



RIVERSIDE COUNTY
PLANNING DEPARTMENT

RIVERSIDE COUNTY PLANNING COMMISSION

9:00 AM

FEBRUARY 24, 2016

**PLANNING
COMMISSIONERS
2016**

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5th District
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Planning Director
Steven Weiss, AICP

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Deputy
County Counsel

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AGENDA

• REGULAR MEETING • RIVERSIDE COUNTY •
RIVERSIDE COUNTY PLANNING COMMISSION

CITY OF LA QUINTA
CITY COUNCIL CHAMBERS

78-495 CALLE TAMPICO, LA QUINTA, CA 92253

If you wish to speak, please complete a "SPEAKER IDENTIFICATION FORM" and give it to the Hearing Secretary. The purpose of the public hearing is to allow interested parties to express their concerns. Please do not repeat information already given. If you have no additional information, but wish to be on record, simply give your name and address and state that you agree with the previous speaker(s).

Should an applicant or any interested party wish to present a PowerPoint presentation, or electronic or digital material, it must be provided by the Project Planner 48-hours in advance of the meeting.

In compliance with the Americans with Disabilities Act, if you require reasonable accommodations, please contact Mary Stark at (951) 955-7436 or e-mail at mcstark@rctlma.org. Requests should be made at least 72 hours in advance or as soon as possible prior to the scheduled meeting. Alternative formats are available upon request.

**CALL TO ORDER - ROLL CALL
SALUTE TO THE FLAG**

1.0 CONSENT CALENDAR: 9:00 a.m. or as soon as possible thereafter. (Presentation available upon Commissioners' request)

1.1 **NONE**

2.0 GENERAL PLAN AMENDMENT INITIATION PROCEEDINGS: 9:00 a.m. or as soon as possible thereafter. (Presentation available upon Commissioners' request)

2.1 **NONE**

3.0 PUBLIC HEARING – CONTINUED ITEMS: 9:00 a.m. or as soon as possible thereafter:

3.1 **NONE**

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Desert Office · 77588 El Duna Court, Suite H
Palm Desert, California 92211
(760) 863-8277 · Fax (760) 863-7040

PUBLIC HEARING - NEW ITEMS: 9:00 a.m. or as soon as possible thereafter:

4.1 **GENERAL PLAN AMENDMENT NO. 1153 (Entitlement / Policy)** – Intent to Adopt a Negative Declaration – Applicant: County of Riverside – Supervisorial District: Countywide – Area Plan: Countywide – Zone Area: N/A – Zone: N/A – Location: Countywide, with particular policies and emphasis on the Salton Sea (ECVAP) and Far Eastern Riverside County (FERCO) desert area outside of existing Area Plans. – Project Size: Countywide – **REQUEST:** County-initiated General Plan Amendment (GPA) No. 1153 proposes to amend the Riverside County General Plan to expand existing renewable energy policies to facilitate renewable energy development in the county, particularly the far eastern desert and Salton Sea regions. The Land Use Element contains text revisions and new and revised policies to coordinate development of renewable energy in the Far Eastern Riverside County (FERCO) desert area (outside of existing Area Plans) and address both the U.S. Bureau of Land Management Solar Energy Program and the state’s proposed Desert Renewable Energy Conservation Plan (DRECP). It will also improve public land coordination for a variety of federal lands within the county. Multipurpose Open Space Element revisions will expand the text and policies addressing renewable energy, including “emerging technologies.” Lastly, for the Eastern Coachella Valley Area Plan, the GPA will establish the Salton Sea Renewable Energy Policy Area along with greatly expanded text and policies. No changes to Land Use Designations or other land use entitlements are planned for this GPA; this GPA is not associated with any renewable energy development proposals. This work effort is funded by a grant from the California Energy Commission (CEC). Project Planner: Cindy A. Thielman-Braun at (951) 955-8632 or email cthielma@rctlma.org.


5.0 WORKSHOPS:

5.1 **NONE**

6.0 ORAL COMMUNICATION ON ANY MATTER NOT ON THE AGENDA**7.0** DIRECTOR’S REPORT**8.0** COMMISSIONERS’ COMMENTS

Agenda Item No.: 4.1
Area Plan: Countywide
Zoning Area: N/A
Supervisorial District: Countywide
Project Planner: Cindy A. Thielman-Braun
Planning Commission: February 24, 2016

GENERAL PLAN AMENDMENT NO. 1153
ENVIRONMENTAL ASSESSMENT NO. 42867
Applicant: County of Riverside
Engineer/Representative: N/A


Steve Weiss, AICP
Planning Director

COUNTY OF RIVERSIDE PLANNING DEPARTMENT STAFF REPORT

PROJECT DESCRIPTION:

General Plan Amendment (GPA) No. 1153 was developed under a grant from the California Energy Commission (CEC) to “provide a robust framework of policies and data addressing renewable energy resources throughout the County.” The amendment applies countywide with a particular focus on the eastern half of Riverside County which has wide stretches of open desert that have been the focus of a number of commercial solar energy proposals in recent years.

To provide for additional guidance and coordination of future renewable energy development within the County, GPA No. 1153 proposes to amend the Riverside County General Plan Land Use Element to revise and expand discussion and policies addressing renewable energy development, including: Wind Energy Siting, Solar Energy Siting, and Electricity Transmission Siting; a new “Wilderness Policy Area” section and five associated new policies; a new “Public Lands in Far Eastern Riverside County” section addressing renewable energy development plans for the region, including the State’s proposed Desert Renewable Energy Conservation Plan (DRECP) and the existing U.S. Bureau of Land Management (BLM) Solar Energy Plan, with nine new associated policies; and three new figures—Figure LU-7, Wilderness Policy Areas in Far Eastern Riverside County; Figure LU-8, Far Eastern Riverside County Solar Energy Areas; and, Figure LU-9, Extent of the Proposed California Desert Renewable Energy Conservation Plan. (See attached Exhibits 1, 2 and 3, respectively.)

GPA No. 1153 also proposes the following revisions and additions related to renewable energy resources for the Multi-Purpose Open Space Element: new and revised text addressing the renewal energy resources in the County, with four new policies; minor edits to Wind Energy Resources, including a new policy; edits to Solar Energy Resources, including two new policies; edits to the Geothermal Resources and Biomass Resources sections, including two new policies; a new “Emerging Technologies” section and ten new associated policies; and revisions to Figure OS-5, Renewable Energy Resources. (See attached Exhibit 4.)

The Eastern Coachella Valley Area Plan (ECVAP) is proposed to add a “Salton Sea Renewable Energy Policy Area,” with sixteen new associated policies and revisions to Figure ECVAP-4, Overlays and Policy Areas, to show the locations of the new policy area, as well as the locations of the new Wilderness Policy Areas located in ECVAP. New text and four associated policies are also added to address Wilderness Policy Areas.

Lastly, the following Area Plans are also revised to show the Wilderness Policy Areas located in their territories, along with associated policies and edits to their respective Policy Area exhibits: Western Coachella Valley Area Plan (WCVAP), The Pass Area Plan (PAP), Riverside Extended Mountainous Area Plan (REMAP), Desert Center Area Plan (DCAP) and Palo Verde Valley Area Plan (PVVAP). The policy areas will affect the following areas within the County:

Protected Federal Wilderness Areas in Eastern Riverside County

Resource ¹	Unit Name	Located Within Area Plans ²	Acreage in FERCO	Total Acreage in County
Wilderness	Beauty Mountain	REMAP	0	19,550
Wilderness	Big Maria Mountains	FERCO, PVV	35,950	46,460
Wilderness	Chuckwalla Mountains	FERCO, DC	101,520	108,760
Wilderness ³	Joshua Tree ³	FERCO, WCV, ECV, DC	397,090	493,750
National Park ⁴	Joshua Tree ⁴	FERCO, WCV, ECV, DC	125,690	159,650
Wilderness	Little Chuckwalla Mountains	FERCO	26,330	26,330
Wilderness	Mecca Hills	ECV	0	33,350
Wilderness	Orocopia Mountains	FERCO, ECV	10,960	61,610
Wilderness	Palen / McCoy	FERCO, PVV	248,850	251,090
Wilderness	Palo Verde Mountains	PVV	0	540
Wilderness	Pinto Mountains	FERCO	23,110	23,110
Wilderness	Rice Valley	FERCO	43,440	43,440
Wilderness	Riverside Mountains	FERCO	25,130	25,130
Wilderness	San Gorgonio	WCV	0	13,060
Wilderness	San Jacinto	REMAP, PASS, WCV	0	226,810
Wilderness	Santa Rosa	REMAP, WCV, ECV	0	96,010
Proposed National Monument ⁵	Sand-to-Snow	WCV	0	(36,850) ⁶
Total			1,038,060	1,628,650

NOTES:

- 1 All areas listed are federal lands and all are managed by the U.S. Bureau of Land Management (BLM).
- 2 Area Plan abbreviations: WCV = Western Coachella Valley; ECV = Eastern Coachella Valley; DC = Desert Center; REMAP = Riverside Extended Mountains; PVV = Palo Verde Valley; PASS = San Gorgonio Pass; FERCO = Far Eastern Riverside County (areas not in any existing Area Plan). See Land Use Tables of the individual Area Plans for totals by Area Plan.
- 3 Portion of Joshua Tree Wilderness excluding Joshua Tree National Park.
- 4 Joshua Tree National Park portion of Joshua Tree Wilderness. Managed by the U.S. National Park Service.
- 5 Area proposed for federal National Monument designation pursuant to the proposed federal California Desert Protection Act of 2011.
- 6 Proposed area, therefore not included in totals.

No Foundation Component or General Plan Land Use Designation changes are proposed under GPA No. 1153.

PROJECT LOCATION:

At nearly 7,300 square miles in area, Riverside is one of the most diverse counties in California. It includes well-established urban, suburban and rural communities, extensive agricultural lands, mineral extraction, recreational areas and scenic vistas. There are rugged mountains, flat valley areas, open desert and expansive natural open spaces. The western portion of the County contains most of the County's non-desert areas, as well as most of its urbanized areas. To the east is the urbanizing hub of the Coachella Valley. Beyond Coachella is the northern end of the massive Salton Sea. Eastern Riverside County, which lies east of the crest of the San Jacinto Mountains, contains almost all the County's desert regions. Elevations in eastern Riverside County range from about 230 feet below mean sea level at the Salton Sea to 10,800 feet at the peak of Mount San Jacinto.

BACKGROUND:

Project Objectives

Pursuant to the grant agreement executed between Riverside County and the CEC (Grant Agreement #REN-13-002), the County committed to proposing a General Plan Amendment and other actions to accomplish the following goals during the grant's performance period of July 2014 through March 2016:

"Provide a robust framework of policies and data addressing renewable energy resources throughout the County, particularly supporting the development and expansion of geothermal resources in the Salton Sea and the coordination of solar resources in the far eastern portion of the County with the state's ongoing DRECP [Desert Renewable Energy Conservation Plan] development."

Key components of the project were identified as the following:

1. Incorporation of DRECP preliminary conservation strategies into the Riverside County General Plan.
2. Performance of opportunities and constraints mapping and analysis for renewable energy resources throughout the County.
3. Identification of regions of the County ripe for further policy development to support and implement renewable energy resource development.

The grant commitments outlined above are being met through the following products:

1. ***GPA – Multipurpose Open Space Element revisions:*** Expand existing discussion and policies addressing renewable energy resources in the County, including geothermal resources and new technologies.
2. ***GPA – Land Use Element revisions:*** Expand existing discussion and policies on renewable energy resources in the County with revisions to clarify focus on land use and siting related issues. Introduction of new "Wilderness Policy Areas" and associated policies

serve to bring recognition of existing federal Wildernesses and other public lands within Riverside County, particularly the Far Eastern Riverside County (FERCO) desert region not presently covered by any Area Plans (and thus addressed in the Land Use Element instead). The FERCO section of the Land Use Element also includes new information and proposed policies to address the coordination of solar resources with the existing federal U.S. Bureau of Land Management (BLM) Solar Energy Plan which created a “Riverside East Solar Energy Zone” on public BLM-managed lands within far eastern Riverside County (FERCO) and the State of California’s proposed DRECP. (See below for more on DRECP.) The new figures proposed for this Element also serve to recognize federal lands, conservation areas and identify regions of the County where additional plans for renewable energy are being proposed by other agencies (i.e., State and BLM).

3. ***GPA – Salton Sea Renewable Energy Policy Area:*** Proposed for the Eastern Coachella Valley Area Plan (ECVAP) in which the Riverside County portion of the Salton Sea is located, this policy area is intended to identify an area where future plans for the restoration, conservation and revitalization of the Salton Sea are being created. Specific uses are not addressed in the policy area, but may be updated at a later date once the State finalizes it’s overall plans for the Sea. The policy area does, however, address the general issues identified for the region, in particular focusing on renewable energy development potential, including geothermal, in and around the Salton Sea as a means for generating economic value in the area while at the same time serving to reduce exposed playa that would otherwise contribute to fugitive dust emissions.
4. ***Online Public GIS Viewer:*** In addition to the GPA presented herein, the grant is also being used as an opportunity to create a series of maps and other geographical data describing the opportunities and constraints for renewable energy development within Riverside County, particularly in FERCO and the Salton Sea regions. The online GIS viewer, which will be fully available to the public, will provide a critically needed function for these areas because it will enable the public to view a variety of maps and data beyond that presented in the General Plan. This includes maps and plans for other agencies, such as BLM, Imperial County, Salton Sea Authority and State, and other data, such as utility and infrastructure plans, not currently available on County General Plan maps. Further, it will also enable these maps and resources to be viewed in an interactive fashion for individual parcels and areas. Once launched (in March), the GIS view may be accessed online via the link provided on the County Planning Department’s website. (More information is available at: <http://planning.rctlma.org/Home/RiversideCountyREDProgram.aspx>.)

About the DRECP

In 2009, the State of California initiated creation of a proposed Desert Renewable Energy Conservation Plan (DRECP) to “help provide effective protection and conservation of desert ecosystems while allowing for the appropriate development of renewable energy projects” with the state’s inland desert regions of seven counties: Imperial, Inyo, Kern, Los Angeles, Riverside, San Bernardino and San

Diego. (See Exhibit 3.) The objective of the DRECP is to create an “efficient and effective biological mitigation and conservation program providing renewable project developers with permit timing and cost certainty under the federal and California Endangered Species Acts while at the same time preserving, restoring and enhancing natural communities and related ecosystems.” Approximately 22.5 million acres of federal and non-federal California desert land have been identified for inclusion the DRECP Plan Area. In Riverside County, the DRECP bounds generally lie immediately east of the existing Coachella Valley Multiple Species Habitat Conservation Plan (CV-MSHCP). (See Exhibit 5.) Additional information on the DRECP can be found at the State’s website: <http://www.drecp.org/>. Although the DRECP has not yet been finalized, GPA No. 1153 includes policies to recognize the DRECP and coordinate land use planning within the County’s jurisdiction in a manner that is consistent with, or complementary to, the objectives of the DRECP as currently proposed in 2015.

Outreach

The grant project began in July 2014 at which time a team of County representatives met with CEC staff in Sacramento to review the proposed grant project. Internal meetings between County staff were held with a number of other agencies and interested parties, including: Salton Sea Authority, Imperial County, National Renewable Energy Laboratory, Imperial Irrigation District (IID), Coachella Valley Water District (CVWD), State Water Resources Control Board, BLM and the six other counties located within the DRECP.

Staff also presented project updates and solicited comments and feedback from a number of groups over the last two years, including: California Energy Commission Integrated Energy Policy Report (IEPR) Lead Commissioner Workshop (August 2014), and two presentations to the Coachella Valley Economic Partnership “Renewable Energy Roundtable.” These were particularly helpful in reaching and obtaining input from a broad spectrum of interested groups from the community, environmental groups and the energy industry. County staff also presented a project update to the CEC August 3, 2015, at the CEC IEPR Workshop on “Landscape-Scale Environmental Evaluations for Energy Infrastructure Planning and the Strategic Transmission Investment Plan.” Staff also attended a second meeting in Sacramento with CEC staff on January 4, 2016, to discuss project status and, in particular, the project’s relationship to plans developing for the Salton Sea region. A Planning Commission workshop was held February 3, 2016, to provide an overview of the grant and proposed GPA development, and solicit comments and feedback from the Commissioners. Lastly, per the requirements of the CEC grant, a final “close-out” project meeting is scheduled for March 28, 2016, with the CEC in Sacramento.

ISSUES OF POTENTIAL CONCERN:

Relationship to Existing Policies and Plans

The proposed policy areas and policies generally serve to recognize existing public agency plans (such as BLM Riverside East SEZ, DRECP Development Focus Areas and Salton Sea plans) and ensure that future development within Riverside County is appropriately coordinated with any development proposed pursuant to said plans. The proposed policy areas and policies do not create any new land use entitlements or propose any new development themselves. Rather, they are expected to improve

coordination between land use proposals on private lands and the protection of existing federal Wildernesses and other public conservation lands.

As such, none of the new policy areas will affect existing Riverside County policy areas, specific plans, overlays or other land use regulations. The proposed policies and plans merely add requirements for planning and coordination. Likewise, the new policies and policy areas will not conflict with either of the existing Multiple Species Habitat Plans (MSHCPs)—the Western Riverside County (WRC-MSHCP) or Coachella Valley (CV-MSHCP) plans. Any future project proposed pursuant to the new policy areas will be required to conform to additional plan-wide requirements of the WRC-MSHCP, such as Riparian/Riverine Policies, Specific Species Surveys, Urban/Wildlands Interface Guidelines (UWIG) and Narrow Endemic Plant Species Policies and Determination of Biologically Equivalent or Superior Preservation Analysis (DBESP), or CV-MSHCP standards, as applicable.

Tribal Consultation

In accordance with Senate Bill 18 (SB 18), the County contacted thirty Tribal entities (as listed by the Native American Heritage Commission) for consultation and five tribes were contacted for consultation pursuant to Assembly Bill 52 (AB 52). Of the consulted tribes, none specifically requested SB 18 consultation with the County and one Tribe requested AB 52 consultation. No significant Tribal Cultural Resources were identified through the consultation process and no mitigation measures resulted.

ENVIRONMENTAL ASSESSMENT:

The County of Riverside is the Lead Agency for the project. Section 21001.1 of the California Environmental Quality Act (CEQA) Guidelines finds that projects, to be carried out by public agencies, must be subject to the same level of review and consideration as that of private projects required to be approved by public entities. Therefore, the County of Riverside prepared an Initial Study (Environmental Assessment No. 42867) for GPA No. 1153 which determined that the General Plan Amendment does not have any potential to have a significant effect on the environment.

RECOMMENDATIONS:

STAFF RECOMMENDS THAT THE PLANNING COMMISSION:

ADOPT PLANNING COMMISSION RESOLUTION NO. 2016-001 recommending adoption of General Plan Amendment No. 1153 to the Board of Supervisors, as shown on Attachment A.

THE PLANNING COMMISSION RECOMMENDS THAT THE BOARD OF SUPERVISORS TAKE THE FOLLOWING ACTIONS:

ADOPT a NEGATIVE DECLARATION for ENVIRONMENTAL ASSESSMENT NO. 42867, based on the findings incorporated in the initial study and the conclusion that the project will not have a significant effect on the environment; and,

TENTATIVELY APPROVE GENERAL PLAN AMENDMENT NO. 1153 amending the Land Use Element, Multi-Purpose Open Space Element, and Eastern Coachella Valley, Western Coachella Valley, The Pass, Riverside Extended Mountains, Desert Center and Palo Verde Valley Area Plans, in accordance with Attachment B, and based on the findings and conclusions incorporated in the staff report, and pending final adoption of the General Plan Amendment resolution by the Board of Supervisors.

FINDINGS:

The following findings are in addition to those in the attached environmental assessment, which is incorporated herein by reference.

1. GPA No. 1153 addresses renewable energy development potential within Riverside County. In doing so, it makes changes to the Land Use Element and Multi-Purpose Open Space Element, as well as the Eastern, Western, Pass, Riverside Extended Mountains, Desert Center and Palo Verde Valley Area Plans. As such, GPA No. 1153 constitutes an Entitlement/Policy Amendment to the General Plan.
2. GPA No. 1153 does not alter any General Plan Foundation Components or Land Use Designations. As such it is consistent with the policies set forth in the General Plan Administration Element and Sections 2.4 and 2.5 of Ordinance No. 348.
3. The modifications proposed by GPA No. 1153 are needed to adjust to new and emerging conditions existing in Riverside County, such as renewable energy plans proposed by outside agencies (including BLM and the DRECP), changing renewable energy development incentives, and proposals for the restoration and revitalization of the Salton Sea by a number of agencies, and to ensure that future renewable energy and related growth in eastern Riverside County is balanced with appropriate public services, infrastructure and basic necessities for healthy and livable communities.
4. GPA No. 960 does not involve a change in or conflict with any Foundation Component designation in the General Plan. No zoning, General Plan Foundation Components or Land Use Designations are changed by the proposed project.
5. GPA No. 960 does not involve a change in or conflict with the Riverside County Vision. Rather, it provides additional clarity for implementing the Vision including, but not limited to, the following:
 - a. Adding policies to the General Plan that further implement the Vision relative to “Sustainability and Global Environmental Stewardship” by identifying and requiring coordination with existing and proposed renewable energy plans on both public and private lands in the Far Eastern Riverside County (FERCO) desert region, around the Salton Sea and throughout Riverside County.

- b. Adding policies to the General Plan that further implement the Vision relative to “Conservation and Open Space Resource System” by identifying and requiring coordination with existing and proposed public conservation lands in the Far Eastern Riverside County (FERCO) desert region and throughout Riverside County.
 - c. Adding policies to the General Plan that further implement the Vision relative to “Intergovernmental Cooperation” by identifying and requiring coordination with existing and proposed plans from other government agencies, such as BLM and the DRECP within the FERCO desert region, Salton Sea and throughout Riverside County.
6. GPA No. 1153 does not involve a change in or conflict with any General Plan Principles. Rather, it provides additional clarity for implementing the General Plan Principles, including, but not limited to, the following:
- a. Regional Issues: The policies of GPA No. 1153 aid the County in achieving the directive to “coordinate with the cities, other local and regional agencies, and Indian nations” to “provide a comprehensive guide to economic and physical development” within the County.
 - b. Area Plans: This GPA contributes to the Principle of “refinement of existing Community Plans” when needed to ensure they remain appropriate for guiding the growth of the communities addressed by the Area Plans. In particular, the GPA adds needed additional information to the non-Area Plan “FERCO” region to reflect recent emerging development and growth trends, as well as recognize the plans of other agencies that may affect the area.
 - c. Infrastructure Support: This GPA aids in implementing the General Plan Principles related to infrastructure, such as providing the groundwork for “locating industrial uses” and “stimulating cooperative programs” between utility suppliers, businesses and other employers to “assure adequate infrastructure support.”
7. The policies and policy areas proposed by GPA No. 1153 do not change or conflict with the implementation of any policies in the General Plan other than those revised as part of the project.
8. The project’s proposed policy areas and policies generally serve to recognize existing public agency plans and ensure that future development within Riverside County is appropriately coordinated with any development proposed pursuant to said plans. They do not create any new land use entitlements or propose any new development themselves. Rather, they are expected to improve coordination between land use proposals on private lands and the protection of existing federal Wildernesses and other public conservation lands. As such, none of the new policy areas will affect existing Riverside County policy areas, specific plans, overlays or other land use regulations.

9. GPA No. 1153 does not affect any lands within any Airport Land Use Compatibility Plans (ALUPs) within Riverside County. Thus it will not result in any ALUP inconsistencies.
10. GPA No. 11153 does not propose any modifications to roadways or the County circulation network. It will not have any significant adverse effects on traffic or circulation.
11. The project may overlap existing City Spheres of Influence within the San Gorgonio Pass (cities of Banning or Beaumont), Coachella Valley (cities of Cathedral City, Coachella, Desert Hot Springs, Indian Wells, Indio, La Quinta, Palm Desert, Palm Springs and Rancho Mirage) or the City of Blythe. However, none of the policies proposed alter land use, entitlements or planned future development within a City Sphere of Influence.
12. The project may overlap existing Park and Recreation Districts, school districts and other governmental service areas. However, none of the policies proposed alter land use, entitlements or planned future development. Nor will the project introduce any new residents or visitors needing access to existing or new recreational, educational, medical, library or governmental facilities.
13. The project does not adversely affect any 100-year floodplain, special flood hazard area, area drainage plan or dam inundation area.
14. Nothing in GPA No. 1153 alters or alleviates the requirements for any future implementing projects proposed within the proposed Policy Areas to comply with all applicable building codes, public safety codes, and Riverside County ordinances and regulations addressing, but not limited to: building safety, seismic safety, fire safety, roadway safety, geological hazards, air quality, water quality, flooding hazards, utilities, agricultural preserves, endangered species protection, natural habitat conservation, hazardous waste use, solid waste disposal, light and noise pollution, and zoning and subdivisions.
15. Environmental Assessment No. 42867 did not identify any potentially significant impacts.
16. GPA No. 1153 addresses special circumstances and conditions that have emerged and were unanticipated when the 2003 RCIP General Plan was originally prepared or the 2008 General Plan updated (GPA No. 960) was initiated, namely: policies and programs enacted by the State of California (in particular the Renewable Portfolio Standards) in the last ten years have led to a marked increase in renewable energy development throughout the State, including Riverside County. Further, the DRECP, which has been in development by the State since 2010 addresses plans for directing the development of renewable energy resources and conservation of desert habitats throughout much of the eastern deserts of the State, including those in far eastern Riverside County on both public (BLM-managed federal) lands and potentially private lands. GPA No. 1153 recognizes these issues and planning considerations in the General Plan to ensure that growth in Riverside County occurs in a manner coordinated with or complementary to the long-term development and conservation patterns envisioned by the State and federal agencies (BLM) via the DRECP.

17. For the reasons outlined above, the proposed amendment, GPA No. 1153, would contribute to the achievement of the purposes of the General Plan and not be detrimental to them.

