessions and incentives available to developers of affordable housing in Laguna Hills. These concessions and incentives include density bonuses, opportunities to develop housing in certain nonresidential districts of the City, fiscal incentives, and procedural incentives. Refer to the Regulatory Concessions and Incentives section for a detailed discussion.

### ***Potential Alicia Gateway Housing Development***

#### ***Summary***

- Density: 10–20 dwelling units per acre
- Maximum Units: 110
- Potential Units: 110
- Affordability: Moderate income and above

Table H-41a summarizes the inventory of commercial underutilized sites in Laguna Hills.

## **COMPARISON OF SITES INVENTORY AND RHNA**

Properties identified in the sites inventory have the combined capacity to accommodate sufficient housing units on vacant and underutilized properties in Laguna Hills (Table H-42) and meet the remaining RHNA for the 2013-2021 planning period. The UVSP was amended to accommodate residential development at a minimum of 30 dwelling units per acre to its current maximum of 50 dwelling units per acre. The UVSP will continue to allow residential development “by right.” The UVSP site provides opportunities at a density suitable to accommodate the development of lower income housing in Laguna Hills.

Table H-41a Commercial Underutilized Sites Inventory							
Underutilized sites	Acres	APN	General Plan	Zone	Maximum Density	Potential New Units in this Housing Element Cycle	Existing Uses
<b>UVSP</b>							
Oakbrook Village (Fritz Duda)	9.8	621-491-07 621-491-08 621-051-10 621-051-11 621-051-12	VC	VC	30-50 du/ac	489	Strip Mall
<b>Alicia Gateway*</b>							
Laguna Hills Plaza (Sylmar Apts., LLC)	9.6	620-011-89	NMU	NMU	.08 FAR	28	Strip Mall
Honali Plaza (Alicia Center Co.)	7.9	620-461-10 620-461-12	NMU	NMU	.08 FAR	23	Strip Mall
Phillips Auto Dealership (EMJ Ltd.)	5	620-231-08 620-231-09	NMU	NMU	.08 FAR	15	Auto Dealership
*Total potential units in Alicia Gateway is 110 dwelling units.							

Table H-42 Summary of Residential Sites Inventory					
Income Category	Vacant Residential Sites	Underutilized Sites	Total Sites	Remaining RHNA	Difference
Total	6	599	605	2	-

## Financial Resources

The City of Laguna Hills has access to several federal and local resources to achieve its housing and community development goals. Specific funding sources will be utilized based on the eligibility and requirements of each project or program. The City leverages, to the maximum extent feasible, local funds with federal and state funds in meeting its housing and community development objectives.

## COMMUNITY DEVELOPMENT BLOCK GRANT (CDBG)

The Community Development Block Grant (CDBG) Program is administered by HUD. Through this program, the federal government provides monies to cities to undertake certain kinds of community development and housing activities.

Activities proposed by the City must meet the objectives and eligibility criteria of CDBG legislation. The primary CDBG objective is the development of viable urban communities, including decent housing and a suitable living environment, and expanding economic opportunity, principally for persons of low and moderate income. Each activity must meet one of the three broad national objectives:

- Benefit low and moderate income families
- Aid in the prevention of elimination of slums or blight
- Meet other community development needs having a particular urgency because existing conditions pose a serious and immediate threat to the health or welfare of the community

Over the past 8 years, the City has been awarded CDBG funds totaling approximately \$2.1 million. These funds were used to renovate over 136 housing units in the 248-unit Aliso Meadows Condominium Development, which primarily houses low income households, although is not deed restricted as such.

## **SECTION 8 HOUSING CHOICE VOUCHER PROGRAM**

The Housing Choice (Section 8) voucher program (HCVP) is the federal government's major program for assisting very low income families, seniors, and the disabled to rent decent, safe, and sanitary housing in the private market. Since the rental assistance is provided on behalf of the family or individual, participants are able to find and lease privately owned housing, including single-family homes, townhouses, and apartments from landlords who accept vouchers.

The Orange County Housing Authority (OCHA) coordinates and administers Section 8 rental assistance on behalf of the City of Laguna Hills. According to OCHA, approximately 19 households are receiving Section 8 assistance in Laguna Hills.

Like many other urban areas, the demand for rental assistance in Orange County is very high. For the first time in more than 4 years, OCHA opened the HCVP waiting list during the month of November 2005. Approximately 20,000 applications were received within this 30-day period. By June 1, 2006, OCHA had established a new wait list containing 18,601 applicant names and began processing elderly

and disabled veterans and families headed by a veteran from the list. At the end of December 2006, OCHA had issued 1,064 Housing Choice Vouchers to applicants on the new waiting list. It could take several years to deplete the current waiting list and accept applications for a new list.

## Energy Conservation

Government Code Section 65583(a)(78) requires that the City of Laguna Hills Housing Element include an analysis of opportunities for energy conservation with respect to residential development.

The City of Laguna Hills fully enforces provisions of Title 24 of the California Administrative Code, which requires energy conservation measures in all new residential buildings (and additions to residential buildings) except hotels, motels, and buildings with four or more habitable stores and hotels. The regulations specify energy saving design for walls, ceilings, and floor installations, as well as heating and cooling equipment and systems, gas cooling devices, conservation standards, and the use of nondepleting energy sources, such as solar energy or wind power. Standards in Title 24 create energy savings of approximately 50 percent over residential construction practices utilized prior to the Title 24 enactment.

Planning to maximize energy efficiency and the incorporation of energy conservation and green building features can contribute to reduced housing costs for homeowners and renters, in addition to promoting sustainable community design, reduced dependence on vehicles, and reduced greenhouse gases.

The City updated its General Plan and incorporated sustainability measures into the General Plan, including energy conservation opportunities.

The City will adopt a sustainable development program (Land Use Implementation Program LU-8) with the goal of reducing ownership costs, reducing water and energy consumption, reducing driving, and reducing greenhouse gas emissions.

The current General Plan incorporates sustainability by establishing implementation programs that address the following: green building standards; mixed use; additional bikeways, sidewalks, walkways, crosswalks to reduce driving; increasing transit use by coordinating with the Orange County Transportation Authority; drafting a climate action plan; increasing water conservation; increasing recycled and reclaimed water; and promoting community gardens. In addition to the above implementation programs in the General Plan, the City will also consider

incorporating additional components into the Sustainable Development Program not directly addressed in these implementation programs such as:

- Adopting a formal green building program, such as Leadership in Energy and Environmental.
- Design (LEED), GreenPoint Rated and/or other programs applicable to Laguna Hills.
- Providing developer incentives for green buildings.
- Adopting a native tree preservation ordinance and encourage planting of new, drought-tolerant trees.
- Promoting and incentivizing alternative energy such as wind and solar in new development and revitalization projects.
- Instituting green purchasing practices in all City operations, including alternative or very fuel efficient vehicles.
- Establishing a marketing and education plan for City residents to encourage green building standards, alternatives to driving, energy conservation through high efficiency lighting and appliances, and alternative energy such as wind and solar.
- Measuring annual progress in City operations, and private development as applicable.
- Participating in utility-sponsored (e.g., Southern California Edison) sustainability programs.

## Housing Plan

### Evaluation of Accomplishments under Adopted Housing Element

Government Code Section 65588(a) requires each jurisdiction to review its housing element as frequently as appropriate to evaluate:

- The appropriateness of the housing goals, objectives, and policies in contributing to the attainment of the state housing goal;
- The effectiveness of the housing element in attainment of the community's housing goals and objectives; and
- The progress of the city, county, or city and county in implementation of the housing element.

This section documents the City's achievements under the 2008-2014

Housing Element. This section describes the relative success of the City’s efforts to implement the programs identified in the previous housing element and contains recommendations for program retention, revision, deletion, or addition to address current and projected needs and state requirements between 2013-2021.

Table H-43 lists the housing programs found in the 2008-2014 Housing Element and provides a summary of accomplishments under the Housing Element cycle.

Table H-43 Review of Accomplishments under 2008 Housing Element		
Program	Objectives	Accomplishments
H-1. Code Enforcement Program	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Enforce zoning and building codes to reduce health and safety hazards.</li> </ul>	<p>Zoning and building code enforcement is provided by the Laguna Hills Community Development Department (CDD) and the City Attorney. Annually, approximately 100 health and safety violations are addressed and abated.</p> <p>Continued Appropriateness: This program is included in the 2013-2021 Housing Element.</p>
H-2 State Franchise Tax Board Code Enforcement	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Enforce California Revenue and Taxation Code prohibiting owners of rental property from claiming certain tax benefits if they maintain substandard rental housing.</li> </ul>	<p>Zoning and building code enforcement are provided by the City. At present, the City has no substandard housing and has not had to notify the Franchise Tax Board of substandard rental housing.</p> <p>Continued Appropriateness: This program is included in the 2013-2021 Housing Element.</p>
H-3 Housing Rehabilitation	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Institute rehabilitation loan and grant program with assistance from OCHA and HCD for low and moderate income homeowners and rental property landlords.</li> </ul>	<p>To date, the City has been awarded CDBG funds totaling approximately \$2.1 million, which resulted in the rehabilitation of 136 affordable housing units for low and moderate income households. .</p> <p>Continued Appropriateness: This program is included in the 2013-2021 Housing Element.</p>
H-4 At-Risk Units	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Contact owners of affordable units to discern plans for continuing affordability of those units.</li> </ul>	<p>The City continues to pursue the extension of affordability controls for the Rancho Moulton housing development. The City prepares a Risk Management Assessment report provided by the California Housing Partnership Corporation.</p> <p>Continued Appropriateness: This program is included in the 2013-2021 Housing Element.</p>
H-5 Foreclosure Referral Program	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Address increased incidence of residences facing foreclosure.</li> </ul>	<p>Provide foreclosure information on City’s website. Refer residents to external agencies to assist in reducing incidence of foreclosures.</p> <p>Continued Appropriateness: This program is included in the 2013-2021 Housing Element.</p>

Table H-43 (continued)  
Review of Accomplishments under 2008 Housing Element

Program	Objectives	Accomplishments
H-6 UVSP Area for Housing Opportunities	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Provide housing opportunities in the UVSP area.</li> </ul>	<p>City continues to inform existing property owners and prospective developers that housing opportunities are available in the UVSP area. In November 2012, the City approved a mixed use project at Oakbrook Village (in the UVSP area), which includes the development of 489 multi-family residential units in two phases.</p> <p>Continued Appropriateness: This program is included in the 2013-2021 Housing Element.</p>
H-7 Alicia Gateway for Housing Opportunities	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Provide housing opportunities in the Alicia Gateway area.</li> </ul>	<p>City continues to inform prospective developers that housing opportunities are available in the Alicia Gateway area.</p> <p>Continued Appropriateness: This program is included in the 2013-2021 Housing Element.</p>
H-8 Neighborhood Mixed Use Land Use Designation and Zone District	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Promote the development of mixed use to create a moderate density center and gathering place in key, centrally located areas in Laguna Hills.</li> </ul>	<p>The City adopted a Neighborhood Mixed Use designation and zone district.</p> <p>Continued Appropriateness: This program was completed in 2009 and is not included in the 2013-2021 Housing Element.</p>
H-9 Zoning Ordinance Update	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Remove constraints for the development of housing for affordable to low and moderate income households with special needs.</li> </ul>	<p>The City adopted an amendment to the UVSP in April 2011.</p> <p>Continued Appropriateness: This program is included in the 2013-2021 Housing Element.</p>
H-10 Second Units	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Provide housing opportunities</li> </ul>	<p>The City continues to implement the Second Unit provisions of the Zoning Ordinance consistent with state law-City permits second units by right in all residential zones of the City, requiring only ministerial approval.</p> <p>Continued Appropriateness: This program is included in the 2013-2021 Housing Element.</p>
H-11 CDBG Funding for Shelter for the Homeless	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Housing Apply for HUD CDBG funds and allocate a portion of such funds to subrecipients who provide shelter for the homeless.</li> </ul>	<p>The City participates in the County's Continuum of Care Program, which addresses homeless needs on a regional basis.</p> <p>Continued Appropriateness: This program is included in the 2013-2021 Housing Element.</p>

**Table H-43 (continued)**  
**Review of Accomplishments under 2008 Housing Element**

Program	Objectives	Accomplishments
H-12 Continuum of Care Funding and Consolidated Plan Participation	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Affordable housing and related social services for special needs.</li> </ul>	<p>The City continues to participate in the OC Consolidated Plan Programs and in the OC Continuum of Care local housing process to facilitate obtaining funds for affordable housing and related social services for special needs populations.</p> <p>Continued Appropriateness: This program is included in the 2013-2021 Housing Element.</p>
H-13 Section 8 Rental Assistance	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Cooperate with the Orange County Housing Authority (OCHA), who currently administers the Section 8 Rental Assistance program on behalf of the City.</li> </ul>	<p>The City continues to cooperate with OCHA and provide referral services and information to the City's residents.</p> <p>Continued Appropriateness: This program included in the 2013-2021 Housing Element.</p>
H-14 Affordable Housing Developer Partnerships	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Partner with mainstream and/or special needs affordable housing developers that could result in set-asides for low income housing projects and/or provide a range of housing options.</li> </ul>	<p>City does not have a redevelopment agency. City has contacted mainstream affordable housing developers regarding housing development opportunities in the City.</p> <p>Continued Appropriateness: This program is included in the 2013-2021 Housing Element.</p>
H-15 Fair Housing Program	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Distribute fair housing education services.</li> <li>Receive and refer fair housing complaints.</li> </ul>	<p>Periodically, the City requests, and receives, Fair Housing Educational Brochures for distribution to the public. The City regularly receives phone calls and emails requesting the Fair Housing Council contact information, which is provided.</p> <p>Continued Appropriateness: This program is included in the 2013-2021 Housing Element.</p>
H-16 Reasonable Accommodation Procedures	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Adopt a Reasonable Accommodation Ordinance</li> </ul>	<p>The City adopted a formal Reasonable Accommodation procedure in 2012.</p> <p>Continued Appropriateness: This program is completed and not included in the 2013-2021 Housing Element.</p>
H-17 Universal Design Features in Housing	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Provide equal housing opportunities</li> </ul>	<p>The City is exploring programs, an ordinance, and incentives to encourage provision of universal design features in housing. The City's Building Code allows builders to develop units that support universal design.</p> <p>Continued Appropriateness: This program is included in the 2013-2021 Housing Element.</p>
H-18 Annual Progress Reports	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Prepare annual reports on citywide housing programs as part of annual General Plan review.</li> <li>Distribute annual report on Housing Element implementation to HCD.</li> </ul>	<p>The City prepares an annual progress report each year and submits it to HCD.</p> <p>Continued Appropriateness: This program is included in the 2013-2021 Housing Element.</p>

Table H-43 (continued)  
Review of Accomplishments under 2008 Housing Element

Program	Objectives	Accomplishments
H-19 Housing Issues Monitoring	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Monitor existing and proposed affordable housing developments in the City.</li> <li>• Monitor legislation, trends, and policy issues related to the development and maintenance of affordable housing in Laguna Hills.</li> </ul>	<p>Ongoing. The City continues monitor housing issues in the City.</p> <p>Continued Appropriateness: This program is included in the 2013-2021 Housing Element.</p>
H-20 Local Housing Efforts Coordination	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Coordinate local housing efforts with appropriate jurisdictions and agencies and cooperate with intergovernmental housing program implementation.</li> <li>• Submit CDBG applications to assist in preserving existing affordable units.</li> </ul>	<p>The City continues to apply for (and receive) CDBG funds each year to rehabilitate and preserve existing affordable housing units. 136 units have been rehabilitated.</p> <p>Continued Appropriateness: This program is included in the 2013-2021 Housing Element.</p>

## Goals and Policies of 2013-2021 Housing Element

The goals and policies described in this section will formulate the City's housing strategy and guide the implementation of the Housing Element programs. The policies are intended to guide the City in making decisions related to housing issues, the City staff in the daily administration of the General Plan, and the public in understanding the general direction of the City's housing policies.

### NEIGHBORHOOD AND HOUSING PRESERVATION

Preserving the City's residential neighborhoods and maintaining the City's housing stock are essential steps to retaining the City's livability and character. Preserving and or replacing units affordable to low income households and those with special needs is also important. Preservation efforts must carefully consider environmental, physical, and economic constraints. To this end, the following policies seek to facilitate neighborhood and housing preservation in Laguna Hills.

#### **GOAL H-1: Maintain and preserve existing housing and residential neighborhoods in Laguna Hills.**

Policy H-1.1: Invest public and private resources in the maintenance and rehabilitation of existing housing to prevent or reverse neighborhood deterioration.

Policy H-1.2: Allocate federal and state resources toward the preservation of residential units, particularly those that are affordable to extremely low, very low, and lower income households.

Policy H-1.3: Maintain and improve community facilities, public housing services, and infrastructure, where necessary, to enhance the livability and vitality of neighborhoods.

Policy H-1.4: Support neighborhood preservation programs, such as graffiti abatement, code enforcement, abandoned or inoperative automobile removal, tree planting, and trash and debris removal.

Policy H-1.5: Preserve the City's affordable housing stock for low and moderate income households and special needs households.

## HOUSING AVAILABILITY

Residents of Laguna Hills recognize the need to provide housing opportunities for all segments of the community. Providing a greater diversity of housing types, such as multifamily apartments, condominiums, townhomes, and senior housing facilities, will allow both younger and older generations of Laguna Hills's residents to remain in the community. Housing variety will also enable citizens from a wide range of economic levels to live within the City. Accordingly, the following policies are designed to facilitate a diverse housing supply. The amount, type, and design of new development should be compatible with existing neighborhoods.

**GOAL H-2: Facilitate the development of a range of housing types, densities, and affordability levels to meet the diverse needs of the community for all economic levels and age groups and special needs groups, such as large families, female-headed households, the disabled, seniors, and the homeless.**

Policy H-2.1: Provide opportunities for higher density residential development, mixed use residential/commercial development, and transit-oriented development in appropriate areas of the City.

Policy H-2.2: Promote zoning designations and commensurate development standards for residential development that encourage flexibility in permitted land use types, which also respond to changing market forces and/or urban planning trends.

Policy H-2.3: Consider standards and incentives that encourage higher density and mixed use development in appropriate areas such as the Urban Village Specific Plan area, Via Lomas housing area, and Alicia Gateway.

Policy H-2.4: Support the development of more sustainable projects that reduce demand for water and energy resources, reduce commute times, and incorporate alternative modes of travel.

Policy H-2.5: Revise governmental regulations and policies that constrain the provision of housing production, including affordable housing and housing for persons with special needs.

Policy H-2.6: Coordinate with the private sector in the development of affordable and special needs, rental, and ownership housing.

Policy H-2.7: Continue to support public and private sector organizations in their efforts to construct, acquire, and improve housing to provide access to housing affordable to lower and moderate income households.

Policy H-2.8: Expand and extend affordability of Rancho Niguel and Rancho Moulton apartments.

Policy H-2.9: Work with nonprofit agencies and private sector developers to encourage development of housing and services that meet the needs of the disabled and elderly, such as assisted living facilities (single-story houses and apartments), and the use of universal design features.

## EQUAL HOUSING OPPORTUNITY

Obtaining adequate housing without discrimination is an important component of a diverse housing supply. Laguna Hills will support the provision of fair housing opportunities through the following goal and policies.

**GOAL H-3: Ensure that adequate housing opportunities are available to all persons in Laguna Hills without discrimination in accordance with federal and state fair housing laws.**

Policy H-3.1: Support the enforcement of laws against illegal acts of housing discrimination based on race, color, ancestry, national origin, religion, sexual orientation, marital status, familial status, age, disability, source of income, or any arbitrary reason excluding persons from housing choice.

Policy H-3.2: Promote equal opportunity in housing and community development programs citywide.

Policy H-3.3: Encourage housing design to accommodate the special needs of the disabled, seniors, large families, single-parent households, and low income households. Designs may include single-story units, units with three, four, or five bedrooms; on site child care facilities; or on-site job training facilities.

## IMPLEMENTATION AND MONITORING

Monitoring, enforcement, and preservation in housing should be established and maintained as an ongoing function of the City. An effective monitoring program provides the City with an important tool to gauge the success of the City's housing programs and to address emerging housing needs as appropriate.

**GOAL H-4: Plan for and monitor the long-term affordability of sound, quality housing.**

Policy H-4.1: Enforce and enhance the housing monitoring system to ensure compliance with funding program regulations and compliance with local, state, and federal laws.

Policy H-4.2: Ensure collaboration among various City departments in the delivery of housing and related services.

## Summary of Approach

The goals, policies, and programs of the Housing Element will help the City to provide housing opportunities for all segments of the community while enhancing the quality of its neighborhoods and housing stock. Table H-44 identifies the four major issues guiding the Housing Element. These major issues represent the direction the City will take in its goals, policies, and programs to implement the vision of Laguna Hills as captured in the Guiding Themes and expressed in the Housing Plan.

## Quantified Objectives

Table H-45 summarizes the City's quantified objectives for construction, rehabilitation, and preservation over the 2013-2021 Housing Element planning period.

As indicated in Table H-45, the City's new construction objective totals two units. The City's rehabilitation objective is 216 units at the Aliso

**Table H-44**  
Description of Actions to Address Housing Issues

Issue	Element	Section	Policy	Program	Figure	Table
<b>Neighborhood and Housing Preservation</b>	Land Use	Respect for Existing Neighborhoods	LU-2.1 through LU-2.8	LU-6		
	Housing	Neighborhood and Housing Preservation	H-1.1 through H-1.5	H-1 through H-5		
<b>Housing Availability</b>	Land Use	Sustainable and Creative Infill Development	LU-3.1 through LU-3.13	LU-3, LU-4, LU-8, LU-9, LU-10	LU-7 through LU-13 (Opportunity Areas)	LU-1 (Land Use Designations)
	Housing	Housing Availability	H-2.1 through H-2.9	H-6 through H-14	H-5 through H-7	H-40, H-41, H-41a, H-42
<b>Equal Housing Opportunity</b>	Housing	Equal Housing Opportunity	H-3.1 through H-3.4	H-15 through H-17		
<b>Implementation and Monitoring</b>	Housing	Implementation and Monitoring	H-4.1 and H-4.2	H-18 through H-20		H-43, H-45

**Table H-45**  
Quantified Objective Summary (2013-2021)

Income	New Construction	Rehabilitation	Conservation
Extremely Low (<30% AMI)	-	-	-
Very Low (<50% AMI)	1	-	25
Low (51–80% AMI)	1	-	26
Moderate (81%-120% AMI)	-	-	-
Above Moderate (>120% AMI)	-	-	-
<b>Total</b>	<b>2</b>	<b>216</b>	<b>51</b>

Meadows Condominium development, which is a nonincome-restricted development. Therefore, the objectives are not quantified by income level. The rehabilitation objective is contingent upon current federal funding levels being maintained.

The City also has two publicly assisted rental housing developments, Rancho Moulton and Rancho Niguel. Affordability controls extend well beyond the planning period of this Housing Element for the Rancho Niguel housing development. The City's preservation goal is 51 units at risk of converting to market rate, currently located in the Rancho Moulton housing development.

**APPENDIX A.**

# **Implementation Program**

## SPECIFIC IMPLEMENTATION PROGRAMS

### Housing

#### NEIGHBORHOOD AND HOUSING PRESERVATION

##### H-1. Code Enforcement Program

The City of Laguna Hills will enforce building code regulations and abate code violations, nuisances, and existing uses, activities, buildings, or structures that pose a threat to public health, safety, or welfare. Enforcement activities will focus on property maintenance, such as eliminating derelict or abandoned vehicles, outdoor storage, or other situations that may constitute health, safety, or fire hazards.

Responsible Agency:	Community Development
Funding Source:	General fund
Time Frame:	Ongoing

##### H-2. State Franchise Tax Board Code Enforcement

To promote maintenance of existing rental properties, the City shall work with the California State Franchise Tax Board to enforce provisions of California Revenue and Taxation code Sections 17274 and 24436.5, which prohibit owners of substandard rental housing from claiming depreciation, amortization, mortgage interest, and property tax deductions of state income tax. The City will notify the State Franchise Tax Board if substandard rental housing is identified.

Responsible Agency:	Community Development
Funding Source:	General Fund
Time Frame:	Ongoing

##### H-3. Housing Rehabilitation

The City will continue to work with the Orange County Housing and Community Services Department to receive rehabilitation loans and grants for low and moderate income homeowners and rental property owners, including senior/disabled households, to maintain housing stock. Efforts will focus on rehabilitating approximately 148 units in the Aliso Meadows Condominium Development. The rehabilitation loan and grant program will use CDBG funds distributed by the County as appropriate. The City will publicize the availability of this program in local newspapers, on the City's website, at the Community Development

Department, and in information items at Planning Agency Public Hearings. Modifications for accessibility/universal design are eligible activities under this program (see also Housing Element Implementation Program H-6 and H-17).

Responsible Agency: Community Development  
 Funding Source: CDBG  
 Time Frame: Annually by September of each year or as otherwise required by the County CDBG schedule

#### H-4. At-Risk Units

The City will continue to pursue the extension of affordability controls for 51 units, either in the existing Rancho Moulton housing development or as part of new or redevelopment activities in the Via Lomas area or other areas of the City. . The City will annually prepare a “Risk Assessment” report provided by the California Housing Partnership Corporation (CHPC). Projects determined high risk are those most likely to decline continued federal assistance because they currently have rents below market rate(s) and are owned by profit-motivated entities. The City will work with potential purchasers to preserve 51 units in the existing development or in new development by finding an interested non-profit entity and securing funding to acquire and preserve the property. The City will use HCD resources listed on the HCD website, as well as other resources, to locate potential funding sources as needed for the preservation of affordable housing. As needed, the City will work with tenants of at-risk units and provide them with education regarding tenant rights, notification procedures, and conversion procedures. The City will also provide tenants in at-risk projects information from the Orange County Housing Authority regarding Section 8 rental assistance.

Responsible Agency: Community Development  
 Funding Source: General Fund  
 Time Frame: By January of each year.

#### H-5. Foreclosure Referral Program

Based on current dynamics, the City seeks to address the increased incidence of residents facing foreclosure. The City will provide foreclosure information on the City’s website, and provide resources at the City to refer residents to external agencies to assist in reducing incidents of foreclosures in Laguna Hills.

Responsible Agency: Community Development  
 Funding Source: General Fund  
 Time Frame: January 2014

#### HOUSING AVAILABILITY

##### H-6. Urban Village Specific Plan Area for Housing Opportunities

The City shall inform existing property owners and prospective developers that housing opportunities are available in the Urban Village Specific Plan area. Housing opportunities include market rate housing units and could also include housing for low and moderate income households, families, seniors, and special needs households. City staff will inform prospective developers at time of project application meeting(s). Additionally, the City will promote the UVSP area on the City's website and will also promote housing development incentives consistent with Chapter 9-72 of the Zoning Ordinance. The UVSP area will also be promoted through the City's Economic Development Strategy (see the Land Use Element Implementation Program LU-14).

Responsible Agency: Community Development  
 Funding Source: CDBG  
 Time Frame: Ongoing; The City will post the information on the website by December 2013 and it will be updated annually.

##### H-7. Alicia Gateway for Housing Opportunities

The City shall inform existing property owners and prospective developers that housing opportunities are available in the Alicia Gateway. Housing opportunities could include market rate housing units and could also include housing for low and moderate income households, families, seniors and special needs households. City staff will inform prospective developers at time of project application meeting(s). Additionally, the City will promote Alicia Gateway on the City's website and will also promote housing development incentives consistent with Chapter 9-72 of the Zoning Ordinance. Alicia Gateway will also be promoted through the City's Economic Development Strategy (see the Land Use Element Implementation Program LU-14).

Responsible Agency: Community Development  
 Funding Source: CDBG  
 Time Frame: The information will be posted on the website by December 2013 and will be updated annually.

Additionally, the City participates annually in the ICSC conferences to promote the opportunity areas in the City.

#### H-8. Zoning Ordinance Update

The implementation of housing goals, policies, and programs will require updating the City's Zoning Ordinance. In addition, certain City rules and regulations may constrain the development of housing affordable to low and moderate income households with special needs. To mitigate potential constraints and implement housing goals, policies, and programs, the City will update the following regulations in the Zoning Ordinance:

1. Consolidate and remove duplicitous definitions of manufactured housing and mobile homes and ensure consistency in the Zoning Ordinance, use regulations, and development standards.
2. Reduce the open space requirement in the High Density Residential district;
3. Increase the maximum lot coverage requirement in the Mixed Use district.
4. Transitional and supportive housing will be permitted as a residential use and only subject to those restrictions that apply to other residential dwellings of the same type in the same zone (Government Code Section 65583 (a)(5)).

Responsible Agency:	Community Development
Funding Source:	General Fund
Time Frame:	October 2014

#### H-9. Second Units

The City shall continue to implement the Second Unit provisions of the Zoning Ordinance consistent with state law. The City will continue to permit second units by right in all residential zones of the City, requiring only ministerial approval. Residential second units provide a viable option for providing additional housing opportunities which could include affordable housing for lower income seniors, single persons, or small households within existing neighborhoods.

Responsible Agency:	Community Development
Funding Source:	General Fund
Time Frame:	Ongoing

**H-10. CDBG Funding for Shelter for the Homeless**

The City shall apply for United States Department of Housing and Urban Development CDBG funds and allocate a portion of such funds to subrecipients who provide shelter for the homeless.

Responsible Agency: Community Development  
 Funding Source: CDBG  
 Time Frame: Annually by September of each year or as otherwise required by the County CDBG schedule

**H-11. Continuum of Care Funding and Consolidated Plan Participation**

The City shall continue to participate in the Orange County Consolidated Plan Programs and in the Orange County Continuum of Care local housing planning process to facilitate obtaining funds for affordable housing and related social services for special needs populations. The Continuum of Care local housing and service delivery system focuses on homeless prevention, outreach, and assessment, emergency shelters, transitional housing, supportive services, and permanent supportive housing for homeless individuals and families. The City shall pursue homeless assistance grants through the Continuum. The City will assist public and private nonprofit housing developers in preparation of funding applications for special needs populations.

Responsible Agency: Community Development  
 Funding Source: CDBG  
 Time Frame: Annually by September of each year or as otherwise required by the County CDBG schedule

**H-12. Section 8 Rental Assistance**

The Orange County Housing Authority currently administers the Section 8 Rental Assistance program on behalf of the City. Currently the program assists renter households in the City of Laguna Hills. Based on future congressional appropriations, the County Housing Authority will apply for additional funding which will enable the Housing Authority to administer additional vouchers for families, seniors, and disabled persons over the Housing Element planning period. The City of Laguna Hills will continue to provide referral services and information to the City's residents.

Responsible Agency: Community Development  
 Funding Source: HUD  
 Time Frame: Ongoing

#### H-13. Affordable Housing Developer Partnerships

The City will continue to develop partnerships with mainstream and/or special needs affordable housing developers that could result in set-asides in existing and planned low income housing projects. These partnerships may include incentives (such as expedited processing, fee waivers, and density bonuses) provided by the City to facilitate the set-asides for planned low income units and actively cooperating with the owners of existing units to secure appropriate federal funding necessary to maintain existing affordability. The City will promote lower income housing development incentives on the City's website, consistent with Chapter 9-72 of the Zoning Ordinance. The City will use HCD's housing resources website to locate available sites and potential funding sources as needed for the development of affordable housing.

Responsible Agency: Community Development  
 Funding Source: General Fund  
 Time Frame: Ongoing; The information will be posted on the website by December 2013 and updated annually.

### EQUAL HOUSING OPPORTUNITY

#### H-14. Fair Housing Program

The City will continue to maintain services and personnel to receive housing complaints and continue to address or resolve complaints. The City will also continue to refer fair housing complaints to the Fair Housing Council if they cannot be resolved at the City level. The City will also continue to disseminate written literature about fair housing laws, resident rights, and remedies for fair housing complaints. The City will ensure that fair housing literature is available in the Community Development Department, on the City's website, and at the Laguna Hills Technology Library. The City will monitor these sites to ensure timely, accurate information is available.

Responsible Agency: Community Development  
 Funding Source: General Fund  
 Time Frame: Ongoing; The information will be posted on the website by December 2013 and updated annually.

#### H-15. Universal Design Features in Housing

The City recognizes that all people have varying abilities and that many people will encounter temporary or permanent changes in ability to conduct the tasks necessary for daily living throughout their lives. Universal design features create housing suited for people of all abilities and can allow residents to stay in their homes over their lifetime. The City will explore programs, an ordinance, and incentives to encourage provision of universal design features in housing. The City will refer to the HCD website for guidelines and a model ordinance consistent with the principles of universal design. The universal design ordinance will address such topics as findings, definitions, scope and application, standards, and enforcement. City staff will encourage prospective developers to provide universal design features at the time of project application meeting(s).

Responsible Agency:	Community Development
Funding Source:	General Fund
Time Frame:	October 2014

#### IMPLEMENTATION AND MONITORING

#### H-16. Annual Progress Reports

The City will report annually on progress toward implementation of the Housing Element and residential development activities citywide.

State law requires that each local jurisdiction submit an annual progress report on the implementation of its General Plan. For the Housing Element, the reporting must include the following:

1. Annual building activity by unit type, tenure, affordability level, deed restriction, and financial assistance;
2. Progress in achieving its RHNA;
3. Program-by-program account of implementation status; and
4. Outcome/disposition of development applications identifying location, size, type, and status of residential development proposals for citywide use and for submittal to Center for Demographic Research at California State University and to the California Department of Finance.

Responsible Agency:	Community Development
Funding Source:	General Fund
Time Frame:	Prepare an annual report for submittal to HCD by April 1 of each year in the planning period

### H-17. Housing Issues Monitoring

The City will monitor existing and proposed affordable housing developments in the City. The City will also monitor legislation, trends, and policy issues related to the development and maintenance of affordable housing in Laguna Hills. Ongoing efforts throughout the planning period include but are not limited to:

1. Monitoring development proposals in the City that could be used to maintain, increase, or enhance affordable housing opportunities;
2. Monitoring and market housing opportunities in the UVSP area, including affordable housing opportunities, through Planning Agency public hearings and project preapplication meetings;
3. Monitoring existing programs designed to preserve assisted housing developments for low income households to determine whether additional actions are needed to protect these developments;
4. Monitoring of mobile home park for conversion to nonresidential use;
5. Attending housing and legislative review conferences;
6. Attending training workshops;
7. Participating in regional planning efforts coordinated by the SCAG; and
8. Interfacing with City agencies and the public.

Responsible Agency: Community Development  
 Funding Source: General Fund  
 Time Frame: Ongoing

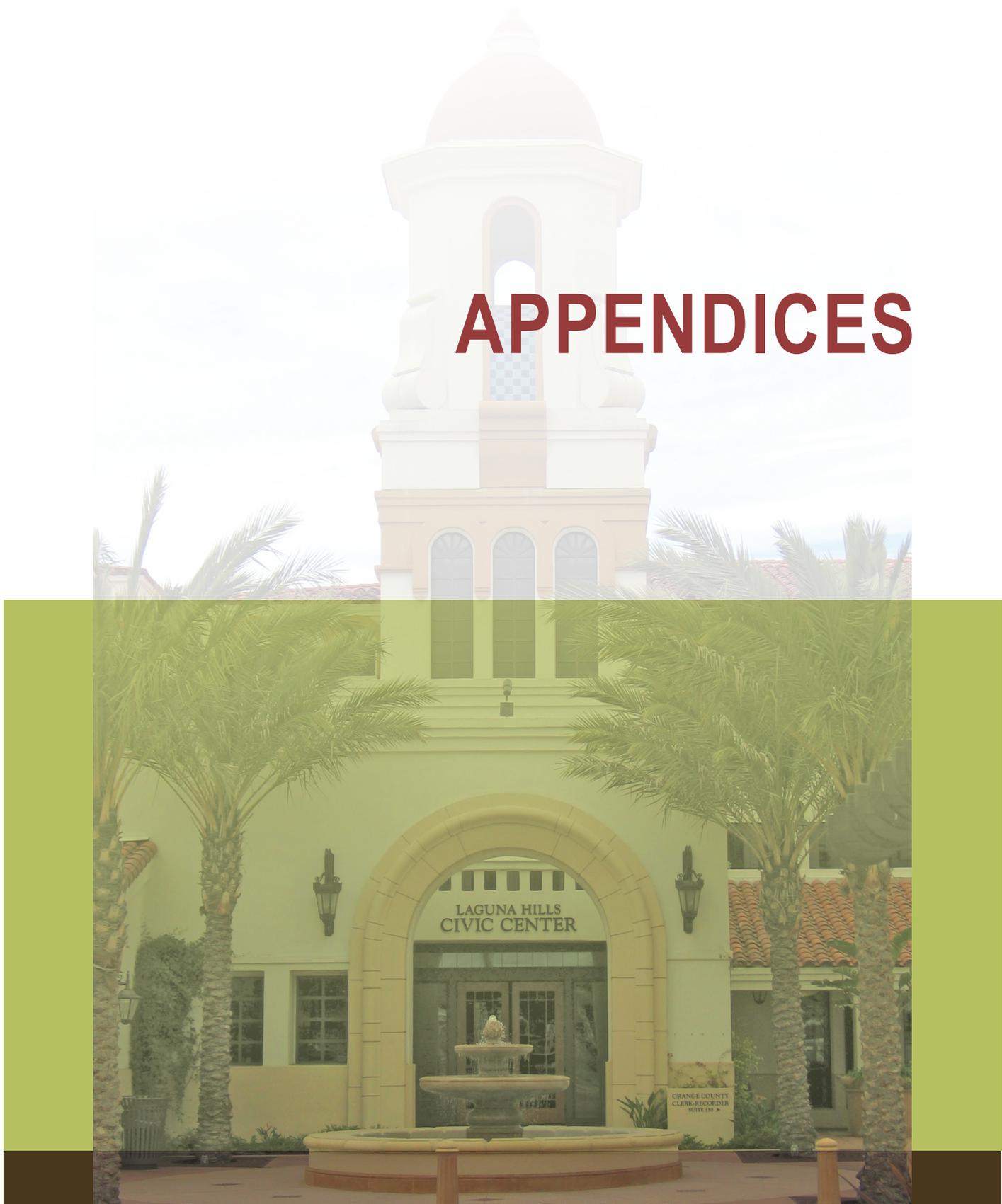
### H-20. Local Housing Efforts Coordination

The City shall coordinate local housing efforts with appropriate federal, state, regional, and local government and/or agencies and cooperate in implementation of intergovernmental housing programs to ensure maximum effectiveness in solving local and regional housing problems. The City will submit CDBG applications to assist in preserving existing affordable housing stock.

Responsible Agency: Community Development  
 Funding Source: CDBG and General Fund  
 Time Frame: December 2009



# APPENDICES



# APPENDIX A.

# Implementation Program



## Introduction

This General Plan Implementation Program provides a guide to implement adopted General Plan policies and actions for the City's elected officials, City staff, and the public. The purpose of the Implementation Program is to ensure the overall direction provided in the General Plan for City growth and development is translated from general terms to specific actions.

Each implementation measure is a program, procedure, or task that requires additional City action. Collaboration with non-City organizations or State and federal agencies may be required. Actions generally apply Citywide or to a specific area of the community. In adopting this Implementation Program, the City Council recognizes the importance of long-range planning considerations in day-to-day decision making and budgeting. Implementation of the specific programs will be subject to funding constraints.

Each implementation program relates directly to one or more General Plan policies drawn from various elements. However, some policies contained within the General Plan Elements

are not yet ripe for more detailed actions and, therefore, do not have associated implementation programs. Future direction by staff, decision makers, or the community may lead to more specific implementation programs being developed for those policies not currently addressed by a specific implementation.

## Implementing the Plan

The Implementation Program is an important part of the City's bi-annual budgeting process. In preparation for each budgeting cycle, each City Department actively reviews the General Plan, and Implementation Program, when determining what Major Plans will be proposed for consideration by the City Council. The Implementation Program will serve as the basis for the preparation of the Annual Report to the City Council on the status of the City's progress in implementing the General Plan, as required by State law. Because some of the individual actions described in the Implementation Program serve as mitigation for significant environmental impacts resulting from planned development identified in the General Plan, the

annual report can also provide a means of monitoring the application of the mitigation measures as required by State California Environmental Quality Act (CEQA) Guidelines. This Implementation Program may be updated annually with the budget process and whenever the City's General Plan is amended or updated to ensure continued consistency and usefulness.

## **PRIMARY IMPLEMENTATION DOCUMENTS**

One of the primary implementation tools for the General Plan is the City's Zoning Ordinance, which establishes zoning districts and corresponding allowed use and development provisions for all property within the City. By law, the Zoning Ordinance text and map must be consistent with the General Plan. Other important implementation tools include, but are not limited to the City's Municipal Code, subdivision ordinance, development agreements, and specific plans.

## **FUNDING**

The City's General Fund is the primary source of funding for General Plan and implementation. Several other fees and funding sources are used to implement the General Plan. These funding sources are listed as applicable in each implementation program.