CONCLUSIONS:

1. The General Plan entitlement/policy amendment proposed by GPA No. 1153 is justified because, for the reasons outlined above, it is found to be:
 - a. consistent with the Riverside County Vision in the General Plan;
 - b. consistent with the General Plan Principles;
 - c. and, consistent with the Foundation Component designations in the General Plan.
2. For the reasons listed above, the proposed project would contribute to the achievement of the purposes of the General Plan and would not be detrimental to them.
3. The proposed project, GPA No. 1153, responds to and addresses special circumstances and conditions that have emerged since the preparation of the 2003 RCIP General Plan and 2008 General Plan Update (GPA No. 960), namely, proposal by the State of California of the Desert Renewable Energy Conservation Plan (DRECP), that includes the far eastern portion of Riverside County in its proposed extent.
4. The proposed project is consistent with the General Plan Land Use Element, Multi-Purpose Open Space Element and with all other elements of the Riverside County General Plan.
5. For the reasons set forth above, GPA No. 1153 is consistent with the Administration Element of the General Plan and Sections 2.4 and 2.5 of Ordinance No. 348.
6. The project is consistent with the zoning classifications of Ordinance No. 348 and with all other applicable provisions of Ordinance No. 348.
7. The proposed policy areas, maps and policies of GPA No. 1153 serve to protect the public's health, safety and general welfare.
8. The proposed project is designed to ensure future development proposals are compatible with existing plans for open space and renewable energy in eastern Riverside County, as well as with the present and future logical development of the subject areas.
9. GPA No. 1153 does not affect any lands within any Airport Land Use Compatibility Plans (ALUPs) within Riverside County. Thus it will not result in any ALUP inconsistencies.

10. The proposed project will not have a significant adverse effect on any existing Habitat Conservation Plan. Nor will it preclude reserve design for the Western Riverside County or Coachella Valley Multiple Species Habitat Conservation Plans. It is designed to recognize plans proposed by the State for future Desert Renewable Energy Conservation Plan conservation.
11. The project will not alter land use, entitlements or planned future development within any City Sphere of Influence. Thus, it will not have any adverse effects on any City Sphere of Influence.
12. The project does not alter land use, entitlements or planned future development; nor does it introduce any new residents or visitors needing access to existing or new recreational, educational, medical, library or governmental facilities. As such, the project will not have any substantial adverse effects on any Park and Recreation Districts, school districts and other governmental service areas.
13. The proposed project will not have a significant adverse effect on the environment.

INFORMATIONAL ITEMS:

1. As of this writing, no letters in support or opposition have been received.

EXHIBITS:

EXHIBIT 1: Figure LU-7, Wilderness Policy Areas in Far Eastern Riverside County

EXHIBIT 2: Figure LU-8, Far Eastern Riverside County Solar Energy Areas

EXHIBIT 3: Figure LU-9, Extent of Proposed California Desert Renewable Energy Conservation Plan

EXHIBIT 4: Figure OS-5, Renewable Energy Resources

EXHIBIT 5: Map showing relationship of DRECP to existing MSHCPs in Riverside County

ATTACHMENTS:

A: Planning Commission Resolution No. 2016-001

B: Proposed General Plan revisions (Land Use Element; Multi-Purpose Open Space Element; Eastern Coachella Valley Area Plan; Western Coachella Valley Area Plan; The Pass Area Plan; Riverside Extended Mountains Area Plan; Desert Center Area Plan; and, Palo Verde Valley Area Plan)

C: Environmental Assessment No. 42867

D: Notice of Determination for EA No. 42867

E: Agency Labels

2
3 **RESOLUTION NO. 2016-001**
4 **RECOMMENDING ADOPTION OF**
5 **GENERAL PLAN AMENDMENT NO. 1153**
6

7 **WHEREAS**, pursuant to the provisions of Government Code Section(s) 65350/65450 et. seq.,
8 public hearings were held before the Riverside County Planning Commission in Riverside, California on
9 February 24, 2016, to consider the above-referenced matter; and,

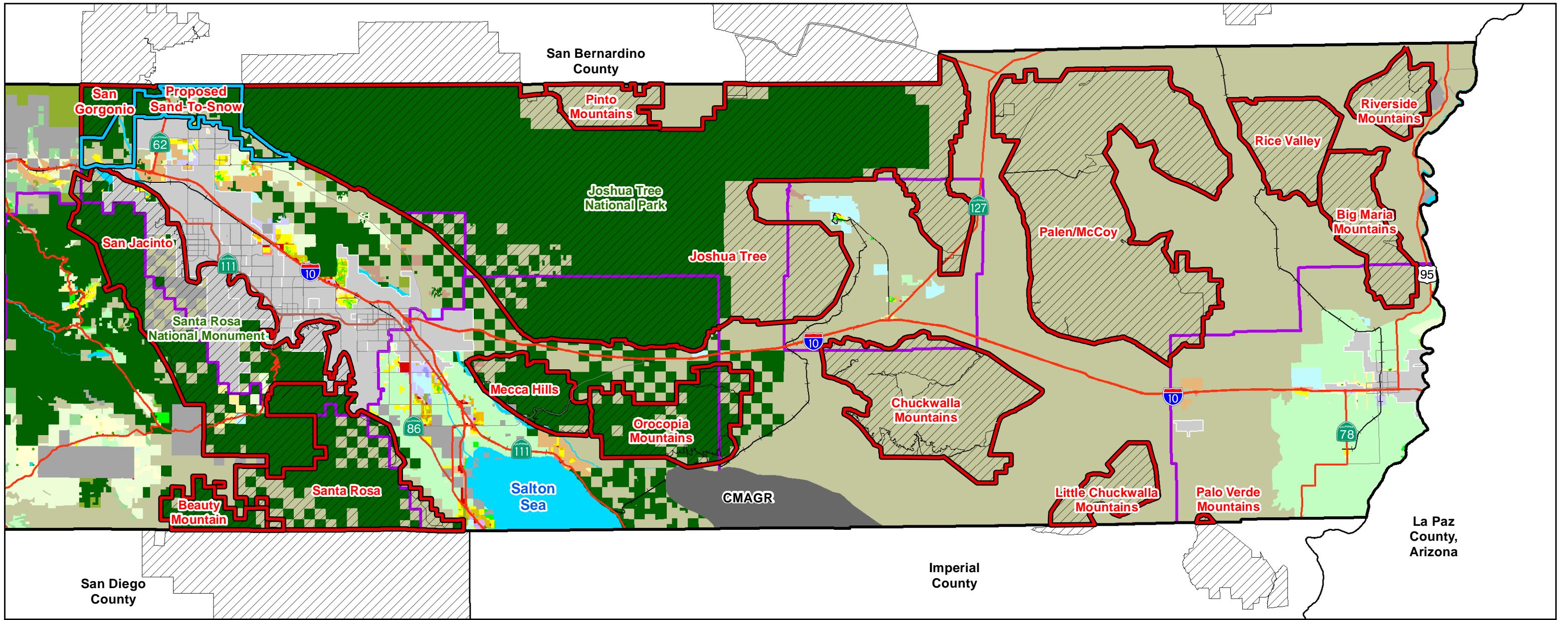
10 **WHEREAS**, all the provisions of the California Environmental Quality Act (CEQA) and
11 Riverside County CEQA implementing procedures have been met and the environmental document
12 prepared or relied on is sufficiently detailed so that all the potentially significant effects of the project on
13 the environment and measures necessary to avoid or substantially lessen such effects have been evaluated
14 in accordance with the above-referenced Act and Procedures; and,

15 **WHEREAS**, the matter was discussed fully with testimony and documentation presented by the
16 public and affected government agencies; now, therefore,

17 **BE IT RESOLVED, FOUND, DETERMINED, AND ORDERED** by the Planning
18 Commission of the County of Riverside, in regular session assembled on February 24, 2016, that it has
19 reviewed and considered the environmental document prepared or relied on and recommends the
20 following based on the staff report and the findings and conclusions stated therein:
21

22 **ADOPTION** of the Negative Declaration environmental document, Environmental Assessment
23 File No. 42867; and
24

25 **ADOPTION** of General Plan Amendment No. 1153.
26
27
28



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COMMUNITY DEVELOPMENT		RURAL COMMUNITY		AGRICULTURE		OPEN SPACE		MISCELLANEOUS		Data Source: Desert Renewable Energy Conservation Plan Gateway (2015); Riverside County GIS (2010)
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Estate Density Residential Very Low Density Residential Low Density Residential Medium Density Residential Medium High Density Residential High Density Residential Very High Density Residential 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Highest Density Residential Commercial Retail Commercial Tourist Commercial Office Light Industrial Heavy Industrial Business Park Public Facilities 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Community Center Mixed Use Planning Area Rural Community - Estate Density Residential Rural Community - Very Low Density Residential Rural Community - Low Density Residential Rural Residential 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Rural Mountainous Rural Desert Agriculture Conservation Conservation Habitat Open Space Recreation 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Open Space Rural Mineral Resources Water City Tribal Lands 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Sand-To-Snow Wilderness Policy Area (WPA) Wilderness Policy Areas (WPA) Federal Wilderness - National Conservation Lands Military 					

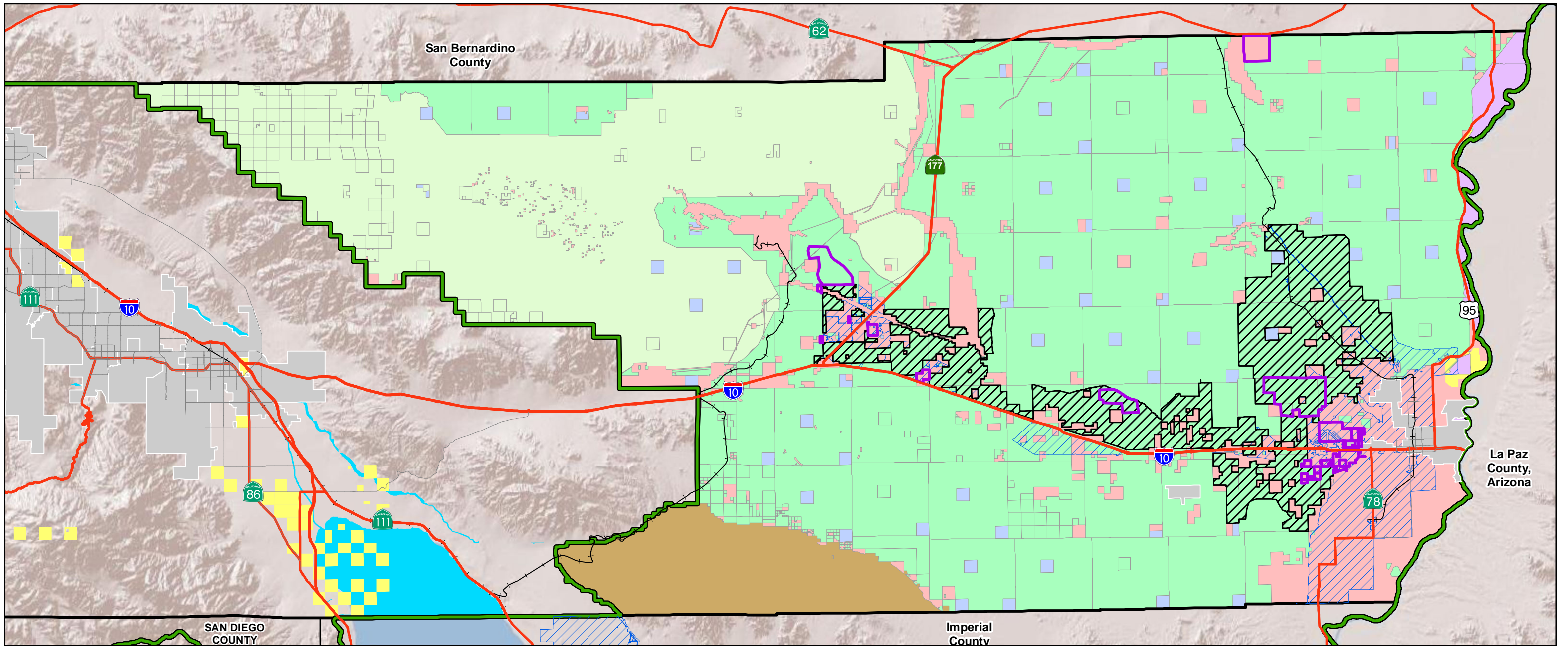
New Figure LU-7

February 8, 2016

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FAR EASTERN RIVERSIDE COUNTY WILDERNESS POLICY AREAS



Data Source: Desert Renewable Energy Conservation Plan Gateway (2015), Riverside County GIS (2010), ArcGIS Online (2015)

Legend

-  Existing Large Scale Solar Projects
-  Federal Lands - Bureau of Land Management
-  Tribal Lands - Colorado River Reservation
-  DRECP Boundary
-  Federal Lands - Chocolate Mountain Aerial Gunnery Range
-  State Lands
-  BLM Eastern Riverside Solar Energy Zone (SEZ)
-  Federal Lands - Joshua Tree National Park
-  Tribal Lands - Other
-  DRECP Proposed Development Focus Areas (DFAs)

**New
Figure LU-8**

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January 25, 2016


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**FAR EASTERN RIVERSIDE COUNTY
SOLAR ENERGY AREAS**

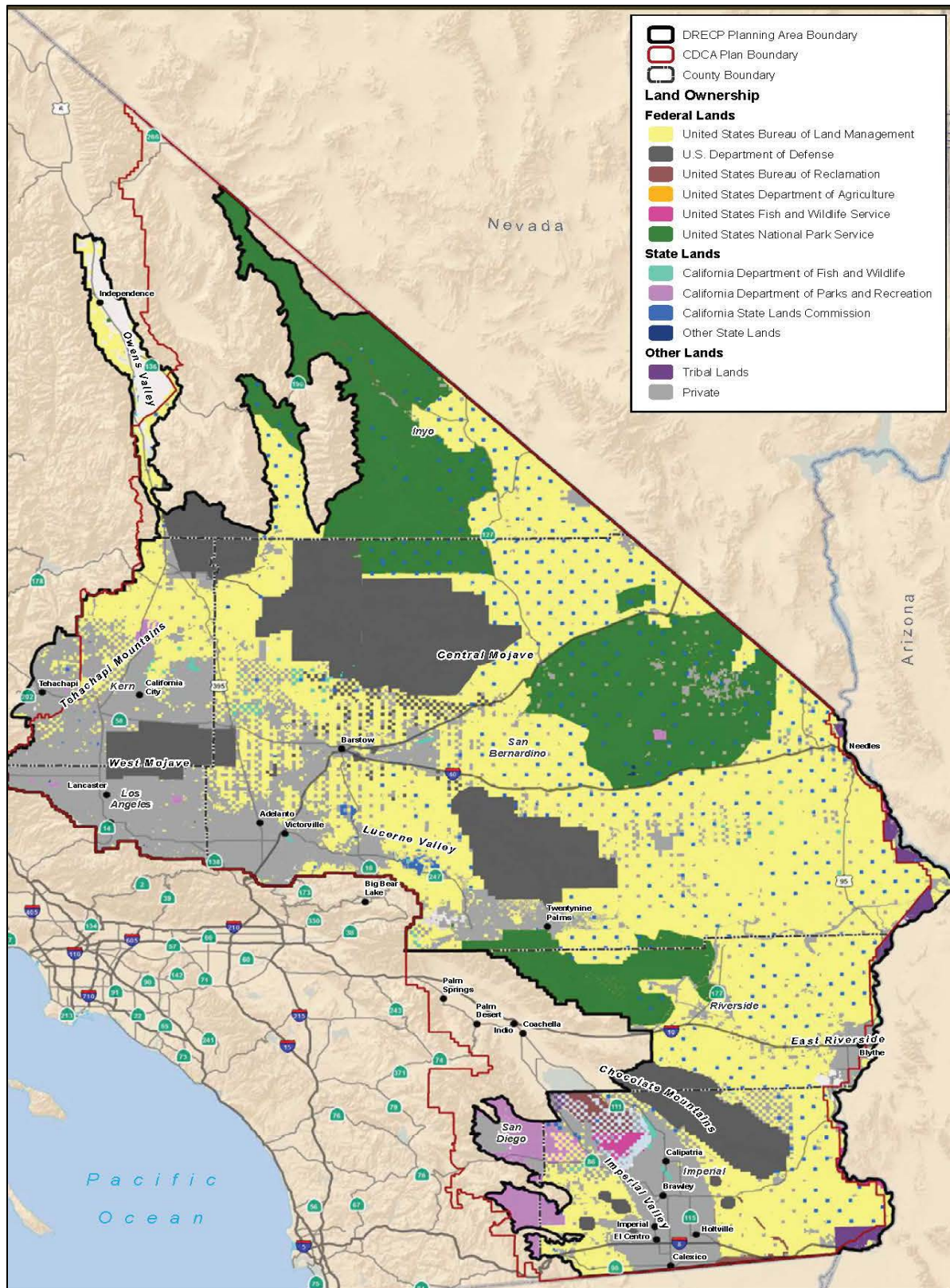
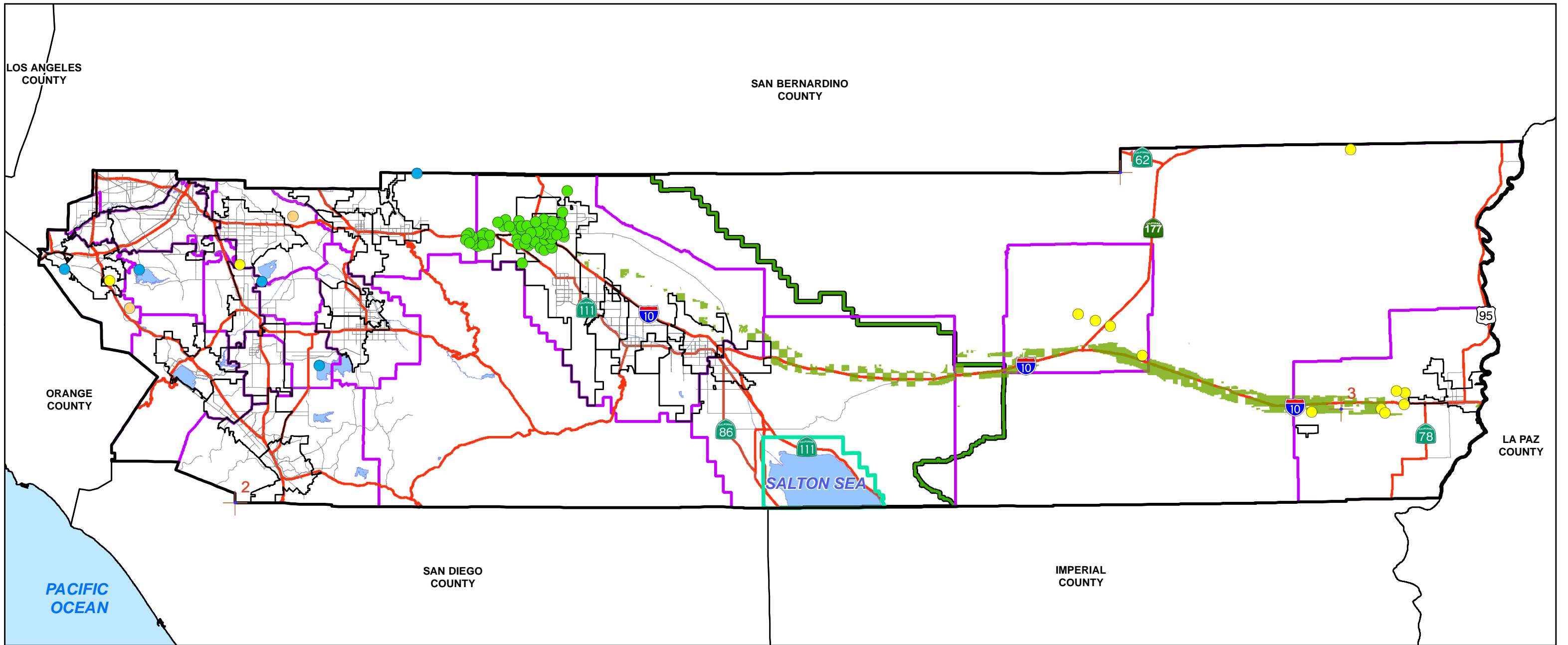


Figure LU-9: Extent of the Proposed California Desert Renewable Energy Conservation Plan (DRECP)



- Legend**
- Renewable Energy Facilities**
- Biomass
 - Hydro
 - Solar
 - Wind
 - ▬ Energy Right-of-Way Corridor

- California Desert Renewable Energy Conservation Plan (DRECP Boundary)
- Salton Sea Renewable Energy Policy Area (See Eastern Coachella Valley Area Plan)
- Area Plan Boundary
- + City Boundary
- Highways
- Waterbodies

Data Source: California Department of Conservation (2013), Riverside County GIS (2010)

Figure OS-5

February 8, 2016

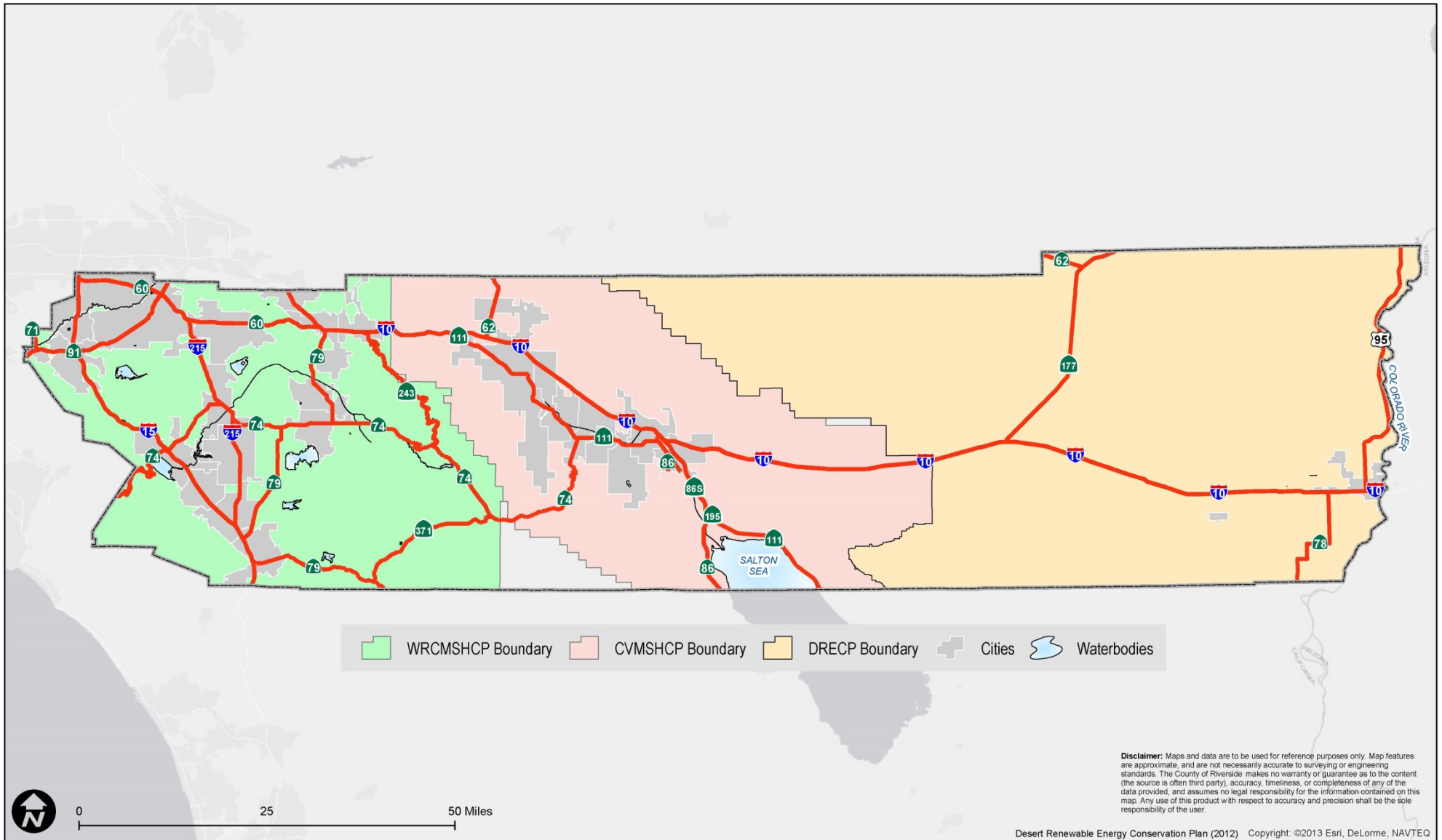
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RENEWABLE ENERGY RESOURCES

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DRECP & MSHCP BOUNDARIES IN RIVERSIDE COUNTY



Land Use Element

Draft General Plan Amendment No. 1153

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Chapter 3

Land Use Element

Introduction

Background

As described in Chapter One, Introduction, the County of Riverside General Plan is the result of a comprehensive planning process that is guided by the Vision Statement, which establishes a series of fundamental values shaping the future quality of life for the County of Riverside. The Vision Statement was further refined by a set of General Plan Principles, which provided further direction for this comprehensive planning process. The Land Use Element and General Plan Land Use Map (Figure LU-1) reflect the outcome of this comprehensive planning process.

The Land Use Element functions as a guide to planners, the general public, and decision makers as to the ultimate pattern of development. It designates the general distribution, general location, and extent of land uses, such as housing, business, industry, open space, agriculture, natural resources, recreation, and public/quasi-public uses. The Land Use Element also discusses the standards of residential density and non-residential intensity for the various land use designations.

Of the general plan elements required by state law, the Land Use Element has the broadest scope. Since it governs how land is to be utilized, many of the issues and policies contained in other plan elements are linked in some degree to this element. For example, the Circulation Element defines policies for the accommodation of vehicular and other trips generated by the population and uses permitted by the Land Use Element. Similarly, the location and density of uses prescribed by this Element are influenced by policies for the protection of environmental resources prescribed by the Multipurpose Open Space Element.

The Element and General Plan Land Use Map are intended to capture and communicate Riverside County's long term desires for the future use and development of their land.

Format of the Land Use Plan

Two Levels of Policy

Policies that are applicable countywide are contained in the Issues and Policies Section beginning on Page 17.

Area plan level policies are contained within each of the 19 Area Plans.

The General Plan consists of two levels of policies that direct land use and development in the county: policies that apply countywide and those that are unique to a specific region. Countywide policies are applicable to the entire unincorporated area, are contained in the General Plan and reflected on the General Plan Land Use Map. More focused policies that address specific regional or local issues are found in the individual area plans.

The Land Use Element is divided into three main sections:

- The first section generally describes the natural and urban setting of Riverside County;
- The second section describes the land use concept for Riverside County, and gives a statistical summary detailing acreages and buildout capacities; and
- The third section contains policies addressing a variety of land use related issues in Riverside County. This section is divided into two main subcategories:
 - Countywide Policies - these policies apply countywide regardless of land use designation or area plan. For example, this subcategory discusses land use related issues regarding such topics as economic development, community design and air quality; and
 - Land Use Designation Policies - these include policies for each land use designation, including Agriculture, Rural Residential, and Commercial Retail.

The General Plan Land Use Map (Figure LU-1) is a comprehensive graphic representation of many of the policies stated in the General Plan and this Land Use Element.

Setting

“Riverside County is a family of special communities in a remarkable environmental setting.” RCIP Vision

Describing the physical setting of Riverside County cannot be done in a single document. This “remarkable environmental setting” includes many facets, from the topography and major physical features, to the natural setting, built environment, unique communities, environmental habitat, circulation system, and most importantly, the people. However, in order to provide a framework for the reader, a general description of the county is important.

This section of the Land Use Element provides a general description of the major features that comprise the county. This general description is further elaborated upon in each element of the General Plan as well as in the RCIP Vision and General Planning Principles. Additional information detailing the county’s setting can be found in the Existing Settings Report, an appendix to the General Plan Environmental Impact Report. Future land uses for the county are described in the next section as well as within each Area plan.

As shown on the Location Map (Figure LU-2), Riverside County is located in Southern California and lies east of Orange County, north of San Diego and Imperial Counties, and south of San Bernardino and Los Angeles Counties. Riverside County is the fourth largest county in the state, encompassing approximately 7,400 square miles and extending westward from the Colorado River to within 14 miles of the Pacific Ocean, a stretch of some 200 miles. Riverside County is roughly equivalent in size to the State of New Jersey.

Riverside County contains a spectacular array of diverse geographical features, including deserts, snow-capped peaks and rugged hills, deep valleys, forests, and rich agricultural lands. Set among this rich landscape is a variety of established and/or growing urban, suburban and rural communities. This array of physical features provides a home for a rich diversity of natural habitat and biological resources. In addition, the diversity of Riverside County offers a living environment to appeal to every taste: dense urban cities, suburban enclaves, resorts, rural communities, agricultural communities, equestrian communities and sparsely populated outposts.

As can be seen on the attached Physical Features Map (Figure LU-3), Riverside County is roughly divided into eastern and western halves by the San Jacinto and Santa Rosa Mountains. A deep valley known as the San Gorgonio Pass, framed by the San Jacinto and San Gorgonio Mountains, creates an accessible corridor linking these two halves. The San Bernardino and Little San Bernardino Mountains form a portion of the northern boundary while numerous mountain ranges, including those in the Santa Rosa Wilderness and Cleveland National Forest, among others, serve as boundaries along the southern and western edges of the county.

These eastern and western halves of the county are distinguished by their physical characteristics as well as their historic growth patterns. The western portion of the county is roughly half the size of the eastern half and is bounded by the Santa Ana Mountains and Cleveland National Forest on the west and the San Jacinto Mountains and the San Bernardino National Forest on the east.

Compared to eastern Riverside County, the western portion of the county contains the greatest concentration of population and has experienced the greatest growth pressures. The majority of this population is concentrated in the incorporated cities of Corona, Riverside, Beaumont, Banning, Norco, Lake Elsinore, Perris, Hemet, San Jacinto, Moreno Valley, Calimesa, Canyon Lake, Murrieta, and Temecula.

The Santa Ana River, which starts in the San Bernardino Mountains, flows through the northern portion of western Riverside County, through Orange County and eventually into the Pacific Ocean. The San Jacinto River, which flows from the Santa Rosa and San Jacinto Mountains, cuts roughly through the middle of western Riverside County and eventually into Lake Elsinore. Several man-made lakes, which provide water supplies and recreational opportunities, are located in this portion of the county, including Lake Mathews, Lake Perris, Lake Skinner, Vail Lake, and Diamond Valley Lake.

The eastern portion of Riverside County is bounded by the Colorado River on the east and the Santa Rosa and San Jacinto Mountains on the west. This portion of the county is distinguished from the western portion of the county by its desert terrain and relatively less populated and congested communities.

The vast majority of eastern Riverside County's population is concentrated in the Coachella Valley within the incorporated cities of Desert Hot Springs, Palm Springs, Cathedral City, Rancho Mirage, Indian Wells, Palm Desert, La Quinta, Indio, and Coachella. Many of these communities are noted for their focus on second homes, retirement living, and golf resorts. The Joshua Tree National Park, known for its rich desert habitat, forms a permanent natural boundary at the northern end of the Coachella Valley. The Whitewater River, a seasonal river which forms in the San Bernardino Mountains, flows through the Coachella Valley and eventually into the Salton Sea at the Valley's southern end. A rich agricultural economy has developed in the Coachella Valley and contributes to the rural character of eastern Riverside County.

A vast expanse of desert wilderness separates the Coachella Valley from the Colorado River. The City of Blythe is located in the Palo Verde Valley along the Colorado River, which provides the source for one of the most productive agricultural regions in the county.

Land Use Concept

Concepts of the General Plan

This section of the Land Use Element provides a general description of the countywide land use concept. This land use concept is depicted on the General Plan Land Use Map (Figure LU-1) as well as in each of the 19 area

Foundation Components

Agriculture - identifies those areas to be used for agricultural production.

Rural - identifies those areas with a distinctive rural character, including existing rural communities, mountainous and desert areas that allow limited development.

Rural Community - identifies communities that exhibit a rural character and allow limited development.

Open Space - identifies those areas appropriate for the preservation of open space for habitat, recreation, scenic value, mineral resource extraction, cultural, and natural resource preservation. This category also identifies remote, large-parceled areas that allow limited development.

Community Development - identifies those areas appropriate for urban or suburban development, including areas for single family and multiple family residential uses, commercial, industrial, business park, public facilities, and a mix of uses.

plans. Immediately following this general description of the concepts driving the land use plan is a description of major aspects of the General Plan Land Use Map.

The concepts for the Land Use Element are introduced in the RCIP Vision Statement and elaborated upon in the General Planning Principles, contained in Appendix B of the General Plan. As directed by these documents, the Land Use Element and General Plan Land Use Map are intended to help guide Riverside County to achieve an integrated and coordinated land use, open space, and transportation system. Central to the vision for Riverside County is the desire to maintain and enhance the character of Riverside County, including its extraordinary natural resources and unique communities, by clearly defining areas which are suitable for future growth and those which are suitable to be preserved and maintained. Key to this goal is the need to focus future growth into a pattern that complements and incorporates the transportation and multi-purpose open space systems. In essence, future growth should be directed to areas that are well served by public facilities and services and preserve significant environmental features such as drainage ways, lands subject to extreme natural hazards, or lands that offer scenic beauty. The focus of this General Plan is not on the continuation of disaggregate land uses, but on creating and connecting whole communities. This vision for Riverside County is desired to be achieved through the following basic tenants:

- Accommodate strategically located community centers and re-plan existing urban cores with a transit-adaptive, integrated mixture of commercial, residential, employment, parks, civic, recreational, and cultural uses within walking distance of transit facilities. These community centers are intended to accommodate a portion of future growth by allowing increased densities and intensities in order to reduce sprawl and the amount of land required for public infrastructure;
- Accommodate a comprehensive, multi-purpose open space system that provides a variety of functions, including; providing a framework for community development that encompasses the needs for active and passive recreation, establishing separations between communities, and maintaining the historic character of Riverside County;
- Accommodate a multi-modal transportation system that serves an expanding population and is integrated with a variety of land uses through transit-adaptive development and infrastructure. This transportation system is interconnected on the regional and project level and includes systems for vehicular, transit, the Oasis concept, pedestrian linkages, trails, bicycle routes, air and other non-motorized forms of transportation. The transportation system is designed into each community and project to provide attractive, safe options of travel;

- Allow for a balanced mixture of land uses, including commercial, office, industrial, agriculture, and open space, as well as a variety of residential product types, densities, and intensities in appropriate locations that respond to a multitude of market segments. The land use plan accommodates a variety of housing types, from rural estates to urban apartments;
- Accommodate the various communities of Riverside County, which are maturing in their own way, at their own pace and within their own context. This includes the preservation of character in some communities, accommodating growth in other communities, and achieving a mixture of growth and preservation in others;
- Cooperate regionally on issues of mobility, transportation systems development, traffic congestion reduction, clear air, clean water, watershed management, and habitat linkages; and
- Utilize a system of incentives that are designed to facilitate the achievement of these concepts within the context of the free market.

The General Plan Land Use Plan establishes a complex interrelationship of land uses that will contribute to accomplishing many of the goals of the General Plan. By careful adherence to the patterns established, a viable, self-sustaining county with a high quality of life and desirable physical character can be developed. The realization of the plan will depend on the creation of well-conceived and comprehensive implementation tools and the continuing support and vision of the county's decision-makers.

General Plan Land Use Map

This section provides a general description and statistical breakdown of the General Plan Land Use Map (Figure LU-1). The General Plan Land Use Map depicts the general pattern of the future land use in unincorporated Riverside County. The General Plan Land Use Map consists of five broad Foundation Component land uses: Agriculture, Rural, Rural Community, Open Space, and Community Development. Each of these is subdivided into more detailed land use designations at the area plan level. The uses allowed within each of these basic categories are detailed in the Land Use Designations Summary Table (Table LU-4) and are directed by policies contained within this Land Use Element.

The Unincorporated Riverside County Cumulative Acreage Summary Table (Table LU-1) presents an itemized acreage summary for each General Plan Foundation Component. The Unincorporated Riverside County Buildout Capacity Summary Table (Table LU-2) provides a summary of the capacity projections based upon the assumed build out of each General Plan land use designation. Statistical summaries for each area plan can be found in their respective area plan document.

The General Plan Land Use Map depicts Riverside County as being predominately rural and natural in character. As shown on Table LU-1, the Rural, Agricultural, Rural Community and Open Space General Plan Foundation Component-designated lands account for 94% of the entire unincorporated area, with the remaining 7% devoted to urbanized uses, roadways, and Indian lands. Approximately 83% of the area in western Riverside County is designated for Agricultural, Rural, Rural Community, or Open Space uses, while these uses make up over 96% of the land in the eastern half of the county.



Buildout Capacity Assumptions and Methodology can be found in Appendix E-1.

**Table LU-1
Unincorporated Riverside County Cumulative Acreage Summary**

General Plan Foundation Component	Western County Area Plans Acreage	%	Eastern County Area Plans Acreage	%	Total	%
Agriculture	29,247	2%	159,630	5%	188,877	5%
Rural	250,296	21%	42,254	1%	292,550	7%
Rural Community	60,658	5%	3,640	0%	64,298	2%
Open Space	661,280	55%	2,630,774	90%	3,292,054	80%
Community Development	111,590	9%	61,584	2%	173,174	4%
Other ¹	79,116	7%	31,732	1%	110,848	3%
Total	1,192,186	100%	2,929,615	100%	4,121,801	100%

NOTES:

1 Includes Indian Lands and Major Roadways. Does not include cities and March JPA within Riverside County.

**Table LU-2
Unincorporated Riverside County Buildout Capacity Summary**

	Western County	%	Eastern County	%	Total
Population	967,919	57%	734,739	43%	1,702,658
Dwelling Units	315,746	61%	205,151	39%	520,897
Employment	310,331	55%	251,458	45%	561,789

NOTES: Totals do not include Indian lands or cities within Riverside County.

With the majority of Community Development lands in the county designated in its western portion, the majority of the buildout capacity for population, dwelling unit and employment also occurs here.

Area Plan System



For a detailed discussion of the land use system, see the **Land Use Designation Policies Section**.

As described in Chapter One, much of the unincorporated portions of Riverside County are divided into 19 area plans, as shown on the Area Plan Boundary Map (Figure LU-4). The purpose of these area plans is to provide more detailed land use and policy direction regarding local issues such as land use, circulation, open space and other topical areas. The area plan land use maps contain a more detailed series of land use categories that are grouped according to the five General Plan Foundation Components. The Land Use Designations Summary Table (Table LU-4) lists the area plan land use categories along with their respective density/intensity standards and summary of allowable uses.



Data Source: Riverside County (2010)

- Agriculture
- Rural
- Rural Community
- Open Space
- Community Development
- Tribal Lands
- Area Plan Boundary
- City Boundary
- Waterbodies
- Highways

Figure LU-1

December 16, 2013

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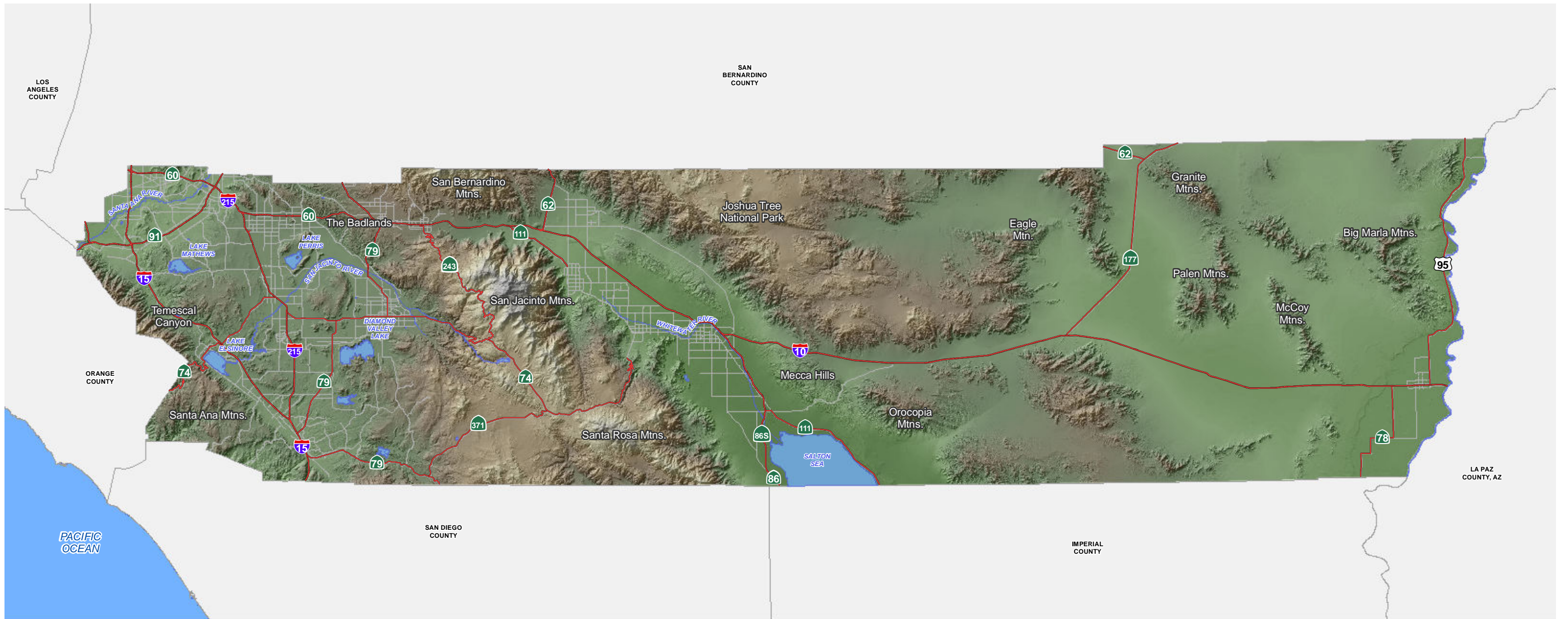


RIVERSIDE COUNTY GENERAL PLAN LANDUSE FOUNDATION COMPONENTS

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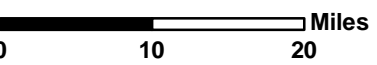
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-  Highways

Figure LU-3

 December 16, 2013

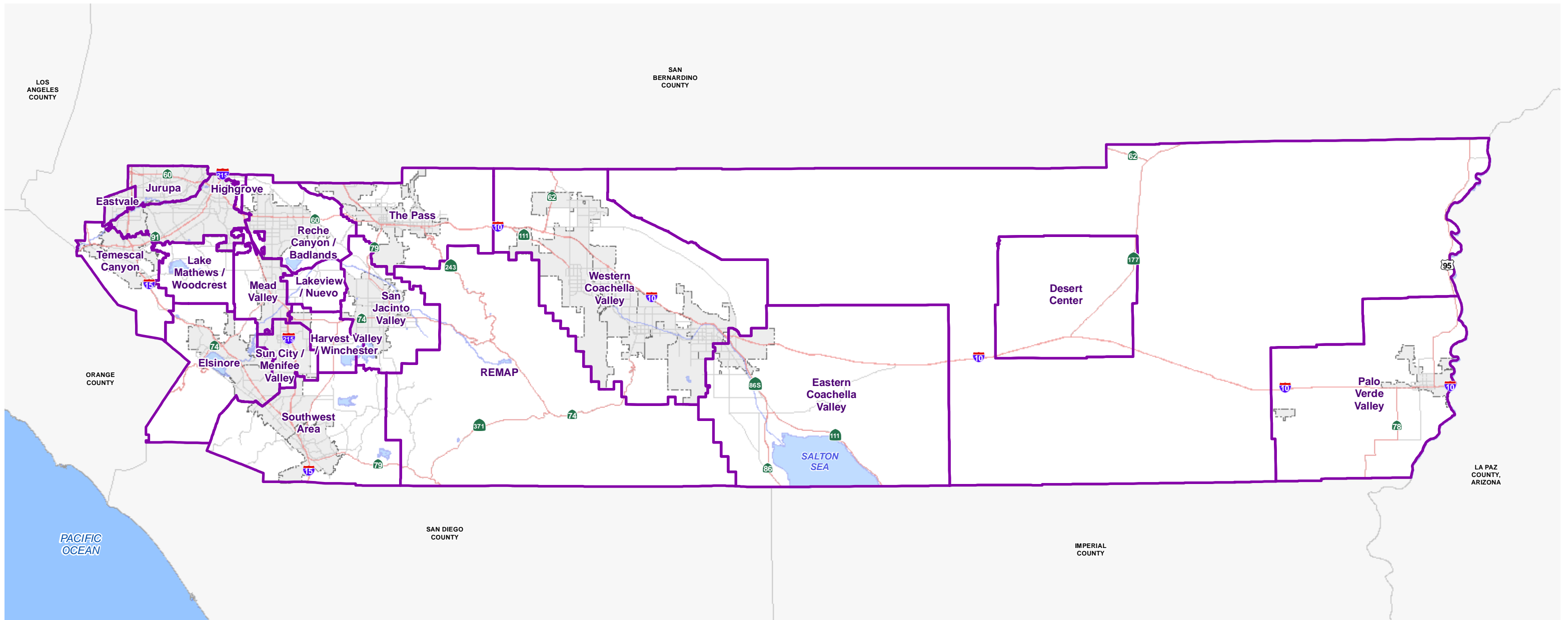
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RIVERSIDE COUNTY PHYSICAL FEATURES

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Data Source: Riverside County Planning (2010)






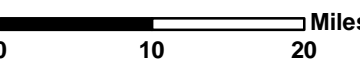
-  Area Plan Boundary
-  City Boundary
-  Waterbodies
-  Highways

Figure LU-4

 December 16, 2013

 Miles

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**RIVERSIDE COUNTY
AREA PLAN BOUNDARIES**

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Issues and Policies

The RCIP Vision expresses the desire to become a “family of special communities in a remarkable environmental setting.” According to the RCIP Vision and General Planning Principles, this desire can be achieved by several different means, from concentrating future growth and reducing sprawl, protecting Riverside County's diverse environmental resources and open space systems, providing multi-modal transportation systems that are integrated into the community, making efficient use of infrastructure, services, and resources and ensuring “consistently high” development standards. These goals address every level of land use, from state and regional level issues, to countywide issues, to community and neighborhood level issues, to specific property and parcel level issues. Like an interlocking chain, every link is vital to the ability to achieve Riverside County's vision.

To guide the achievement of the RCIP Vision and General Plan Principles, the Land Use Element is designed to address these many levels of issues and policies. It does so on a systematic basis by topic in order to help organize and focus the reader. However, the goal of each policy and topic is to achieve the desires expressed in the RCIP Vision and General Plan Principles.

Countywide Policies

The following policies address countywide issues that are general in nature and may apply to numerous locations and land use designations within the planning area. The policies are grouped by topic and are preceded by a brief discussion of issues pertaining to the topic. As discussed in the Introduction to the General Plan, following each policy is a reference number indicating the applicable Action Item(s) as listed in the Implementation Program, which is located in Appendix K-1 of the General Plan.

Administration

In order to implement the General Plan, the County of Riverside must perform a number of administrative functions that are not necessarily exclusive to land use issues. This includes updating the existing ordinances and developing procedures to carry out the direction of the General Plan as well as coordinating with outside agencies. The intent of these policies is to provide directions to allow for the continued operation of non-conforming uses as well as to ensure a coordinated planning effort between the county and cities, LAFCO, service providers, and the County Airport Land Use Commission.

“

We acknowledge that balancing a variety of important considerations in making community decisions is a constant challenge. We have faith that the foundation provided through our participation in shaping this vision and its implementing mechanisms will achieve a workable balance of mutual benefit.

”

- RCIP Vision

“

Despite differences in priorities and approaches, we are engaged in community building for ourselves and our heirs based on the common ground we have forged

”

- RCIP Vision

The General Plan policy and implementation item reference system:

LU 1.3: Identifies which element contains the Policy, in this case the Land Use Element, and the sequential number.

AI 1 and AI 4: Reference to the relevant Action Items contained in the Implementation Program found in Appendix K.

Policies:

- LU 1.1 Allow for the continued occupancy, operation, and maintenance of legal uses and structures that exist at the time of the adoption of the General Plan and become non-conforming due to use, density, and/or development requirements.
- LU 1.2 Encourage existing non-conforming uses to transition into conformance with the new land use designation and/or policy.
- LU 1.3 Notify city planning departments of any discretionary projects within their respective spheres-of-influence in time to allow for coordination and to comment at public hearings. (AI 4, 21)
- LU 1.4 Require that annexations allow the County of Riverside to maintain a sufficient tax base or other revenue base to pay for their necessary services.

- LU 1.5 The County of Riverside shall participate in regional efforts to address issues of mobility, transportation, traffic congestion, economic development, air and water quality, watershed and habitat management with cities, local and regional agencies, stakeholders, Indian nations, and surrounding jurisdictions. (AI 4, 16)
- LU 1.6 Coordinate with local agencies, such as LAFCO, service providers and utilities, to ensure adequate service provision for new development. (AI 4)
- LU 1.7 Review all Specific Plans that have been in effect for 20 or more years in order to determine whether the types and intensities of proposed development remain appropriate for undeveloped areas within the Specific Plan boundaries. In conjunction with each Foundation General Plan Amendment (eight-year) cycle, prepare a report on Specific Plan implementation addressing all Specific Plans, with particular attention to Specific Plans that have reached their twentieth anniversary during that eight-year period. (AI 7)
- LU 1.8 As required by the Airport Land Use Law, submit certain proposed actions to the Riverside County Airport Land Use Commission for review. Such actions include proposed amendments to the General Plan, area plans, or specific plans, as well as proposed revisions to the zoning ordinance and building codes. (AI 4)
- LU 1.9 In the event that an existing property is smaller in area than would be required by the General Plan, zoning that recognizes the existing lot size may be applied. (AI 1)
- LU 1.10 The Area Plan designations of properties within adopted Specific Plans are provided for informational and illustrative purposes only. The actual designations of land are as specified in the applicable Specific Plan document.

- LU 1.11 In conjunction with the adoption of the General Plan, each adopted Specific Plan is identified as a “Community Development” Specific Plan, a Rural Community Specific Plan, or a Rural Specific Plan. Future Specific Plans shall be similarly identified at the time of adoption. The following Specific Plan Amendments and Specific Plan Substantial Conformance applications shall not be interpreted to constitute Foundation-level changes subject to the eight-year Foundation General Plan Amendment cycles:
- a. All proposed land use designation changes within a Community Development Specific Plan;
 - b. All proposed land use designation changes within a Rural Community Specific Plan, except those that propose to establish Community Development (other than Public Facilities) designations within its boundaries;
 - c. All proposed land use designation changes within a Rural Specific Plan, except those that propose to establish Community Development (other than Public Facilities) or Rural Community designations within its boundaries.

A proposal to add a Public Facilities designation within a Rural Community or Rural Specific Plan shall not be considered a Foundation-level change.

- LU 1.12 Pursuant to state law, each land use designation that provides for residential development (other than caretakers’ dwellings) is assigned a population density standard for the purposes of projection and infrastructure planning. These population density standards are relevant only for general planning purposes, and shall not be interpreted as constituting legal limitations on the number of persons who may reside at any particular location or parcel.

“
Riverside County is a family of special communities in a remarkable environmental setting.

”

- RCIP Vision



A **sphere of influence** is the area outside of and adjacent to a city’s border that the city has identified as a future logical extension of its jurisdiction. While the County of Riverside has land use authority over city sphere areas, development in these areas directly affects circulation, service provision, and community character within the cities.

The Use and Design of the Land

As discussed above, there are many levels of land use design necessary to achieve the goal of the RCIP Vision and General Plan Principles. Each level is necessary to the other. The following three topics are intended to help organize the policies that relate to the macro level, the medium level, and the micro level. The Efficient Use of Land topic deals with countywide or macro level issues; the Community Design topic addresses issues at the neighborhood or community level (medium); and the Project Design topic addresses the parcel or project (micro) level.

Efficient Use of Land

The population of Riverside County and its cities is expected to double between the years 2000 and 2020, growing by approximately 1.4 million people. Accommodating this new population and the resultant demand for housing, employment, services, and resources will be challenge enough. But balancing this growth and its demands with the desire to improve the character and lifestyle of the county is daunting. What this means is that the county must find a place to accommodate growth, provide the necessary infrastructure, services and resources, preserve a system of multi-purpose open space, and establish new communities and maintain existing communities that offer a range of lifestyle choices, from urban centers to remote rural enclaves.

To achieve these often competing goals, land must be used wisely and efficiently. Direction is provided by the RCIP Vision;

“New growth patterns no longer reflect a pattern of random sprawl. Rather, they follow a framework of transportation and open space corridors, with concentrations of development that fit into that framework.”

“
 The County should encourage compact and transit-adaptive development on regional and community scales. The policy goal is to permit and encourage increased densities and intensities, and to reduce the land required for public infrastructure...
 ”
 -General Plan Principles

In order to efficiently use land, growth must be focused into strategically located centers or into existing developed areas, thus minimizing development pressures on rural, agricultural, and open space areas. This will also help to preserve the unique rural character of the county and its rich open spaces. Grouped with this focused growth is the need to reorganize patterns of development in order to accommodate a range of uses, styles, and densities; is adaptive to transit; and is internally and externally networked to a multi-modal transportation system.

The following policies express the desire for the preferred patterns of land use in the county:

Policies:

LU 2.1 Accommodate land use development in accordance with the patterns and distribution of use and density depicted on the General Plan Land Use Map (Figure LU-1) and the Area Plan Land Use Maps, in accordance with the following: (AI 1, 3, 5, 9, 27, 29, 30, 41, 60, 91)

- a. Provide a land use mix at the countywide and area plan levels based on projected need and supported by evaluation of impacts to the environment, economy, infrastructure, and services.
- b. Accommodate a range of community types and character, from agricultural and rural enclaves to urban and suburban communities.
- c. Provide for a broad range of land uses, intensities, and densities, including a range of residential, commercial, business, industry, open space, recreation, and public facilities uses.
- d. Concentrate growth near community centers that provide a mixture of commercial, employment, entertainment, recreation, civic, and cultural uses to the greatest extent possible.