## SPECIFIC IMPLEMENTATION PROGRAMS

### Land Use

LAND USE		2010 - 2012	Annual	Bi-Annual	Ongoing
<b>LU-1. Balanced Growth</b>  Review discretionary development proposals to assess the project's effect on the community's jobs/housing balance and fiscal stability. Ensure developments provide their fair share of infrastructure such as utilities, roads, parks, and recreational opportunities or pay in lieu fees toward the development/extension of these facilities.					●
<b>Implements policy(ies):</b>	LU-1.1, 1.2, 1.3				
<b>Responsible Department:</b>	Community Development, Public Services				
<b>Funding Source:</b>	General Fund, development fees				
<b>LU-2. CEQA Review</b>  Ensure all projects are reviewed and processed per CEQA.					●
<b>Implements policy(ies):</b>	LU-4.6				
<b>Responsible Department:</b>	Community Development				

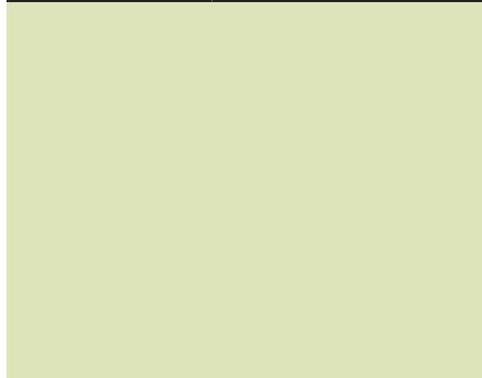
Funding Source:	General Fund, development fees				
LAND USE	2010 - 2012	Annual	Annual	Bi-Annual	Ongoing
<p><b>LU-3. Zoning Ordinance and Zoning Map</b></p> <p>Review and update the Zoning Ordinance and the Zoning Map to ensure consistency with the General Plan and to help implement the General Plan policies and principles. The Zoning Ordinance update will include, but not be limited to the following items:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Add Planned Community Via Lomas Zone and Neighborhood Mixed Use Zone and appropriate development standards.</li> <li>2. Reassess noise regulations for consistency between General Plan and Zoning Ordinance.</li> <li>3. Update and expand Section 9-40, Design Regulations and Standards to facilitate and encourage connectivity and compatibility between adjacent land uses and activities as well as ensure excellent design of development and revitalization projects.</li> <li>4. Revise parking regulations to encourage unique parking solutions and parking management techniques.</li> <li>5. Define Community Gardens and allow and/or encourage their provision in appropriate zones.</li> <li>6. Establish standards/incentives for gardens, fruit trees, and agricultural production in residential areas.</li> <li>7. Incorporate sustainability principles (e.g., wind energy standards) and remove barriers to sustainability.</li> <li>8. For consistency with the Airport Land Use Commission’s Airport Environs Land Use Plan for Heliports, the following procedures will be added to the Zoning Ordinance:             <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>a. The City will ensure that each applicant, seeking a Conditional Use Permit or similar for the construction or operation of a heliport or helistop, complies fully with the State approval permit procedure provided by law and with all conditions of approval imposed or recommended by the Federal Aviation Administration (FAA), by the Airport Land Use Commission for Orange County (ALUC) and by Caltrans/Division of Aeronautics. This requirement shall be in addition to all other City development requirements.</li> <li>b. For development of structures with a height of 200 feet in height above ground level or higher, at a development site, application shall file a Notice of Proposed Construction or Alteration with the FAA (FAA Form 7460-1). Following the FAA’s Aeronautical Study of the Project, projects must comply with conditions of approval imposed or recommended by the FAA. Subsequent to the FAA findings, the City shall forward the FAA Aeronautical Study to the Airport Land Use Commission (ALUC) of Orange County which may result in a consistency analysis with ALUC.</li> </ol> </li> </ol> <p>Also refer to Housing Element Program H-9 for Zoning Ordinance updates pertaining specifically to housing issues.</p>					

LAND USE		2010 - 2012	Annual	Bi-Annual	Ongoing
<b>Responsible Department:</b>	Community Development, Public Services				
<b>Funding Source:</b>	General Fund, development fees				
<b>LU-4. Urban Village Specific Plan</b>  Review and update the Urban Village Specific Plan to ensure consistency with the General Plan and to help implement the General Plan policies and principles. The Urban Village Specific Plan will be updated to address the following: <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Require any proposed residential development to be between 30 and 50 dwelling units per acre.</li> <li>2. Allow additional square footage for retail activities.</li> <li>3. Perform a trail connections study, showing how the UVSP area can be connected to the Regional Trail System.</li> </ol>		●			
<b>Implements policy(ies):</b>	LU-1.1, 1.2, 1.3, 3.2, 6.1, 6.2				
<b>Responsible Department:</b>	Community Development, Public Services				
<b>Funding Source:</b>	General Fund, development fees				
<b>LU-5. Community Participation</b>  Use the City's website, newsletters, advertisements, and other measures to inform the community of and encourage participation at civic and community events. Continue to coordinate the City's Traffic, Community Services, Historical, and Arts Commissions, which provide for resident input on these issues.					●
<b>Implements policy(ies):</b>	LU-1.7, 1.8				
<b>Responsible Department:</b>	Community Services				
<b>Funding Source:</b>	General Fund				

LAND USE		2010 - 2012	Annual	Bi-Annual	Ongoing
<b>LU-6. Compatibility Assessment and Buffering</b>  Review discretionary development proposals to assess the compatibility of proposed development with adjacent/surrounding uses and activities. Require site design, buffers, architectural and buffering techniques, and other measures are incorporated into projects to ensure compatibility between uses and activities.					●
<b>Implements policy(ies):</b>	LU-2.5, 2.6, 2.7, 2.8				
<b>Responsible Department:</b>	Community Development, Public Services				
<b>Funding Source:</b>	Development application fees				
<b>LU-7. Design Standards</b>  Review development and revitalization projects for consistency with Zoning Ordinance Section 9-40, Design Regulations and Standards.					●
<b>Implements policy(ies):</b>	LU-2.1, 2.2, 3.3, 4.6, 4.7, 4.8				
<b>Responsible Department:</b>	Community Development				
<b>Funding Source:</b>	General Fund				

LAND USE		2010 - 2012	Annual	Bi-Annual	Ongoing
<p><b>LU-8. Sustainable Development</b></p> <p>Adopt a sustainable development program with the goal of reducing ownership costs, reducing water and energy consumption, reducing driving, and reducing greenhouse gas emissions. This Sustainable Development program may incorporate the following programs that address environmental sustainability: Green Building Standards; Mixed Use; Bikeways, Sidewalks, Walkways, Crosswalks; Orange County Transportation Authority; Climate Action Plan; Water Conservation; Recycled and Reclaimed Water; and Community Gardens. In addition to the above implementation programs, the City will also consider incorporating additional components into the Sustainable Development Program not directly addressed in these other programs:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Adopt a formal green building program, such as Leadership in Energy and Environmental Design (LEED), GreenPoint Rated and/or other programs applicable to Laguna Hills.</li> <li>2. Provide developer incentives for green buildings.</li> <li>3. Adopt a native tree preservation ordinance and encourage planting of new, drought-tolerant trees.</li> <li>4. Promote and incentivize alternative energy such as wind and solar in new development and revitalization projects.</li> <li>5. Institute green purchasing practices in all City operations, including alternative or very fuel efficient vehicles.</li> <li>6. Establish a marketing and education plan for City residents to encourage green building standards, alternatives to driving, energy conservation through high efficiency lighting and appliances, and alternative energy such as wind and solar.</li> <li>7. Measure annual progress in City operations, and private development as applicable.</li> <li>8. During the development review process for large development projects (greater than 10 units and/or 10,000 square feet), the City will coordinate with energy providers to determine if additional energy efficiency measures can be incorporated into a project's design.</li> </ol>		○			○
<b>Implements policy(ies):</b>	LU-3.1, 3.2, 3.6, 3.7, 3.8, 3.9, 3.11; H-2.4; COS-1.6, 1.7, 1.8, 1.9, 1.10, 1.17, 1.18, 1.19, 1.20, 3.1, 3.3, 3.4, 3.5				
<b>Responsible Department:</b>	Community Development				
<b>Funding Source:</b>	General Fund				

LAND USE		2010 - 2012	Annual	Bi-Annual	Ongoing
<b>LU-9. Green Building Standards</b>  Evaluate proposed development projects throughout the City using LEED standards, GreenPoint Rated, and/or other green building standards. The City encourages all future development and major renovation projects within the following General Plan designations to achieve LEED certification, and/or other green certifications: High Density Residential, Village Commercial, Freeway Commercial, Community Commercial, Office Professional, Mixed Use, Neighborhood Mixed Use, and Community/Private Institution. Investigate the potential to offer density bonus incentives on residential projects that achieve LEED certification, and other green certifications and ratings. programs.		○			○
<b>Implements policy(ies):</b>	LU-3.6, 3.7, 3.8, 3.9; COS-1.17, 1.18, 1.19, 1.20				
<b>Responsible Department:</b>	Community Development				
<b>Funding Source:</b>	General Fund				
<b>LU-10. Mixed Use and Infill Development</b>  Actively encourage the development and maintenance of mixed uses, particularly in the Mixed Use and Neighborhood Mixed Use areas, by maintaining a list of sites available for mixed use and infill development and making the list available to developers. Establish developer incentives to encourage well-designed mixed use and infill development projects in these areas.		○			○
<b>Implements policy(ies):</b>	LU-2.1, 2.2, 3.3, 4.6, 4.7, 4.8				
<b>Responsible Department:</b>	Community Development				
<b>Funding Source:</b>	General Fund				



LAND USE		2010 - 2012	Annual	Bi-Annual	Ongoing
<b>LU-11. Community Gateways</b>  Plan for and encourage strong, unifying gateways at major entrances to the City and in community activity centers. New private and public infrastructure and development projects should achieve strong gateway features through the use of signage and iconic design, architecture, and/or landscaping components that communicate Laguna Hills' identity and character.					○
<b>Implements policy(ies):</b>	LU-4.1, 4.3; M-4.1				
<b>Responsible Department:</b>	Community Development, Public Services				
<b>Funding Source:</b>	General Fund				
<b>LU-12. Streetscapes and Landscaping</b>  Continue to install public amenities such as streetlights, benches, trash containers, art, drinking fountains, landscaping, and other amenities, to provide pleasant and comfortable streets and parking areas that enhance the City's identity and promote walkability. An additional focus should be improving public and private property slopes. This program will be coordinated with the Community Gateways program and Wayfinding program to create a unified identity for Laguna Hills.					○
<b>Implements policy(ies):</b>	LU-1.4, 3.5, 4.2, 4.4, 4.5; M-4.2				
<b>Responsible Department:</b>	Community Development, Public Services				
<b>Funding Source:</b>	General Fund, grants, private development, benefit assessment districts				



LAND USE		2010 - 2012	Annual	Bi-Annual	Ongoing
<b>LU-13. Revenue and Employment Generating Land Uses</b>  Use the City’s website; use trade publications; and collaborate with regional Chambers of Commerce, local businesses, and developers to promote Laguna Hills’ development opportunities and availability of sites for redevelopment for housing, civic uses, shopping, and services. Make economic development and business surveys readily available to local businesses to track and monitor their performance. Make the surveys available to outside businesses and establishments looking to locate their projects in Laguna Hills.					●
<b>Implements policy(ies):</b>	LU-6.1, 6.2, 6.3, 7.1, 7.2, 7.3, 7.4, 7.5, 7.6, 7.7				
<b>Responsible Department:</b>	Community Development, Administration / Finance				
<b>Funding Source:</b>	General Fund				
<b>LU-14. Economic Development Strategy</b>  Develop an Economic Development Strategy as a means of stimulating economic growth through redeveloping aging commercial centers, opportunity areas, and the Urban Village area, including Laguna Hills Mall. The Economic Development Strategy will also consider providing incentives for redevelopment, including infrastructure improvements, and to attract businesses and jobs to Laguna Hills. Further, the Strategy will explore new funding sources and identify collaborative relationships between the City and key economic stakeholders.		●		●	
<b>Implements policy(ies):</b>	LU-5.1, 5.2, 5.3, 5.4, 5.5, 6.4, 7.1, 7.2, 7.3, 7.4, 7.5, 7.7, 7.8, 7.9				
<b>Responsible Department:</b>	Community Development, Administration/Finance				
<b>Funding Source:</b>	General Fund, tax increment				



LAND USE		2010 - 2012	Annual	Bi-Annual	Ongoing
<p><b>LU-15. Fiscal Management</b></p> <p>Conduct a fiscal management review that assesses the City’s budget issues in relation to the General Plan. Identify changes in service levels and providers, capital improvement projects, fiscal impacts associated with development, and issues related to financing local and regional improvements. Review development impact fees, user charges, and mitigation fees to ensure charges are commensurate with costs and services provided. Pursue grants and other funding sources as appropriate to supplement the City’s general fund.</p>				●	
<b>Implements policy(ies):</b>	LU-5.1, 5.2				
<b>Responsible Department:</b>	Community Development, Administration / Finance, Public Services				
<b>Funding Source:</b>	General Fund				

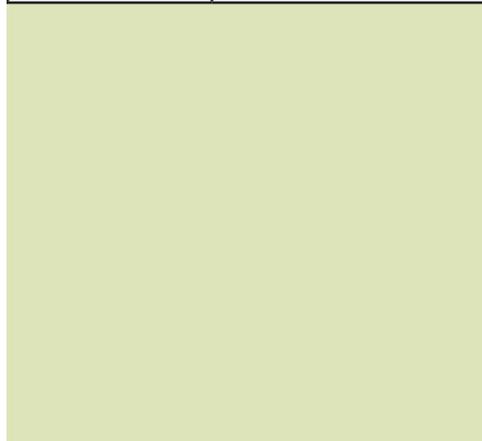
## SPECIFIC IMPLEMENTATION PROGRAMS

### Mobility

MOBILITY		2010 - 2012	Annual	Bi-Annual	Ongoing
<p><b>M-1. Mobility Planning and Traffic Analysis</b></p> <p>Review discretionary development proposals for potential impacts to the mobility and infrastructure systems and to ensure the street system meets City standards. The level of service standards established in the Mobility Element will be used to determine the significance of impacts. Intersection level of service will be determined by the volume to capacity ratio and the Highway Capacity Manual calculations. Mitigation in the form of physical improvements and/or impact fees will be required to reduce the significant impacts. As part of this program, the City will coordinate with local jurisdictions to reduce the impacts of development in Laguna Hills on adjacent jurisdictions.</p>					●
<b>Implements policy(ies):</b>	M-1.1, 1.2, 1.3, 1.4				
<b>Responsible Department:</b>	Public Services				
<b>Funding Source:</b>	General Fund, development fees				
<p><b>M-2. Capital Improvement Plan</b></p> <p>Continue to bi-annually update the City of Laguna Hills Six-year Capital Improvement Program, which complies with the requirements of Measure M and the Congestion Management Program (CMP). The Plan identifies and recommends funding for future improvements to the mobility system, as well as other public facilities, including improvements to the existing pedestrian and bicycle network and landscaping right-of-ways.</p>				●	●
<b>Implements policy(ies):</b>	M-1.3				
<b>Responsible Department:</b>	Public Services				
<b>Funding Source:</b>	General Fund, gas tax, Measure M, State and federal grants				

MOBILITY		2010 - 2012	Annual	Bi-Annual	Ongoing
<b>M-3. Transportation Improvements</b>					○
<p>Continue to participate in inter-jurisdictional forums for Growth Management Areas (GMAs) 9 and 10. With other participating jurisdictions, work to maintain a list of GMA transportation improvement projects designed to accommodate General Plan growth projections. The member jurisdictions through the inter-jurisdictional forums have developed a deficient intersection list. The City will establish appropriate mitigation standards for those intersections exceeding the level of service target, or will determine that a given intersection is subject to a finding of special circumstances.</p>					
Implements policy(ies):	M-1.1, 1.4				
<b>Responsible Department:</b>	Community Development, Public Services				
<b>Funding Source:</b>	General Fund				
<b>M-4. Transportation Demand and System Management</b>					○
<p>Continue to participate in regional efforts to implement Transportation Demand Management (TDM) through implementation of the City's Transportation Demand Ordinance as set forth in the Municipal Code. The purpose of the ordinance is to promote alternative transportation methods, such as carpools, vanpools, transit, bicycles, walking, park-and-ride lots; parking management programs; and other strategies to meet congestion and air quality goals. Complete intersection capacity improvements and coordinate traffic signals as necessary to improve traffic flow.</p>					
Implements policy(ies):	M- 1.1, 1.2, 2.3, 5.1, 5.2, 5.3, 5.4, 5.6, 6.1, 6.3, 6.5				
<b>Responsible Department:</b>	Community Development, Public Services				
<b>Funding Source:</b>	General Fund				

MOBILITY		2010 - 2012	Annual	Bi-Annual	Ongoing
<b>M-5. Bikeways, Trails &amp; Open Space Master Plan</b>  Update the Bikeways, Trails & Open Space Master Plan. Identify gaps and major barriers to connectivity in the City and identify appropriate means and locations for overcoming those barriers. Include a pedestrian/walkability component in the updated Plan that identifies areas where major barriers to connectivity exist, and measures and/or techniques to improve walkability and safety.					○
Implements policy(ies):	M-3.1, 3.2, 3.3, 3.4, 3.6, 3.7; COS-1.11, 1.12, 1.13, 1.14, 2.1, 2.2, 2.3				
Responsible Department:	Community Services, Public Services				
Funding Source:	General Fund				
<b>M-6. Bikeways, Sidewalks, Walkways, Crosswalks</b>  Work with project proponents to ensure that safe and attractive sidewalks, walkways, bike lanes, and cross walks that facilitate use are provided in accordance with City standards. Work with developers to construct links to adjacent communities, using open space easements and utility easements when appropriate.					○
Implements policy(ies):	M-3.1, 3.2, 3.3, 3.4, 3.6, 3.7; LU-1.6, 2.2, 3.3, 3.10				
Responsible Department:	Community Development, Public Services, Developers, Community Services				
Funding Source:	General Fund, State and local grants				



MOBILITY		2010 - 2012	Annual	Bi-Annual	Ongoing
<b>M-7. Bike Support Facilities</b>					○
Provide bicycle support facilities (e.g., bicycle racks, personal lockers, showers, and other bicycle support facilities) in new development and revitalization projects to encourage bicycle riding as a transportation mode. Consider adopting a formal bike support facility ordinance and/or guidelines applicable to private and public development.					
Implements policy(ies):	M-3.7				
Responsible Department:	Community Development, Public Services, Developers, Community Services				
Funding Source:	General Fund, state and local grants				
<b>M-8. Orange County Transportation Authority</b>					○
Work closely with the Orange County Transportation Authority (OCTA) to achieve the following:					
<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Maintain consistency with the County Master Plan of Arterial Highways (MPAH) within the City.</li> <li>2. Implement the OCTA Congestion Management Plan (CMP) within the City.</li> <li>3. Expand and improve bus service within the City.</li> <li>4. Encourage express bus service to regional activity centers.</li> <li>5. Encourage provision of attractive, well designed, and appropriate transit amenities, including shaded bus stops with no advertising</li> <li>6. Provide special transit services (such as direct shuttle or dial-a-ride services).</li> <li>7. Support and implement the OCTA Commuter Bikeways Strategic Plan and participate in future updates and revisions to the Plan.</li> </ol>					
In addition, coordinate with Caltrans on all plans, activities, and projects that may affect State roadway facilities.					
Implements policy(ies):	M-5.1, 5.6, 5.7				
Responsible Department:	Public Services				
Funding Source:	General Fund, gas tax revenues, Measure M				

<b>MOBILITY</b>		<b>2010 - 2012</b>	<b>Annual</b>	<b>Bi-Annual</b>	<b>Ongoing</b>
<b>M-9. Public Education</b>					
<p>Coordinate with regional transit providers and use public education to accomplish the following objectives:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Encourage City residents and workers to rideshare and use transit.</li> <li>2. Educate residents of all ages about local mobility choices.</li> <li>3. Work with schools to improve and advertise nonautomotive options for getting to school and school-related activities.</li> <li>4. Coordinate education activities and make materials available to residents. Utilize forums, flyers, brochures, and the City's website to accomplish these objectives.</li> </ol>					○
Implements policy(ies):	M-5.2, 5.4, 5.5				
Responsible Department:	Public Services				
Funding Source:	General Fund				
<b>M-10. Traffic Calming</b>					
<p>Adopt a formal traffic calming policy. Construct and implement traffic calming measures in appropriate locations, including increased law enforcement of traffic laws. Work with neighborhoods to address local traffic concerns, and explore funding alternatives for neighborhood traffic calming improvements. Discourage frequent driveway curb cuts along Mobility Element roadways and encourage reciprocal access between properties, when appropriate.</p>					○
Implements policy(ies):	M-2.1, 2.2, 2.4				
Responsible Department:	Public Services				
Funding Source:	General Fund, gas tax revenues				



MOBILITY		2010 - 2012	Annual	Bi-Annual	Ongoing
<p><b>M-11. Wayfinding</b></p> <p>Continue to implement and expand wayfinding signs and features throughout the City that complement gateway signs and contribute to the City’s identity and character. Wayfinding signs will direct motorists to key destinations in the City. Wayfinding signs at the pedestrian level will direct pedestrians and cyclists to key destinations, trails, and activity centers. Consider including mileage/distance data on all pedestrian-oriented signage.</p>					●
Implements policy(ies):	LU-4.1, 4.3; M-4.1				
Responsible Department:	Community Development, Public Services				
Funding Source:	General Fund, grants, private development, development fees				
<p><b>M-12. Scenic Vistas and Views</b></p> <p>As development and revitalization projects come forward, work with developers to preserve scenic views and vistas of natural and man-made landmarks visible from public locations and streets. Figure COS-2 depicts the designated scenic vistas in Laguna Hills.</p>					●
Implements policy(ies):	M-4.3				
<b>Responsible Department:</b>	Community Development				
Funding Source:	General Fund				



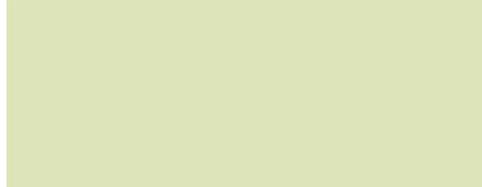
## SPECIFIC IMPLEMENTATION PROGRAMS

### Conservation and Open Space

CONSERVATION AND OPEN SPACE		2010 - 2012	Annual	Bi-Annual	Ongoing
<p><b>COS-1 Water Conservation</b></p> <p>Encourage water conservation throughout Laguna Hills in the following ways:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Encourage developments to apply water-conserving principles, including such techniques and materials as native or low water use (drought-tolerant) plants, low precipitation sprinkler heads, bubblers, drip irrigation systems, and timing devices.</li> <li>2. Support the production of recycled water and develop new uses for recycled water.</li> <li>3. Apply water conservation techniques/project “water budgets” to achieve a significant reduction over historic use and over average uses for the proposed type of development by the incorporation of water conservation devices, such as low-flow toilets, flow restriction devices, and water conserving appliances in new public and private development and rehabilitation projects.</li> </ol>					
Implements policy(ies):	COS-1.1, 1.4, 1.5				
Responsible Department:	Community Development, Public Services				
Funding Source:	General Fund				
<p><b>COS-2 Adequate Water Supply</b></p> <p>Implement applicable provisions in the Moulton Niguel and El Toro water districts’ Urban Water Master Plans and ensure that adequate water supplies are available to meet the needs of current and future growth, as well as during an emergency event or drought. Support efforts by these agencies to research and employ new technologies that improve water services and/or sustainability of water supplies serving Laguna Hills.</p>					
Implements policy(ies):	COS-1.2; CSF-5.1, 5.2				
Responsible Department:	Water Service Districts, Public Services				
Funding Source:	General Fund, user fees				