- e. Concentrate growth near or within existing urban and suburban areas to maintain the rural and open space character of Riverside County to the greatest extent possible.
- f. Site development to capitalize upon multi-modal transportation opportunities and promote compatible land use arrangements that reduce reliance on the automobile.
- g. Prevent inappropriate development in areas that are environmentally sensitive or subject to severe natural hazards.

Community Design

The RCIP Vision states,

“Our communities maintain their individual distinctive qualities and character, surrounded in most cases by open space or non-intensive uses to contribute to their sense of unique identity. Community centers, gathering places, and special focal points unique to each community also aid this identity.”

This section is intended to focus on the desired aspects, at a community or neighborhood level, that help achieve the RCIP Vision and General Plan Principles. The RCIP Principles state that, ***“The General Plan should promote development of a “unique community identity” in which each community exhibits a special sense of place by retaining distinct edges and sufficient open space between scattered urbanized areas.”*** At this scale, policies focus on achieving compact, transit adaptive development, identifying open space separators to provide edges between communities, and enhancing or creating the distinctiveness of each community.

Policies:

- LU 3.1 Accommodate land use development in accordance with the patterns and distribution of use and density depicted on the General Plan Land Use Maps (Figure LU-1) and the Area Plan Land Use Maps in accordance with the following concepts: (AI 1, 3, 9, 10, 125)
- a. Accommodate communities that provide a balanced mix of land uses, including employment, recreation, shopping, public facilities and housing.
 - b. Assist in and promote the development of infill and underutilized parcels which are located in Community Development areas, as identified on the General Plan Land Use Map.
 - c. Promote parcel consolidation or coordinated planning of adjacent parcels through incentive programs and planning assistance.

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New growth patterns no longer reflect a pattern of random sprawl. Rather, they follow a framework of transportation and open space corridors, with concentrations of development that fit into that framework. In other words, important open space and transportation corridors define growth areas.

Growth focus in this County is on quality, not on frustrating efforts to halt growth.

Population growth continues and is focused where it can best be accommodated.

Growth is well coordinated between cities and the County and they jointly influence periodic state and regional growth forecasts affecting Riverside County and its cities.

”

-RCIP Vision

- d. Create street and trail networks that directly connect local destinations, and that are friendly to pedestrians, equestrians, bicyclists, and others using non-motorized forms of transportation.
- e. Re-plan existing urban cores and specific plans for higher density, compact development as appropriate to achieve the RCIP Vision.
- f. In new towns, accommodate compact, transit-adaptive infrastructure (based on modified standards that take into account transit system facilities or street network).
- g. Provide the opportunity to link communities through access to multi-modal transportation systems.

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We are proud of the distinctive identities that our communities now possess and cherish the sense of place that results from them. We want this sense of place and distinctiveness maintained and enhanced in our planning and development activities.

”

- RCIP Vision

- LU 3.2 Use open space, greenways, recreational lands, and water-courses as community separators. (AI 25, 40, 60, 61)
- LU 3.3 Promote the development and preservation of unique communities in which each community exhibits a special sense of place and quality of design. (AI 14, 30)
- LU 3.4 Allow techniques, such as incentives or transfer of development credit programs or other mechanisms, to achieve more efficient use of land. (AI 9, 30)
- LU 3.5 Prepare a community separators map or overlay that will illustrate the intent of the County of Riverside and its residents that Riverside County’s distinctive community identities be maintained. The map should be a bubble diagram rather than attempting to delineate policy boundaries. Topographical and geographical features such as mountains, hills, rivers, and floodplains should constitute the community separators in most cases. The map should be used as a tool for Riverside County’s use in inter-governmental matters, such as commenting on proposals submitted to or by LAFCO, cities, or tribal authorities. (AI 4)

Project Design

The RCIP Vision states that,

“Development standards are consistently high, offset in cost by the absence of unpredictable time delays and conflict in the development review process.”

This level of policies is intended to address the importance of detail at the parcel and project level in achieving the vision for Riverside County. The individual project is the immediate manifestation of the desires to incorporate quality and innovative design techniques that help enhance the character of Riverside County and contribute to the distinctiveness of the community.

Policies:

LU 4.1

Require that new developments be located and designed to visually enhance, not degrade the character of the surrounding area through consideration of the following concepts: (AI 1, 3, 6, 14, 23, 24, 41, 62)

- a. Compliance with the design standards of the appropriate area plan land use category.
- b. Require that structures be constructed in accordance with the requirements of Riverside County's zoning, building, and other pertinent codes and regulations.
- c. Require that an appropriate landscape plan be submitted and implemented for development projects subject to discretionary review.
- d. Require that new development utilize drought tolerant landscaping and incorporate adequate drought-conscious irrigation systems.
- e. Pursue energy efficiency through street configuration, building orientation, and landscaping to capitalize on shading and facilitate solar energy, as provided for in Title 24 Part 6 and/or Part 11, of the California Code of Regulations (CCR).
- f. Incorporate water conservation techniques, such as groundwater recharge basins, use of porous pavement, drought tolerant landscaping, and water recycling, as appropriate.
- g. Encourage innovative and creative design concepts.
- h. Encourage the provision of public art that enhances the community's identity, which may include elements of historical significance and creative use of children's art.
- i. Include consistent and well-designed signage that is integrated with the building's architectural character.
- j. Provide safe and convenient vehicular access and reciprocal access between adjacent commercial uses.
- k. Locate site entries and storage bays to minimize conflicts with adjacent residential neighborhoods.
- l. Mitigate noise, odor, lighting, and other impacts on surrounding properties.
- m. Provide and maintain landscaping in open spaces and parking lots.
- n. Include extensive landscaping.

“

Incentives and the competitive need to “raise the bar” in creating communities of excellence commonly stimulate the development community to exceed the norms of development standards

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- RCIP Vision

- o. Preserve natural features, such as unique natural terrain, arroyos, canyons, and other drainage ways, and native vegetation, wherever possible, particularly where they provide continuity with more extensive regional systems.
- p. Require that new development be designed to provide adequate space for pedestrian connectivity and access, recreational trails, vehicular access and parking, supporting functions, open space, and other pertinent elements.
- q. Design parking lots and structures to be functionally and visually integrated and connected.
- r. Site buildings access points along sidewalks, pedestrian areas, and bicycle routes, and include amenities that encourage pedestrian activity.
- s. Establish safe and frequent pedestrian crossings.
- t. Create a human-scale ground floor environment that includes public open areas that separate pedestrian space from auto traffic or where mixed, it does so with special regard to pedestrian safety.
- u. Recognize open space, including hillsides, arroyos, riparian areas, and other natural features as amenities that add community identity, beauty, recreational opportunities, and monetary value to adjacent developed areas.
- v. Manage wild land fire hazards in the design of development proposals located adjacent to natural open space.


LU 4.2 Require property owners to maintain structures and landscaping to a high standard of design, health, and safety through the following: (AI 5)

- a. Provide proactive code enforcement activities.
- b. Promote programs and work with local service organizations and educational institutions to inform residential, commercial, and industrial property owners and tenants about property maintenance methods.
- c. Promote and support community and neighborhood based efforts for the maintenance, upkeep, and renovation of structures and sites.

LU 4.3 Create programs to ensure historic preservation. (AI 1)

LU 4.4 Encourage the appropriate interpretive use of historic or pre-historic resources for such things as educational kiosks, specially designed play equipment, or historical landscaping.

LU 4.5 Permit historically significant buildings to vary from building and zoning codes in order to maintain the historical character of Riverside County; providing that the variations do not



**Refer to the
Multipurpose Open
Space Element for
additional Historic
Preservation Policies and
Discussion.**

endanger human life and buildings comply with the State Historic Building Code. (AI 1)

- LU 4.6 Promote the availability of day care centers including locating such centers at or near work sites, within high density residential projects, and near transportation hubs.

Infrastructure, Public Facilities and Service Provision

With the projected increase in population, demands on/for community facilities and infrastructure, such as roads, utilities, public safety and schools will increase. The challenge will be to correlate the provision of infrastructure, public facilities and services with these demands.

In order to ensure the correlation between growth and service provisions as well as to minimize capital and service costs, the RCIP Vision dictates that development should only occur where adequate public facilities and services are available or are planned for at the time of development. In addition, it is an expressed desire of Riverside County that those that benefit from these services and facilities bear a fair share of the cost of improvements, as illustrated in the RCIP Vision as follows:

“We know that community building involves significant costs. We seek sharing of benefits and costs in a proportional manner: the community should fund community-wide benefits and development related benefits should be funded by the development, all as part of an equitable overall financing strategy. We seek shared funding methods through partnerships that improve overall cost-effectiveness.”

Policies:

- LU 5.1 Ensure that development does not exceed the ability to adequately provide supporting infrastructure and services, such as libraries, recreational facilities, educational and day care centers; transportation systems, and fire/police/medical services. (AI 3, 4, 32, 74)
- LU 5.2 Monitor the capacities of infrastructure and services in coordination with service providers, utilities, and outside agencies and jurisdictions to ensure that growth does not exceed acceptable levels of service. (AI 3, 4, 32, 74)
- LU 5.3 Review all projects for consistency with individual urban water management plans (AI 3)
- LU 5.4 Ensure that development and conservation land uses do not infringe upon existing essential public facilities and public utility corridors, which include county regional landfills, fee owned rights-of-way and permanent easements, whose true land use is that of public facilities. This policy will ensure that the public facilities designation governs over what otherwise may be inferred by the large-scale general plan maps. (AI 3)

Day Care Facilities and Services

The County of Riverside strives to provide attractive, safe and well-functioning communities which offer quality public services and facilities that provide a high quality of life for all residents. A key component towards achieving this vision is the balanced distribution of services and community facilities that meet the needs of Riverside County’s diverse and growing population, especially in the day care services sector. Changes in demographics and



A Day Care Facility is a facility where children, the disabled, or seniors are supervised and cared for.

lifestyles are making day care an increasingly critical issue for parents, children, society and the economy in the county.

The intent of the following policies is to develop a comprehensive day care delivery system that builds day care services into the fabric of the local communities.

Policies:


- LU 6.1 Provide opportunities to develop a wide range of quality day care facilities, including large and small family day care homes and public and private day care facilities. (AI 126, 127, 128)
 - a. Permit day care facilities where Riverside County usually permits single family residential uses except for areas designated Community Development-Heavy Industrial and Open Space designations of Mineral Resources, Conservation Habitat, Conservation, and Water and areas where day care facilities are prohibited pursuant to adopted Airport Land Use Compatibility Plans. Limit the capacity of new (or expanded capacity of existing) day care facilities in areas subject to hazards or risk that are not amenable to mitigation such as aircraft accident potential.
 - b. When feasible, require day care facilities in new residential, commercial, office/industrial and larger mixed use developments, except in areas where day care facilities are prohibited pursuant to adopted Airport Land Use Compatibility Plans. Limit the capacity of new (or expanded capacity of existing) day care facilities in areas subject to hazards or risks that are not amenable to mitigation such as aircraft accident potential.
 - c. Promote in high-need locations, especially in conjunction with schools, parks, faith-based institutions, community centers and senior centers.
- LU 6.2 Encourage cities to adopt day care facility policies that are consistent with Riverside County’s day care facility policies.

Land Use Compatibility

One of the primary purposes of land use planning is to minimize the impacts certain uses have on adjacent areas. This has been traditionally accomplished by providing separation between sensitive uses and uses whose by-products may include noise, excessive traffic, odors, dust, or vibrations. For instance, a number of uses, including agriculture, industrial, commercial, landfills, mining operations, and transportation facilities, can have potentially adverse effects upon residential neighborhoods, sensitive habitat areas and schools. However, in order to achieve a more compact development pattern, improved accessibility between places of employment and residence, and improved access to transit as described in the RCIP Vision, a strict reliance on physical separations is not practical. Instead, Riverside County must require construction techniques and enforce use regulations (e.g., restrictions on hours of operations) to help mitigate these impacts and achieve these aspects of the Vision.

Compatibility is also associated with character. That is, the character of an area is often viewed in terms of the relationships between, and treatment of, the built and natural environment. The design of structures and their relationship to the surrounding natural and/or urban character plays a key role in creating the character or identity of a place.


The intent of these policies is to provide guidance regarding compatibility, including reducing negative impacts on adjacent uses and the sensitive siting and design of uses.



It is the intent of the General Plan that new and encroaching uses shall provide a mitigation or buffer between existing uses where potential adverse impacts could occur.

Policies:

- LU 7.1 Require land uses to develop in accordance with the General Plan and area plans to ensure compatibility and minimize impacts. (AI 1, 3)
- LU 7.2 Notwithstanding the Public Facilities designation, public facilities shall also be allowed in any other land use designation except for the Open Space-Conservation and Open Space-Conservation Habitat land use designations. For purposes of this policy, a public facility shall include all facilities operated by the federal government, the State of California, the County of Riverside, any special district governed by or operating within the County of Riverside or any city, and all facilities operated by any combination of these agencies.
- LU 7.3 Consider the positive characteristics and unique features of the project site and surrounding community during the design and development process. (AI 3)
- LU 7.4 Retain and enhance the integrity of existing residential, employment, agricultural, and open space areas by protecting them from encroachment of land uses that would result in impacts from noise, noxious fumes, glare, shadowing, and traffic. (AI 3)
- LU 7.5 Require buffering to the extent possible between urban uses and adjacent rural/equestrian oriented land uses. (AI 3)



For the purposes of the Forestry section, the following definitions apply:

Forest Land is defined as land supporting at least 10% native tree cover of any species, including hardwoods, under natural conditions that allows for management of one or more forest resources, including timber.

Timber is defined pursuant to the California Timberland Productivity Act, California Government Code section 51100 et seq.

- LU 7.6 Require buffering to the extent possible and/or the maintaining of a natural edge for proposed development directly adjacent to National Forests. (AI 3)
- LU 7.7 Require buffers to the extent possible between development and watercourses, including their associated habitat.
- LU 7.8 Require new developments in Fire Hazard Severity Zones to provide for a fuel clearance/modification zone, as required by the Fire Department.
- LU 7.9 Require buffers between urban uses and adjacent solid waste disposal facilities.
- LU 7.10 The proponent for new development proposals on forested lands with at least 10% coverage of mature conifer trees, forest land or timber in which three or more acres of forested lands will be cleared (removed) of trees must demonstrate to the County of Riverside compliance with any/all applicable state regulations regarding the protection and operation of said

forest resources. As used here, the term, “native trees,” shall only apply to naturally-occurring conifers growing above 5,000 feet AMSL elevation. Additionally, replacement trees for all qualifying mature trees removed must be planted at a ratio of 1:1. The replacement trees must be planted on the project site or, where that is infeasible because the entire site must be permanently cleared, on property in an acceptable alternate location, preferably nearby.

Economic Development

According to the RCIP Vision,

Job growth in Riverside County has exceeded the remarkable population growth experienced during the last 20 years. This is a consequence of the natural pattern of jobs following labor force and the extensive efforts by local governments, the business community and educational institutions to stimulate and reinforce new economic activity. The effort has been aided by the fact that Riverside County offers an outstanding variety of living environments and housing choices and now enjoys a reputation as a highly desirable place for business relocation. The expansion of educational opportunities and complementary programs between education, industry, and the work force has played a significant part in this economic vitality.

It is clear from this Vision statement that there is an intent not only to be responsive to local markets but to become an equal participant in regional, national, and international markets.

To achieve this goal, the General Plan Principles identify several necessary steps. They include stimulating a diverse economic mix, providing economic opportunities, and ensuring access capabilities to operate effectively at those economic scales. This also includes improving the relationship between jobs and housing opportunities in order to allow residents to both work and live in the county; promoting commercial and industrial development to grow and/or relocate to the county; developing employment generating land uses where most appropriate (i.e., with convenient access to multi-modal transportation options, on underutilized and/or vacant parcels in close proximity to workers); and supporting agricultural uses as an important part of Riverside County’s economy and heritage.

Policies:

- LU 8.1 Accommodate the development of a balance of land uses that maintain and enhance Riverside County’s fiscal viability, economic diversity, and environmental integrity. (AI 20)
- LU 8.2 Promote and market the development of a variety of stable employment and business uses that provide a diversity of employment opportunities. (AI 17)
- LU 8.3 Promote the development of focused employment centers rather than inefficient strip commercial development.
- LU 8.4 Allow the flexibility to reevaluate the appropriateness of employment and business land use designations that are non-viable and inefficient. (AI 17, 19)
- LU 8.5 Stimulate cooperative arrangements with adjacent cities, counties, regions, and states where programs and projects of mutual benefit can be undertaken. (AI 4, 18)

- LU 8.6 Create practical incentives for business development, and avoid disincentives. (AI 9, 17)
- LU 8.7 Promote the development and dissemination of marketing information to make business enterprises aware of the opportunities and advantages of location/expansion in Riverside County. (AI 17)
- LU 8.8 Stimulate industrial/business-type clusters that facilitate competitive advantage in the marketplace, provide attractive and well landscaped work environments, and fit with the character of our varied communities. (AI 17, 19)
- LU 8.9 Allow home enterprise and home occupation activities consistent with preserving the quality of the residential environment in which they are located.
- LU 8.10 Locate job centers so they have convenient access to Riverside County's multi-modal transportation facilities.
- LU 8.11 Encourage the involvement of business leaders in overall economic development strategies. (AI 17)
- LU 8.12 Improve the relationship and ratio between jobs and housing so that residents have an opportunity to live and work within the county.

Open Space, Habitat and Natural Resource Preservation

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Multipurpose regional open space and community/ neighborhood public spaces are permanent elements of the Riverside County landscape.

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-RCIP Vision

Riverside County is known for its extraordinary environmental setting, which provides recreational, ecological, and scenic value. This open space, found in remote regions of the county as well as within Community Development areas, is one of the primary defining aspects of Riverside County's livability and character. In some instances, open space provides the separation between communities, helping to enhance the distinctiveness of communities in the county. The RCIP Vision states:

“We value the unusually rich and diverse natural environment with which we are blessed and are committed to maintaining sufficient areas of natural open space to afford the human experience of natural environments as well as sustaining the permanent viability of the unique landforms and ecosystems that define this environment.”

Poorly planned growth and development would threaten to eliminate or degrade this essential feature of the county. The Multipurpose Open Space Element addresses this issue in great detail. The policies below relate directly to preserving and enhancing open space through land use related methods. They include restrictions on development of open space, focusing urban growth, providing recreational and open space opportunities within the built environment, and achieving a balance between urban uses and open space/habitat.



Watercourses include the courses of streams, rivers, creeks, whether permanent or seasonal and whether natural or channelized.

Policies:

LU 9.1 Provide for permanent preservation of open space lands that contain important natural resources, cultural resources, hazards, water features, watercourses including arroyos and canyons, and scenic and recreational values. (AI 10)

LU 9.2 Require that development protect environmental resources by compliance with the Multipurpose Open Space Element of the General Plan and federal and state regulations such as CEQA, NEPA, the Clean Air Act, and the Clean Water Act. (AI 3, 10)



For related policies on this topic, see the **Multipurpose Open Space Element** of the General Plan and the description of the Open Space Foundation Component in this Element.

LU 9.3 Incorporate open space, community greenbelt separators, and recreational amenities into Community Development areas in order to enhance recreational opportunities and community aesthetics, and improve the quality of life. (AI 9, 28)

LU 9.4 Allow development clustering and/or density transfers in order to preserve open space, natural resources, cultural resources, and biologically-sensitive resources. Wherever possible, development on parcels containing 100-year floodplains, blueline streams and other higher-order watercourses, and areas of steep slopes adjacent to them shall be clustered to keep development out of watercourse and adjacent steep slope areas, and to be compatible with other nearby land uses. (AI 1, 9)

LU 9.5 In conjunction with the CEQA review process, evaluate the potential for residential projects not located within existing parks and recreation districts or County Service Areas (CSAs) that provide for neighborhood and community park development and maintenance to be annexed to such districts or CSAs, and require such annexation where appropriate and feasible. (AI 3)

LU 9.6 If any area is classified by the State Geologist as an area that contains mineral deposits and is of regional or statewide significance, and Riverside County either has designated that area in its general plan as having important minerals to be protected pursuant to subdivision (a) of Section 2761 of the Surface Mining and Reclamation Act, or has otherwise not yet acted pursuant to subdivision (a), then prior to permitting a use which would threaten the potential to extract minerals in that area, Riverside County shall prepare, in conjunction with its project CEQA documentation, a statement specifying its reason for permitting the proposed use, and shall forward a copy to the State Geologist and the State Mining and Geology Board for review.

LU 9.7 Protect lands designated by the State Mining and Geology Board as being of regional or statewide significance from encroachment of incompatible land uses, such as high-density residential, low-density residential with high values, sensitive public facilities, institutions (e.g., schools, hospitals), etc., by requiring incorporation of buffer zones or visual screening into the incompatible land use.

Fiscal Impacts

Riverside County is expected to double its population by the year 2020. Not only does this growth place an additional burden on existing services, infrastructure and facilities, but there is an ongoing need to address deteriorating facilities and infrastructure.

One of the challenges associated with this population increase will be to ensure that new growth pays for its share of public services and infrastructure, and that existing residents are not burdened with the costs of that new growth. In addition, the intent is to enhance Riverside County's long-term financial solvency.

To achieve these goals, constant diligence is necessary to monitor the level of existing services, such as police and fire, the operation and maintenance of various facilities, and staffing levels, so the County of Riverside can respond to potential changes. The County of Riverside recognizes that not every project can have a positive fiscal impact (e.g. low income housing, transit facility), but that overall the County must achieve a fiscal balance.

Policies:

- LU 10.1 Require that new development contribute their fair share to fund infrastructure and public facilities such as police and fire facilities. (AI 3)
- LU 10.2 Require a fiscal impact analysis for specific plans and major development proposals so as not to have a negative fiscal impact on the County of Riverside. (AI 3)

Air Quality



Please see the **Air Quality Element** for more detailed information and additional policies regarding this topic.

Despite continued improvement in this area, air quality remains a serious issue throughout the county and the Southern California region, requiring continued diligence to meet state and federal air quality standards. Progress toward clean air is a challenging task. On-going solutions occur at many jurisdictional levels and through various methods. This section addresses land use related solutions that can be used to help improve air quality. The Air Quality Element addresses this topic in greater detail.

Land use distribution has a profound impact on air quality. The proliferation of residential areas and a general lack of significant job centers within the county has resulted in significant automobile congestion on the region's highway and arterial roadway system, contributing to the area's poor air quality. The RCIP Vision acknowledges this fact and seeks a new direction that is intended to improve the relationship between jobs and housing opportunities, as follows:

Land use strategies being implemented in the County reflect an improved balance of jobs and housing, resulting in significant reduction in the average commute times and related motor vehicle pollutants.

The intent of these policies is to provide significant areas for residential and employment-generating uses within close proximity in order to reduce commute times and ease regional congestion, and capitalize on a broadening of choices provided by the regional transportation system.

Policies:

- LU 11.1 Provide sufficient commercial and industrial development opportunities in order to increase local employment levels and thereby minimize long-distance commuting. (AI 1, 17)
- LU 11.2 Ensure adequate separation between pollution producing activities and sensitive emission receptors, such as hospitals, residences, child care centers and schools. (AI 3)
- LU 11.3 Accommodate the development of community centers and concentrations of development to reduce reliance on the automobile and help improve air quality.
- LU 11.4 Provide options to the automobile in communities, such as transit, bicycle and pedestrian trails, to help improve air quality.
- LU 11.5 Ensure that all new developments reduce Greenhouse Gas emissions as prescribed in the Air Quality Element and Climate Action Plan.

Hillside Development and Slope

Natural slopes are one of Riverside County's primary aesthetic resources. Foothill and mountain areas, which are visible throughout the county, create a dramatic backdrop for local communities and help define the character of Riverside County.

Hillside areas also provide an important location for habitat as well as for certain lifestyle choices. In addition, there are public safety issues, such as slope failures, landslides, and mudslides, that occur naturally or as a result of development, grading, and landscaping.

The severity of these slopes, the ability to provide infrastructure and services (such as transportation, water, sewer, etc.), and safety considerations can drastically alter the use and development potential of individual properties. Development on hillsides within the county, where land use designations permit, will require careful siting, grading, and design in order to minimize exposure to hazards and to maintain and enhance the scenic quality of Riverside County.

Policies:

- LU 12.1 Apply the following policies to areas where development is allowed and that contain natural slopes, canyons, or other significant elevation changes, regardless of land use designation: (AI 1, 23, 24)
- Require that hillside development minimize alteration of the natural landforms and natural vegetation.
 - Allow development clustering to retain slopes in natural open space whenever possible.
 - Require that areas with slope be developed in a manner to minimize the hazards from erosion and slope failures.



Please see the **Safety Element** for additional policies regarding slope, erosion, grading, and drainage.

- d. Restrict development on visually significant ridgelines, canyon edges and hilltops through sensitive siting and appropriate landscaping to ensure development is visually unobtrusive.
- e. Require hillside adaptive construction techniques, such as post and beam construction, and special foundations for development when the need is identified in a soils and geology report which has been accepted by the County of Riverside.
- f. In areas at risk of flooding, limit grading, cut, and fill to the amount necessary to provide stable areas for structural foundations, street rights-of-way, parking facilities, and other intended uses.

Circulation



Please see the **Circulation Element** for a description of the transit oasis concept.

Riverside County contains a number of transportation options, including automobile, rail and air transportation, a transit oasis system, bicycling, hiking, and walking, which serve as vital inter- and intra-regional linkages for the movement of people and goods. Rapid economic and residential growth both within and outside of the county has far outpaced the ability to provide adequate transportation facilities, resulting in increased roadway congestion and decreased air quality. Future land use arrangements and supporting multi-modal transportation systems will allow employment, service and housing opportunities in close proximity to each other, decrease the need to use the

automobile for every trip, reduce roadway congestion, and improve the opportunity to use transportation alternatives safely and effectively. The following policies address land use issues related to circulation. A more detailed discussion and policy direction related to circulation can be found in the Circulation Element.

Policies:

- | | |
|---------|--|
| LU 13.1 | Provide land use arrangements that reduce reliance on the automobile and improve opportunities for pedestrian, bicycle, and transit use in order to minimize congestion and air pollution. |
| LU 13.2 | Locate employment and service uses in areas that are easily accessible to existing or planned transportation facilities. |
| LU 13.3 | Locate transit stations in community centers and at places of public, employment, entertainment, recreation, and residential concentrations. |
| LU 13.4 | Incorporate safe and direct multi-modal linkages in the design and development of projects, as appropriate. (AI 24, 26, 41) |
| LU 13.5 | Allow traffic-calming elements, such as narrow streets, curb bulbs, textured paving, and landscaping, where appropriate. |
| LU 13.6 | Require that adequate and accessible circulation facilities exist to meet the demands of a proposed land use. (AI 3) |
| LU 13.7 | Review projects for consistency with Riverside County's Transportation Demand Ordinance. (AI 3) |

Scenic Corridors

Riverside County contains abundant natural visual resources, including low-lying valleys, mountain ranges, rock formations, rivers, and lakes. These features are often enjoyed via Riverside County’s many roadways. Due to the visual significance of many of these areas, several roadways have been officially recognized as either Eligible or Designated State or County Scenic Highways. These roadways are depicted in the Circulation Element (Figure C-9) as well as within each of the 19 area plans, where applicable. The intent of these policies is to conserve significant scenic resources along designated scenic highways for future generations and to manage development along scenic highways and corridors so as not to detract from the area’s scenic quality.

Policies:

- LU 14.1 Preserve and protect outstanding scenic vistas and visual features for the enjoyment of the traveling public. (AI 32, 79)
- LU 14.2 Incorporate riding, hiking, and bicycle trails and other compatible public recreational facilities within scenic corridors. (AI 33, 41)
- LU 14.3 Ensure that the design and appearance of new landscaping, structures, equipment, signs, or grading within Designated and Eligible State and County scenic highway corridors are compatible with the surrounding scenic setting or environment. (AI 3, 32, 39)
- LU 14.4 Maintain at least a 50-foot setback from the edge of the right-of-way for new development adjacent to Designated and Eligible State and County Scenic Highways. (AI 3)
- LU 14.5 Require new or relocated electric or communication distribution lines, which would be visible from Designated and Eligible State and County Scenic Highways, to be placed underground. (AI 3, 32)
- LU 14.6 Prohibit offsite outdoor advertising displays that are visible from Designated and Eligible State and County Scenic Highways. (AI 3, 79)
- LU 14.7 Require that the size, height, and type of on-premises signs visible from Designated and Eligible State and County Scenic Highways be the minimum necessary for identification. The design, materials, color, and location of the signs shall blend with the environment, utilizing natural materials where possible. (AI 3)
- LU 14.8 Avoid the blocking of public views by solid walls. (AI 3)

“

The development of scenic highways will not only add to the pleasure of the residents of this State, but will also play an important role in encouraging the growth of the recreation and tourism industries upon which the economy of many areas of this State depend.

”

-The California Scenic Highway Program (SB1463), adopted 1963



Please see the Multipurpose Open Space Element and the Circulation Element for additional policies regarding scenic corridors and highways.

“

Airports serving the County are tied into the regional air transportation system and operate as an efficient and convenient transportation mode to accommodate the traveling needs of the people and move selected goods quickly in the highly competitive international marketplace.

”

-RCIP Vision

Airports

Airports in Riverside County provide an important function for passengers as well as benefit local and regional economies. Future population increases will create an additional demand for air transportation. In order to ensure the orderly expansion of airports and the adoption of land use measures that minimize the public's exposure to excessive noise and safety hazards within areas around public airports (to the extent that these areas are not already devoted to incompatible uses) the State of California has adopted the Airport Land Use Law, Public Utilities Code Sections 21670-21679.5. This General Plan is intended to implement and be consistent with the purposes of the Airport Land Use Law.

The Airport Land Use Law provides for the creation of the Riverside County Airport Land Use Commission (ALUC) and the adoption of airport land use compatibility plans by the Commission to assist the County of Riverside and affected cities in land use planning in the vicinity of public use airports located in the county. The Commission has adopted airport land use com-

patibility plans for airports in the County, and each of those plans, as presently adopted, is included in Appendix L-1 and incorporated by reference. For a summary of those plans, refer to the appropriate Area Plan's Airport Influence Area section for the airport in question (See Reference Table).

Policies:

- LU 15.1 Allow airport facilities to continue operating in order to meet existing and future needs respecting potential noise and safety impacts.
- LU 15.2 Review all proposed projects and require consistency with any applicable airport land use compatibility plan as set forth in Appendix I-1 and as summarized in the Area Plan's Airport Influence Area section for the airport in question. (AI 3)
- LU 15.3 Review all subsequent amendments to any airport land use compatibility plan and either amend the General Plan to be consistent with the compatibility plan or overrule the Airport Land Use Commission as provided by law (Government Code Section 65302.3). (AI 3)
- LU 15.4 Prior to the adoption or amendment of the General Plan or any specific plan, or the adoption or amendment of a zoning ordinance or building regulation within the Airport Influence Area of any airport land use compatibility plan, refer such proposed actions to the ALUC for review and determination as provided by the Airport Land Use Law. (AI 3)
- LU 15.5 If the General Plan has not been found consistent with the applicable Airport Land Use Compatibility Plan (ALUCP), and the County of Riverside has not overruled the ALUC, refer all actions, regulations, or permits within the Airport Influence Area to the ALUC for review and determination as provided by the Airport Land Use Law.
- LU 15.6 If the General Plan has been found consistent with the applicable ALUCP, the County of Riverside may elect to voluntarily submit proposed actions, regulations, or permits to the ALUC for an advisory review if:

- a. There is a question as to the purpose, intent or interpretation of an ALUCP; or
- b. Assistance is needed in airport land use matters.

- LU 15.7 Allow the use of development clustering and/or density transfers to meet airport compatibility requirements as set forth in the applicable airport land use compatibility plan. (AI 3)
- LU 15.8 In accordance with FAA criteria, avoid locating sanitary landfills and other land uses that are artificial attractors of birds within 10,000 feet of any runway used by turbine-powered aircraft and within 5,000 feet of other runways. Also avoid locating attractors of other wildlife that can be hazardous to aircraft operations in locations adjacent to airports. (AI 3)
- LU 15.9 Ensure that no structures or activities encroach upon or adversely affect the use of navigable airspace. (AI 3)

**Table LU-3
Relationship of ALUC Compatibility Plans to County Area Plans**


Riverside County General Plan	Banning Municipal 2004	Blythe 2004	Bermuda Dunes 2004	Chino ** 2008	Chiriaco Summit 2004	Corona Municipal 2004	Jacqueline Cochran 2005	Flabob 2004	French Valley 2007	Hemet-Ryan 1992	March Joint ARB	Palm Springs International 2005	Riverside Municipal 2005	Perris Valley* Airport 2011
Area Plans, Volume 1														
Eastvale				X										
Elsinore														
Harvest Valley / Winchester										X	X			
Highgrove											X			
Jurupa								X					X	
Lake Mathews / Woodcrest											X			
Mead Valley											X			*
Southwest									X					
Sun City / Menifee Valley														*
Temescal Canyon						X								
Area Plans, Volume 2														
Desert Center														
Eastern Coachella Valley					X		X							
Lakeview / Nuevo											X			
Palo Verde		X												
Reche Canyon / Badlands											X			
Riverside Extended Mountain														
San Jacinto Valley										X				
The Pass	X													
Western Coachella Valley			X									X		

Wind Energy Siting Resources

Energy resources provide the power necessary to operate and maintain the quality of life enjoyed by most Riverside County residents. Wind energy resources are among the beneficial energy resources located in Riverside County; development of wind resources provides economic and revenue advantages to the County of Riverside. Many types of wind energy power generating facilities are present or will be built within the *next 50 years life span of the General Plan*; however, the potential aesthetic, land use, noise, and ecological issues associated with the development of wind turbines necessitate *adequate clear* policy direction in order to ensure the continuation of the quality of life in the county. Wind turbines, also referred to as Wind Energy Conversion Systems (WECS), should generally be located away from natural hazards, critical habitat and community development types of land uses. Nonetheless, wind turbines have an essential role as electric power generators, and, consistent with these policies may be constructed and maintained in areas proven to have a wind resource.

The following policies address land use and compatibility issues associated with wind energy development and use. Renewable energy resources as a whole, including wind, are discussed in more detail in the Multipurpose Open Space Element.

Policies:

- | | | |
|---------|---|--|
| LU 16.1 | Prohibit commercial wind turbines within the Rural Community Foundation Component areas and within the Rural Residential land use designation. Prohibit commercial wind turbines within the Community Development Foundation Category, except within the areas designated Public Facilities (Edom Hill and the area around Devers Substation) within the mapped Policy Area providing for wind energy development in the Western Coachella Valley Area Plan. (AI 3) |  <p>These guidelines provide design and modification of poles, cross arms, and wire placements to effect adequate separation of energized hardware; insulation of wires and other hardware where sufficient separation cannot be attained; and management of eagle perching. In addition, all transmission lines facilities should avoid crossing ridge tops to avoid bird and tower line collisions.</p> |
| LU16.2 | Require wind turbines to address through project design the alignments of multipurpose trails as designated on Figure C-5 of the Circulation Element. (AI 3) | |
| LU 16.3 | Require wind turbines to address through project design Riverside County Regional Parks and sensitive environmental areas. Setbacks will be determined on a project by project basis <i>consistent with applicable zoning requirements</i> . (AI 3) | |
| LU 16.4 | Except in unusual circumstances, no wind turbines shall be sited on lands in excess of 25% of slope. (AI 3) | |
| LU 16.5 | Except in unusual circumstances, restrict lands in excess of 25% of slope from uses associated with wind turbine development, such as access roads, except in specific instances where site-specific investigation indicates that no adverse impacts or increased hazard would result, and that visual impacts can be mitigated. (AI 3) | |
| LU 16.6 | Prohibit wind turbines located on top of earthquake faults or lineaments. (AI 3) | |
| LU 16.7 | Geotechnical considerations, such as potential landslides and mudflows, shall be reviewed with all commercial wind energy developments. Geotechnical reports submitted for review shall | |

adequately address avoidance of hazards and, if avoidance is not feasible, propose mitigation according to good engineering practices. (AI 3)

- LU 16.8 Wildlife and natural vegetation impacts of proposed commercial wind turbine development shall be considered, including endangered species avoidance and mitigation, bird migration flyways, and may include appropriate consultation with state and federal wildlife agencies. (AI 3)
- LU 16.9 Restrict placement of commercial wind turbine arrays within 2,000 feet of residential development for arrays with 10 or fewer wind turbines and restrict placement of commercial wind turbine arrays within 3,000 feet or greater of residential development for arrays with more than 10 wind turbines, unless the applicant supplies documentation that the machines are designed according to proven engineering practices and will not violate applicable County of Riverside noise standards including excessive low frequency or pure tone noise. (AI 3)
- LU 16.10 Require wind turbines to operate at less than 65 dBA and not more than 60 dBA when installed adjacent to noise-sensitive land uses. (AI 3)
- LU 16.11 Ensure that site designs and operation provide for adequate security and safety to lessen the possibilities and impacts of accidents, vandalism, and environmental hazards. (AI 3)
- LU 16.12 Require the design and location of commercial wind energy developments to mitigate visual impacts. Issues which may be included in the review may be, but are not necessarily limited to, the following list, depending on turbine types, densities, and siting: (AI 3)
 - a. Color of turbines;
 - b. Location and design of associated facilities such as roads, fencing, non Public Utilities Commission regulated utility lines, substations and maintenance buildings to minimize intrusion or disruption of the landscape;
 - c. Minimizing of disturbed ground and roadway, and restoring of the surface to natural vegetation;
 - d. Prohibition of brand names or advertising associated with wind turbines visible from any scenic highways or key viewpoints;
 - e. Need for interpretation and/or visitors center located at the end of the view shed of turbines.
- LU 16.13 Require design measures for commercial wind energy development on sites near official or eligible State or County Scenic Highways designated (Figure C-9, Circulation Element) by Riverside County, and sites within those areas identified as “critical” and “very critical” by Environment Impact Report No. 158. Issues which may be included in the review may be, but are not necessarily limited to, the following list, depending on turbine types, densities, and siting: (AI 3).
 - a. Except in unusual circumstances, no wind turbine will be sited on slopes in excess of 25%; the purpose of this standard is to prevent disturbance and degradation of landforms, and

visual scarring by cut and fill, side casting, retaining walls, trenching, and vegetation removal; avoid skyline and ridgeline location.

- b. Wind turbines should be set back from scenic highways and viewpoints; set back individual turbines far enough from scenic highways and key viewpoints so they do not obscure or overwhelm distinctive skylines; set back large turbines from small important landmarks so that they do not overwhelm the landform.
- c. Coordinate color schemes for all developments; avoid mixing colors within a particular array unless to subordinate a particular turbine type or to provide safety markings; limit use of color patterns as accent for key clusters or individual turbines; consider aviation safety coloration and lighting as may be required by the FAA.

Solar Energy Siting Resources

Within California, the Sonoran and Mojave deserts provide some of the best potential for solar energy generation and storage, including a vast swath of mostly undeveloped land between the Coachella Valley and the Arizona border in the eastern third of Riverside County. The region typically averages over 300 days of sun each year and annual precipitation of about 3.5 inches. As such, both the federal government and State of California have identified this portion of Riverside County as providing land key to future solar energy development.

Ongoing development of solar energy, both utility-scale solar power plants and residential rooftop solar energy systems, is anticipated over the next 30 years as California continues working to meet updated Renewable Portfolio Standards that seek to increase use of renewables for electricity generation. As demand increases and economic efficiencies lower costs, a variety of solar power generating facilities may be built over the next 30 years. To ensure solar development does not seriously degrade natural resources, care must be taken to protect critical habitats, wilderness areas, wildlife corridors, important Tribal cultural resources, aesthetic and recreational values, as well as avoiding natural hazards and incompatible land uses.

The following policies address land use and compatibility issues associated with the siting, development and use of solar power plants (commercial solar facilities). Renewable energy resources as a whole, including solar, are discussed in more detail in the Multipurpose Open Space Element.

Policies:

- ~~LU 17.1~~ *Permit and encourage solar energy systems as an accessory use to any residential, commercial, industrial, mining, agricultural or public use. [Relocated to LU 18.1]*
- LU ~~17.2~~ 17.1 *Permit and encourage, in an environmentally and fiscally responsible manner, the development of renewable energy resources and related infrastructure, including but not limited to, the development of solar power plants in the County of Riverside.*
- LU 17.2 *Except in unusual circumstances, limit the development of solar power plants on lands in excess of 25% of slope.*
- LU 17.3 *Permit and encourage, in an environmentally and fiscally responsible manner, solar power plants in locations close to suitable transmission facilities and close to electrical load centers (that is, end users).*

LU 17.4 *Strongly discourage solar power plants using wet-cooling solar technologies, for example power towers, in desert locations where facility groundwater demand (extraction) would exceed safe yields and cause significant drawdown. Promote water conservation measures for all solar power plant developments.*

LU 17.6 *Consider designating salt-distressed farmland for development of solar power plants.*

Distributed generation refers to electricity that is produced at or near the point where it is used. These distributed “solar energy systems” can be located on rooftops or ground-mounted and are typically connected to the local utility distribution grid. Such uses are most commonly installed as accessory uses—where the electricity generation is not the main land use on a site and the electricity generated is used primarily (50% or more) onsite. The most common use of accessory solar energy systems is on residential rooftops to generate electricity for use onsite. Other accessory uses can include solar water heating for use within a building, solar pool heating or solar water heating for space heating (radiator).

Concerns associated with distributed generation facilities often include aesthetics and glare, land use compatibility, property values and obsolescence/disposal. The following policies address land use and compatibility issues associated with the siting, development and use of solar energy systems (that is, accessory solar uses) to the extent that the County is not precluded by State law from addressing such issues. Renewable energy resources as a whole, including solar, are discussed in more detail in the Multipurpose Open Space Element.

Policies:

LU ~~17.4~~ 18.1 *Permit and encourage solar energy systems as an accessory use to any residential, commercial, industrial, mining, agricultural or public use.*

LU 18.2 *Encourage installation of solar energy systems for onsite power and hot water production.*

LU 18.3 *Encourage housing tracts with over 50 dwelling units to construct at least 20% of the units such that a substantial portion of each unit’s main roof area receives unobstructed sunlight between 11 a.m. and sunset year round.*

LU 18.4 *Consider opportunities to create energy partnerships or participate in programs encouraging local residential solar photovoltaic use, namely small residential rooftop solar energy systems.*

LU 18.5 *Consider opportunities to coordinate with the California Public Utilities Commission, California Energy Commission and investor- owned utilities (for example, Southern California Edison) in providing incentives for solar energy system installation.*



Net energy metering (NEM) is an electricity tariff billing mechanism designed to facilitate the installation of onsite renewable energy generation. Under NEM tariffs, participating customers receive a bill credit for excess generation that is exported to the electric grid during times when it is not serving onsite load. NEM tariffs are extensively regulated by the California Public Utilities Commission and subject to change. The CPUC website is the best source for accurate, up-to-date information on NEM.



A small residential rooftop solar energy system is defined under California Government Code section 65850.5 to include the following:

- Is no larger than 10 kilowatts;
- Is installed on a single or duplex family dwelling;
- Does not exceed legal building heights; and
- Conforms to a variety of state fire, structural, electric and other building codes. (CG sec. 65860.5)

- LU 18.6 *Support programs designed to train Riverside County residents in job skills in renewable energy fields, such as photovoltaic solar energy system design and installation.*
- LU 18.7 *Support programs to educate residents on the many renewable energy related opportunities, programs and incentives available in California, such as the California Energy Commission's New Solar Homes Partnership, the Go Solar California initiative and others.*
- LU 18.8 *Develop and disseminate educational materials to the public to increase the transparency of the review/ approval process for residential solar energy systems. Such materials may include fact sheets, bulletins, guidelines, checklists, or other such references. Ideally, all such materials should be made available from a single centralized source or website.*
- LU 18.9 *Consider developing incentives to encourage installation of residential solar energy systems on units within specific plans, large single-family housing tracts (over 50 units) and multi-family residential structures at time of construction, rather than merely building solar-ready rooftops.*
- LU 18.10 *Track County solar energy system permit issuance and periodically examine solar energy trends throughout the County to identify, and where possible remove, any barriers to further residential solar energy development.*

Electricity Transmission Siting

*Renewable energy development requires a variety of infrastructure facilities to enable the generated energy (electricity) to be delivered (transmitted) to load centers (concentrations of electricity end-users) often a great distance from the generation site. These transmission lines are essential for reliable electrical service in a region, but can require large swaths of land that can conflict with developed uses and natural environments if not planned, sited and constructed with care. **Figure C-10** in the Circulation Element shows the alignments of various utility corridors within Riverside County, including lands falling under federal utility corridor designations.*

As renewable energy development expands, particularly in the far eastern desert of Riverside County, the need for additional high-voltage electric transmission connections to carry the generated power to other regions will be critical.

The transmission system provides a number of functions including:

- *Enabling wholesale market transactions that help to stabilize electric prices;*
- *Improving system reliability and stability;*
- *Creating opportunities for establishing new electric generation stations, particularly for renewable energy; and*
- *Providing additional voltage support when needed.*

Because of its importance at the regional, state and national levels, utility corridor planning occurs at all three of these levels, in addition to local. At the state level, regional and intrastate transmission line planning is undertaken by a number of agencies.

Transmission lines crossing the state are owned and operated by individual energy providers, both public and private. Southern California Edison (SCE) and Imperial Irrigation District (IID) operate major transmission lines (for example, carrying 220-500

kilovolts (kV) of electricity) in Riverside County. A critical major transmission corridor runs east-west through most of Riverside County roughly following Interstate 10 and connects the Greater Los Angeles Metropolis along the coast to the energy generators in the eastern half of the state, including the large commercial-scale solar generating facilities located in far eastern Riverside County, as well as to generators in Arizona. Additional major transmission corridors connect to the population centers of western Riverside County and Coachella Valley, as well as linking to San Bernardino, Orange, San Diego and Imperial counties.

In cases where the County is not pre-empted from exercising jurisdiction, the following policies address land use and compatibility issues associated with the siting and development of energy transmission corridors, particularly for electricity.

Policies

- LU 19.1 Encourage development of electrical transmission lines along routes which minimize potential environmental effects.*
- LU 19.2 Support rooftop solar energy systems as a means for promoting in-state electricity production without the need for extensive new transmission facilities.*
- LU 19.3 Encourage renewable energy development to focus on locations within ten miles of existing transmission corridors and facilities.*
- LU 19.4 Encourage renewable energy development to avoid crossing via roads or transmission lines areas classified as having special environmental concerns (such as Areas of Critical Environmental Concern or Desert Wildlife Management Areas.)*
- LU 19.5 Promote the development of distributed renewable systems by sharing relevant information with infrastructure siting authorities to help maximize renewable energy interconnection opportunities, reduce costs for renewable energy developments and preserve sensitive lands when siting electricity transmission and distribution infrastructure.*
- LU 19.6 Encourage appropriate secondary land uses (such as, non-inhabited uses such as plant nurseries, RV storage, open space and parks) in areas with overhead transmission facility rights-of-way. Trails running along transmission alignments may also be included as a potential secondary land use, provided appropriate easements are obtained.*
- LU 19.7 Plan or approve transmission-related projects with the following objectives in mind:*
 - a. Protect the health and safety of Riverside County’s residents and their communities by assuring that transmission corridors will be located so as to have the least possible adverse impact upon them.*
 - b. Protect Riverside County’s agricultural economy by assuring that, to the extent practicable, the placement of above-ground transmission facilities, such as high-voltage towers and lines, will have the least possible adverse impact on agriculture.*
 - c. Protect as much as possible the fragile ecological balance of Riverside County’s wetlands and the surrounding lands, particularly deserts, by assuring that natural resources are considered in the location of transmission corridors and facilities. Integrate protections as part of ecosystem restoration programs when feasible.*
 - d. Protect viewsheds and the aesthetic environment as much as possible by encouraging appropriate location and design features for transmission projects.*

Water Conservation and Water-Efficient Landscaping

Riverside County's supply of water is limited by its arid climate, agricultural practices, projected population growth, and dependence on imported water. Despite an ever-increasing water demand, the availability of imported water has been reduced due to environmental regulations and drought. In some areas within Riverside County, contamination from natural or manufactured sources has reduced groundwater quality such that its use requires treatment. Management of the amount of water available (local and imported) and its quality, is an important response to the gap between supply and demand in Riverside County.

The most effective approach to conserving water resources must begin with implementing effective new water-efficient landscaping practices. Approximately 60% to 70% of a residential site's water consumption is spent irrigating landscape ill-suited to the Riverside County region. Similarly, approximately 50% of water used at commercial sites is spent on landscaping.

There is wide-spread consensus that the use of certain plant materials and landscaping practices can significantly reduce water consumption. New, efficient irrigation components are available through smaller irrigation establishments but they have not replaced their inefficient predecessors within the larger home improvement centers. Similarly, few nurseries carry a wide variety or quantity of drought tolerant plants.

On December 17, 2006, the Riverside County Board of Supervisors adopted Ordinance No. 859. This ordinance required that new development reduce its water demand for landscape by at least 20%. Desert water districts require that landscape plans demonstrate a 50% reduction. Riverside County Ordinance No. 859 requires the use of state-of-the-art water-efficient irrigation components, landscaping practices, and plant types designed to better suit the climatic and environmental conditions of the Inland Empire.

The County of Riverside has joined with local water agencies and other interest groups to form the Riverside County Water Task Force. The mission of the Task Force is to "ensure reliability, sustainability, and quality of the water resources within Riverside County through stakeholder communication and collaboration." The Task Force tracks and responds to legislation concerning water supply issues and is involved in seeking solutions to the endangered species concerns that limit the pumping of State Water Project water to Southern California. Additionally, the Water Task Force is developing a Local Model Water-Efficient Landscape Ordinance that will enhance Riverside County's Ordinance No. 859 and bring it into compliance with the state's standards as reflected in AB1881.

Local water agencies such as Western Municipal Water District, Eastern Municipal Water District, Coachella Valley Water District, Desert Water Agency, Rancho California Water District and others are changing their core business models to reflect water efficient practices. Similarly, public agencies such as the County of Riverside must take similar action and incorporate water-efficiency measures into its land use actions.

Policies

LU ~~48.4~~ 20.1 **Ensure compliance with Riverside County's water-efficient landscape policies.** Ensure that projects seeking discretionary permits and/or approvals develop and implement landscaping plans prepared in accordance with the Water-Efficient Landscape Ordinance (Ordinance No. 859), the County of Riverside Guide to California Friendly Landscaping and Riverside County's California Friendly Plant List. Ensure that irrigation plans for all new development incorporate weather based controllers and utilize state-of-the-art water-efficient irrigation components.

- LU ~~48.2~~ 20.2 **Minimize use of turf.** Minimize the use of natural turf in landscape medians, front-yard typical designs, parkways, other common areas, etc. and use drought tolerant planting options, mulch, or a combination thereof as a substitute. Limit the use of natural turf to those areas that serve a functional recreational element. Incorporate other aesthetic design elements such as boulders, stamped concrete, pavers, flagstone, decomposed granite, manufactured rock products to enhance visual interest and impact.
- LU ~~48.3~~ 20.3 **Design and field check irrigation plans to reduce run-off.** Emphasize the use of subsurface irrigation techniques for landscape areas adjoining non-permeable hardscape. Utilize subsurface irrigation or other low volume irrigation technology in association with long, narrow, or irregularly shaped turf areas. Minimize use of irregularly shaped turf areas.
- LU ~~48.4~~ 20.4 **Coordinate Riverside County water-efficiency efforts with those of local water agencies.** Support local water agencies' water conservation efforts.
- LU ~~48.5~~ 20.5 **Emphasize and expand the use of recycled water in conjunction with local water agencies.** Recycled water determined to be available pursuant to Section 13550 of the California State Water Code shall be used for appropriate non-potable uses whenever it: a) provides a beneficial use to the customer; b) is economically and technically feasible; c) is consistent with applicable regulatory requirements; and d) is in the best interests of public health, safety, and welfare. With the exception of non-common areas of single-family home residential developments, all other irrigation systems must be designed and installed to accommodate the current or future use of recycled water for irrigation. If no recycled water availability exists or is imminent in the vicinity of a project (as determined by prevailing water agency), all subsurface piping shall be installed as "recycled water ready" to reduce future retrofit costs. Such irrigation plans shall be developed in accordance with standards and policies of the applicable recycled water purveyor. Recycled water systems shall be designed to meet regulatory requirements of the California Department of Public Health and the local recycled water purveyor.
- LU ~~48.6~~ 20.6 **Encourage Public Participation in Water Conservation Efforts.** More outreach is needed to change the public perception of water-efficient landscaping and the design/care of such landscapes as they are a departure from that "green" paradigm with which many Riverside County residents are familiar. To achieve this objective the County of Riverside will:
- a. Develop tools designed to assist landowners with converting to attractive, drought tolerant landscapes.
 - b. Participate in outreach efforts designed to educate the developers, landscape personnel, nurseries, retail establishments, and the public on water-efficient landscaping and wise water-use programs.
 - c. Promote the use of drought tolerant plants and irrigation components.