<b>CONSERVATION AND OPEN SPACE</b>		<b>2010 - 2012</b>	<b>Annual</b>	<b>Bi-Annual</b>	<b>Ongoing</b>
<b>COS-3 Water Quality</b>					
<p>Adopt, amend, and/or enforce City policies, regulations, and programs to decrease stormwater and urban runoff pollution while considering the following:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Promote the use of low impact development standards in new development and redevelopment projects.</li> <li>Continue to implement the National Pollutant Discharge Elimination System (NPDES) stormwater permits issues by the State and Regional Water Quality Control Board. Require new development and revitalization projects to incorporate Best Management Practices (BMPs) pursuant to the NPDES permit to ensure that the City complies with applicable State and federal regulations.</li> <li>Educate residents regarding surface water quality pollutants, especially those that may result from community activities, such as car washes.</li> </ol>					○
<b>Implements policy(ies):</b>	COS-1.3; S-6.2, 6.3				
<b>Responsible Department:</b>	Community Development, Public Services				
<b>Funding Source:</b>	General Fund, development fee				
<b>COS-4. Recycled and Reclaimed Water</b>					
<p>In cooperation with the State, regional, and local water agencies and suppliers, support the expansion of the use of recycled water for urban and agricultural irrigation. Cooperate with these agencies to establish standards and regulations for the use of recycled water in development projects.</p>					○
<b>Implements policy(ies):</b>	COS-1.5				
<b>Responsible Department:</b>	Community Development, Public Services				
<b>Funding Source:</b>	General Fund				

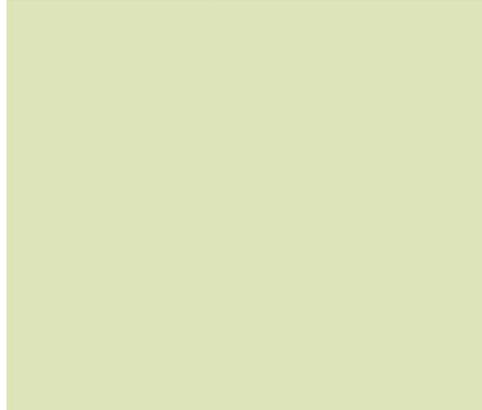
<b>CONSERVATION AND OPEN SPACE</b>		<b>2010 - 2012</b>	<b>Annual</b>	<b>Bi-Annual</b>	<b>Ongoing</b>
<p><b>COS-5 Community Gardens</b></p> <p>Support community gardens and efforts of residents to grow food for their own consumption and to sell homegrown food at farmers markets and/or to local restaurants as follows:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Allow the growing of fruit and other crops on residential properties in designated areas.</li> <li>2. Permit the establishment of community gardens in public parks and open spaces.</li> <li>3. Accommodate a local farmers market in Laguna Hills</li> </ol>					○
Implements policy(ies):	COS-2.6				
Responsible Department:	Community Development, Community Services				
Funding Source:	General Fund				
<p><b>COS-6. Parks and Recreational Needs</b></p> <p>Conduct a parks and recreation needs assessment considering the need for the following:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Recreational interpretive, historical, and environmental education programs highlighting the various natural and cultural resources found in Laguna Hills.</li> <li>2. Active recreation areas including sports parks and ball fields.</li> <li>3. Integrating seniors and persons with disabilities into regular recreation programming efforts and consideration of amendments to existing programs or adding new programs as appropriate to meet the integration needs.</li> <li>4. Youth and teen educational enrichment activities, and skills training.</li> <li>5. Community facilities that will strengthen community activity, healthy lifestyles and neighborhood integration.</li> </ol>					○
Implements policy(ies):	COS-1.15, 2.5, 2.7, 2.9, 2.10; CSF-1.12				
Responsible Department:	Community Development, Community Services				
Funding Source:	General Fund				



<b>CONSERVATION AND OPEN SPACE</b>		<b>2010 - 2012</b>	<b>Annual</b>	<b>Bi-Annual</b>	<b>Ongoing</b>
<b>COS-7. Air Quality Management Plan</b>					●
Work with the South Coast Air Quality Management District (SCAQMD) and the Southern California Association of Governments (SCAG) to implement the Air Quality Management Plan and meet all federal and State air quality standards for pollutants. Participate in any future amendments and updates to the Plan. Implement, review, and interpret the General Plan and future discretionary projects in a manner consistent with the Air Quality Management Plan to meet standards and reduce overall emissions from mobile and stationary sources.					
<b>Implements policy(ies):</b>	COS-3.2				
<b>Responsible Department:</b>	Community Development				
<b>Funding Source:</b>	General Fund, development fees				



<b>CONSERVATION AND OPEN SPACE</b>		<b>2010 - 2012</b>	<b>Annual</b>	<b>Bi-Annual</b>	<b>Ongoing</b>
<b>COS-8. Climate Action Plan</b>					
Prepare a Climate Action Plan consisting, at a minimum, of the following components:					
<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. A baseline inventory of all known sources of greenhouse gases (as defined by section 38505 of the California Health and Safety Code) in the City. The baseline year shall be the most recent year for which data are available at the time of adoption of the General Plan.</li> <li>2. An inventory of greenhouse gases emitted in the City in 1990 from all source categories included in the baseline inventory.</li> <li>3. A projected inventory of greenhouse gases expected to be emitted in the year 2020 due to the City's discretionary land use decisions pursuant to the General Plan Update, as well as greenhouse gases emitted by the City's internal government operations.</li> <li>4. A target for the reduction of those sources of emissions reasonably attributable to the City's discretionary land use decisions and internal government operations. The reduction shall be based on returning to the 1990 emissions level for the City by 2020 or otherwise set at an emissions level for a year that reduces the City's contribution to global climate change as supported by the best available scientific modeling.</li> <li>5. Feasible greenhouse gas reduction measures intended to meet the reduction target by regulating those sources of emissions reasonably attributable to the City's discretionary land use decisions and internal government operations.</li> </ol>		●			●
<b>Implements policy(ies):</b>	COS-1.6, 1.7, 1.8, 1.9, 1.10, 3.1, 3.2, 3.3, 3.4, 3.5				
<b>Responsible Department:</b>	Community Development, Public Services				
<b>Funding Source:</b>	General Fund				



<b>CONSERVATION AND OPEN SPACE</b>		<b>2010 - 2012</b>	<b>Annual</b>	<b>Bi-Annual</b>	<b>Ongoing</b>
<p><b>COS-9. City of Laguna Hills Tree Protection Ordinance</b></p> <p>In accordance with the City of Laguna Hills Tree Protection Ordinance, a permit shall be required from the Public Services Director to plant, move, spray, trim, remove, prune, replace, cut, or otherwise disturb any tree in any public place. Section 8-08.050 of the Laguna Hills Tree Protection Ordinance requires that City trees be replaced by the caliper inch measured at diameter breast height. (DBH) For every inch of DBH removed, an equal number of caliper inches shall be replaced. For example, the removal of one 12-inch tree shall necessitate the planting of a total of 12 inches of new tree(s) (e.g. one 12-inch tree, six 2-inch trees or four 3-inch trees).</p>					●
<b>Implements policy(ies):</b>	COS-3.1				
<b>Responsible Department:</b>	Public Services				
<b>Funding Source:</b>	General Fund				



## SPECIFIC IMPLEMENTATION PROGRAMS

### Community Services and Facilities

COMMUNITY SERVICES AND FACILITIES		2010 - 2012	Annual	Bi-Annual	Ongoing
<p><b>CSF-1. Animal Care Services</b></p> <p>Investigate opportunities with the Orange County Community Resource Agency (OCCRA) and other Orange County cities to improve animal care services (such as field services, education, spay and neutering, health, and shelter) in a cost-effective manner. Work with OCCRA to locate and build a new County shelter.</p>					○
<b>Implements policy(ies):</b>	CSF-1.4, 1.5				
<b>Responsible Department:</b>	OC Animal Care, Police Services				
<b>Funding Source:</b>	General Fund, dog license fees				

<b>COMMUNITY SERVICES AND FACILITIES</b>		<b>2010 - 2012</b>	<b>Annual</b>	<b>Bi-Annual</b>	<b>Ongoing</b>
<b>CSF-2. Schools to Serve the Community</b>					
Continue to work with Saddleback Valley Unified School District (SVUSD) to address the following issues, as applicable:					
<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Assist SVUSD to update information in their Master Plans and Long-Range Facility Plans, and identify future school and administrative facility sites, student generation formulas, and facility improvement plans.</li> <li>2. Assist SVUSD in their review of development proposals to ensure that proposals are consistent with school facilities requirements.</li> <li>3. Coordinate any needed amendments to the City General Plan with applicable school districts.</li> <li>4. Develop safe pedestrian and bicycle routes to all schools and ensure physical improvements (such as crosswalks and bike racks) are in place to support walking and bicycling to schools.</li> <li>5. Explore nonstructural solutions that may encourage people to walk or bus to school, rather than drive (e.g., staggered start times, walking groups, etc.)</li> <li>6. Coordinate busing programs and expand ride-sharing opportunities to relieve congestion and improve safety conditions during school drop-off and pick-up times.</li> <li>7. Enter into joint-use agreements to make additional recreational facilities available to the community during nonschool hours.</li> <li>8. Work with SVUSD to redraw attendance boundaries as needed to alleviate overcrowding.</li> </ol>					○
<b>Implements policy(ies):</b>	CSF-2.1, 2.2				
<b>Responsible Department:</b>	Community Development, Community Services, Service Providers				
<b>Funding Source:</b>	General Fund, State and federal funds, school development fees				



<b>COMMUNITY SERVICES AND FACILITIES</b>		<b>2010 - 2012</b>	<b>Annual</b>	<b>Bi-Annual</b>	<b>Ongoing</b>
<p><b>CSF-3. Fire and Police Services</b></p> <p>Ensure that fire and police facilities or resources are adequate to serve potential new development and redevelopment. Coordinate with service providers to evaluate the level of fire and police service provided to the community. Require adequate street widths and clearance for emergency access. When the City renews service contracts with the Orange County Fire Authority (OCFA) and Orange County Sheriff's Department (OCSD), consider the following issues:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Staffing levels identified in service contracts should reflect the established service standards, community population, crime conditions, increased emergency activity, geography of service area, and funds availability.</li> <li>Contracts should include service to new development and redevelopment that will be constructed during terms of the contract.</li> <li>Size of physical facilities and type of resources within the City should accommodate sufficient staff and equipment, and distribution of the facilities should minimize emergency response times.</li> </ol>					○
<b>Implements policy(ies):</b>	CSF-3.1, 4.1; S-2.1, 2.2, 3.1, 3.2				
<b>Responsible Department:</b>	Community Development, OCFA, OCSD				
<b>Funding Source:</b>	Development fees, General Fund, property tax				
<p><b>CSF-4. Water and Sewer Services for New Development</b></p> <p>Review development and redevelopment proposals and require necessary studies, as appropriate, and water conservation and mitigation measures to ensure adequate water and sewer service.</p>					○
<b>Implements policy(ies):</b>	CSF-5.1, 5.2, 6.1, 6.2				
<b>Responsible Department:</b>	Community Development, Service Providers, Public Services				
<b>Funding Source:</b>	General Fund				

<b>COMMUNITY SERVICES AND FACILITIES</b>		<b>2010 - 2012</b>	<b>Annual</b>	<b>Bi-Annual</b>	<b>Ongoing</b>
<b>CSF-5. Solid Waste Services</b>					○
Continue to contract for solid waste services from a private sector provider. Ensure that community needs for solid waste disposal are being met.					
<b>Implements policy(ies):</b>	CSF-7.1				
<b>Responsible Department</b>	Community Services, Administration, Solid Waste Service Providers				
<b>Funding Source:</b>	General Fund, user fees, solid waste franchise fees, grants				
<b>CSF-6. Reduce, Reuse, Recycle</b>					○
Continue to implement solid waste diversion programs as well as public education programs as outlined in the City's Source Reduction and Recycling Element required by Assembly Bill 939. As part of this program, work with the private sector contractor providing solid waste services within the City to ensure that appropriate recycling containers, procedures, and education are readily available throughout the community. Develop programs to maximize recycling of waste products generated by the community to prolong useful life of the local landfills.					
<b>Implements policy(ies):</b>	CSF-7.2, COS-1.19, 1.20, 1.21				
<b>Responsible Department:</b>	Community Services, Administration/Finance, Private Sector Service Waste Providers				
<b>Funding Source:</b>	General Fund, solid waste franchise fees, grants				
<b>CSF-7. Orange County Public Library</b>					○
Work with the Orange County Public Library (OCPL) to ensure that the City's library services needs are met as future development and redevelopment occurs.					
<b>Implements policy(ies):</b>	CSF-8.1				
<b>Responsible Department</b>	Community Development				
<b>Funding Source:</b>	General Fund, development fees, OCPL property taxes				

<b>COMMUNITY SERVICES AND FACILITIES</b>		<b>2010 - 2012</b>	<b>Annual</b>	<b>Bi-Annual</b>	<b>Ongoing</b>
<b>CSF-8. Utility Companies and Telecommunications</b>					○
As part of the development application and review process, coordinate with Southern California Edison, San Diego Gas and Electric, Cox Communications Orange County, The Gas Company, AT&T, cellular telephone service providers, and other local utilities to assess capacity and infrastructure needs to support new development or redevelopment activities. Ensure through such coordination that Laguna Hills remains on the cutting edge of new infrastructure technology.					
<b>Implements policy(ies):</b>	CSF-9.1, 10.1, 10.2				
<b>Responsible Department:</b>	Community Development, Utility and Communications Providers, Public Services				
<b>Funding Source:</b>	General Fund, user fees				
<b>CSF-9. Orange County Flood Control District and Adequate Flood Control</b>					○
Coordinate with the Orange County Flood Control District (OCFCD) to ensure regularly scheduled maintenance of flood control channels and completion of necessary repairs to promote flood protection. Coordinate with the OCFCD and water districts regarding any needed improvements to existing aboveground water tanks. Work with the District to identify new flood control improvements, and establish installation programs for improvements.					
<b>Implements policy(ies):</b>	CSF-11.1, 11.2; S-6.1				
<b>Responsible Department:</b>	Community Development, Public Services				
<b>Funding Source:</b>	General Fund, development fees, OCFCD property taxes				



## SPECIFIC IMPLEMENTATION PROGRAMS

### Safety

SAFETY		2010 - 2012	Annual	Bi-Annual	Ongoing
<b>S-1. Geologic Hazard Assessments</b>  Pursuant to State law, geologic and/or geotechnical studies are required for proposed new development projects located in areas identified as susceptible to landslides and liquefaction, and binding mitigation strategies must be adopted. Compliance with the recommendations set forth in site-specific geologic and/or geotechnical studies will be made a condition of the site development permit for subsequent projects. In addition, the City may require applicants to incorporate measures to stabilize and maintain slopes on a site-by-site basis, such as, but not limited to, proper planting, irrigation, retaining walls, and benching. Figure S-2 in the Safety Element depicts the location of known geologic/seismic hazards in Laguna Hills.					○
<b>Implements policy(ies):</b>	S-1.1, 1.2				
<b>Responsible Department:</b>	Community Development, Public Services				
<b>Funding Source:</b>	Development fees				
<b>S-2 Natural Hazards Risk Reduction</b>  Reduce the risk to the community from hazards related to geologic conditions, seismic activity, flooding, and structural and wildfires by requiring feasible mitigation of such impacts on discretionary development projects. Assess development proposals for potential hazards pursuant to CEQA. Require measures to mitigate all identified significant public safety hazards.					○
<b>Implements policy(ies):</b>	S-1.2				
<b>Responsible Department:</b>	Community Development, Public Services				
<b>Funding Source:</b>	General Fund, user fees				

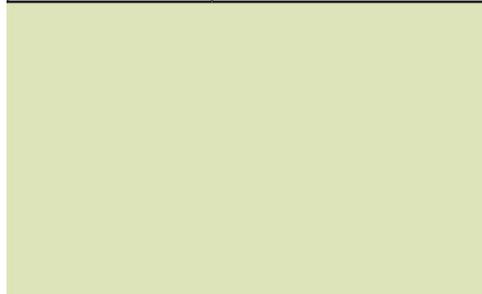
<b>SAFETY</b>		<b>2010 - 2012</b>	<b>Annual</b>	<b>Bi-Annual</b>	<b>Ongoing</b>
<b>S-3. Slope Monitoring and Remediation</b>					●
Continually monitor and encourage remediation of unstable slope areas, particularly in areas characterized by the presence of crib walls or where historical anecdotal evidence of instability exists.					
<b>Implements policy(ies):</b>	S-1.1, 1.2				
<b>Responsible Department:</b>	Community Development, Public Services				
<b>Funding Source:</b>	General Fund				
<b>S-4. Building Codes</b>					●
Continually update development standards and adopt the latest building construction codes to guide future development and redevelopment in areas with known geologic and seismic-related hazards.					
<b>Implements policy(ies):</b>	S-1.2				
<b>Responsible Department:</b>	Community Development				
<b>Funding Source:</b>	General Fund, development fees				

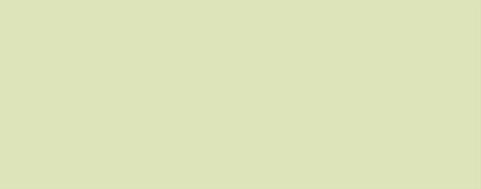
SAFETY		2010 - 2012	Annual	Bi-Annual	Ongoing
<b>S-5. Orange County Fire Authority</b>					○
Work closely with the Orange County Fire Authority (OCFA) to implement fire hazard education and fire prevention programs, including fuel modification programs and controlled burns. Coordinate with OCFA to ensure that water pressure is adequate for fire fighting purposes in all areas of the City, particularly in redevelopment projects/areas. Coordinate with OCFA to implement the Hazardous Materials Area Plan within Laguna Hills.					
<b>Implements policy(ies):</b>	S-5.1, 5.2, 5.3, 5.4				
<b>Responsible Department:</b>	Community Development, Public Services				
<b>Funding Source:</b>	General Fund, OCFA property taxes				
<b>S-6. New Fire Prevention Technology</b>					○
Support research and development of new technologies to prevent and suppress fires (e.g., foam treatments for new construction and other means). If appropriate, encourage OCFA to utilize such technologies to improve fire safety in Laguna Hills.					
<b>Implements policy(ies):</b>	S-2.4				
<b>Responsible Department:</b>	Community Development, OCFA, Public Safety				
<b>Funding Source:</b>	General Fund				

<b>SAFETY</b>		<b>2010 - 2012</b>	<b>Annual</b>	<b>Bi-Annual</b>	<b>Ongoing</b>
<b>S-7. Public Education Programs</b>					
Use public education activities to accomplish the following objectives:					
<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Raise public awareness of fire safety issues, including urban and wildland fire prevention, where to take pets during fire-related evacuations, and the benefits of fire-resistant slope cover. Continue to educate elementary and secondary school students about fire hazards and prevention measures.</li> <li>2. Coordinate with the Orange County Sheriff's Department (OCSD) to increase public awareness about criminal activity and crime prevention activities. Continue to educate elementary and secondary school students about crime and drug prevention awareness.</li> <li>3. Educate the public regarding proper disposal of household hazardous waste (including medical wastes) and other safety concerns related to improper use or storage of hazardous materials.</li> <li>4. Ensure that residents are prepared for any problems associated with the San Onofre Nuclear Generating Station (SONGS). Coordinate education activities and make materials available to residents. Utilize forums, flyers, brochures, and the City's website to accomplish these objectives.</li> <li>5. Raise public awareness regarding the City's Emergency Operations Plans to ensure that residents and businesses are prepared to safeguard life and property during and after emergencies/disasters.</li> </ol>					○
<b>Implements policy(ies):</b>	S-2.3, 3.3, 5.4, 5.6, 7.2				
<b>Responsible Department:</b>	Community Development, Public Services, OCSD, OCFA				
<b>Funding Source:</b>	General Fund				
<b>S-8. Neighborhood Watch and Community-Oriented Policing</b>					
Continue to coordinate and promote citywide Neighborhood Watch and Community-Oriented Policing programs. Focus efforts in those areas receiving the most service calls.					○
<b>Implements policy(ies):</b>	S-3.4				
<b>Responsible Department:</b>	Public Safety, Police Services				
<b>Funding Source:</b>	General Fund				