Density Transfers

Density transfers for residential dwelling units are an important tool for implementing several goals of Riverside County's General Plan, including open space preservation, cultural resource preservation, the provision of community separators, and rural lands preservation. Additionally, for the Western Riverside County Multiple Species Habitat Conservation Plan (WRC MSHCP), density transfers will be an important tool in helping to

assemble the Plan's reserve system. The County of Riverside is working with community stakeholders to develop policies to implement a program to enable and encourage transfers of density that implement the goals described above. The policies will also be designed to be implemented in conjunction with the Incentives System (Administration Element: Page A-16). When completed, the density transfer policies will be considered for incorporation into the General Plan.

LU ~~19.4~~ 21.1 Where appropriate, use any adopted Density Transfer Program to help implement Rural Village Overlay Study Areas and the Multi-Species Habitat Conservation Program.

Land Use Designation Policies

The following section describes the General Plan Foundation Components and area plan land use designations system and provides guidance for appropriate development within each land use category as depicted on both the General Plan (Figure LU-1) and area plan land use maps.

Land use designations are organized in a two-tiered hierarchy as shown below on the Land Use Designation Key: General Plan Foundation Components and Area Plan land use designations. The General Plan Foundation Components describe the overall nature and intent of each of the five General Plan land uses: Agriculture, Rural, Rural Community, Open Space, and Community Development. These Foundation Components are general in nature and do not determine the specific land use on individual properties located within the boundaries of the Area Plans. Instead, parcel-specific land uses are located on the individual area plan land use maps. These Foundation Components are further subdivided into the Area Plan land use designations shown on Figure LU-5, each containing a specific description of allowable uses and development standards.

Figure LU- 5 Land Use Designation Key

Foundation Component	Area Plan Designation
Agriculture	Agriculture
Rural	Rural Residential (5 acre min. lot size) Rural Mountainous (10 acre min. lot size) Rural Desert (10 acre min, lot size)
Rural Community	Estate Density Residential (2 acre min. lot size) Very Low Density Residential (1 acre min. lot size) Low Density Residential (one-half acre min. lot size)
Open Space	Open Space-Conservation Open Space-Conservation Habitat Open Space-Recreation Open Space-Rural Open Space-Water Open Space-Mineral Resources
Community Development	Estate Density Residential (2 acre min. lot size) Very Low Density Residential (1 acre min. lot size) Low Density Residential (one-half acre min. lot size) Medium Density Residential (2-5 units per acre) Medium High Density Residential (5-8 units per acre) High Density Residential (8-14 units per acre) Very High Density Residential (14-20 units per acre) Highest Density Residential (20-plus units per acre) Commercial Retail Commercial Tourist Commercial Office Community Center Light Industrial Heavy Industrial Business Park Public Facilities Mixed Use Planning Area

The Land Use Designations Summary Table (Table LU-4) provides intensity/density standards and allowable land uses for each land use category. A detailed description of the land use designations, associated policies and development standards follows this table. For land use designations permitting residential uses at densities at or less than 2 dwelling units per acre, typical representative minimum lot sizes are also displayed to provide the reader with a conceptual understanding of what types of lot patterns can occur resulting from development in these designations. The table is not intended to imply that there is a minimum lot size requirement associated with any land use designation. However, minimum lot size requirements do apply in some circumstances elsewhere in the General Plan in conjunction with clustering policies, policy areas, etc.

All references to acreage or acres in this Element, unless otherwise specified, refer to gross acreage.

Standards of population density for residential uses can be derived for each residential land use category by multiplying the maximum allowable number of dwelling units per gross acre (du/ac) for the category by the average number of persons per dwelling unit assumed for the residential designations (Table LU-5). The persons per dwelling unit standard used for each area plan varies. These standards are described in Appendix E-1, Socioeconomic Buildout Assumptions and Methodology.

Standards of population density for nonresidential uses can be derived by multiplying one gross acre (43,560 square feet) by the net acreage factor of 0.75 (0.80 for light industrial uses); then by the applicable Floor Area Ratio (FAR, or gross building area of all floors divided by lot area); and then dividing by the assumed square foot per employee factor. The assumed average square footage of non-residential building floor area per employee

varies among the non-residential land use designations, and is described in Appendix E-1, Socioeconomic Buildout Assumptions and Methodology.

Table LU-4
Land Use Designations Summary

Foundation Component	Area Plan Land Use Designation	Building Intensity Range (du/ac or FAR) ^{1, 2, 3, 4}	Notes
Agriculture	Agriculture (AG)	10 ac min.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Agricultural land including row crops, groves, nurseries, dairies, poultry farms, processing plants, and other related uses. One single-family residence allowed per 10 acres except as otherwise specified by a policy or an overlay.
Rural	Rural Residential (RR)	5 ac min.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Single-family residences with a minimum lot size of 5 acres. Allows limited animal keeping and agricultural uses, recreational uses, compatible resource development (not including the commercial extraction of mineral resources) and associated uses and governmental uses.
	Rural Mountainous (RM)	10 ac min.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Single-family residential uses with a minimum lot size of 10 acres. Areas of at least 10 acres where a minimum of 70% of the area has slopes of 25% or greater. Allows limited animal keeping, agriculture, recreational uses, compatible resource development (which may include the commercial extraction of mineral resources with approval of a SMP) and associated uses and governmental uses.
	Rural Desert (RD)	10 ac min.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Single-family residential uses with a minimum lot size of 10 acres. Allows limited animal keeping, agriculture, recreational, renewable energy uses including solar, geothermal and wind energy uses, as well as associated uses required to develop and operate these renewable energy sources, compatible resource development (which may include the commercial extraction of mineral resources with approval of SMP), and governmental and utility uses.
Rural Community	Estate Density Residential (RC-EDR)	2 ac min.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Single-family detached residences on large parcels of 2 to 5 acres. Limited agriculture, intensive equestrian and animal keeping uses are expected and encouraged.
	Very Low Density Residential (RC-VLDR)	1 ac min.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Single-family detached residences on large parcels of 1 to 2 acres. Limited agriculture, intensive equestrian and animal keeping uses are expected and encouraged.
	Low Density Residential (RC-LDR)	0.5 ac min.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Single-family detached residences on large parcels of 0.5 to 1 acre. Limited agriculture, intensive equestrian and animal keeping uses are expected and encouraged.
Open Space	Conservation (C)	N/A	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> The protection of open space for natural hazard protection, cultural preservation, and natural and scenic resource preservation. Existing agriculture is permitted.
	Conservation Habitat (CH)	N/A	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Applies to public and private lands conserved and managed in accordance with adopted Multiple Species Habitat and other Conservation Plans.
	Water (W)	N/A	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Includes bodies of water and natural or artificial drainage corridors. Extraction of mineral resources subject to SMP may be permissible provided that flooding hazards are addressed and long term habitat and riparian values are maintained.
	Recreation (R)	N/A	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Recreational uses including parks, trails, athletic fields, and golf courses. Neighborhood parks are permitted within residential land uses.
	Rural (RUR)	20 ac min.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> One single-family residence allowed per 20 acres. Extraction of mineral resources subject to SMP may be permissible provided that scenic resources and views are protected.
	Mineral Resources (Min)	N/A	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Mineral extraction and processing facilities. Areas held in reserve for future mineral extraction and processing.

Foundation Component	Area Plan Land Use Designation	Building Intensity Range (du/ac or FAR) ^{1, 2, 3, 4}	Notes
Community Development	Estate Density Residential (EDR)	2 ac min.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Single-family detached residences on large parcels of 2 to 5 acres. Limited agriculture and animal keeping is permitted, however, intensive animal keeping is discouraged.
	Very Low Density Residential (VLDR)	1 ac min.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Single-family detached residences on large parcels of 1 to 2 acres. Limited agriculture and animal keeping is permitted, however, intensive animal keeping is discouraged.
	Low Density Residential (LDR)	0.5 ac min.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Single-family detached residences on large parcels of 0.5 to 1 acre. Limited agriculture and animal keeping is permitted, however, intensive animal keeping is discouraged.
	Medium Density Residential (MDR)	2 - 5 du/ac	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Single-family detached and attached residences with a density range of 2 to 5 dwelling units per acre. Limited agriculture and animal keeping is permitted, however, intensive animal keeping is discouraged. Lot sizes range from 5,500 to 20,000 sq. ft., typical 7,200 sq. ft. lots allowed.
	Medium High Density Residential (MHDR)	5 - 8 du/ac	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Single-family attached and detached residences with a density range of 5 to 8 dwelling units per acre. Lot sizes range from 4,000 to 6,500 sq. ft.
	High Density Residential (HDR)	8 - 14 du/ac	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Single-family attached and detached residences, including townhouses, stacked flats, courtyard homes, patio homes, townhouses, and zero lot line homes.
	Very High Density Residential (VHDR)	14 - 20 du/ac	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Single-family attached residences and multi-family dwellings.
	Highest Density Residential (HHDR)	20+ du/ac	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Multi-family dwellings, includes apartments and condominium. Multi-storied (3-plus) structures are allowed.
	Commercial Retail (CR)	0.20 - 0.35 FAR	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Local and regional serving retail and service uses. The amount of land designated for Commercial Retail exceeds that amount anticipated to be necessary to serve Riverside County's population at build out. Once build out of Commercial Retail reaches the 40% level within any Area Plan, additional studies will be required before CR development beyond the 40 % will be permitted.
	Commercial Tourist (CT)	0.20 - 0.35 FAR	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Tourist related commercial including hotels, golf courses, and recreation/amusement activities.
	Commercial Office (CO)	0.35 - 1.0 FAR	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Variety of office related uses including financial, legal, insurance and other office services.
	Community Development	Light Industrial (LI)	0.25 - 0.60 FAR
Heavy Industrial (HI)		0.15 - 0.50 FAR	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> More intense industrial activities that generate greater effects such as excessive noise, dust, and other nuisances.
Business Park (BP)		0.25 - 0.60 FAR	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Employee intensive uses, including research and development, technology centers, corporate offices, clean industry and supporting retail uses.
Public Facilities (PF)		≤ 0.60 FAR	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Civic uses such as County of Riverside administrative buildings and schools.
Community Center (CC)		5 - 40 du/ac 0.10 - 0.3 FAR	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Includes combination of small-lot single family residences, multi-family residences, commercial retail, office, business park uses, civic uses, transit facilities, and recreational open space within a unified planned development area. This also includes Community Centers in adopted specific plans.
	Mixed Use Planning Area		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> This designation is applied to areas outside of Community Centers. The intent of the designation is not to identify a particular mixture or intensity of land uses, but to designate areas where a mixture of residential, commercial, office, entertainment, educational, and/or recreational uses, or other uses is planned.

Overlays and Policy Areas

Overlays and Policy Areas are not considered a Foundation Component. Overlays and Policy Areas address local conditions and can be applied in any Foundation Component. The specific details and development characteristics of each Policy Area and Overlay are contained in the appropriate Area Plan. Tables included in General Plan Appendix E-1 provide additional specification for each of these types of planning instruments.

Community Development Overlay (CDO)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Allows Community Development land use designations to be applied through General Plan Amendments within specified areas within Rural, Rural Community, Agriculture, or Open Space Foundation Component areas. Specific policies related to each Community Development Overlay are contained in the appropriate Area Plan.
Community Center Overlay (CCO)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Allows for either a Community Center or the underlying designated land use to be developed.
Rural Village Overlay (RVO) and Rural Village Overlay Study Area (RVOSA)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> The Rural Village Overlay allows a concentration of residential and local-serving commercial uses within areas of rural character. The Rural Village Overlay allows uses and maximum densities/intensities from the Medium Density Residential, Medium-High Density Residential and Commercial Retail land use designations. In rural villages identified as Rural Village Overlay Study Areas, the final boundaries and specific land use designations will be determined at a later date based on further study.
Historic District Overlay (HDO)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> This overlay allows for specific protections, land uses, the application of the Historic Building Code, and consideration for contributing elements to the District.
Specific Community Development Designation Overlay	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Permits flexibility in land uses designations to account for local conditions. Consult the applicable Area Plan text for details.
Policy Areas	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Policy Areas are specific geographic districts that contain unique characteristics that merit detailed attention and focused policies. These policies may impact the underlying land use designations. At the Area Plan level, Policy Areas accommodate several locally specific land use designations, such as the Cherry Valley Policy Area (The Pass Area Plan), or the Highway 79 Policy Area (Sun City/Menifee Valley Area Plan). Consult the applicable Area Plan text for details.

NOTES:

1 FAR = Floor Area Ratio, which is the measurement of the amount of non-residential building square footage in relation to the size of the lot. Du/ac = dwelling units per acre, which is the measurement of the amount of residential units in a given acre.

2 The building intensity range noted is exclusive, that is the range noted provides a minimum and maximum building intensity.

3 Clustering is encouraged in all residential designations. The allowable density of a particular land use designation may be clustered in one portion of the site in smaller lots, as long as the ratio of dwelling units/area remains within the allowable density range associated with the designation. The rest of the site would then be preserved as open space or a use compatible with open space (e.g., agriculture, pasture or wildlife habitat). Within the Rural Foundation Component and Rural Designation of the Open Space Foundation Component, the allowable density may be clustered as long as no lot is smaller than 0.5 acres. This 0.5-acre minimum lot size also applies to the Rural Community Development Foundation Component. However, for sites adjacent to Community Development Foundation Component areas, 10,000 square foot minimum lots are allowed. The clustered areas would be a mix of 10,000-square-foot and 0.5-acre lots. In such cases, larger lots or open space would be required near the project boundary with Rural Community and Rural Foundation Component areas.

4 The minimum lot size required for each permanent structure with plumbing fixtures utilizing an onsite wastewater treatment system to handle its wastewater is 0.5 acres per structure.

**Table LU-5
Population per Square Mile**

Area Plan Designation	Population per Square Mile	
	Western County Area Plans	Eastern County Area Plans
Open Space-Rural	43	50
Agriculture, Rural Mountainous, Rural Desert	91	111
Rural Residential	268	249
Estate Density Residential	632	692
Very Low Density Residential	1,546	1,443
Low Density Residential	3,062	3,654
Medium Density Residential	6,562	7,387
Medium High Density Residential	12,671	17,372
High Density Residential	22,240	24,992
Very High Density Residential	33,036	42,720
Highest Density Residential/Community Center	61,777	88,390

Agriculture



Please see the **Multipurpose Open Space Element** for additional policies regarding agricultural uses.

One of Riverside County’s most important land uses in terms of historic character and economic strength is ~~its~~ widespread and diverse agriculture lands. Agriculture production is one of the largest industries in terms of dollar value in the county and competes successfully in the global economy. It is clear that agricultural uses provide important employment opportunities for many Riverside County residents. Agricultural uses also preserve a lifestyle choice that is synonymous with a part of Riverside County’s history and character. In fact, it is agriculture that defines the unique character of many communities in Riverside County, and helps to define the edges of and provide separation between developed areas. Many people are drawn to Riverside County for the very character that agricultural uses provide and

there is a solid commitment to ensuring that these uses remain an integral part of Riverside County’s future. The importance of agricultural uses and the sensitivity of development in and around agricultural areas is reflected in the RCIP Vision:

“Agricultural land that remains economically viable, either as a permanent or temporary economic resource, is well protected by policies, ordinances and design regulations applicable to new development that may be planned nearby.”

However, as mentioned in this Vision Statement, there is a potential for agricultural uses to conflict with adjacent uses. This is due to mounting growth pressures near and within significant agricultural regions. Many existing agricultural areas have been or are in danger of being encroached upon by uses that are negatively impacted by some agricultural operations, such as residences and schools. As agricultural lands become less productive or are encroached upon, there is a danger of these uses becoming less economically viable, becoming subdivided, or converting to other uses. The acknowledgment of pressures upon agricultural areas and the desire to continue this use is evident in the following statement from the RCIP Vision:

“Agriculture remains a strong component of the County's economy. Even though some agricultural land has been urbanized, there has also been expansion in other locations. The place of agriculture in the community remains strong and conflicts between agricultural operations and nearby development are rare. The Riverside County agricultural industry is a strong competitor in the global agricultural market.”

The intent of the General Plan Agriculture Foundation Component and associated policies is to identify and preserve areas where agricultural uses are the long term desirable use, as stated in the General Plan Principles; **“Provide for the continued and even expanded production of agricultural products by conserving areas appropriate for agriculture and related infrastructure and supporting services.”** In addition, the intent of these policies is to minimize the conflicts between agricultural and urban/suburban uses.



It is the expressed intent of this General Plan that new uses encroaching upon existing agricultural operations shall provide some type of buffering to mitigate any compatibility issues.

Agriculture Area Plan Designation

As shown on the Land Use Designation Key (Figure LU-5), the Agriculture Foundation Component consists of one area plan land use designation of the same name.

Agriculture (AG) - The Agriculture land use designation has been established to help conserve productive agricultural lands within the county. These include row crops, nurseries, citrus groves and vineyards, dairies, ranches, poultry and hog farms, and other agricultural related uses. Areas designated for Agriculture generally lack an infrastructure that is supportive of urban development.

Residential density is permitted at one dwelling unit per parcel provided that the parcel is 10 acres in size or larger. An additional dwelling unit may be allowed for each additional 10 acres being farmed for use by the owner, operator or employees, up to five total dwelling units per parcel. Additional dwellings for farm worker housing may be permitted as described below.

Policies:

The following policies apply to properties designated as Agriculture on the General Plan and area plan land use maps.

LU ~~20.4~~ 22.1 Encourage retaining agriculturally designated lands where agricultural activity can be sustained at an operational scale, where it accommodates lifestyle choice, and in locations where impacts to and from potentially incompatible uses, such as residential uses, are minimized, through incentives such as tax credits.

LU ~~20.2~~ 22.2 Protect agricultural uses, including those with industrial characteristics (dairies, poultry, hog farms, etc.) by discouraging inappropriate land division in the immediate proximity and allowing only uses and intensities that are compatible with agricultural uses. (AI 3)

LU ~~20.3~~ 22.3 Permit farm-workers housing as an interim land use under the following circumstances: (AI 31)

- a. The area in which the proposal is located appears to be predominantly agricultural in nature and does not appear it will change in the near future.
- b. The proposal is an interim use (5 to 10 years) and will not substantially affect the existing character of the area.
- c. Adequate infrastructure exists in the area to ensure safe, sound, and decent housing for farm workers.
- d. The proposal will not create any significant land use incompatibilities.
- e. The proposal will not jeopardize public health, safety, and welfare.



Farm worker housing includes mobile home or travel trailer park for rental by agricultural workers wherein not less than 80% of the trailer sites are restricted to rental by migrant agricultural workers, as defined by County Ordinance No. 348, for a period of time not to exceed nine months in any twelve month period. The remainder of the sites are restricted to rental by permanent agricultural workers, and occupancy by the owner or operator of the trailer park.



Agricultural uses that exist on land designated for other land uses, such as residential, are allowed to continue as set forth in policy LU 1.1. It is upon a change from agriculture to another use or new development that the underlying land use designation would apply.



Riverside County Ordinance No. 625, the Right-to-Farm Ordinance: the intent of this ordinance is to reduce the loss of agricultural resources by limiting the circumstances under which agricultural operations may be deemed to constitute a nuisance.

LU ~~20.4~~ 22.4 Encourage conservation of productive agricultural lands. Preserve prime agricultural lands for high-value crop production.

LU ~~20.5~~ 22.5 Continue to participate in the California Land Conservation Act (the Williamson Act) of 1965.

LU ~~20.6~~ 22.6 Require consideration of state agricultural land classification specifications when a 2.5-year Agriculture Foundation amendment to the General Plan is reviewed that would result in a shift from an agricultural to a non-agricultural use. (AI 8)

LU ~~20.7~~ 22.7 Adhere to Riverside County's Right-to-Farm Ordinance.

LU ~~20.8~~ 22.8 Encourage educational and incentive programs in coordination with the Riverside County Agricultural Commissioner's Office, the University of California Cooperative Extension Service, and the Riverside County Farm Bureau, that convey the importance of conserving watercourses and their associated habitat, as well as protective buffers for domestic and farm livestock grazing.

LU ~~20.9~~ 22.9 Weigh the economic benefits of surface mining with the preservation/conservation of agriculture when considering mineral excavation proposals on land classified for agricultural uses.

LU ~~20.10~~ 22.10 Allow agriculturally related retail uses such as feed stores and permanent produce stands in all areas and land use designations.

LU ~~20.11~~ 22.11 The County of Riverside shall pursue the creation of new incentive programs, such as tax credits, that encourage the continued viability of agricultural activities. (AI 1)

Rural

Another of Riverside County's most important land uses in terms of historic character and lifestyle choice is its rural areas and rural communities. Rural areas comprise one of the most distinctive and attractive segments of the county, and are the expressed lifestyle choice for many residents. Rural uses include a range of choices, from agricultural, to equestrian, to estate, to remote cabins and resorts. Like agricultural uses, rural uses define the unique character of many communities in Riverside County, and help to define their edges by providing separation between developed areas. Rural areas are also valuable in providing important wildlife habitat and habitat linkages as well as cultural preservation goals such as historic landscapes. Many visitors are drawn to Riverside County to enjoy the rural atmosphere. The importance of the rural character to Riverside County is reflected in the following RCIP Vision statements:

"The extensive heritage of rural living continues to be accommodated in areas committed to that lifestyle and its sustainability is reinforced by the strong open space and urban development commitments provide for elsewhere in the RCIP."

"Each of our rural areas and communities has a special character that distinguishes them from urban areas and from each other. They benefit from some conveniences such as small-scale local commercial services and all-weather access roads, yet maintain an unburied, uncrowded life style. Rural residents accept the fact that they must travel some distance for more complete services and facilities."

Due to increasing growth pressures, there is danger that the character of some rural areas may be diminished by encroaching urbanization. There is a delicate balance between accommodating future growth and preserving this rural lifestyle. In some instances, allowing limited growth is desirable and appropriate while in others, there is a need to maintain the character of an area. In either instance, it is necessary to ensure that an appropriate level of services and infrastructure is available.

There are a number of methods proposed to achieve this balance, including the creation of community centers, establishment of lot size minimums, consolidation of multiple lots, and the clustering of residential units. These options can be accomplished through a number of means, including programs and incentives. The County of Riverside has a commitment to ensuring that rural uses remain an integral part of Riverside County's future and are protected through the policies of the General Plan, as reflected in the following General Plan Principle statements:

“Rural land use designations should be established that accommodate a rural lifestyle generally within existing rural towns and rural residential neighborhoods. Additional rural towns and residential neighborhoods should be minimized because of the need to provide more efficient community development opportunities.”

Rural character includes and can be enhanced by small villages that function as a center for outlying areas by providing a concentration of civic and commercial uses. The General Plan Principles reflect the importance of these villages:

“These principles do not preclude the addition of small-scale villages of a contrasting character, even those that might include a mix of more intensive residential development, as a component of the rural landscape.”

The Rural General Plan Foundation Component is intended to identify and preserve areas where the rural lifestyle is the desired use, including areas of remote cabins, residential estates, limited agriculture, equestrian, and animal keeping uses. In the future, the challenge will focus on preserving the character of established rural areas while accommodating future growth, preventing the encroachment of more intense urban uses, and ensuring compatibility between rural and urban uses.

Rural Area Plan Land Use Designations

As shown on the Land Use Designation Key (Figure LU-5), the Rural General Plan Foundation Component consists of three Area Plan land use designations: Rural Residential, Rural Mountainous, and Rural Desert. The Rural Village Area plan overlay is discussed at the end of this Element.

Rural Residential (RR) - The Rural Residential land use designation allows one single family residence per five acres, as well as limited animal-keeping and agricultural activities. Limited recreational uses, compatible resource development (not including the commercial extraction of mineral resources) and associated uses, and governmental uses are allowed within this



Small Scale Commercial Uses

reflect the rural communities in scale and character; this type of commercial development serves the need of rural communities. The development standards for these commercial uses reflect areas where urban services and facilities are generally unavailable and are not likely to be provided in the near future. The type of uses allowed and the development standard shall be in accordance with the Rural Commercial (C-R) Zone in Ordinance 348. The following are examples of small-scale commercial uses:

- Animal hospital
- Barber shop
- Bakery
- Drug Store
- Hardware Store
- Pet and pet supply shop
- Post Office
- Convenience Store
- Nurseries/garden supply
- Produce market
- Professional Office Space

designation. Neighborhood-serving small-scale commercial uses that are compatible with the surrounding uses are allowed.

Rural Mountainous (RM) - The Rural Mountainous land use designation allows single family residential uses, limited animal-keeping and agricultural uses, with a maximum residential density of 1 dwelling unit per 10 acres. This designation applies to areas of at least 10 acres where a minimum 70% of the area has slopes of 25% or greater. It also applies to remote areas that are completely or partially surrounded by slopes greater than 25%, and that do not have both county-maintained access and access to community sewer and water systems. Limited recreational uses, compatible resource development (which may include the extraction of mineral resources with approval of a surface mining permit) and associated uses, and governmental uses are allowed within this designation. Neighborhood-serving small-scale commercial uses that are compatible with the surrounding uses are allowed.

Rural Desert (RD) - The Rural Desert land use designation allows for single family residences, limited agriculture and animal keeping uses, with a maximum residential density of 1 dwelling unit per 10 acres. Limited recreational uses; renewable energy uses including solar, geothermal and wind energy uses, as well as associated uses required to develop and operate these renewable energy sources; compatible resource development (which may include the extraction of mineral resources with approval of a surface mining permit); governmental and utility uses are also allowed within this designation. This designation is generally applied to remote desert areas characterized by poor access and a lack of water and other services. Neighborhood-serving small-scale commercial uses that are compatible with the surrounding uses are allowed.

Policies:

The following policies apply to properties designated with the Rural Residential, Rural Mountainous, and Rural Desert land use designations on the area plan land use maps.

- LU ~~21.4~~ 23.1 Require that grading be designed to blend with undeveloped natural contours of the site and avoid an unvaried, unnatural, or manufactured appearance. (AI 23)
- LU ~~21.2~~ 23.2 Require that adequate and available circulation facilities, water resources, sewer facilities and/or septic capacity exist to meet the demands of the proposed land use. (AI 3)
- LU ~~21.3~~ 23.3 Ensure that development does not adversely impact the open space and rural character of the surrounding area. (AI 3)
- LU ~~21.4~~ 23.4 Encourage clustered development where appropriate on lots smaller than the underlying land use designation would allow. The density yield of the underlying land use designation may be clustered on 0.5-acre lots; however, for sites located adjacent to the Community Development Foundation Component, 10,000-square-foot-minimum lots may be considered.
- LU ~~21.5~~ 23.5 Encourage parcel consolidation. (AI 29)
- LU ~~21.6~~ 23.6 Provide programs and incentives that allow rural areas to maintain and enhance their existing and desired character. (AI 9, 30)
- LU ~~21.7~~ 23.7 Small-scale commercial uses that serve rural neighborhoods are allowed subject to the following criteria:

- a. The portion of the lot proposed for commercial uses shall be between 0.5 and 2.5 acres.
- b. The portion of the lot proposed for commercial uses shall be located adjacent to an arterial, a mountainous arterial or a major roadway.
- c. The proposed use may not be located within 2 miles of a Commercial land use designation.
- d. The design and scale of the proposed use shall be compatible with the surrounding uses, protective of view sheds, and blend-in with the rural nature of the area.
- e. The proposed use shall be implemented through allowed uses and related development standards of the Rural Commercial (C-R) Zone (AI 1).