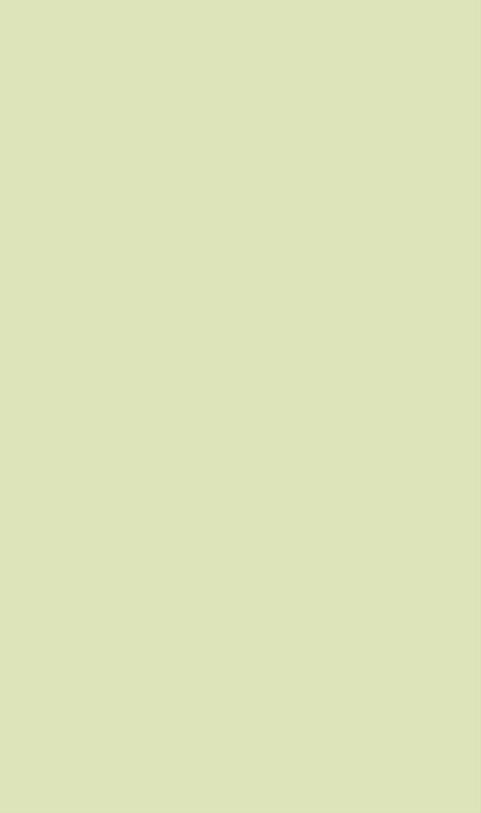
SAFETY		2010 - 2012	Annual	Bi-Annual	Ongoing
<b>S-9. Crime Prevention through Environmental Design (CPTED)</b>					○
Review all new development and redevelopment proposals for sensitivity to CPTED principles. Encourage incorporation of design features that employ adequate lighting and place increased emphasis on public areas. Coordinate with the OCSD to develop guidelines on CPTED principles.					
<b>Implements policy(ies):</b>	S-4.1; LU-3.12				
<b>Responsible Department:</b>	Community Development, OCSD				
<b>Funding Source:</b>	Development fees				
<b>S-10. County Hazardous Waste Reduction Program</b>					○
The City shall promote the use of the County of Orange's Household Hazardous Waste Collection Centers for the proper disposal of hazardous waste. Continue to identify locations where residents can properly dispose of hazardous waste and advertise these locations at public counters and on the City's website.					
<b>Implements policy(ies):</b>	S-5.1, 5.2, 5.3, 5.4				
<b>Responsible Department:</b>	Community Services, Administration/Finance				
<b>Funding Source:</b>	General Fund				
<b>S-11. Nuclear Power Risks Reduction</b>					○
Participate in programs and emergency response exercises with federal and State agencies and Southern California Edison to minimize community risks related to nuclear power production at SONGS. Implement measures related to SONGS within the City's Emergency Operations Plan (EOP) to ensure that residents are prepared for any problems associated with the facility.					
<b>Implements policy(ies):</b>	S-5.6				
<b>Responsible Department:</b>	Community Development, Public Services, Police Services				
<b>Funding Source:</b>	General Fund				

SAFETY		2010 - 2012	Annual	Bi-Annual	Ongoing
<p><b>S-12. Project-Related Flood Control and Stormwater Management and Comprehensive Drainage Studies</b></p> <p>As a condition of project approval, require new development and redevelopment to provide adequate on-site and off-site storm water and flood management facilities to control direct and indirect erosion and discharges of pollutants and/or sediments. To determine the facility and Best Management Practices (BMP) needs, the City will require, when necessary, a hydrological/drainage analysis be performed by a state-licensed and City-approved engineer, with the cost of said analysis the responsibility of the project applicant.</p>					○
<b>Implements policy(ies):</b>	S-6.2; COS-1.3				
<b>Responsible Department:</b>	Public Services				
<b>Funding Source:</b>	Development fees				
<p><b>S-13. Emergency Operations Plan</b></p> <p>Implement the City's Emergency Operations Plan (EOP) according to requirements and provisions of the State Emergency Management System and National Incident Management System. Ensure that the EOP establishes community emergency shelter facilities and is easily available to the public. Work with nearby jurisdictions to enhance multi-jurisdictional coordination during emergency situations.</p>					○
<b>Implements policy(ies):</b>	S-7.1, 7.3				
<b>Responsible Department:</b>	All departments				
<b>Funding Source:</b>	General Fund				





<b>SAFETY</b>		<b>2010 - 2012</b>	<b>Annual</b>	<b>Bi-Annual</b>	<b>Ongoing</b>
<b>S-14. Citizen’s Emergency Preparedness Academy</b>					
Continue to educate and promote Laguna Hills residents, businesses, and Neighborhood Watch members in 8-week training programs focusing on survival and recovery from disasters.					
<b>Implements policy(ies):</b>	S-7.2				
<b>Responsible Department:</b>	Public Safety Department				
<b>Funding Source:</b>	General Fund				



## SPECIFIC IMPLEMENTATION PROGRAMS

### Noise

NOISE		2010 - 2012	Annual	Bi-Annual	Ongoing
<p><b>N-1. Noise Standards and Acoustical Studies</b></p> <p>Review development proposals to ensure that the noise standards and compatibility criteria set forth in the Noise Element are met. Consult Noise Element guidelines and standards for noise compatible land uses to determine the suitability of proposed developments relative to existing and forecasted noise levels. Enforce California Title 24 Noise Standards to ensure an acceptable interior noise level of 45 dBA CNEL in habitable rooms.</p> <p>Require acoustical analysis for all discretionary projects where any of the following apply:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. The project will create or impact noise sensitive land uses and is located within the existing or future 60 dbA CNEL or higher contour.</li> <li>2. The addition of more than 10 percent to the volume of average daily traffic of any arterial street.</li> <li>3. The addition of 1,000 or more vehicles in the peak hour on adjacent roadways.</li> <li>4. The project will introduce noise or vibration sources associated with mechanical equipment operations, entertainment, maintenance, and facility operations.</li> <li>5. The project is a proposed residential use in the vicinity of existing and proposed commercial areas.</li> <li>6. The project is a mixed use development that includes a residential component. The focus of this type of acoustical study is to determine likely interior and exterior noise levels and recommend appropriate design features to reduce noise.</li> </ol> <p>Require mitigation measures, where necessary, to reduce noise levels to meet the adopted standards and criteria. Such measures may include landscaped berms, barriers, walls, enhanced parkways, increased parkways, and other sound attenuating architectural design and construction methods. Only permit new development if adopted noise standards and regulations can be met.</p>					○
<b>Implements policy(ies):</b>	N-1.2, N-2.2, N-2.3, N-2.4, N-2.5, N-3.1, N-3.2				
<b>Responsible Department:</b>	Community Development				
<b>Funding Source:</b>	Development fees				

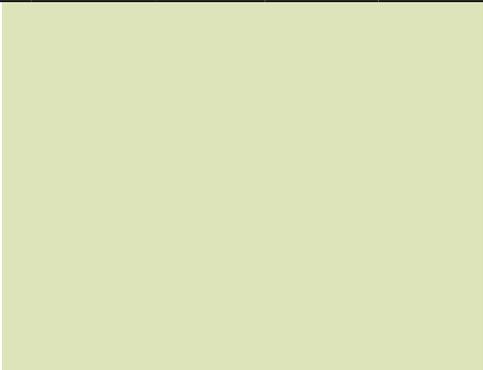
NOISE		2010 - 2012	Annual	Bi-Annual	Ongoing
<p><b>N-2. Noise Ordinance</b></p> <p>Adopt the noise standards as proposed in Table N-2 of the Noise Element and update Chapter 5-24 of the City's municipal code and update chapter 9-40.190 of the City's municipal code to achieve consistency on City noise standards.</p>					●
<b>Implements policy(ies):</b>	N-1.1, N-1.2, N-1.3, N-3.1, N-3-2				
<b>Responsible Department:</b>	Community Development				
<b>Funding Source:</b>	General Fund				
<p><b>N-3. Noise Insulation Standards</b></p> <p>Implement provisions of the California Noise Insulation Standards (Title 24) that specify that indoor noise levels for multi-family residential living spaces shall not exceed 45 dB CNEL. The standard is defined as the combined effect of all noise sources and is implemented when existing or future exterior noise levels exceed 60 dB CNEL. Title 24 further requires that the standard be applied to all new hotels, motels, apartment houses, and dwellings other than single-family dwellings. The City will also apply this standard to single-family dwellings and condominium conversion projects.</p>					●
<b>Implements policy(ies):</b>	COS-1.15, 2.5, 2.7, 2.9, 2.10; CSF-1.12				
<b>Responsible Department:</b>	Community Development				
<b>Funding Source:</b>	General Fund				



NOISE		2010 - 2012	Annual	Bi-Annual	Ongoing
<p><b>N-4. Commercial Noise</b></p> <p>Review the locations of proposed projects with the potential to generate noise in relation to sensitive receptors through the discretionary project review process. Limit delivery or service hours for stores and businesses with loading areas, docks, or trash bins that front, side, or gain access on driveways next to residential and other noise sensitive areas. Only approve exceptions if full compliance with the nighttime limits of the noise regulations is achieved</p>					○
<b>Implements policy(ies):</b>	N-1.1, N-1.2, N-3.1, N-3.2				
<b>Responsible Department:</b>	Community Development				
<b>Funding Source:</b>	General Fund				
<p><b>N-5. Construction Noise</b></p> <p>Require all construction activity to comply with the limits (maximum noise levels, hours, and days of allowed activity) established in City noise regulations to reduce impacts associated with temporary construction noise to the extent feasible. Trucks associated with construction activities shall follow designated truck routes, where appropriate.</p>					○
<b>Implements policy(ies):</b>	N-3.1				
<b>Responsible Department:</b>	Community Development, Public Services				
<b>Funding Source:</b>	General Fund				



HOUSING		2010 - 2012	Annual	Bi-Annual	Ongoing
<b>H-1. Code Enforcement Program</b>  The City of Laguna Hills will enforce building code regulations and abate code violations, nuisances, and existing uses, activities, buildings, or structures that pose a threat to public health, safety, or welfare. Enforcement activities will focus on property maintenance, such as eliminating derelict or abandoned vehicles, outdoor storage, or other situations that may constitute health, safety, or fire hazards.					●
<b>Implements policy(ies):</b>	H-1.1, H-1.3, H-1.4				
<b>Responsible Department:</b>	Community Development				
<b>Funding Source:</b>	General Fund				
<b>H-2. State Franchise Tax Board Code Enforcement</b>  To promote maintenance of existing rental properties, the City shall work with the California State Franchise Tax Board to enforce provisions of California Revenue and Taxation code Sections 17274 and 24436.5, which prohibit owners of substandard rental housing from claiming depreciation, amortization, mortgage interest, and property tax deductions of state income tax. The City will notify the State Franchise Tax Board if substandard rental housing is identified.					●
<b>Implements policy(ies):</b>	H-1.1, H-1.3, H-1.4				
<b>Responsible Department:</b>	Community Development				
<b>Funding Source:</b>	General Fund				



HOUSING		2010 - 2012	Annual	Bi-Annual	Ongoing
<b>H-3. Housing Rehabilitation</b>					
<p>The City will continue to work with the Orange County Housing and Community Services Department to receive rehabilitation loans and grants for low and moderate income homeowners and rental property owners, including senior/disabled households, to maintain housing stock. Efforts will focus on rehabilitating approximately 148 units in the Aliso Meadows Condominium Development. The rehabilitation loan and grant program will use CDBG funds distributed by the County as appropriate. The City will publicize the availability of this program in local newspapers, on the City’s website, at the Community Development Department, and in information items at Planning Agency Public Hearings. Modifications for accessibility/universal design are eligible activities under this program (see also Housing Element Implementation Program H-6 and H-17).</p>			●		●
<b>Implements policy(ies):</b>	H-1.1, H-1.2, H-1.5, H-2.5, H-2.6, H-2.7, H-2.9, H-3.4				
<b>Responsible Department:</b>	Community Development				
<b>Funding Source:</b>	CDBG				
<b>H-4. At-Risk Units</b>					
<p>The City will continue to pursue the extension of affordability controls for 51 units, either in the existing Rancho Moulton housing development or as part of new or redevelopment activities in the Via Lomas area or other areas of the City. . The City will annually prepare a “Risk Assessment” report provided by the California Housing Partnership Corporation (CHPC). Projects determined high risk are those most likely to decline continued federal assistance because they currently have rents below market rate(s) and are owned by profit-motivated entities. The City will work with potential purchasers to retain 51 units in the existing development or in new development by finding an interested non-profit entity and securing funding to acquire and preserve the property. The City will use HCD resources listed on the HCD website, as well as other resources, to locate potential funding sources as needed for the preservation of affordable housing. As needed, the City will work with tenants of at-risk units and provide them with education regarding tenant rights, notification procedures, and conversion procedures. The City will also provide tenants in at-risk projects information from the Orange County Housing Authority regarding Section 8 rental assistance.</p>			●		●
<b>Implements policy(ies):</b>	H-1.5, H-1.2, H-2.8				
<b>Responsible Department:</b>	Community Development, Public Services				
<b>Funding Source:</b>	General Fund				

HOUSING		2010 - 2012	Annual	Bi-Annual	Ongoing
<b>H-5. Foreclosure Referral Program</b>  Based on current dynamics, the City seeks to address the increased incidence of residents facing foreclosure. The City will provide foreclosure information on the City’s website, and provide resources at the City to refer residents to external agencies to assist in reducing incidents of foreclosures in Laguna Hills.		●			●
<b>Implements policy(ies):</b>	H-1.4, H-2.7				
<b>Responsible Department:</b>	Community Development				
<b>Funding Source:</b>	General Fund				
<b>H-6. Urban Village Specific Plan Area for Housing Opportunities</b>  The City shall inform existing property owners and prospective developers that housing opportunities are available in the Urban Village Specific Plan area. Housing opportunities include market rate housing units and could also include housing for low and moderate income households, families, seniors, and special needs households. City staff will inform prospective developers at time of project application meeting(s). Additionally, the City will promote the UVSP area on the City’s website and will also promote housing development incentives consistent with Chapter 9-72 of the Zoning Ordinance. The UVSP area will also be promoted through the City’s Economic Development Strategy (see the Land Use Element Implementation Program LU-14).					●
<b>Implements policy(ies):</b>	H-2.1, H-2.2, H-2.3, H-2.6				
<b>Responsible Department:</b>	Community Development				
<b>Funding Source:</b>	CDBG				

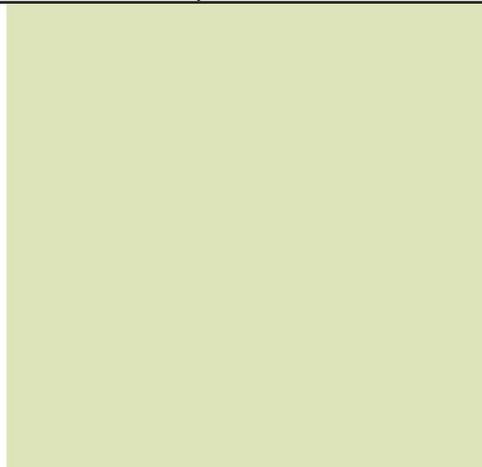


<b>HOUSING</b>		<b>2010 - 2012</b>	<b>Annual</b>	<b>Bi-Annual</b>	<b>Ongoing</b>
<p><b>H-7. Alicia Gateway for Housing Opportunities</b></p> <p>The City shall inform existing property owners and prospective developers that housing opportunities are available in the Alicia Gateway. Housing opportunities could include market rate housing units and could also include housing for low and moderate income households, families, seniors and special needs households. City staff will inform prospective developers at time of project application meeting(s). Additionally, the City will promote Alicia Gateway on the City’s website and will also promote housing development incentives consistent with Chapter 9-72 of the Zoning Ordinance. Alicia Gateway will also be promoted through the City’s Economic Development Strategy (see the Land Use Element Implementation Program LU-14).</p>					○
<b>Implements policy(ies):</b>	H-2.1, H-2.2, H-2.3, H-2.6				
<b>Responsible Department:</b>	Community Development				
<b>Funding Source:</b>	CDBG				
<p><b>H-8. Neighborhood Mixed Use Land Use Designation and Zone District</b></p> <p>The City will adopt a new neighborhood mixed use designation and zone district that will promote the development of vertical and horizontal mixed use. Neighborhood mixed use will create a moderate density center and gathering place in key, centrally located areas within Laguna Hills. This designation/district will promote a mix of retail, housing, and office uses; walkable connections, plazas, and green space for community gathering; high quality design and architecture; orientation of buildings toward the street and pedestrians; and accessibility to transit. Allowed uses would include commercial retail, office, and residential, while prohibiting stand-alone residential. The City will apply the new designation/district to the Alicia Gateway and could apply the neighborhood mixed use designation/district to other areas as applicable.</p>					○
<b>Implements policy(ies):</b>	H-2.1, H-2.2, H-2.3, H-2.6				
<b>Responsible Department:</b>	Community Development				
<b>Funding Source:</b>	General Fund				

<b>HOUSING</b>		<b>2010 - 2012</b>	<b>Annual</b>	<b>Bi-Annual</b>	<b>Ongoing</b>
<b>H-9. Zoning Ordinance Update</b>					
<p>The implementation of housing goals, policies, and programs will require updating the City's Zoning Ordinance. In addition, certain City rules and regulations may constrain the development of housing affordable to low and moderate income households with special needs. To mitigate potential constraints and implement housing goals, policies, and programs, the City will update the following regulations in the Zoning Ordinance:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Consolidate and remove duplicitous definitions of manufactured housing and mobile homes and ensure consistency in the Zoning Ordinance, use regulations, and development standards.</li> <li>2. Reduce the open space requirement in the High Density Residential district;</li> <li>3. Increase the maximum lot coverage requirement in the Mixed Use district.</li> <li>4. Amend the Urban Village Specific Plan to require residential densities between 30 and 50 dwelling units per acre.</li> <li>5. Separate the transitional care facility/community care facility/emergency shelter definitions and explicitly allow emergency shelters in the Mixed Use zone subject to the development standards allowed by State law.</li> <li>6. Update and include definitions for Emergency Shelter, Supportive Housing, and Transitional Housing, consistent with the provisions of the California Health and Safety Code. Transitional and supportive housing will be treated as residential uses subject to the same standards that apply to other residential uses of the same type in the same zone.</li> </ol>		●			
<b>Implements policy(ies):</b>	H-2.1, H-2.2, H-2.3, H-2.5, H-2.9, H-3.4				
<b>Responsible Department:</b>	Community Development				
<b>Funding Source:</b>	General Fund				



HOUSING		2010 - 2012	Annual	Bi-Annual	Ongoing
<b>H-10. Second Units</b>					○
The City shall continue to implement the Second Unit provisions of the Zoning Ordinance consistent with state law. The City will continue to permit second units by right in all residential zones of the City, requiring only ministerial approval. Residential second units provide a viable option for providing additional housing opportunities which could include affordable housing for lower income seniors, single persons, or small households within existing neighborhoods.					
<b>Implements policy(ies):</b>	H-2.2, H-3.4				
<b>Responsible Department:</b>	Community Development				
<b>Funding Source:</b>	CDBG				
<b>H-11. CDBG Funding for Shelter for the Homeless</b>					○
The City shall apply for United States Department of Housing and Urban Development CDBG funds and allocate a portion of such funds to subrecipients who provide shelter for the homeless.					
<b>Implements policy(ies):</b>	H-2.6, H-2.7				
<b>Responsible Department:</b>	Community Development				
<b>Funding Source:</b>	CDBG				



HOUSING		2010 - 2012	Annual	Bi-Annual	Ongoing
<b>H-12. Continuum of Care Funding and Consolidated Plan Participation</b>  The City shall continue to participate in the Orange County Consolidated Plan Programs and in the Orange County Continuum of Care local housing planning process to facilitate obtaining funds for affordable housing and related social services for special needs populations. The Continuum of Care local housing and service delivery system focuses on homeless prevention, outreach, and assessment, emergency shelters, transitional housing, supportive services, and permanent supportive housing for homeless individuals and families. The City shall pursue homeless assistance grants through the Continuum. The City will assist public and private nonprofit housing developers in preparation of funding applications for special needs populations.					○
<b>Implements policy(ies):</b>	H-2.6				
<b>Responsible Department:</b>	Community Development				
<b>Funding Source:</b>	CDBG				
<b>H-13. Section 8 Rental Assistance</b>  The Orange County Housing Authority currently administers the Section 8 Rental Assistance program on behalf of the City. Currently the program assists renter households in the City of Laguna Hills. Based on future congressional appropriations, the County Housing Authority will apply for additional funding which will enable the Housing Authority to administer additional vouchers for families, seniors, and disabled persons over the Housing Element planning period. The City of Laguna Hills will continue to provide referral services and information to the City's residents.					○
<b>Implements policy(ies):</b>	H-1.2, H-1.3, H-1.5, H-2.7, H-2.8, H-2.9				
<b>Responsible Department:</b>	Community Development				
<b>Funding Source:</b>	HUD				



<b>HOUSING</b>		<b>2010 - 2012</b>	<b>Annual</b>	<b>Bi-Annual</b>	<b>Ongoing</b>
<b>H-14. Affordable Housing Developer Partnerships</b>					○
<p>The City will continue to develop partnerships with mainstream and/or special needs affordable housing developers that could result in set-asides in existing and planned low income housing projects. These partnerships may include incentives (such as expedited processing, fee waivers, and density bonuses) provided by the City to facilitate the set-asides for planned low income units and actively cooperating with the owners of existing units to secure appropriate federal funding necessary to maintain existing affordability. The City will promote lower income housing development incentives on the City's website, consistent with Chapter 9-72 of the Zoning Ordinance. The City will use HCD's housing resources website to locate available sites and potential funding sources as needed for the development of affordable housing.</p>					
<b>Implements policy(ies):</b>	H-2.3, H-2.5, H-2.6, H-2.7, H-2.9				
<b>Responsible Department:</b>	Community Development				
<b>Funding Source:</b>	General Fund				
<b>H-15. Fair Housing Program</b>					○
<p>The City will continue to maintain services and personnel to receive housing complaints and continue to address or resolve complaints. The City will also continue to refer fair housing complaints to the Fair Housing Council if they cannot be resolved at the City level. The City will also continue to disseminate written literature about fair housing laws, resident rights, and remedies for fair housing complaints. The City will ensure that fair housing literature is available in the Community Development Department, on the City's website, and at the Laguna Hills Technology Library. The City will monitor these sites to ensure timely, accurate information is available.</p>					
<b>Implements policy(ies):</b>	H-3.1, H-3.2, H-3.3				
<b>Responsible Department:</b>	Community Development				
<b>Funding Source:</b>	General Fund				

HOUSING		2010 - 2012	Annual	Bi-Annual	Ongoing
<p><b>H-16. Reasonable Accommodation Procedures</b></p> <p>The City recognizes the unique needs of persons with disabilities. To comply with federal and state housing laws, the City will analyze existing land use controls, building codes, and permit and processing procedures to determine constraints they impose on the development, maintenance, and improvement of housing for persons with disabilities. Based on its findings, the City will develop a policy for reasonable accommodation to provide relief from code regulations and permitting procedures that may have a discriminatory effect on housing for individuals with disabilities. The policy shall include procedures for requesting accommodation, timeline for processing and appeals, criteria for determining whether a requested accommodation is reasonable, and ministerial approval for minor requests. The City will refer to the HCD website to develop guidelines and a model ordinance for reasonable accommodations. The ordinance will address such topics as purpose, findings, applicability, notice to the public of accommodation process, procedures, reviewing authority, required findings, and appeals. The adoption of reasonable accommodation procedures will be coordinated with other Zoning Ordinance updates as detailed in Implementation Program H-8. The City will conduct an outreach program to assist in the preparation of an ordinance that will include written notification or interviews via phone or in person of stakeholders as identified in Table H-1.</p>					
<b>Implements policy(ies):</b>	H-2.5, H-2.9, H-3.1, H-3.2, H-3.3				
<b>Responsible Department:</b>	Community Development				
<b>Funding Source:</b>	General Fund				



<b>HOUSING</b>		<b>2010 - 2012</b>	<b>Annual</b>	<b>Bi-Annual</b>	<b>Ongoing</b>
<b>H-17. Universal Design Features in Housing</b>					
<p>The City recognizes that all people have varying abilities and that many people will encounter temporary or permanent changes in ability to conduct the tasks necessary for daily living throughout their lives. Universal design features create housing suited for people of all abilities and can allow residents to stay in their homes over their lifetime. The City will explore programs, an ordinance, and incentives to encourage provision of universal design features in housing. The City will refer to the HCD website for guidelines and a model ordinance consistent with the principles of universal design. The universal design ordinance will address such topics as findings, definitions, scope and application, standards, and enforcement. City staff will encourage prospective developers to provide universal design features at the time of project application meeting(s).</p>		○			
<b>Implements policy(ies):</b>	H-2.5, H-2.9, H-3.1, H-3.2, H-3.3				
<b>Responsible Department:</b>	Community Development				
<b>Funding Source:</b>	General Fund				



HOUSING		2010 - 2012	Annual	Bi-Annual	Ongoing
<p><b>H-18. Annual Progress Reports</b></p> <p>The City will report annually on progress toward implementation of the Housing Element and residential development activities citywide. State law requires that each local jurisdiction submit an annual progress report on the implementation of its General Plan. For the Housing Element, the reporting must include the following:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Annual building activity by unit type, tenure, affordability level, deed restriction, and financial assistance;</li> <li>2. Progress in achieving its RHNA;</li> <li>3. Program-by-program account of implementation status; and</li> <li>4. Outcome/disposition of development applications identifying location, size, type, and status of residential development proposals for citywide use and for submittal to Center for Demographic Research at California State University and to the California Department of Finance.</li> </ol>			○		
<b>Implements policy(ies):</b>	H-4.1, H-4.2				
<b>Responsible Department:</b>	Community Development				
<b>Funding Source:</b>	General Fund				



HOUSING		2010 - 2012	Annual	Bi-Annual	Ongoing
<b>H-19. Housing Issues Monitoring</b>					
<p>The City will monitor existing and proposed affordable housing developments in the City. The City will also monitor legislation, trends, and policy issues related to the development and maintenance of affordable housing in Laguna Hills. Ongoing efforts throughout the planning period include but are not limited to:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Monitoring development proposals in the City that could be used to maintain, increase, or enhance affordable housing opportunities;</li> <li>2. Monitoring and market housing opportunities in the UVSP area, including affordable housing opportunities, through Planning Agency public hearings and project preapplication meetings;</li> <li>3. Monitoring existing programs designed to preserve assisted housing developments for low income households to determine whether additional actions are needed to protect these developments;</li> <li>4. Monitoring of mobile home park for conversion to nonresidential use;</li> <li>5. Attending housing and legislative review conferences;</li> <li>6. Attending training workshops;</li> <li>7. Participating in regional planning efforts coordinated by the SCAG; and</li> <li>8. Interfacing with City agencies and the public.</li> </ol>					●
<b>Implements policy(ies):</b>	H-4.1, H-4.2				
<b>Responsible Department:</b>	Community Development				
<b>Funding Source:</b>	General Fund				
<b>H-20. Local Housing Efforts Coordination</b>					
<p>The City shall coordinate local housing efforts with appropriate federal, state, regional, and local government and/or agencies and cooperate in implementation of intergovernmental housing programs to ensure maximum effectiveness in solving local and regional housing problems. The City will submit CDBG applications to assist in preserving existing affordable housing stock.</p>			●		
<b>Implements policy(ies):</b>	H-4.2				
<b>Responsible Department:</b>	Community Development				



# APPENDIX B.

# Related Plans and Programs



## Introduction

Many plans and programs enacted through federal, State, and local legislation relate directly to the goals of the General Plan. These plans and programs are administered by agencies with powers to enforce federal, State, and local laws. The purpose of this appendix is to serve as a useful introduction to potential federal, State, and local regulatory requirements during development and environmental review. Because the regulatory environment changes frequently, these plans and programs have been presented in an appendix to allow the City to revise this section as needed without undergoing a formal General Plan Amendment. Table B-1 (at the end of this appendix) depicts the relationship between related plans and programs and the General Plan elements in a matrix format.

## Federal Plans and Programs

### COMPREHENSIVE ENVIRONMENTAL RESPONSE,

### COMPENSATION, AND LIABILITY ACT (CERCLA)

The Comprehensive Environmental Response, Compensation, and Liability Act (CERCLA), commonly known as Superfund, was enacted by Congress on December 11, 1980. This law created a tax on the chemical and petroleum industries and provided broad federal authority to respond directly to releases or threatened releases of hazardous substances that may endanger public health or the environment. CERCLA established prohibitions and requirements concerning closed and abandoned hazardous waste sites; provided for liability of persons responsible for releases of hazardous waste at these sites; and established a trust fund to provide for cleanup when no responsible party could be identified.

### EMERGENCY PLANNING COMMUNITY RIGHT-TO-KNOW ACT (EPCRA)

The Emergency Planning Community Right-to-Know Act (EPCRA) was included under the Superfund Amendments and Reauthorization Act (SARA) law and is commonly referred to as SARA

Title III. EPCRA was passed in response to concerns regarding the environmental and safety hazards posed by the storage and handling of toxic chemicals. EPCRA establishes requirements for federal, State and local governments, Indian Tribes, and industry regarding emergency planning and “Community Right-to-Know” reporting on hazardous and toxic chemicals. SARA Title III requires states and local emergency planning groups to develop community emergency response plans for protection from a list of Extremely Hazardous Substances (40 CFR 355 Appendix B). The Community Right-to-Know provisions help increase the public’s knowledge and access to information on chemicals at individual facilities, their uses, and releases into the environment.

## **FEDERAL CLEAN AIR ACT**

The federal Clean Air Act (42 U.S.C. §§ 7401-7671q) requires the adoption of National Ambient Air Quality Standards to protect public health and welfare from the effects of air pollution. Six air pollutants have been identified by the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency (USEPA) as being of concern nationwide: carbon monoxide (CO); ozone (O<sub>3</sub>); nitrogen dioxide (NO<sub>2</sub>); sulfur dioxide (SO<sub>2</sub>); lead (Pb); and particulate matter (PM), which is subdivided into two classes based on particle size—PM<sub>10</sub> and PM<sub>2.5</sub>. These pollutants are collectively referred to as criteria pollutants.

## **FEDERAL ENDANGERED SPECIES ACT (ESA)**

The federal Endangered Species Act (ESA), administered by the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service, applies to federally listed species and habitat occupied by federally listed species. Federally listed species are most likely to occur within riparian habitat areas in the City’s floodplains. ESA Section 9 forbids specified acts that directly or indirectly harm listed species. Section 9 also prohibits “taking” any species of wildlife or fish listed as endangered. These restrictions apply to all federal agencies and all persons subject to U.S. jurisdiction.

## **NATIONAL FLOOD INSURANCE PROGRAM (NFIP)**

The National Flood Insurance Program (NFIP) is administered by the Federal Emergency Management Agency (FEMA). The NFIP provides federal flood insurance and federally financed loans for property owners in floodprone areas. To qualify for federal flood insurance, the City must identify flood hazard areas and implement a system of protective controls. The flood management section in the Safety Element fulfills these requirements.

## **NATIONAL HISTORIC PRESERVATION ACT (NHPA)**

The National Historic Preservation Act (NHPA) of 1966 created the framework for preservation activity in the United States. The NHPA redefined and expanded the National Register of Historic Places (NRHP) (established by the Historic Sites Act of 1935), created the position of State Historic Preservation Officer (SHPO), and set up the Historic Preservation Fund to fund the provisions of the NHPA. Section 106 of the NHPA requires that the effects of all federal undertakings on properties eligible or listed in the NRHP be taken into account. Amendments to the NHPA in 1980 provided for the establishment of a Certified Local Government (CLG) program. The CLG program allows for direct local government participation and integration in the statewide historic preservation planning process. Cities can apply for CLG status; to qualify, cities must adopt a historic preservation ordinance, establish a qualified preservation commission, provide for adequate public participation, and conduct a comprehensive historic resource survey. Advantages to becoming a CLG include the ability to compete for preservation grants. CLGs directly participate in the nomination of historic properties to the NRHP and perform other preservation functions as delegated by SHPO under NHPA.

## **UNIFORM BUILDING CODE (UBC)**

The federal Uniform Building Code (UBC) defines different regions of the United States and ranks them according to their seismic hazard potential. There are four types of regions, called Seismic Zones 1 through 4, with Zone 1 having the least seismic potential and Zone 4 having the highest seismic potential. The City of Laguna Hills is within Seismic Zone 4; accordingly, any future development would be required to comply with all design standards applicable to Seismic Zone 4.

## **UNIFORM FIRE CODE (UFC)**

The federal Uniform Fire Code (UFC) is the primary means for authorizing and enforcing procedures and mechanisms to ensure the safe handling and storage of any substance that may pose a threat to public health and safety. The UFC regulates the use, handling, and storage requirements for hazardous materials at fixed facilities. The UFC and the federal Uniform Building Code (UBC) use a hazard classification system to determine what protective measures are required to protect fire and life safety. These measures may include construction standards, separations from property lines, and specialized equipment. To ensure that these safety measures are met, the UFC employs a permit system based on hazard classification.

## **U.S. FISH AND WILDLIFE SERVICE (USFWS)**

The U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service (USFWS) regulates impacts to wildlife resources. Special permits are required for activities that may affect fish and game habitat. USFWS also regulates impacts to sensitive plant and animal species. Future development in Laguna Hills that has the potential to affect wildlife resources will be subject to the regulations of USFWS.

## **U.S. NUCLEAR REGULATORY COMMISSION EMERGENCY PLANNING ZONES**

The U.S. Nuclear Regulatory Commission has identified the area surrounding nuclear generating stations, such as the San Onofre Nuclear Generating Station (SONGS), as Emergency Planning Zones. The federal government establishes the area with a 50-mile radius around every nuclear generating station as an Ingestion Pathway Zone. At SONGS, the Ingestion Pathway Zone encompasses all of Orange County.

## **USGS LANDSLIDE HAZARD IDENTIFICATION PROGRAM**

The U.S. Geologic Survey (USGS) in fulfillment of the requirements of Public Law 106-113 created the National Landslide Hazards Program to reduce long-term losses from landslide hazards by improving our understanding of the causes of ground failure and suggesting mitigation strategies. The Federal Emergency Management Agency (FEMA) is the responsible agency for the long-term management of natural hazards.

## **State Plans and Programs**

### **ALQUIST-PRIOLO EARTHQUAKE FAULT ZONING ACT**

The Alquist-Priolo Act (Public Resources Code Sections 2621–2630) was passed in 1972 to mitigate the hazard of surface faulting to structures designed for human occupancy. The main purpose of the law is to prevent the construction of buildings used for human occupancy on the surface trace of active faults. The law addresses only the hazard of surface fault rupture and is not directed toward other earthquake hazards. The Alquist-Priolo Act requires the State Geologist to establish regulatory zones known as “Earthquake Fault Zones” around the surface traces of active faults and to issue appropriate maps. The maps are distributed to

all affected cities, counties, and State agencies for their use in planning efforts. Before a project can be permitted in a designated Alquist-Priolo Earthquake Fault Zone, cities and counties must require a geologic investigation to demonstrate that proposed buildings would not be constructed across active faults. Laguna Hills is not located within an Alquist-Priolo Earthquake Fault Zone.

## **CALIFORNIA AIR RESOURCES BOARD (CARB)**

The California Air Resources Board (CARB) is the agency responsible for coordination and oversight of State and local air pollution control programs in California and for implementing the California Clean Air Act (CCAA). The CCAA, which was adopted in 1988, required CARB to establish the California Ambient Air Quality Standards (CAAQS). CARB has established CAAQS for sulfates, hydrogen sulfide, vinyl chloride, visibility-reducing particulate matter, and the above-mentioned criteria air pollutants. In most cases the CAAQS are more stringent than the National Ambient Air Quality Standards. Differences in the standards are generally explained by the health effects studies considered during the standard-setting process and the interpretation of the studies. In addition, the CAAQS incorporate a margin of safety to protect sensitive individuals.

## **CALIFORNIA BUILDING CODE (CBC)**

The State of California provides a minimum standard for building design through the California Building Code (CBC). The CBC is based on the Uniform Building Code and modified for California conditions. The CBC is generally adopted on a jurisdiction-by-jurisdiction basis, subject to further modification based on local conditions. The City of Laguna Hills has adopted the CBC along with the County of Orange Grading and Building Codes.

## **CALIFORNIA DEPARTMENT OF FISH AND GAME (CDFG)**

The California Department of Fish and Game (CDFG) regulates impacts to wildlife resources. Special permits are required for alteration, dredging, or any activity in a lake or stream, as well as other activities that may affect fish and game habitat. CDFG also regulates impacts to sensitive plant and animal species. Future development in Laguna Hills that has the potential to affect wildlife habitat will be subject to CDFG regulations.

## **CALIFORNIA ENDANGERED SPECIES ACT (CESA)**

The California Endangered Species Act (CESA) generally parallels the main provisions of the federal Endangered Species Act and is administered by CDFG. CESA prohibits the “taking” of listed species except as otherwise provided in State law. Any future development or redevelopment in Laguna Hills that has the potential to affect wildlife will be subject to the restrictions contained in CESA.

## **CALIFORNIA ENVIRONMENTAL QUALITY ACT (CEQA)**

The California Environmental Quality Act (CEQA) is the State’s environmental review process that requires public agencies to identify the significant environmental effects of a project and either avoid the significant environmental effects, where feasible, or mitigate the significant environmental effects, where feasible.

## **CALIFORNIA FIRE CODE**

The California Fire Code and Office of the State Fire Marshall provide regulations and guidance for local agencies in the development and enforcement of fire safety standards. The California Fire Code also establishes minimum requirements that will provide a reasonable degree of safety from fire, panic, and explosion.

## **THE CALIFORNIA GLOBAL WARMING SOLUTIONS ACT**

Assembly Bill 32 (AB 32), the California Global Warming Solutions Act of 2006 (Nunez, Chapter 488, Statutes of 2006) recognizes that global warming poses a serious threat to the economy, environment, and people of California. To avert these potential consequences, AB 32 requires California to reduce statewide emissions to the 1990 level by 2020 (a reduction of about 30 percent from the forecast emissions level for 2020, or about 10 percent below the existing emissions level). The law establishes the California Air Resources Board (CARB) as the lead agency to implement AB 32, which identifies the major actions CARB must perform. The major actions required of CARB to implement AB 32 include developing a list of early actions to begin reducing greenhouse gas emissions; creating an inventory of historic emissions in the state; establishing the 2020 emissions limit; approval of a Scoping Plan by January 1, 2009 describing the comprehensive set of actions that will achieve the 2020 limit; and adopting the actions in the Scoping Plan as regulations by January 1, 2011, to ensure they are implemented and enforceable by January 1, 2012.

## **CALIFORNIA HEALTH AND SAFETY CODE, HAZARDOUS WASTE CONTROL**

The Hazardous Waste Control Act (HWCA) regulates the generation, treatment, storage, and disposal of hazardous waste. Hazardous waste is any material or substance that is discarded, relinquished, disposed, or burned, or for which there is no intended use or reuse, and the material or substance causes or significantly contributes to an increase in mortality or illness; or the material or substance poses a substantial present or potential hazard to human health or the environment. These materials or substances include spent solvents and paints (oil and latex), used oil, used oil filters, used acids and corrosives, and unwanted or expired products (pesticides, aerosol cans, cleaners, etc.). If the original material or substance is labeled danger, warning, toxic, caution, poison, flammable, corrosive or reactive, the waste is very likely to be hazardous.

## **CALIFORNIA NOISE INSULATION STANDARDS (TITLE 24)**

The California Commission of Housing and Community Development officially adopted noise standards in 1974. In 1988, the Building Standards Commission approved revisions to the standards (Title 24, Part 2, California Code of Regulations). As revised, Title 24 establishes an interior noise standard of 45 dBA (A-weighted decibels) for residential space (community noise equivalent level [CNEL] or day/night average sound level [ $L_{dn}$ ]). Acoustical studies must be prepared for residential structures that are to be located within noise contours of 60 dBA or greater from freeways, major streets, thoroughfares, rail lines, rapid transit lines, or industrial noise sources. The studies must demonstrate that the building is designed to reduce interior noise to 45 dBA or lower.

## **CALIFORNIA SURFACE MINING AND RECLAMATION ACT (SMARA)**

The California Surface Mining and Reclamation Act of 1975 (SMARA) requires that all cities address in their General Plans the significant aggregate resources classified by the State Geologist and designated by the State Mining and Geology Board. SMARA was enacted to promote conservation and protection of significant mineral deposits. The law also ensures that significant aggregate resources are recognized and considered before land use decisions are made that may compromise the availability of these resources.

## **INTEGRATED WASTE MANAGEMENT PROGRAM**

In 1989, Assembly Bill 939 (AB 939), known as the Integrated Waste Management Act, was passed because of the increase in waste stream and the decrease in landfill capacity. As a result, the current California Integrated Waste Management Board (CIWMB) was established. A disposal reporting system with CIWMB oversight was established, and facility and program planning was required. AB 939 mandates a reduction of waste being disposed: jurisdictions were required to meet diversion goals of 25 percent by 1995 and 50 percent by the year 2000. AB 939 also established an integrated framework for program implementation, solid waste planning, and solid waste facility and landfill compliance.

## **SEISMIC HAZARDS MAPPING ACT**

The Seismic Hazards Mapping Act of 1990 (Public Resources Code Sections 2690–2699.6) addresses earthquake hazards from nonsurface fault rupture, including liquefaction and seismically induced landslides. The act established a mapping program for areas that have the potential for liquefaction, landslide, strong groundshaking, or other earthquake and geologic hazards. The act also specifies that the lead agency for a project may withhold development permits until geologic or soils investigations are conducted for specific sites and mitigation measures are incorporated into plans to reduce hazards associated with seismicity and unstable soils.

## **SENATE BILL 375**

Senate Bill 375 (SB 375) establishes a strategy for achieving significant greenhouse gas emissions reductions through improved land use planning and transportation policy, which the bill states are necessary to achieve the 2020 limit established by AB 32. The bill requires CARB to establish greenhouse gas reduction targets for the automobile and light truck sector for 2020 and 2035 for regions of the State with a metropolitan planning organization (MPO). MPOs are required to adopt a sustainable community's strategy (SCS), and an alternative planning strategy (APS) in specified situations, as part of its regional transportation plan (RTP) that is designed to achieve the automobile and light truck sector greenhouse gas reduction target established for their region by CARB. Transportation planning and programming activities performed by MPOs are required to be consistent with the adopted SCS, with certain projects exempt from consistency with the SCS. Local land use policies, including General Plans, are not required to be consistent with an adopted SCS or APS. In addition to linking regional transportation planning with local land use planning, the bill aligns both of those

activities with the state mandated housing element process and provides significant regulatory reform to development projects that are proposed within areas consistent with the SCS.

## Regional Plans and Programs

### AIRPORT ENVIRONS LAND USE PLAN FOR HELIPORTS (AELUP)

The Airport Environs Land Use Plan (AELUP) for Heliports intends to safeguard the general welfare of the inhabitants within the vicinities of heliports by reviewing proposed heliport sites to determine if the proposed site is compatible with adjacent existing or proposed uses. Location of heliport sites in compatible areas helps to ensure the continued operation of the heliports. Specifically, the AELUP seeks to protect the public from the adverse effects of aircraft noise, to ensure that sites are not proposed for locations where people and facilities are concentrated, and to ensure that structures or activities in the area would not adversely affect the navigable airspace. The implementation of the AELUP will help forestall urban encroachment on heliports and will allow for their continued operation by ensuring that heliports are sited in areas compatible with adjacent development.

As described in Figure 1 of the AELUP, all construction or alteration of structures within Orange County at elevations more than 200 feet above ground level require FAA and ALUC notification. In addition, the ALUC indicates “For development of structures with a height of 200 feet in height above ground level or higher, at a development site, applicants shall file a Notice of Proposed Construction or Alteration with the FAA (FAA Form 7460-1). Following the FAA’s Aeronautical Study of the project, projects must comply with conditions of approval imposed or recommended by the FAA. Subsequent to the FAA findings, the City shall forward the FAA Aeronautical Study to the Airport Land Use Commission (ALUC) of Orange County which may result in a consistency analysis with ALUC.