Rural Community

The Rural Community Foundation Component is intended to identify communities and neighborhoods having a rural lifestyle, where animal - keeping uses and limited infrastructure (compared with Community Development areas) are prevalent. Rural Community areas will serve as transition areas between Community Development and Rural Foundation Components. Small-scale commercial activities, such as local grocery stores, gift shops and drug stores, located outside urban boundaries are needed to serve these rural communities. Small- scale incidental commercial uses are allowed. Agriculture is permitted in these areas.

Rural Community Area Plan Land Use Designations

These communities often define their rural lifestyle in part through a desire to maintain particular lot sizes, such as 1 acre or 2 acres. The major challenges for these areas in planning for the future include maintaining their rural character even as other areas in the County of Riverside experience rapid urban development, providing adequate public services in a rural context, and ensuring that buffers are provided between these areas and other uses that could be incompatible with their animal - keeping and agricultural nature.

Estate Density Residential (RC-EDR) - The Estate Density Residential land use designation provides for the development of detached single family residential dwelling units and ancillary structures on large parcels. In the Rural Community Foundation Component (unlike the Community Development Foundation Component, which also permits the application of the Estate Density Residential designation), equestrian and other animal-keeping uses are expected and encouraged. Agriculture and small scale commercial uses are permitted in this designation. The density range is from 1 dwelling unit per 2 acres to 1 dwelling unit per 5 acres.

Very Low Density Residential (RC-VLDR) - The Very Low Density Residential land use designation provides for the development of detached single family residential dwelling units and ancillary structures on large parcels. In the Rural Community Foundation Component (unlike the Community Development Foundation Component, which also permits the application of the Very Low Density Residential designation), equestrian and other animal- keeping uses are expected and encouraged. Agriculture and small scale commercial uses are permitted in this designation. The density range is from 1 dwelling unit per acre to 1 dwelling unit per two acres.

Low Density Residential (RC-LDR) - The Low Density Residential land use designation provides for the development of detached single family residential dwelling units and ancillary structures on large parcels. In the Rural Community Foundation Component (unlike the Community Development Foundation Component, which also permits the application of the Low Density Residential Foundation Component), equestrian and other

animal - keeping uses are expected and encouraged. Agriculture and small scale commercial uses are permitted in this designation. The density range is from 2 dwelling units per acre to 1 dwelling unit per acre.

Policies:

- LU ~~22.1~~ 24.1 Require that grading be designed to blend with undeveloped natural contours of the site and avoid an unvaried, unnatural, or manufactured appearance. (AI 23)
- LU ~~22.2~~ 24.2 Require that adequate and available circulation facilities, water resources, sewer facilities and/or septic capacity exist to meet the demands of the proposed land use. (AI 3)
- LU ~~22.3~~ 24.3 Ensure that development does not adversely impact the open space and rural character of the surrounding area. (AI 3)
- LU ~~22.4~~ 24.4 Encourage clustered development where appropriate on lots smaller than the underlying land use designation would allow. The density yield of the underlying land use designation may be clustered on 0.5-acre lots; however, for sites located adjacent to the Community Development Foundation Component, 10,000 square foot minimum lots may be considered.
- LU ~~22.5~~ 24.5 Encourage parcel consolidation. (AI 29)
- LU ~~22.6~~ 24.6 Provide programs and incentives that allow rural areas to maintain and enhance their existing and desired character. (AI 9, 30)
- LU ~~22.7~~ 24.7 Small-scale commercial uses that serve rural neighborhoods are allowed subject to the following criteria:
 - a. The portion of the lot proposed for commercial uses shall be between 0.5 and 2.5 acres.
 - b. The portion of the lot proposed for commercial uses shall be located adjacent to an arterial, a mountainous arterial or a major roadway.
 - c. The proposed use may not be located within 2 miles of a Commercial land use designation.
 - d. The design and scale of the proposed use shall be compatible with the surrounding uses, protective of view sheds, and blend in with the rural nature of the area.
 - e. The proposed use shall be implemented through allowed uses and related development standards of the Rural Commercial (C-R) Zone (AI 1).
- LU ~~22.8~~ 24.8 An amendment from the Rural Community Foundation Component that meets the following criteria may be considered as an entitlement/policy amendment and processed as defined in Section 2.4 General Plan Technical Amendments and Entitlement/Policy Amendments of Ordinance No. 348:
 - a. This amendment shall be located within a city’s sphere of influence area.
 - b. This amendment shall be located within an existing community that is characterized by lots smaller than 20,000 square feet in net area.

- c. There shall be a Memorandum of Understanding between the County of Riverside and the city that ensures adequate infrastructure, including sewer services for the establishment of lots smaller than one acre.
- d. This amendment shall be processed with a tract or parcel map and approved with a condition of approval that requires the extension of a sewer line.

Open Space

One of the most distinctive features of Riverside County is its variety of open spaces. These open spaces vary by terrain, from remote deserts and mountains, to rolling hills and canyons, to lakes and streams, to protected habitat areas, to passive and active recreational areas, and are vital to the heritage, character, and lifestyle of Riverside County. This importance is reflected in the RCIP Vision:

“Multipurpose regional open space and community/ neighborhood public spaces are permanent elements of the Riverside County landscape.”

Open spaces also provide the setting for Riverside County’s unique and distinctive communities. They help define the unique character of many communities in Riverside County and help to provide edges and separation between developed areas. These open spaces also are an important economic benefit to the County of Riverside in that they draw thousands of visitors each year. Neighborhood and community parks and recreational fields also provide important facilities that enhance the quality of life for local residents and visitors. Providing access to these open spaces is a continued goal of the County of Riverside, as stated in the RCIP Vision:

“Public access to recreation opportunities is part of the overall open space system, with multi-purpose parks, play fields and community facilities at varied sizes in accessible locations.”

It is also clear that Riverside County’s biological health and diversity is dependent upon the preservation of natural open spaces. The importance of this is clear in the following RCIP Vision statement:

“The multi-purpose open space system provides for multi-species habitat preservation rather than a piecemeal approach to single species. This enables the natural diversity of plants and animals to sustain themselves because of the critical relationships between them. Extensive land areas set aside for this purpose and they are linked by corridors of various designs to allow movement between habitat areas. In addition, the public’s access to the open space system is significantly expanded for recreation purposes, enabling a variety of active and passive recreation pursuits. Trails provide a means of recreation in themselves, as well as access for less intensive recreation. Creative and effective means of acquiring open space have enabled establishment of this system so that private property rights are respected and acquisition costs are feasible. This system also provides an effective approach that has eliminated conflict over development activities because of the demonstrated commitment to permanently preserving critical open space resources.”

Due to increasing growth pressures, there is danger that the quality and character of some open space areas may be diminished. The balance between accommodating future growth and preserving the quality of Riverside County’s open spaces is one of the most challenging and volatile issues in the county. There are a number of methods proposed to achieve this balance, including implementation of adopted MSHCPs, the creation of community centers, the establishment of lot size minimums, and the clustering of residential units. The County of Riverside has a commitment to ensuring that open spaces remain an integral part of Riverside County’s future and are protected through the policies of the General Plan, as reflected in the following General Plan Principle statement:

“Designation of open spaces in the General Plan and Area plans conveys the intent of creating a comprehensive open space system that provides a framework for community development and encompasses the needs of humans for active and passive recreation, as well as the needs of multiple species for survival and sustenance. Within that overall designation, the functional areas of community open space and habitat preservation should be clearly delineated.”

The Open Space General Plan Foundation Component is intended to accomplish this by identifying open space areas for the preservation of habitat, water and other natural resources, protection from natural hazards, provision of recreational areas, and the protection of scenic resources.

Open Space Area Plan Land Use Designations

As shown on the Land Use Designation Key (Figure LU-5), the Open Space General Plan designation consists of six Area Plan land use designations: Open Space-Conservation, Open Space-Conservation Habitat, Open Space-Water, Open Space-Recreation, Open Space-Rural, and Open Space-Mineral Resources.



For additional policies related to these land uses, please see the **Multipurpose Open Space Element**.

Policies:

The following policies apply to properties designated under the Open Space Foundation Component.

- LU ~~23-4~~ 25.1 An amendment to, but not from, the Open Space Foundation Component and the corresponding change from any other Foundation Component may be treated as an entitlement/policy amendment and processed as defined in Section 2.4 General Plan Technical Amendments and Entitlement/Policy Amendments of Ordinance No. 348.
- LU ~~23-2~~ 25.2 Require that structures be designed to maintain the environmental character in which they are located. (AI 3)

Open Space-Conservation (OS-C) - The Open Space-Conservation land use designation is applied to lands containing non-MSHCP Habitat lands, natural hazards, cultural resources, or other natural and scenic resources. Ancillary structures or uses may be permitted provided that they further the intent of this designation and do not substantially alter the character of the area. Actual building or structure size, siting, and design will be determined on a case by case basis.

Open Space-Conservation Habitat (OS-CH) - The Open Space-Conservation Habitat land use designation applies to public and private lands conserved and managed in accordance with adopted MSHCPs. Ancillary structures or uses may be permitted for the purpose of preserving or enjoying open space. Actual building or structure size, siting, and design will be determined on a case by case basis.

Open Space-Water (OS-W) - Open Space-Water designated areas include bodies of water and major floodplains and natural drainage corridors. Ancillary structures or uses may be permitted for flood control or recreational purposes. The extraction of mineral resources subject to an approved surface mining permit may be permissible, provided that the proposed project can be undertaken in a manner that does not result in increased flooding hazards and that is consistent with maintenance of long-term habitat and riparian values.

Policies:

The following policies apply to properties designated either as Open Space-Conservation, Open Space-Conservation Habitat, or Open Space-Water on the area plan land use maps.

- LU ~~24.4~~ 26.1 Cooperate with the California Department of Fish and Wildlife (CDFW), United States Fish and Wildlife Service (USFWS), and any other appropriate agencies in establishing programs for the voluntary protection, and where feasible, voluntary restoration of significant environmental habitats. (AI 10)

Open Space-Recreation (OS-R) - The Open Space-Recreation land use designation allows for active and passive recreational uses such as parks, trails, camp grounds, athletic fields, golf courses, and off-road vehicle parks. Ancillary structures may be permitted for recreational opportunities. Actual building or structure size, siting, and design will be determined on a case by case basis.

Policies:

The following policies apply to those properties designated as Open Space-Recreation on the area plan land use maps:

- LU ~~25.4~~ 27.1 The County of Riverside shall develop and maintain a regional park system that provides recreational opportunities for residents and visitors of Riverside County.
- LU ~~25.2~~ 27.2 Provide for a balanced distribution of recreational amenities.
- LU ~~25.3~~ 27.3 Require that park facilities be accessible to the community, regardless of age, physical limitation or income level.
- LU ~~25.4~~ 27.4 Require that new development meet or exceed the parkland requirements as established in the Quimby Act and Riverside County enabling ordinances. (AI 3)

Open Space-Rural (OS-RUR) - The Open Space-Rural land use designation is applied to remote, privately owned open space areas with limited access and a lack of public services. Single-family residential uses are permitted at a density of one dwelling unit per 20 acres. The extraction of mineral resources subject to an approved surface mining permit may be permissible, provided that the proposed project can be undertaken in a manner that is consistent with maintenance of scenic resources and views from residential neighborhoods and major roadways and that the project does not detract from efforts to protect endangered species.

Policies:

The following policies apply to properties designated as Open Space-Rural on the area plan land use maps.

- LU ~~26.4~~ 28.1 Require that development be designed to blend with undeveloped natural contours of the site and avoid an unvaried, unnatural, or manufactured appearance. (AI 23)
- LU ~~26.2~~ 28.2 Require that adequate and available circulation facilities, water resources, sewer facilities, and/or septic capacity exist to meet the demands of the proposed land use. (AI 3)

- LU ~~26.3~~ 28.3 Ensure that development does not adversely impact the open space and rural character of the surrounding area. (AI 3)
- LU ~~26.4~~ 28.4 Encourage parcel consolidation. (AI 29)
- LU ~~26.5~~ 28.5 Provide programs and incentives that allow Open Space-Rural areas to maintain and enhance their existing and desired character. (AI 9)
- LU ~~26.6~~ 28.6 Encourage clustered development where appropriate on lots smaller than 20 acres. The density yield of the site may be clustered on 0.5-acre lots; however, for sites located adjacent to the Community Development Foundation Component, 10,000 square foot minimum lots may be considered.

Open Space-Mineral Resource (OS-MIN) - The Open Space-Mineral Resource land use designation allows for mineral extraction and processing facilities designated on the basis of the Surface Mining and Reclamation Act (SMARA) of 1975 classification. Areas held in reserve for future mining activities also fall under this designation. Ancillary structures or uses may be permitted which assist in the extraction, processing, or preservation of minerals. Actual building or structure size, siting, and design will be determined on a case by case basis.

Policies:

The following policies apply to properties designated as Open Space-Mineral Resources on the area plan land use maps.

- LU ~~27.1~~ 29.1 Require that surface mining activities and lands containing mineral deposits of statewide or of regional significance comply with Riverside County Ordinances and the SMARA.
- LU ~~27.2~~ 29.2 Protect lands designated as Open Space-Mineral Resource from encroachment of incompatible land uses through buffer zones or visual screening. (AI 3)
- LU ~~27.3~~ 29.3 Protect road access to mining activities and prevent or mitigate traffic conflicts with surrounding properties.
- LU ~~27.4~~ 29.4 Require the recycling of mineral extraction sites to open space, recreational, or other uses that are compatible with the surrounding land uses.
- LU ~~27.5~~ 29.5 Require an approved reuse plan prior to the issuing of a permit to operate an extraction operation.

Community Development

The Community Development General Plan Foundation Component depicts areas where urban and suburban development is appropriate. It is the intent of this Foundation Component to provide a breadth of land uses that foster variety and choice, accommodate a range of life styles, living and working conditions, and accommodate diverse community settings. The goal is to accommodate a balance of jobs, housing, and services within communities to help achieve other aspects of the RCIP Vision, such as mobility, open space, and air quality goals. It is the expressed goal of the General Plan to focus future growth into those areas designated for Community Development and in a pattern that is adaptive to transit and reduces sprawl. This is evident in the following RCIP Vision statement:

“There is no question that the process of accommodating almost a doubling of population in the last 20 years has been challenging. Yet, the emerging pattern of growth is now much clearer that it was during earlier growth periods. Perhaps more importantly, because of this clarity, there is now a much stronger focus on the quality of growth and development, rather than a fear of being overwhelmed by the numbers. Population growth has been accompanied by an even greater expansion of jobs.

Riverside County and its cities are so well coordinated in their growth forecasting activities that regional forecast revisions accept locally generated forecasts as a matter of course. This has many benefits for the people of Riverside County, such as unquestioned qualifications for receiving funding under various state and federal programs and stronger competition for available discretionary funding programs to supplement local resources.

- 1. New growth patterns no longer reflect a pattern of random sprawl. Rather, they follow a framework of transportation and open space corridors, with concentrations of development that fit into that framework. In other words, important open space and transportation corridors define growth areas.*
- 2. Growth focus in this County is on quality, not on frustrating efforts to halt growth.*
- 3. Population growth continues and is focused where it can best be accommodated.*
- 4. Growth is well coordinated between cities and the County and they jointly influence periodic state and regional growth forecasts affecting Riverside County and its cities.”*

As expressed in this statement, a quality physical environment is also an important aspect of the future growth in Riverside County. Accordingly, general policy direction is provided in the General Plan and in each land use designation to address aspects of quality. It is acknowledged that “quality” is a subjective term and it is not the intent of this document to mandate or preclude design review. Instead, the intent is to communicate the desire of the County of Riverside and offer guidance to property owners, developers, and decision-makers. In general, these land use designations should provide a range of community design options to respond to varied lifestyle choices with a high regard for the environment, community character and safety.

The Community Development General Plan land use designation consists of seventeen Area Plan land use designations, as shown on the Land Use Designation Key (Figure LU-5). These designations are grouped within five broad categories; Residential, Commercial, Industrial/Business Park, Public Facility, and Community Centers. The particular aspects of and desires for each of these broad categories is discussed within the appropriate category. Policies are grouped based on three scales to express the varying aspects of the RCIP Vision; countywide (expressed in the Countywide Policies section), community, and individual project.

Residential Area Plan Land Use Designations

Residential land uses in Riverside County are the single largest urban use in terms of acreage, and can be found in areas ranging from rugged mountainous terrain to low-lying valleys. Residential land uses accommodate not only a wide variety of housing types and land use designs, but also an assortment of public uses such as churches, schools, parks, day care centers, libraries, and other cultural and civic uses that serve as a crucial support element for neighborhoods and communities and help establish focus and identity. The intent of these policies is to accommodate demand for residential land uses, accommodate a range of housing styles, types, densities and affordability, and to ensure that new and rehabilitated residential structures enhance the quality of the neighborhood through sound construction techniques and architectural detail.

Residential land uses are divided into eight Area Plan land use designations: Estate Density, Very Low Density Residential, Low Density Residential, Medium Density Residential, Medium High Density Residential, High Density Residential, Very High Density Residential, and Highest Density Residential.

Estate Density Residential (EDR) - The Estate Density Residential land use designation provides for the development of detached single family residential dwelling units and ancillary structures on large parcels. In the Community Development Foundation Component (unlike the Rural Community Foundation Component, which also permits the application of the Estate Density Residential designation), intensive animal-keeping uses are discouraged or would be limited as appropriate in order to ensure compatibility between the EDR designation and other, more intense Community Development residential uses in the vicinity. Limited agriculture is permitted in this designation. The density range is from 1 dwelling unit per 2 acres to 1 dwelling unit per 5 acres, which allows a minimum lot size of 2 acres.

Very Low Density Residential (VLDR) - The Very Low Density Residential land use designation provides for the development of detached single family residential dwelling units and ancillary structures on large parcels. In the Community Development Foundation Component (unlike the Rural Community Foundation Component, which also permits the application of the Very Low Density Residential land use designation), intensive animal-keeping uses are discouraged or would be limited to ensure compatibility between the VLDR designation and other, more intense Community Development residential uses in the vicinity. Limited agriculture is permitted in this designation. The density range is from 1 dwelling unit per acre to 1 dwelling unit per 2 acres, which allows a minimum lot size of 1 acre.

Low Density Residential (LDR) - The Low Density Residential land use designation provides for the development of detached single family residential dwelling units and ancillary structures on large parcels. In the Community Development Foundation Component (unlike the Rural Community Foundation Component, which also permits the LDR designation), intensive animal-keeping uses are discouraged or would be limited to ensure compatibility between the LDR designation and other, more intense Community Development residential uses in the vicinity. Limited agriculture is permitted in this designation. The density range is from 2 dwelling units per acre to 1 dwelling unit per acre, which allows a minimum lot size of one - half acre.

Medium Density Residential (MDR) - The Medium Density Residential land use designation provides for the development of conventional single family detached houses and suburban subdivisions. Limited agriculture and animal-keeping uses, such as horses, are also allowed within this category. The density range is 2.0 to 5.0 dwelling units per acre, which allows for a lot size that typically ranges from 5,500 to 20,000 square feet.

Medium High Density Residential (MHDR) - The Medium High Density Residential land use designation provides for the development of smaller lot, single family residences. Typical allowable uses in this category include detached, small-lot single family homes, patio homes, and townhouses. The potential for clustered development is provided for in this category. The density range is 5.0 to 8.0 dwelling units per acre, with lot sizes typically ranging from 4,000 to 6,500 square feet.

High Density Residential (HDR) - The High Density Residential land use designation allows detached, small lot single family and attached single family homes, patio homes, zero lot line homes, multi-family apartments, duplexes, and townhouses. The potential for clustered development is provided for in this land use category. The density range is 8.0 to 14.0 dwelling units per acre.

Very High Density Residential (VHDR) - The Very High Density Residential land use designation allows for the development of multi-family apartments, duplexes, and condominiums, with a density range of 14.0 to 20.0 dwelling units per acre.

Highest Density Residential (HHDR) - The Highest Density Residential land use designation allows for the development of multiple family apartments, including multi-story (3+) structures, with a density range of 20.0 to 40.0 dwelling units per acre.

Policies:

The following policies apply to residentially designated properties within the Community Development General Plan land use designation, as described above and as depicted on the area plan land use maps.

LU ~~28.4~~ 30.1 Accommodate the development of single- and multi-family residential units in areas appropriately designated by the General Plan and area plan land use maps.

Community Design

LU ~~28.2~~ 30.2 Accommodate higher density residential development near community centers, transportation centers, employment, and services areas.

LU ~~28.3~~ 30.3 Require that adequate and available circulation facilities, water resources, and sewer facilities exist to meet the demands of the proposed residential land use. (AI 3)

LU ~~28.4~~ 30.4 Accommodate the development of a variety of housing types, styles and densities that are accessible to and meet the needs of a range of lifestyles, physical abilities, and income levels.

LU ~~28.5~~ 30.5 Integrate a continuous network of parks, plazas, public squares, bicycle trails, transit systems, and pedestrian paths into new communities and developments to provide both connections within each community and linkages with surrounding features and communities.

LU ~~28.6~~ 30.6 Require setbacks and other design elements to buffer residential units to the extent possible from the impacts of abutting agricultural, roadway, commercial, and industrial uses. (AI 3)

LU ~~28.7~~ 30.7 Allow for reduced street widths to minimize the influence of the automobile and improve the character of a neighborhood, in accordance with the Riverside County Fire Department.

LU ~~28.8~~ 30.8 Establish activity centers within or near residential neighborhoods that contain services such as child or adult-care, recreation, public meeting rooms, convenience commercial uses, or similar facilities.

LU ~~28.9~~ 30.9 Require residential projects to be designed to maximize integration with and connectivity to nearby community centers, rural villages, and neighborhood centers.

Project Design

LU ~~28.10~~ 30.10 Require that residential units/projects be designed to consider their surroundings and to visually enhance, not degrade, the character of the immediate area. (AI 3)



Please see the
**Neighborhood Centers
Overlay** section for
discussion of
neighborhood activity
centers.

LU ~~28.11~~ 30.11 Require that special needs housing is designed to enhance, not visually degrade, the appearance of adjacent residential structures. (AI 3)

LU ~~28.12~~ 30.12 Work proactively with residential developers to incorporate, where feasible, child care centers that serve families of all incomes and children of all ages where such facilities are lacking.

Commercial Area Plan Land Use Designations

Commercial land uses are critical to the long term economic and fiscal stability of the County of Riverside. Commercial uses help to provide jobs for local residents, contribute to enhancing and balancing communities economically, and facilitate a tax base that aids in providing needed public facilities and services. Unfocused, underutilized, and unkempt commercial strips result in unsightly conditions that detract from the quality of communities, and usually impair the efficiency of the roadway that services them. It is the goal of this General Plan to accommodate commercial demand, stimulate focused commercial centers, accommodate a variety and range of uses, and ensure that new or rehabilitated commercial structures and centers enhance the character of the area and are integrated into the community they are intended to service. As stated in the RCIP Vision,

Clusters of similar businesses and industries are created within areas designated for job generating uses and our expanded educational institutions provide preparation and training for the new jobs created in these clusters.

Commercial land uses within the Community Development category are divided into three Area Plan land use designations: Commercial Retail, Commercial Office, and Commercial Tourist.



Floor Area Ratio (FAR) is measured by dividing the number of square feet of building by the number of square feet of the parcel. For example, a three-story, 60,000 square-foot building (20,000 square feet per floor) on a 20,000 square-foot parcel has a FAR of 3.0.

Commercial Retail (CR) - The Commercial Retail land use designation allows for the development of commercial retail uses at a neighborhood, community and regional level, as well as for professional office and tourist-oriented commercial uses. Commercial Retail uses will be permitted based on their compatibility with surrounding land uses, and based on the amount of Commercial Retail acreage already developed within County of Riverside unincorporated territory. The amount of land designated for Commercial Retail development within Riverside County's land use plan exceeds that amount which is anticipated to be necessary to serve Riverside County's population at build out. This oversupply will ensure that flexibility is preserved in site selection opportunities for future retail development within the county. Floor area ratios range from 0.2 to 0.35. (In order to more accurately project the actual potential for retail development within the Riverside County unincorporated areas, and the traffic and environmental impacts that would result from it, the statistical build out projections for the General Plan EIR assumed that 40% of the area designated Commercial Retail might ultimately develop as commercial uses. It was further assumed that the remaining 60% of the area designated CR would likely develop as residential uses within the Medium Density Residential range.)

Commercial Tourist (CT) - The Commercial Tourist land use designation allows for tourist-related commercial uses such as hotels, golf courses, recreation, and amusement facilities. Commercial Tourist uses will be permitted based on their compatibility with surrounding land uses. FAR range from 0.2 to 0.35.

Commercial Office (CO) - The Commercial Office land use designation allows for a variety of office uses, including financial institutions, legal services, insurance services, and other office and support services. Commercial Office uses will be permitted based on their compatibility with surrounding land uses. FAR range from 0.35 to 1.0.

Policies:

The following policies apply to commercially designated properties within the Community Development General Plan Foundation Component, as further depicted on the area plan land use maps.