### COUNTY OF ORANGE CONGESTION MANAGEMENT PROGRAM

The State of California requires urbanized areas such as Orange County to adopt a Congestion Management Program (CMP) with the goal of reducing traffic congestion and facilitating coordination of local land use planning and regional transportation improvement decision. By and large, the Orange County CMP is a composite of data collected by local jurisdictions according to guidelines established by the Orange County

Transportation Authority (OCTA). The data is compiled by the OCTA and submitted to the Southern California Association of Governments (SCAG), the agency that determines regional consistency. Within Laguna Hills, Moulton Parkway, El Toro Road, Interstate 5, and State Route 73 are components of the Orange County CMP.

## COUNTY OF ORANGE GROWTH MANAGEMENT PLAN (MEASURE M)

In 1990, Orange County voters approved Measure M authorizing a half-cent retail sales tax increase for a period of 20 years effective April 1, 1991. In 2006, Orange County voters approved the renewal of Measure M for another 30 years until 2041. Measure M revenue is returned to local jurisdictions for use on local and regional transportation and maintenance projects.

The purpose of the Orange County Growth Management Plan is to ensure that transportation and other public facilities are adequate to meet current and projected needs of County residents. The Plan establishes the following five major policies:

- **Development Phasing:** Development will be phased according to Comprehensive Phasing Plans (CPPs) adopted by the County. Phasing is limited to roadway and public facility capacities.
- **Balanced Community Development:** Development will be balanced to encourage employment of local residents, and both employment and employee housing in the County, as well as in individual growth management areas (GMAs).
- **Traffic Level of Service:** Future development creates the need for improvements to major intersections significantly impacted by growth, and a developer fee program is included to pay for improving affected intersections on a pro-rata basis.
- **Traffic Improvement Programs:** All new development must provide necessary transportation facilities and intersection improvements as a condition of development approval.
- **Public Facility Plans:** Comprehensive public facility plans for fire, sheriff/police, and library services are required. New development participates on a pro-rata basis.

Implementation of the Orange County Growth Management Plan involves the establishment of (1) GMAs to implement Comprehensive Phasing Plans; (2) Facility Implementation Plans to address the financing

of public facilities for each GMA; (3) Countywide implementation and evaluation of compliance with development phasing and improvements; and (4) traffic improvement/public facility development agreements.

To qualify for Measure M revenue, each jurisdiction must comply with the Countywide Traffic Improvement and Growth Management Program. Specifically, to receive an allocation of Measure M revenue, Laguna Hills must submit a statement of compliance with the growth management components of this Program. Requirements include the adoption of a traffic circulation plan consistent with the Master Plan of Arterial Highways, adoption of a Growth Management Element within the General Plan, adoption and adequate funding for a local transportation fee program, and adoption of a 7-year capital improvement program that includes all transportation projects funded either partially or fully by Measure M funds.

## **COUNTY OF ORANGE MASTER PLAN OF ARTERIAL HIGHWAYS**

The County of Orange Master Plan of Arterial Highways (MPAH) forms part of the Orange County General Plan and designates the arterial system in the circulation element of the General Plan. Defined according to specific arterial functional classifications, the MPAH serves to define the intended future roadway system for the County. Cities within the County are expected to achieve consistency with the MPAH in individual General Plan circulation elements. To implement changes to the MPAH, approval from the Orange County Transportation Authority is required.

## **NATIONAL POLLUTANT DISCHARGE AND ELIMINATION SYSTEM (NPDES)**

The 1972 amendment to the Clean Water Act (CWA) established the National Pollutant Discharge Elimination System (NPDES) permit program. The NPDES permit program outlined in the CWA contains effluent limitation guidelines, water quality requirements, and permit program requirements for discharges to waters of the U.S. The U.S. Environmental Protection Agency (USEPA) has overall responsibility for the NPDES program, but administration of the program in California has been delegated to the State Water Resources Control Board (SWRCB) and the nine Regional Water Quality Control Boards (RWQCBs). The City of Laguna Hills is located in two RWQCB regions; the Santa Ana Region (Region 8) and the San Diego Region (Region 9). Each region implements an NPDES permit for the respective area of the City that is included in each region. Under the NPDES permit, Laguna Hills must implement measures to reduce urban runoff during all phases of development: planning, construction and

existing uses. Requirements include incorporating Best Management Practices (BMPs) to reduce runoff from construction and current uses, reporting any violations to the San Diego RWQCB, and education regarding the negative water quality impacts of urban runoff.

## **NATURAL COMMUNITY CONSERVATION PLAN AND HABITAT CONSERVATION PLAN (NCCP/HCP)**

The Orange County Environmental Management Agency (EMA) has prepared a Natural Community Conservation Plan and Habitat Conservation Plan (NCCP/HCP) for the Central and Coastal Subregion of the County of Orange, including portions of Laguna Hills. The NCCP/HCP was prepared in cooperation with CDFG and USFWS. The intent of the NCCP/HCP program is to provide long-term, regional protection of natural vegetation and wildlife diversity, while allowing compatible land use and appropriate development and growth. The NCCP/HCP is accomplished with the institution of a subregional Habitat Reserve System and implemented through a coordinated program to manage biological resources within the habitat reserve.

## **OCTA COMMUTER BIKEWAYS STRATEGIC PLAN**

The Orange County Transportation Authority (OCTA) Commuter Bikeways Strategic Plan is a regional planning document that identifies existing and proposed bikeways in Orange County. OCTA is currently updating the Commuter Bikeways Strategic Plan. The updated plan will help coordinate bikeway planning efforts between local agencies by providing a regional perspective of the needs and benefits of bikeways in Orange County.

## **ORANGE COUNTY FIRE AUTHORITY HAZARDOUS MATERIALS AREA PLAN**

The Orange County Fire Authority (OCFA) Hazardous Materials Area Plan addresses normal day-to-day hazardous materials operations as well as extreme emergencies, in which coordination among a variety of emergency response agencies is required. Local government involvement in a hazardous materials emergency is principally focused on discovery, notification, evaluation, and initiation of immediate on-scene action, along with long-term preparedness measures, which are implemented in coordination with local businesses. The Area Plan provides guidance for all local government agencies within OCFA's jurisdiction, including Laguna Hills, in response to a hazardous materials emergency.

## REGIONAL HOUSING NEEDS ASSESSMENT

State housing element law requires that Southern California Association of Governments (SCAG) determine the amount of housing needed in its region and allocate the need to each community. The allocation of housing need is based on Statewide and local projections of population, employment, and housing need. State law requires cities to ensure that adequate sites, public facilities, and services are available to facilitate housing production commensurate with their housing need. Laguna Hills' Housing Element identifies programs to address its share of the region's housing need.

## SCAG REGIONAL COMPREHENSIVE PLAN AND GUIDE

The Southern California Association of Governments (SCAG) undertakes regional planning for the six-county SCAG region composed of Los Angeles, Orange, Riverside, San Bernardino, Imperial and Ventura Counties. SCAG's efforts focus on developing regional strategies to minimize traffic congestion, protect environmental quality, and provide adequate housing. The Regional Comprehensive Plan and Guide sets forth broad goals intended to be implemented by participating local and regional jurisdictions and the South Coast Air Quality Management District. SCAG has adopted companion documents to the Regional Comprehensive Plan and Guide, most notably the Regional Transportation Plan.

## SCAG REGIONAL TRANSPORTATION PLAN

In May 2008, the Southern California Association of Governments (SCAG) adopted the 2008 Regional Transportation Plan (RTP). The RTP is the culmination of a multi-year effort involving stakeholders from across the SCAG Region and connects the six-county region of Imperial, Los Angeles, Orange, Riverside, San Bernardino, and Ventura Counties to a future vision in which innovative solutions address current transportation challenges. The 2008 RTP presents the transportation vision for this region through the year 2035 and provides a long-term investment framework for addressing the region's transportation and related challenges. The Plan focuses on maintaining and improving the transportation system through a balanced approach that considers system preservation, system operation and management, improved coordination between land-use decisions and transportation investments, and strategic expansion of the system to accommodate future growth. SCAG has also adopted a Regional Transportation Improvement Program to implement

the projects and programs listed in the Regional Transportation Plan. These plans work together to help improve vehicular traffic within the region and thereby reduce air pollution.

## **SOUTH COAST AIR QUALITY MANAGEMENT PLAN**

The federal Clean Air Act requires preparation of plans to improve air quality in any region designated as a nonattainment area. A nonattainment area is a geographic region identified by the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency and/or the California Air Resources Board as not meeting State or federal standards for a given pollutant. The Air Quality Management Plan, or AQMP, prepared by the South Coast Air Quality Management District, first adopted in 1994 and updated on a 3-year cycle, contains policies and measures designed to achieve federal and State air quality standards within the South Coast Air Basin. The assumptions and programs in the AQMP draw directly from regional goals, objectives, and assumptions in the Southern California Association of Governments' Regional Comprehensive Plan and Guide.

## **Local Plans and Programs**

### **CITY OF LAGUNA HILLS EMERGENCY OPERATIONS PLAN**

An Emergency Operations Plan developed by the City guides the training and execution of actions in preparation for or in response to significant disasters. Executive Order S-04-06 signed by the Governor of California directs the State Office of Emergency Services to provide models and resources for local agencies in the preparation of or execution of Emergency Management Plans. Additionally, the Orange County Sheriff's Department and Department of Environmental Health provide similar models and resources for local agencies.

### **DEVELOPMENT AGREEMENTS**

State law provides for development agreements between a project proponent and the City. The purpose of a development agreement is to provide developers with additional assurances that the policies, rules and regulations, and conditions of approval in effect at the time a project was approved will not be nullified by a future local policy or regulation change. In exchange, the developer may be required to meet certain conditions or performance criteria, which become part of the agreement.

Development agreements can be a useful means of meeting General Plan goals and policies while removing some of the risks faced by developers.

Agreements can remain in effect for a few or several years, the term typically being set forth in the agreement. It is important to emphasize that, as set forth in the Government Code, the City is not prohibited from applying new rules, regulations, and policies to the property unless specifically stated in the development agreement, nor is the City prevented from denying or conditionally approving any subsequent development project application on the basis of such existing or new rules, regulations, or policies.

## **MASTER PLANS**

### **Bikeways, Trails, and Open Space Master Plan**

The City of Laguna Hills Bikeways Trails and Open Space Master Plan was prepared in 2001 and represents a comprehensive planning effort to guide future recreation development and natural area conservation within the City of Laguna Hills. The Plan includes a description of the baseline conditions in 2001 as well as explores the opportunities and constraints for the improvement of bikeways, trails, and open spaces.

### **Saddleback Valley Unified School District Facilities Master Plan**

To plan for future facility needs, school districts typically implement a long-range planning approach with Long-Range Facility Plans and Master Plans. These documents allow school districts to estimate the number of additional students that new development will generate and plan for needed improvements to meet the demand. The Saddleback Valley Unified School District Facilities Master Plan is based on the projected development levels established for the City. The master plan also considers demographic trends, such as increased household size, that can affect the need for future school services. The City's coordination with the school districts to provide adequate educational facilities is an issue addressed in this Element.

## **MUNICIPAL CODE AND ZONING ORDINANCE**

The City's Municipal Code and Zoning Ordinance are the primary tools used to implement the goals and policies of the General Plan. The Zoning Ordinance provides more detailed direction related to development standards; permitted, conditionally permitted, and prohibited uses; and other regulations such as parking standards and sign regulations. The land uses specified in the Zoning Ordinance are based upon and should be consistent with the land use policies set forth in the General Plan. Changes to the Zoning Ordinance will be necessary due to the adoption of provisions in this General Plan and will require changes to the zoning maps and development standards.

## City of Laguna Hills Noise Ordinance

The City of Laguna Hills has the authority to set land use noise standards and place restrictions on private activities that generate excessive or intrusive noise. The applicable standards for these activities are specified in the Laguna Hills Municipal Code. The Noise Ordinance establishes allowable interior and exterior noise levels for residential areas. Specific standards for daytime and nighttime hours are also provided. Certain noise sources are prohibited and the ordinance establishes an enforcement process. Noise Ordinance requirements are identified in this Element.

## SPECIFIC PLANS

While the General Plan provides overall guidance for the physical development of the City, specific plans are used to provide more detailed regulatory guidance for special areas or large developments within the City. Specific plans are generally composed of a land use plan, circulation plan, development standards, design guidelines, phasing plan, infrastructure plan (water, sewer, or drainage), and implementation plan. They are typically implemented as customized zoning for a particular area of the City and are generally used for large-scale projects that require a comprehensive approach to planning and infrastructure issues.

### Urban Village Specific Plan

The City currently has one, approved specific plan. The Urban Village Specific Plan (UVSP), adopted in November 2002, is a 240-acre area bounded by Paseo de Valencia on the north and west, Los Alisos Boulevard on the south, and Interstate 5 on the east. The purpose of the UVSP area is to develop an urban core in which a variety of public, regional commercial, recreational, and high density residential uses work in concert to create an urban village. The UVSP provides for a continuing mixture of land uses, including retail, residential hotel, medical offices, and general offices. All new development within this area is subject to the provisions of the UVSP.

## URBAN WATER MANAGEMENT PLANS

Urban water purveyors are required to prepare and update an Urban Water Management Plan (UWMP) every 5 years. The Moulton Niguel and El Toro Water Districts, which serve Laguna Hills, updated their Plans in 2005. UWMPs address water supply, treatment, reclamation, and water conservation, and contain a water shortage contingency plan. Local UWMPs, such as those prepared by the Moulton Niguel and El Toro Water Districts, are supplemental to the regional plans prepared by the Metropolitan Water District of Southern California and the Municipal Water District of Orange County.

**Table B-1  
Related Plans and Programs**

Plans and Programs	General Plan Elements						
	Land Use	Mobility	Conservation and Open Space	Community Services and Facilities	Safety	Noise	Housing
<b>Federal</b>							
Comprehensive Environmental Response, Compensation, and Liability Act (CERCLA)					▪		
Emergency Planning Community Right to Know Act (EPCRA)					▪		
Federal Clean Air Act			▪				
Federal Endangered Species Act (ESA)			▪				
National Flood Insurance Program (NFIP)			▪	▪	▪		
National Historic Preservation Act (NHPA)			▪				
Uniform Building Code (UBC)					▪		▪
Uniform Fire Code (UFC)					▪		▪
U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service (USFWS)			▪				
U.S. Nuclear Regulatory Commission Emergency Planning Zones					▪		
USGS Landslide Hazard Identification Program					▪		
<b>State</b>							
Alquist-Priolo Earthquake Fault Zoning Act					▪		
California Air Resources Board (CARB)		▪					
California Building Code (CBC)					▪		
California Department of Fish and Game (CDFG)			▪				

Table B-1  
Related Plans and Programs

Plans and Programs	General Plan Elements						
	Land Use	Mobility	Conservation and Open Space	Community Services and Facilities	Safety	Noise	Housing
California Endangered Species Act (CESA)			▪				
California Environmental Quality Act (CEQA)	▪	▪	▪	▪	▪	▪	▪
California Fire Code					▪		▪
California Global Warming Solutions Act	▪	▪	▪		▪		
California Health and Safety Code, Hazardous Waste Control					▪		
California Noise Insulation Standards (Title 24)						▪	▪
California Surface Mining and Reclamation Act (SMARA)			▪				
Integrated Waste Management Program				▪			
Seismic Hazards Mapping Act					▪		
Senate Bill 375	▪	▪	▪				
<b>Regional</b>							
Airport Environs Land Use Plan for Heliports (AELUP)	▪						
County of Orange Congestion Management Program		▪					
County of Orange Growth Management Plan (Measure M)	▪	▪		▪			▪
County of Orange Master Plan of Arterial Highways		▪					
National Pollutant Discharge and Elimination System (NPDES)			▪	▪	▪		

Table B-1  
Related Plans and Programs

Plans and Programs	General Plan Elements						
	Land Use	Mobility	Conservation and Open Space	Community Services and Facilities	Safety	Noise	Housing
Natural Community Conservation Plan and Habitat Conservation Plan (NCCP/HCP)		▪					
OCTA Commuter Bikeways Strategic Plan					▪		
Orange County Fire Authority Hazardous Materials Area Plan							▪
Regional Housing Needs Assessment	▪	▪	▪				▪
SCAG Regional Comprehensive Plan and Guide		▪					
SCAG Regional Transportation Plan	▪	▪	▪				
South Coast Air Quality Management Plan							
<b>Local</b>							
City of Laguna Hills Emergency Operations Plan					▪		
Development Agreements	▪						
Bikeway, Trails, and Open Space Master Plan		▪	▪				
Saddleback Valley Unified School District Facilities Master Plan				▪			
Municipal Code and Zoning Ordinance	▪	▪	▪	▪	▪	▪	▪
Specific Plans	▪	▪	▪	▪	▪	▪	▪
Urban Water Management Plans			▪	▪			



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# APPENDIX C.

# Glossary



## A

**Access:** A way of approaching or entering a property, including ingress (the right to enter) and egress (the right to leave).

**Acres, Gross:** The total area of a site, including those areas that cannot be built upon.

**Acres, Net:** The portion of a site that can actually be built upon. The following generally are not included in the net acreage of a site: public or private road rights-of-way, public open space, and floodways.

**ADT:** Average daily trips made by vehicles in a 24-hour period.

**Affordability Covenant:** A property title agreement that places resale or rental restrictions on a housing unit.

**Affordable Housing:** Under State and federal statutes, housing that costs no more than 30 percent of gross household income. Housing costs include rent or mortgage payments, utilities, taxes, insurance, homeowner association fees, and other related costs.

**Air Basin:** A geographical area in California defined as a distinct air basin for the purpose of managing the air resources of the State on a regional basis. An air basin generally has similar meteorological and geographic conditions throughout. The State is currently divided into 15 air basins.

**Air Pollution:** The presence of contaminants in the air in concentrations that exceed naturally occurring quantities and are undesirable or harmful.

**Air Quality Standards:** The prescribed (by the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency and the California Air Resources Board) level of pollutants in the outside air that cannot be exceeded legally during a specified time in a specified geographical area.

**Ambient Noise Level:** The overall noise from all sources near and far. In this context, the ambient noise level constitutes the normal or existing level of environmental noise at a given location.

**Arterial:** A major street carrying the traffic of local and collector streets to and from freeways and other major streets, with controlled intersections and generally providing direct access to nonresidential properties.

**Assisted Care Facility:** An institution or premises licensed by the State and used for the housing and care of the ambulatory, aged, or infirm and offering or providing lodging, meals, nursing, dietary, or other personal services, but not including the care and treatment of persons with contagious or communicable disease or mental illness, or persons addicted to narcotics or alcohol. The term does not include places where there is surgery, physical therapy, or other similar activities, such as are customarily provided in hospitals.

**Assisted Housing:** Housing that has been subsidized by federal, State, or local housing programs.

**At-Risk Housing:** Multi-family rental housing that is at risk of losing its status as housing affordable for low and moderate income tenants due to the expiration of federal, State or local agreements.

**A-Weighted Decibel (dBA):** A numerical method of rating human judgement of loudness. The A-weighted scale reduces the effects of low and high frequencies in order to simulate human hearing.

## B

**Bike Lane:** A corridor expressly reserved by markings for bicycles, existing on a street or roadway in addition to any lanes for use by motorized vehicles (Class 2 Bikeway).

**Bike Path:** A paved route not on a street or roadway, and expressly reserved for bicycles. Bike paths may parallel roads but typically are separated from them by landscaping (Class I Bikeway).

**Bike Route:** A facility shared with motorists and identified only by signs. A bike route has no pavement markings or lane stripes (Class 3 Bikeway).

**Buffer:** A strip of land designated to protect one type of land use from another with which it is incompatible. Where a commercial district or agricultural uses abut a residential district, for example, additional use, yard, or height restrictions may be imposed to protect residential properties. The term may also be used to describe any zone that separates two unlike zones such as a multi-family housing zone between single-family housing and commercial uses.

**Building:** Any structure having a roof supported by columns or walls and intended for the shelter, housing, or enclosure of any individual, animal, process, equipment, goods, or materials of any kind or nature.

## C

**California Building Code:** A standard building code that sets minimum standards for construction. The California Building Code is outlined in Title 24 of the California Code of Regulations and includes the Uniform Plumbing Code, Uniform Mechanical Code, National Electric Code, California Fire Code, and the California Energy Code California Department of Housing and Community Development - HCD: The State Department responsible for administering State-sponsored housing programs and for reviewing housing elements to determine compliance with State housing law.

**California Environmental Quality Act (CEQA):** A State law requiring State and local agencies to regulate activities with consideration for environmental protection. If a proposed activity has the potential for a significant adverse environmental impact, an Environmental Impact Report (EIR) may be required to be prepared and certified as to its adequacy before taking action on the proposed project.

**Caltrans:** California Department of Transportation.

**Capital Improvement Program (CIP):** A proposed timetable or schedule of all future capital improvements (government acquisition of real property, major construction project, or acquisition of long lasting, expensive equipment) to be carried out during a specific period and listed in order of priority, together with cost estimates and the anticipated means of financing each project. CIPs are usually projected 5 or 6 years in advance and should be updated annually.

**Certificate of Use and Occupancy:** A required document issued by a governmental authority allowing the occupancy or use of a building and certifying that the structure or use has been constructed and will be used in compliance with all the applicable municipal codes and ordinances.

**Census:** The official decennial enumeration of the population conducted by the federal government.

**City:** City, with a capital “C,” generally refers to the government or administration of the City of Laguna Hills. City, with a lower case “c” may mean any city.

**Collector:** A street for traffic moving between arterial and local streets, generally providing direct access to properties.

**Community Development Block Grant (CDBG):** A grant program

administered by the U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development (HUD). This grant allots money to cities and counties for housing rehabilitation and community development activities, including public facilities and economic development.

**Community Noise Equivalent Level (CNEL):** The average equivalent sound level during a 24-hour day, obtained after addition of 5 decibels to sound levels in the evening from 7 p.m. to 10 p.m. and after addition of 10 decibels to sound levels in the night after 10 p.m. and before 7 a.m. See also “A-Weighted Decibel.”

**Compatibility:** The characteristics of different uses or activities that permit them to be located near each other in harmony and without conflict. The designation of permitted and conditionally permitted uses in zoning districts is intended to achieve compatibility within the district. Some elements affecting compatibility include intensity of occupancy as measured by dwelling units per acre; pedestrian or vehicular traffic generated; volume of goods handled; and such environmental effects as noise, vibration, glare, air pollution, or the presence of hazardous materials. On the other hand, many aspects of compatibility are based on personal preference and are much harder to measure quantitatively, at least for regulatory purposes.

**Condominium:** A building, or group of buildings, in which units are owned individually, and the structure, common areas, and facilities are owned by all the owners on a proportional, undivided basis.

**Conservation:** The management of natural resources to prevent waste, destruction, or neglect.

**County:** County, with a capital “C,” generally refers to the government or administration of the County of Orange. County, with a lower case “c” may mean any county.

**Coverage:** The proportion of the area of the footprint of a building in relation to the area of the lot on which it stands.

## D

**Decibel (dB):** A unit for describing the amplitude of sound, as it is heard by the human ear. See also “A Weighted Decibel,” “Community Noise Equivalent Level,” and “Day-Night Average Level.”

**Density:** The number of dwelling units per unit of land; for the purposes of this General Plan density is the number of dwelling units per net acre of land (du/acre), exclusive of existing or proposed streets and rights-of-

way. Thus, the density of a development of 100 units occupying 20 net acres is 5.0 units per net acre.

**Density Bonus:** The allocation of development rights as required by State law that allow a parcel to be developed at a higher residential density than the maximum for which the parcel is designated, in exchange for the provision of a certain percentage of those units as affordable.

**Developer:** An individual or business that prepares raw land for the construction of buildings or causes to be built physical building space for use primarily by others, and in which the preparation of the land or the creation of the building space is in itself a business and is not incidental to another business or activity.

**Development:** The division of a parcel of land into two or more parcels; the construction, reconstruction, conversion, structural alteration, relocation, or enlargement of any structure; any mining, excavation, landfill, or land disturbance; and any use or extension of the use of land.

**Development Agreement:** A contractual agreement between a developer and the City that clearly establishes the developer's responsibility to provide a certain type of development, streets and sewer improvements, and any other mutually agreed to terms and responsibilities as a precondition for securing approval of a project.

**Development Impact Fees:** A fee or charge imposed on developers to pay for a jurisdiction's costs of providing services to new development.

**Domestic water, potable:** Water that has undergone adequate treatment and is considered suitable for human drinking and cooking uses.

**Dwelling Unit:** One or more rooms designed, occupied, or intended for occupancy as separate living quarters, with cooking, sleeping, and sanitary facilities provided within the unit for the exclusive use of a household.

## E

**Easement:** A grant of one or more of the property rights by the property owner to and/or for use by the public, a corporation, or another person or entity.

**Elderly Household:** As defined by HUD, elderly households are one- or two-member (family or nonfamily) households in which the head or spouse is age 62 or older.

**Element:** A division of the General Plan referring to a topic area for which goals, policies, and programs are defined (e.g., land use, housing, circulation).

**Emergency Shelter:** An emergency shelter is a facility that provides shelter to homeless families and/or homeless individuals on a limited short-term basis.

**Endangered Species:** A species of animal or plant is considered endangered when its prospects for survival and reproduction are in immediate jeopardy from one or more causes.

**Entitlement:** The rights granted to a land owner or other authorized party to improve a property. Such right is usually expressed in terms of a use and intensity allowed under a development agreement, subdivision or tract map, or zoning regulations. For example, an entitlement may specify the maximum number of residential dwelling units permitted on a site, or the maximum square footage of nonresidential development permitted on a site.

**Environment:** The sum of all external conditions and influences affecting the life, development and, ultimately, the survival of an organism.

## F

**Fair Market Rent (FMR):** Fair Market Rents (FMRs) are freely set rental rates defined by HUD as the median gross rents charged for available standard units in a county or Standard Metropolitan Statistical Area (SMSA). FMRs are used for the Section 8 Rental Program and many other HUD programs and are published annually by HUD.

**Fault:** A fracture in the earth's crust forming a boundary between rock masses that have shifted.

**FEMA:** Federal Emergency Management Agency.

**Fire Flow:** A rate of water flow required to halt and reverse the spread of a fire.

**First-Time Homebuyer:** Defined by HUD as an individual or family who has not owned a home during the 3-year period preceding the HUD-assisted purchase of a home. Jurisdictions may adopt local definitions for first-time home buyer programs, which differ from nonfederally funded programs.

**Floodplain:** A lowland or relatively flat area adjoining the banks of a river or stream, which is subject to a 1 percent or greater chance or flooding in any given year (i.e., 100-year flood).

**Floor Area Ratio (FAR):** The ratio between the total gross floor area of all buildings on a lot and the total land area of that lot; usually expressed as a numerical value (e.g., a building having 5,000 square feet of gross floor area located on a lot of 10,000 square feet in area has a floor area ratio of 0.5, sometimes also designated as a FAR of 0.5:1).

## G

**General Plan:** A legal document that takes the form of a map and accompanying text adopted by the local legislative body. The plan is a compendium of policies regarding the long-term development of a jurisdiction. The State requires the preparation of seven elements or divisions as part of the plan: land use, housing, circulation, conservation, open space, noise, and safety. Additional elements pertaining to the unique needs of an agency are permitted.

**Goal:** The ultimate purpose of an effort stated in a way that is general in nature and immeasurable; a broad statement of intended direction and purpose (e.g., “Provide a diverse mix of land uses to meet the future needs of all residents and the business community.”).

**Grade:** The degree of rise or descent of a sloping surface.

**Grading:** An excavation, filling in, spreading, or moving of earth, sand, gravel, rock, or other material on a lot, building site, street right-of-way, or other land area.

**Ground Failure:** Mudslide, landslide, liquefaction, or the compaction of soils due to groundshaking from an earthquake.

**Groundshaking:** Ground movement resulting from the transmission of seismic waves during an earthquake.

**Groundwater:** The supply of fresh water under the ground surface in an aquifer or soil that forms a natural reservoir.

**Group Quarters:** A facility that houses groups of unrelated persons not living in households (U.S. Census definition). Examples of group quarters include institutions, dormitories, shelters, military quarters, assisted living facilities, and other quarters, including single-room occupancy (SRO) housing, where 10 or more unrelated individuals are housed.

**Growth Management:** Techniques used by government to control the rate, amount, and type of development.

## H

**Habitat:** The physical location or type of environment in which an organism or biological population lives or occurs.

**Hazardous Materials:** An injurious substance, including pesticides, herbicides, toxic metals and chemicals, liquefied natural gas, explosives, volatile chemicals, and nuclear fuels.

**HCD:** The State Department of Housing and Community Development.

**Home Mortgage Disclosure Act (HMDA):** The Home Mortgage Disclosure Act requires larger lending institutions making home mortgage loans to publicly disclose the location and disposition of home purchase, refinance, and improvement loans. Institutions subject to HMDA must also disclose the gender, race, and income of loan applicants.

**Homeless:** Unsheltered homeless are families and individuals whose primary nighttime residence is a public or private place not designed for, or ordinarily used as, a regular sleeping accommodation for human beings (e.g., the street, sidewalks, cars, vacant and abandoned buildings). Sheltered homeless are families and persons whose primary nighttime residence is a supervised publicly or privately operated shelter (e.g., emergency, transitional, battered women, and homeless youth shelters; and commercial hotels or motels used to house the homeless).

**Household:** According to the Census, a household is all persons living in a dwelling unit whether or not they are related. Both a single person living in an apartment and a family living in a house are considered households.

**Household Income:** The total income of all the people living in a household. Households are usually described as very low income, low income, moderate income, and upper income for that household size, based on their position relative to the county median income.

**Housing Problems:** Defined by HUD as a household that (1) occupies a unit with physical defects (lacks complete kitchen or bathroom); (2) meets the definition of overcrowded; or (3) spends more than 30 percent of income on housing cost.

**Housing Unit:** A room or group of rooms used by one or more individuals living separately from others in the structure, with direct access to the outside or to a public hall and containing separate toilet and kitchen facilities.

**HUD:** Please see U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development.

## I

**Implementation:** An action, procedure, program, or technique that carries out General Plan policy.

**Income Category:** Four categories are used to classify a household according to income based on the median income for the county. Under state housing statutes, these categories are defined as follows: Very Low (0-50% of County median); Low (51-80% of County median); Moderate (81-120% of County median); and Upper (over 120% of County median).

**Infrastructure:** The physical systems and services that support development and population, such as roadways, railroads, water, sewer, natural gas, electrical generation and transmission, telephone, cable television, storm drainage, and others.

**Intensity:** A measure of the amount or level of development often expressed as the ratio of building floor area to lot area (floor area ratio) for commercial, business, and industrial development, or dwelling units per acre of land for residential development (also called “density”). For the purposes of this General Plan, the intensity of nonresidential development is described through the use of floor area ratio and building floor area square footage.

**Intersection:** Where two or more roads cross at grade.

**Issue:** A problem, constraint, or opportunity that becomes the basis for community action.

## J

No terms.

## K

No terms.

## L

**Landscaping:** Planting, including, but not limited to, trees, shrubs, and ground covers that are suitably designed, selected, installed, and maintained to enhance a site or right-of-way.

**Land Use:** A description of how land is occupied or used.

**Land Use Plan:** A plan showing the existing and proposed location, extent, and intensity of development of land to be used in the future for varying types of residential, commercial, industrial, agricultural, recreational, and other public and private purposes, or a combination of purposes.

**Landslide:** A general term for a falling or sliding mass of soil or rocks.

**Large Household:** A household with five or more members.

**Liquefaction:** A process by which water-saturated granular soils transform from a solid to a liquid state due to groundshaking. This phenomenon usually results from shaking from energy waves released in an earthquake.

**Local Street:** A street providing direct access to properties and designed to discourage through-traffic.

**Lot:** The basic unit of land development. A designated parcel or area of land established by plat, subdivision, or as otherwise permitted by law, to be used, developed, or built upon as a unit.

**LOS:** Level of service of roadway and intersection operations.

## M

**Manufactured Housing:** Housing that is constructed of manufactured components, assembled partly at the site rather than totally at the site. Also referred to as modular housing.

**Market Rate Housing:** Housing that is available on the open market without any subsidy. The price for housing is determined by the market forces of supply and demand and varies by location.

**Median Income:** The annual income for each household size within a region, which is defined annually by HUD. Half of the households in the region have incomes above the median and half have incomes below the median.

**Mitigate:** To ameliorate, alleviate, or avoid to the extent reasonably feasible.

**Mobile Home:** A structure, transportable in one or more sections, that is built on a permanent foundation and designed to be used as a dwelling unit when connected to the required utilities.

## N

**National Flood Insurance Program:** A federal program that authorizes the sale of federally subsidized flood insurance in communities where such flood insurance is not available privately.

**National Pollutant Discharge Elimination System (NPDES):** The State Water Resources Control Board issues permits to jurisdictions with the objectives to attain and protect the beneficial uses of water bodies in the State; reduce pollutants in storm water to the maximum extent practicable, and evaluate compliance with the objectives and requirements contained in the permit.

**Noise:** Any undesired audible sound.

**Noise Contours:** Lines drawn about a noise source indicating constant energy levels of noise exposure. CNEL and  $L_{dn}$  are the metrics utilized to describe community noise exposure.

**Nonattainment:** The condition of not achieving a desired or required level of performance. Frequently used in reference to air quality.

## O

**Open Space:** Any parcel or area of land or water essentially unimproved and set aside, designated, dedicated, or reserved for public or private use or enjoyment.

**Orange County Council of Governments (OCCOG):** A regional planning and review authority whose membership includes representation from all jurisdictions in Orange County.

**Ordinance:** A law or regulation set forth and adopted by a governmental authority, usually a city or county.

**Overcrowding:** As defined by the U.S. Census, a household with greater than 1.01 persons per room, excluding bathrooms, kitchens, hallways, and porches.

**Overpayment:** The extent to which gross housing costs, including utility costs, exceed 30 percent of gross household income, based on data published by the U.S. Census Bureau. Severe overpayment, or cost burden, exists if gross housing costs exceed 50 percent of gross income.

**Ozone:** An oxidant, O<sub>3</sub>, that makes up the largest single portion of smog.

## P

**Parcel:** The basic unit of land entitlement. A designated area of land established by plat, subdivision, or otherwise legally defined and permitted to be used, or built upon.

**Particulate:** A minute, separate airborne particle of such materials as dust, smoke, and pollen.

**Policy:** Statements guiding action and implying clear commitment found within each element of the General Plan (e.g., “Ensure a balance or surplus between the generation of public revenues and the cost of providing public facilities and services.”).

**Pollution:** The presence of matter or energy whose nature, location, or quantity produces undesired environmental effects.

**Program:** A coordinated set of specific measures and actions (e.g., zoning, subdivision procedures, and capital expenditures) the local government intends to use in carrying out the policies of the General Plan.

## Q

No terms.

## R

**Redevelopment:** Redevelopment, under the California Community Redevelopment Law, is a process with the authority, scope, and financing mechanisms necessary to provide stimulus to reverse current negative business trends, remedy blight, provide job development incentives, and create a new image for a community. It provides for the planning, development, redesign, clearance, reconstruction, or rehabilitation, or any combination of these, and the provision of public and private improvements as may be appropriate or necessary in the interest of the general welfare. In a more general sense, redevelopment is a process in which existing development and use of land is replaced with newer development and/or use.

**Regional:** Pertaining to activities or economies at a scale greater than that of a single jurisdiction that affect a broad homogeneous area.

**Regional Housing Needs Assessment (RHNA):** The Regional Housing Needs Assessment (RHNA) is based on State of California projections of population growth and housing unit demand and assigns a share of the region's future housing need to each jurisdiction within the Southern California Association of Governments region. These housing need numbers serve as the basis for the update of the Housing Element in each California city and county.

**Regulation:** A rule or order prescribed for managing government.

**Rehabilitation:** The upgrading of a building in previously dilapidated or substandard condition, for human habitation or use.

**Right-of-Way:** A strip of land acquired by reservation, dedication, prescription, or condemnation and intended to be occupied or currently occupied by a road, crosswalk, railroad, electric transmission lines, oil or gas pipeline, water line, sanitary or storm sewer, or other similar uses.

**Riparian:** Of, on, or relating to the banks of a natural course of water.

## S

**SCAG:** Southern California Association of Governments.

**Second Dwelling Unit:** A separate residential unit containing sleeping quarters and bathroom facilities independent of the principal dwelling on the site.

**Section 8:** A tenant-based rental assistance program that subsidizes a family's rent in a privately owned house or apartment. The program is administered by local public housing authorities. Assistance payments are based on 30 percent of household annual income. Households with incomes of 50 percent or below the area median income are eligible to participate in the program.

**Seiche:** An earthquake-generated wave in an enclosed body of water such as a lake, reservoir, or bay.

**Seismic:** Caused by or subject to earthquakes or earth vibrations.

**Sensitive Species:** Includes those plant and animal species considered threatened or endangered by the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service and/or the California Department of Fish and Game according to Section

3 of the federal Endangered Species Act. Endangered—any species in danger of extinction throughout all, or a significant portion of, its range. Threatened—a species likely to become an endangered species within the foreseeable future throughout all, or a portion of, its range. These species are periodically listed in the Federal Register and are, therefore, referred to as “federally listed” species.

**Setback:** A minimum horizontal distance between the building line and the lot line; or when abutting a street, the minimum horizontal distance between the building line and the ultimate right-of-way line.

**Sewer:** Any pipe or conduit used to collect and carry away wastewater from the generating source to a treatment plant or discharge outfall.

**Site:** A parcel of land used or intended for one use or a group of uses and having frontage on a public or an approved private street. A lot.

**Slope:** Land gradient described as the vertical rise divided by the horizontal run, and expressed in percent.

**Soil:** The unconsolidated material on the immediate surface of the earth created by natural forces that serves as natural medium for growing land plants.

**Solid Waste:** Unwanted or discarded material, including garbage with insufficient liquid content to be free flowing, generally disposed of in landfills or incinerated.

**Southern California Association of Governments (SCAG):** The Southern California Association of Governments is a regional planning agency that encompasses six counties: Imperial, Riverside, San Bernardino, Orange, Los Angeles, and Ventura. SCAG is responsible for the preparation of the Regional Housing Needs Assessment (RHNA).

**Special Needs Groups:** Those segments of the population that have a more difficult time finding decent affordable housing due to special circumstances. Under State planning law, these special needs groups consist of seniors, disabled, large households, female-headed households with children, farmworkers, homeless, and students.

**Standards:** (1) A rule or measure establishing a level of quality or quantity that must be complied with or satisfied. The California Government Code (Section 65302) requires that General Plans describe “standards.” Examples of standards might include the number of acres of parkland per 1,000 populations that the community will attempt to acquire and improve. (2) Requirements in a zoning ordinance that govern building and development as distinguished from use restrictions; for example, site-design regulations such as lot area, height, limit

frontage, landscaping, and floor area ratio.

**Structure:** Anything constructed or erected that requires location on the ground (excluding swimming pools, fences, and walls used as fences).

**Subdivision:** The division of a lot, tract, or parcel of land that is the subject of an application for subdivision.

**Subsidence:** The sudden sinking or gradual downward settling and compaction of soil and other surface material with little or no horizontal motion. Subsidence may be caused by a variety of human and natural activity, including earthquakes.

**Subsidy (Housing):** To assist by payment of a sum of money or by the granting of terms or favors that reduce the need for monetary expenditures. Housing subsidies may take the forms of mortgage interest deductions or tax credits from federal and/or State income taxes, sale or lease at less than market value of land to be used for the construction of housing, payments to supplement a minimum affordable rent, and the like.

**Substandard Housing:** Housing that does not meet the minimum standards contained in the State Housing Code (i.e., does not provide shelter), or endangers the health, safety or well-being of occupants. Jurisdictions may adopt more stringent local definitions of substandard housing.

**Supportive Services:** Services provided to residents of supportive housing for the purpose of facilitating the independence of residents. Some examples are case management, medical or psychological counseling and supervision, child care, transportation, and job training.

## T

**Topography:** Configuration of a surface, including its relief and the position of natural and man-made features.

**Townhouse:** A dwelling unit occupying its own lot but which is physically attached to at least one other dwelling unit.

**Transportation Demand Management (TDM):** A strategy for reducing demand on the road system by reducing the number of vehicles using the roadways and/or increasing the number of persons per vehicle. TDM attempts to reduce the number of persons who drive alone on the roadway during the commute period and to increase the number in carpools, vanpools, buses and trains, walking, and biking. TDM can be an element of TSM (see below).

**Transportation Systems Management (TSM):** Individual actions or comprehensive plans to reduce the number of vehicular trips generated by or attracted to new or existing development. TSM measures attempt to reduce the number of vehicle trips by increasing bicycle or pedestrian trips or by expanding the use of bus, transit, carpool, vanpool, or other high occupancy vehicles.

**Transit:** The conveyance of persons or goods from one place to another by means of a local, public transportation system.

**Transitional Housing:** Transitional housing is temporary (often 6 months to 2 years) housing for a homeless individual or family who is transitioning to permanent housing. Transitional housing often includes a supportive services component (e.g., job skills training, rehabilitation counseling, etc.) to allow individuals to gain necessary life skills in support of independent living.

**Trip:** A one-way journey that proceeds from an origin to a destination via a single mode of transportation; the smallest unit of movement considered in transportation studies. Each trip has one “production end,” (or origin--often from home, but not always), and one “attraction end” (destination).

## U

**Units At-Risk of Conversion:** Housing units that are currently restricted to low income housing use and will become unrestricted and possibly be lost as low income housing.

**U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development (HUD):** The cabinet level department of the federal government responsible for housing, housing assistance, and urban development at the national level. Housing programs administered through HUD include Community Development Block Grant (CDBG), HOME and Section 8, among others.

**Use:** The purpose for which land or structures are arranged, designed or intended, or for which either land or structures are, or may be, occupied or maintained. “Use” includes construction, establishment, maintenance, alteration, moving onto, enlargement, operation, or occupancy.

## V

**Variance:** A modification of any specific provision of the Zoning

Ordinance, granted by the City, after a public hearing, in accordance with applicable sections of the Zoning Ordinance, for the purpose of assuring that no property, because of special circumstances applicable to it, is deprived of privileges commonly enjoyed by other properties in the same vicinity and district.

**Vegetative Communities:** Unique groupings of plants determined primarily on elevation and climate.

## W

No terms.

## X

No terms.

## Y

No terms.

## Z

**Zoning:** A police power measure, enacted primarily by units of local government, in which the community is divided into districts or zones within which permitted and special uses are established as are regulations governing lot size, building bulk, placement, and other development standards. Requirements vary from district to district, but they must be uniform within the same district. The zoning ordinance consists of a map and text.

**Zoning Map:** The officially adopted zoning map of a city specifying the location of zoning districts within all geographic areas of the city.