LU ~~29.4~~ 31.1 Accommodate the development of commercial uses in areas appropriately designated by the General Plan and area plan land use maps. (AI 2, 6)

Community Design

LU ~~29.2~~ 31.2 Once 40% of the area designated Commercial Retail within any Area Plan is built out, commercial retail development applications that are proposed within that Area Plan will only be considered for approval based on demonstrated market need, as well as a demonstrated ability to accommodate the traffic impacts the development will generate. (AI 1)

LU ~~29.3~~ 31.3 Site buildings along sidewalks, pedestrian areas, and bicycle routes and include amenities that encourage pedestrian activity. (AI 3)

LU ~~29.4~~ 31.4 Accommodate community-oriented facilities, such as telecommunications centers, public meeting rooms, day care centers, and cultural uses. (AI 3)

LU ~~29.5~~ 31.5 Concentrate commercial uses near transportation facilities and high density residential areas and require the incorporation of facilities to promote the use of public transit, such as bus turnouts. (AI 3)

LU ~~29.6~~ 31.6 Require that commercial projects abutting residential properties protect the residential use from the impacts of noise, light, fumes, odors, vehicular traffic, parking, and operational hazards. (AI 3)

LU ~~29.7~~ 31.7 Require that adequate and available circulation facilities, water resources, and sewer facilities exist to meet the demands of the proposed land use. (AI 3)

LU ~~29.8~~ 31.8 Allow mixed use projects to develop in commercially designated areas in accordance with the guidelines of the Community Center Land Use Designation and with special consideration of impacts to adjacent uses. (AI 3)

Project Design

LU ~~29.9~~ 31.9 Require that commercial development be designed to consider their surroundings and visually enhance, not degrade, the character of the surrounding area. (AI 3)

LU ~~29.10~~ 31.10 Floor to Area Ratio (FAR) is intended for planning purposes only. The Planning Director or his/her designee shall have the discretion to authorize the use of a FAR that is less intense in order to encourage good project design and efficient site utilization.

Industrial and Business Park Area Plan Land Use Designations

Industrial land aids in creating economic growth by providing jobs for local and area-wide residents, providing growth opportunities for new and existing businesses, and facilitating a tax base upon which public services can be provided. The goal of Riverside County is to provide attractive work environments that fit with the character of each community and are well served by convenient and adequate accessibility to multi-modal transportation options that bring jobs and housing in closer proximity to one another. Stimulation of clusters of similar industrial business will facilitate competitive advantage in the market place.

Industrial/Business Park land uses within the Community Development category are divided into three Area Plan land use designations: Business Park, Light Industrial, and Heavy Industrial.

Light Industrial (LI) - The Light Industrial land use designation allows for a wide variety of industrial and related uses, including assembly and light manufacturing, repair and other service facilities, warehousing, distribution centers, and supporting retail uses. Building intensity ranges from 0.25 to 0.6 FAR.

Heavy Industrial (HI) - The Heavy Industrial land use designation allows for intense industrial activities that may have significant impacts (noise, glare, odors) on surrounding uses. Building intensity ranges from 0.15 to 0.5 FAR.

Business Park (BP) - The Business Park land use designation allows for employee-intensive uses, including research and development, technology centers, corporate and support office uses, clean industry and supporting retail uses. Building intensity ranges from 0.25 to 0.6 FAR.

Policies:

The following policies apply to Industrial and Business Park designated properties within the Community Development General Plan Foundation Component, as further depicted on the area plan land use maps.

LU ~~30.1~~ 32.1 Accommodate the continuation of existing and development of new industrial, manufacturing, research and development, and professional offices in areas appropriately designated by General Plan and area plan land use maps. (AI 1, 2, 6)

Community Design

LU ~~30.2~~ 32.2 Control heavy truck and vehicular access to minimize potential impacts on adjacent properties. (AI 43)

LU ~~30.3~~ 32.3 Protect industrial lands from encroachment of incompatible or sensitive uses, such as residential or schools, that could be impacted by industrial activity. (AI 3)

LU ~~30.4~~ 32.4 Concentrate industrial and business park uses in proximity to transportation facilities and utilities, and along transit corridors.

LU ~~30.5~~ 32.5 Allow for the inclusion of day care centers, public meeting rooms, and other community-oriented facilities in industrial districts.

LU ~~30.6~~ 32.6 Control the development of industrial uses that use, store, produce, or transport toxins, generate unacceptable levels of noise or air pollution, or result in other impacts. (AI 1)

- LU ~~30.7~~ 32.7 Require that adequate and available circulation facilities, water resources, and sewer facilities exist to meet the demands of the proposed land use. (AI 3)

Project Design

- LU ~~30.8~~ 32.8 Require that industrial development be designed to consider their surroundings and visually enhance, not degrade, the character of the surrounding area. (AI 3)
- LU ~~30.9~~ 32.9 Floor to Area Ratio (FAR) is intended for planning purposes only. The Planning Director or his/her designee shall have the discretion to authorize the use of a FAR that is less intense in order to encourage good project design and efficient site utilization.

Public Facility Area Plan Land Use Designation

Uses within the Public Facilities designation provide essential support services to the County of Riverside. These uses include airports, landfills, flood control facilities, utilities, schools, and other such facilities. Due to the intense nature of many of these activities, potential conflicts with surrounding land uses can thus occur. The intent of these policies is to provide for adequate public facilities within the county and to ensure compatibility with surrounding land uses.

Public Facility land uses within the Community Development category are grouped under the Public Facilities Area Plan land use designation.

Public Facilities (PF) - The Public Facilities land use designation provides for the development of various public, quasi-public, and private uses with similar characteristics, such as governmental facilities, utility facilities including public and private electric generating stations and corridors, landfills, airports, educational facilities, and maintenance yards. Privately held uses with public facility characteristics are not required to be designated as Public Facilities, but are eligible to be so designated based on site-specific reviews of the characteristics of the use in question. Due to the varied nature of this category, building intensity and design criteria for uses in this designation shall generally comply with those standards and policies most similar to the intended use. Airports, utility facilities, other than electric generating stations, and landfills generally have low FARs. Building intensities for civic uses such as Riverside County administrative buildings and schools, however, are comparable to other employment-generating land use designations. The maximum intensity allowed for civic uses within the Public Facilities designation is 0.60 FAR. Actual FAR will vary for other uses and the appropriate FAR will, therefore, be determined in the zoning ordinance.

Policies:

The following policies apply to Public Facility designated properties within the Community Development General Plan land use designation, as depicted on the area plan land use maps.

- LU ~~31.1~~ 33.1 Accommodate the development of public facilities in areas appropriately designated by the General Plan and area plan land use maps. (AI 1, 2, 6)

Community Design

- LU ~~31.2~~ 33.2 Protect major public facilities, such as landfill and solid waste processing sites and airports, from the encroachment of incompatible uses. (AI 3)

- LU ~~31.3~~ 33.3 Require that new public facilities protect sensitive uses, such as schools and residences, from the impacts of noise, light, fumes, odors, vehicular traffic, parking, and operational hazards. (AI 3)
- LU ~~31.4~~ 33.4 Require that adequate and available circulation facilities, water resources, and sewer facilities exist to meet the demands of the proposed land use. (AI 3)

Project Design

- LU ~~31.5~~ 33.5 Require that public facilities be designed to consider their surroundings and visually enhance, not degrade, the character of the surrounding area. (AI 3)
- LU ~~31.6~~ 33.6 Ensure that development and conservation land uses do not infringe upon existing essential public facilities and public utility corridors, which include Riverside County regional landfills, fee owned rights-of-way and permanent easements, whose true land use is that of Public Facilities. This policy will ensure that the public facilities designation governs over what otherwise may be inferred by the large-scale General Plan maps. (AI 3)
- LU ~~31.7~~ 33.7 Due to the scale of General Plan and Area Plan maps and the size of the county, utility easements and linear rights-of-way that are narrow in width are not depicted on General Plan and Area Plan maps. These features need to be taken into consideration in the review of applications to develop land and proposals to preserve land for conservation.

Community Center Area Plan Land Use Designation

One of the central concepts of the RCIP Vision and General Planning Principles is the creation of community centers. As stated in the RCIP Vision:

“Our communities maintain their individual distinctive qualities and character, surrounded in most cases by open space or non-intensive uses to contribute to their sense of unique identity. Community centers, gathering places, and special focal points unique to each community also aid this identity.”

The purpose of these community centers is multi-faceted; accommodating future growth, establishing a new growth pattern for Riverside County, defining and enhancing communities, and achieving the other aspects of the RCIP Vision such as improved mobility and the protection/provision of open spaces. In essence, community centers are intended to accommodate increased densities and a more focused growth pattern in order to accommodate future growth and reduce sprawl. This in turn will help protect Riverside County's rural communities, character, and open spaces.

Community centers are purposefully designed to function differently from the typical patterns of individual, segregated land uses. Uses and activities are designed together in an integrated fashion to create a dynamic urban environment that acts as the center of activity for the surrounding area. The design and activity found in community centers helps in creating a strong “a sense of place.” Community centers accommodate a variety of residential densities, nonresidential intensities and public spaces that are integrated in a manner that promotes pedestrian activity and minimizes the dominance of the automobile. Public and quasi-public uses such as civic buildings, schools, open space, recreational and cultural facilities are also integral parts of community centers. Because of their more intense, compact nature of development, community centers accommodate and enhance the feasibility of providing transit service and other forms of transportation, including pedestrian and bicycle travel.

Community centers typically consist of two levels of development; a centralized core area that accommodates the highest intensity of use, and an adjacent core support area where development intensity lessens as it radiates away from the core. This designation allows a horizontal and/or vertical mixture of uses on one or more parcels, and may be either a series of free-standing structures or combined in a single building.

Community centers should be designed to encourage a safe, lively pedestrian environment and focus retail or service uses on the ground floor with professional offices and/or residential uses on the upper floors.

The scale, size and mixture of uses in the community centers varies based upon the character of the surrounding area. This designation consists of four Community Center types to reflect variations in intended size, scale, focus, and composition of uses: Village Centers, Town Centers, Job Centers, and Entertainment Centers. The intended designation of each community center is described in those individual area plans where such centers are located. See General Plan Appendix E-1, pages 4-6 (Tables E-6, E-7, and E-8, in particular), for specifics on the land use and planning assumptions associated with each type of Community Center.

Village Center (VC) - Village Centers are pedestrian-oriented community centers that serve adjacent and nearby residential neighborhoods. These are the smallest scale community centers and are intended to reflect a village, or small downtown atmosphere. The Village Center is most appropriately located in a suburban type environment. Allowable land uses within Village Centers include:

- Very High and High Density Residential in the core area;
- High Density Residential in the core support area;
- Commercial Retail;
- Commercial Office;
- Public Facilities; and
- Open Space-Recreation.

Typical uses may include public or quasi-public uses (schools, plazas, cultural centers, parks), neighborhood or community serving retail centers, recreational uses, offices, and courtyard-style or attached residential development. Land use emphasis is generally on uses within the Commercial Retail designation such as a grocery store, drug store, and other retail outlets, and the Commercial Office designation such as professional services and financial institutions. Residential densities range from 3.0 to 20.0 dwelling units per acre, while non-residential intensities range from 0.2 to 1.0 FAR.

Town Center (TC) - Town Centers allow for a more intense and intimate mix of land uses when compared to the Village Center. Town Centers can be located in dense urban areas or as a core for a large area of suburban development. The Town Center provides uses such as those found in a traditional downtown district. Town Centers provide regional attractions and facilities in addition to those uses that serve local residents and workers. Allowable land uses within Town Centers include:

- Highest Density Residential in or adjacent to the core area;
- Very High Density Residential in the core and core support areas;

- Commercial Retail;
- Commercial Office;
- Commercial Tourist;
- Public Facilities; and
- Open Space-Recreation

The land use emphasis in Town Centers is primarily on retail and office uses. Typical commercial uses may include local and regional serving uses such as restaurants, bookstores, specialty stores, mid-rise office complexes, business support services, medical services, day care centers, and hotels. Appropriate public uses include those associated with a downtown core such as libraries, cultural facilities, community centers, sports and recreation facilities, theaters, plazas, and urban parks. Other uses include attached single family and multi-family residences. Densities range from 14.0 to 40.0 dwelling units per acre, while non-residential intensities range from 0.2 to 3.0 FAR.

Job Center (JC) - Job Centers can be viewed as a concentrated area of employment uses. Job Centers may vary in scale and size, but are intended to provide regional-serving uses with a mixture of business park and office uses, support commercial retail centers and high density residential uses. Allowable land uses within Job Centers include:

- Highest Density Residential within the core area;
- Very High Density Residential within the core and core support area;
- Business Park;
- Light Industrial;
- Commercial Retail;
- Commercial Office;
- Public Facilities; and
- Open Space-Recreation.

Typical employment uses within Business Park and Light Industrial designated areas include research and development firms, manufacturing, assembling, private and public research institutions, academic institutions, medical facilities, and support commercial uses. Warehousing and distribution facilities uses are not allowed within Job Centers.

Support commercial and retail service centers should serve the daily needs of employees and employers. Typical uses include restaurants, dry cleaners, grocery stores, copy centers, printers, telecommunication centers, professional offices, health clubs, day care centers, and regional-serving commercial uses such as gas stations, lodging facilities, banks, recreational and other ancillary services. Residential uses include attached single family and multi-family residences such as courtyard homes and apartments. Public/quasi-public and open space uses

may include cultural and educational facilities, government facilities, and urban parks. Residential densities range from 14.0 to 40.0 dwelling units per acre, while non-residential intensities range from 0.2 to 2.0 FAR. There is also a second type of Job Center, the Job Center with No Residential (JCNR), which may be used in some locations as an alternative to the Entertainment Center. See General Plan Appendix E-1 (Tables E-6 and E-7, in particular) for more details.

Entertainment Center (EC) - Entertainment Centers vary in size, scale and purpose, from resort communities, to intense, active centers. Entertainment Centers provide regional entertainment, recreation and tourist-destination attractions and facilities in addition to support commercial and office uses. Allowable land uses include:

- Very High Density Residential within the core area;
- High Density Residential within the core and core support areas;
- Commercial Tourist;
- Commercial Retail;
- Commercial Office;
- Public Facilities; and
- Open Space-Recreation.

The land use emphasis in Entertainment Centers is primarily on regional serving, tourist-oriented entertainment and recreational facilities. These uses may include amusement parks, hotels, golf courses, water parks, arcades, sports arenas/stadiums, regional parks, and athletic fields. Other typical land uses within Entertainment Centers include small-lot detached and attached residences, public/quasi-public uses such as a visitors' center or park, local and regional serving commercial retail and service uses, and mid-rise commercial office uses. Typical commercial and office uses may include restaurants, specialty stores, business support services, day care centers, and financial institutions. Residential densities range from 8.0 to 20.0 dwelling units per acre, while non-residential intensities range from 0.2 to 1.5 FAR. As noted above, the Job Center with No Residential (JCNR) may be used in some locations as an alternative to the Entertainment Center. See General Plan Appendix E-1 (Tables E-6 and E-7, in particular) for more details.

Policies:

The following policies apply to properties with the Community Center land use designation within the Community Development General Plan Foundation Component, as further depicted on the area plan land use maps.

- LU ~~32.4~~ 34.1 Accommodate the development of structures and sites that integrate a mix of housing, retail, commercial office, business park, public/quasi-public, and recreational open space uses in areas designated for Community Center on the area plan land use maps.

Community Design

- LU ~~32.2~~ 34.2 Require that areas designated as community center be planned and designed with a specific plan of land use. (AI 14, 15)
- LU ~~32.3~~ 34.3 Provide open space areas within community centers to provide visual relief from the urban environment, form linkages to other portions of the urban area, and serve as buffers, where necessary. (AI 3)
- LU ~~32.4~~ 34.4 Include day care centers, public meeting rooms, and other community-oriented facilities in community and employment centers whenever feasible, along transit lines or major circulation facilities, and in locations away from significant noise and air quality generators.
- LU ~~32.5~~ 34.5 Locate community centers along transit lines and/or major circulation facilities in order to enhance accessibility and promote transit ridership. (AI 3)
- LU ~~32.6~~ 34.6 Require that adequate and available circulation facilities, water resources, and sewer facilities exist to meet the demands of the proposed land use. (AI 3)
- LU ~~32.7~~ 34.7 Orient the entrance of buildings in community centers to the streets and provide parking in the rear. (AI 3)
- LU ~~32.8~~ 34.8 Allow shared parking and reduced parking standards in the cores of community centers. (AI 3)
- LU ~~32.9~~ 34.9 Integrate pedestrian, equestrian and bicycle-friendly street and trail networks connecting community centers with surrounding land uses. (AI 3)

Project Design

- LU ~~32.10~~ 34.10 Require that mixed-use developments be designed to mitigate potential conflicts between uses, considering such issues as noise, lighting, security, trash, and truck, and automobile access. (AI 3)
- LU ~~32.11~~ 34.11 Require that mixed-use developments be located and designed to visually enhance, not degrade the character of the surrounding area. (AI 3)

Location and Extent of Community Centers

- LU ~~32.12~~ 34.12 Since it is a land use designation within the Community Development Foundation Component, the Community Center designation may be enlarged, reduced, added, or eliminated for any site within a Community Development area through quarterly General Plan Amendments (GPAs). However, the area of any one Community Center (whether included in the General Plan at the time of its initial adoption or subsequently added through a GPA) shall not be permitted to be enlarged by a cumulative total (through one or more GPAs) of more than 10% during any eight-year certainty period. (AI 1, 3)

Mixed Use Planning Area

Mixed-use development is any urban, suburban or village development that blends a combination of residential, commercial, cultural, institutional, or industrial uses where those functions are physically and functionally integrated. Mixed-use development provides pedestrian connections and other amenities such as:

- greater housing variety and density, more affordable housing, life-cycle housing (starter homes to larger family homes to senior housing), workforce housing, veterans housing etc.;
- reduced distances between housing, workplaces, retail businesses and other amenities and destinations;
- better access to fresh, healthy foods (as food and retail and farmers markets can be accessed on foot/bike or by transit);
- more compact development, land use synergy (e.g. residents provide customers for retail which provide amenities for residents);
- stronger neighborhood character, sense of place; and
- walkable, bicycle-friendly environments with increased accessibility via transit resulting in reduced transportation costs.

The Mixed Use Planning Area (MUPA) land use designation is intended to reflect mixed use development areas throughout Riverside County. The intent of the designation is not to identify a particular mixture or intensity of land uses, but to designate areas where a mixture of residential, commercial, office, entertainment, educational, and/or recreational uses, or other uses is planned. Many of the Mixed Use Planning Areas are located in specific plans. In the future, these areas may be appropriate candidates for the Community Center designation. In order for the Community Center designation to be considered, the project proponent is required to file a specific plan or a specific plan amendment, wherein issues relating to density, traffic, provision of transit services, compatibility with other nearby land uses, fiscal impacts, and other issues relating to the viability of the Community Center proposal are addressed and resolved.

Overlays

Overlays are land use designations that are intended to reflect a particular characteristic and are not restricted by land use categories. An overlay is applied over an underlying land use designation to provide another layer of guidance or a variety of options, or to illustrate a site characteristic that may present a constraint to land development. For instance, the underlying land use designation might be Rural Residential; however, the presence of the Rural Village Overlay allows the opportunity to develop higher density residential and/or commercial uses. In this case, the property owner can choose between developing to the Rural Residential standards or the standards of the Rural Village Overlay. For each Overlay, a schematic outlining the applicable land use designations and their associated planning assumptions is presented in General Plan Appendix E-1 (Tables E-10 through E-13, in particular). For the two Rural Village Land Use Overlays, a map of the specific additional (alternate) land use designations is provided in the applicable area plan.

An Overlay is a tool that allows land use designations from a higher level of development (typically, the Community Development Foundation Component) to be applied to areas currently under land use designations of lower-intensity Foundation Components (such as the Rural, Rural Community, Agriculture, or Open Space Foundation Components). The alternate Foundation Component and land use designations of the Overlay may

be applied through a General Plan Amendment in the future. The key advantages of an Overlay are that: (1) the existing (underlying) land use designation remains unless or until the Overlay is desired; and (2) the necessary General Plan Amendment to convert the Overlay area from the existing Foundation Component to the new Community Development (or other) land use designations is typically exempt from the eight-year Foundation Component amendment restriction and other procedural requirements applicable to Foundation Component amendments. Instead, unless indicated otherwise by specific General Plan policies, General Plan Amendments for Overlays shall be deemed Entitlement/Policy amendments and subject to the procedural requirements applicable to that amendment category.

Community Development Overlay

The Community Development Overlay is a tool that allows land use designations from the Community Development Foundation Component to be applied through General Plan Amendments in the future within specified areas currently within Rural, Rural Community, Agriculture, or Open Space Foundation Component. The existing underlying land use designations of these other foundation components will remain and continue to be allowed until such time as the alternate Community Development Overlay’s land uses are approved. Typically, such overlays will contain special policies within the appropriate area plan texts that address important local issues, such as buffering between existing and new uses, rules for applying the new Community Development designations, and their permitted densities and intensities. Community Development Overlays are mapped on the affected Area Plan Overlays and Policy Areas map. For the specific land use and planning assumptions associated with the Community Development Overlays throughout the county, see General Plan Appendix E-1, Table E-12.

Community Center Overlay

The Community Center Overlay is applied in areas where the intent under the General Plan is for either a Community Center to be developed, or for the underlying designated land use to be developed (or remain) depending on the desires of the affected landowners. Various factors, including the existence of multiple small parcels, existing development patterns, or uncertainty as to the ultimate location of the community center in the local area, result in the need to retain flexibility regarding options for development while the community center concept is pursued. In Community Center Overlay areas, either a specific plan or a more general master plan, instead of a specific plan, may be established. Also, for implementation, an overlay zone may be applied that provides flexible regulations to facilitate the ultimate development of a community center while preserving many traditional land use and development options. Because of the multiplicity of smaller parcels in some Community Center Overlay areas and other factors, the County of Riverside may take a role in working with area landowners to prepare a master plan or a specific plan, and undertaking other functions that would assist in developing a community center. For the specific land use and planning assumptions associated with Community Center Overlays within the General Plan, see Table E-10 of General Plan Appendix E-1.

Policies:

- LU ~~33.4~~ 35.1 Allow either a Community Center or a land use consistent with the underlying designation to be developed in areas covered by the Community Center Overlay. (AI 1)
- LU ~~33.2~~ 35.2 A Community Center Overlay may be applied to any area within the Community Development Foundation Component, where such application would be consistent with the intent and policies of this section, and the ultimate development of a community center, consistent with the intent and policies of the applicable Community Center land use designations.

LU ~~33.3~~ 35.3 Since it utilizes land use designations that are in the Community Development Foundation Component, the Community Center Overlay designation may be enlarged, reduced, added, or eliminated for any site within a Community Development area through quarterly General Plan Amendments (GPAs). (AI 2)

Rural Village Overlay and Rural Village Land Use Overlay

The Rural Village Overlay and Rural Village Land Use Overlay allow a concentration of development within rural areas. Both types of Rural Villages accommodate a range of residential and local-serving commercial, educational, cultural, and recreational opportunities.

In some rural village areas, dispersed development patterns, physical characteristics such as topography and floodplains, and other factors prevented the final definition of formal Rural Village Overlay boundaries at the time of the adoption of the General Plan in 2003. Thus, to accommodate and plan for these unresolved issues, a number of areas were designated in the 2003 General Plan as “Rural Village Study Areas.” These were the following: Meadowbrook and El Cariso (Elsinore Area Plan), Good Hope/Wagonwheel (Mead Valley Area Plan), and Aguanga/Radec Junction, and Twin Creek Ranch (REMAP). The Rural Villages that were recognized in the General Plan in 2003 as Rural Village Overlays were as follows: Sky Valley (Western Coachella Valley Area Plan), Chiriaco Summit (Eastern Coachella Valley), and Anza (REMAP).

Following the adoption of the General Plan in 2003, relevant factors were studied in more detail on a parcel-by-parcel basis through spatial analyses conducted for each Rural Village Overlay and Study Area. These analyses included review of existing land use patterns, lot sizes, topography, and available infrastructure in order to determine appropriate designations and areas that are suitable for commercial uses, small-scale industrial uses, or residential development intensities higher than existing levels. Where the results of these spatial analyses supported the merits of development potential, the existing Rural Village Study Areas were redesignated as “Rural Village Land Use Overlays.” For other Rural Village Study Areas, the spatial analysis indicated the need for changes to the Rural Villages, such as enlargement, reduction, or deletion.

Consequently, as a result of General Plan Amendment No. 960, two former Rural Village Study Areas are now recognized as Rural Village Land Use Overlays: Meadowbrook (Elsinore Area Plan) and Good Hope/Wagonwheel (Mead Valley Area Plan). For each of these RVLUOs, a custom overlay of land use designations was created and placed in the applicable Area Plan. Rural Villages eliminated as a result of GPA No. 960 were: El Cariso (Elsinore Area Plan), Aguanga/Radec Junction, and Twin Creek Ranch (REMAP), Anza (REMAP), and Chiriaco Summit (Eastern Coachella Valley). GPA No. 960 also recognized Sky Valley (Western Coachella Valley Area Plan) as a Rural Village Overlay and Chiriaco Summit Rural Village Study Area was redesignated as a Policy Area for clarification. Lastly, the former Anza Rural Village Overlay was subsumed into a much larger Anza Valley Policy Area (see REMAP for more details on the Anza area).

For the specific land use and planning assumptions associated with each of the Rural Village Overlays and Land Use Overlays located throughout the county, see Table E-11 of General Plan Appendix E-1.

Policies:

The following policies apply to properties designated with the Rural Village Overlay or Rural Village Land Use Overlay on the area plan overlays and policy areas maps.

LU ~~34.4~~ 36.1 Allow areas designated with the Rural Village Land Use Overlay to develop in accordance with the Overlay designation or the underlying land use designation.

- LU ~~34.2~~ 36.2 Consider new or expanded Rural Village Land Use Overlays within Agriculture, Rural, Rural Community Foundation Component as well as the Open Space-Rural land use designation, as a Foundation Amendment.
- LU ~~34.3~~ 36.3 Require that adequate and available transportation facilities, water resources, sewer facilities and/or septic capacity exist to meet the demands of the proposed land use. (AI 3)
- LU ~~34.4~~ 36.4 Permit transfer of density or lot aggregation/consolidation in Rural Village Land Use Overlays when such mechanisms and programs are available in the county (AI 30)
- LU ~~34.5~~ 36.5 If a Rural Village Study Area Overlay is eliminated, develop the area according to the policies of the underlying land use designation(s).

Specific Community Development Designation Overlays

In order to respond to the need for local flexibility, the County of Riverside may choose to designate properties within any foundation component with a specific community development designation overlay. Under this type of Overlay, a single specific land use designation is provided as an “alternate” land use that may be developed on the subject property if approved through a General Plan Amendment. Unlike the Community Center and Community Development Overlays, which typically cover a range of land use designations, the Specific Community Development Designation Overlays only propose a single land use (most commonly Business Park or Commercial-Retail). Again, the application of a Specific Community Development Designation Overlay to properties within any foundation component other than the Community Development foundation component may only occur in conjunction with the initial adoption of the General Plan and with the eight-year General Plan review cycles, except as otherwise specified pursuant to the provisions of the General Plan Certainty System, which, with specified exceptions, limits amendments between foundation component categories to eight-year cycles. In situations where the underlying designation is within a different foundation component, the specific community development designation overlay provides an exemption from the eight-year limit and other procedural requirements applicable to Foundation Component amendments, but only for the General Plan Amendment that proposes to enact the specific land use designation specified by the overlay. Such amendments shall be deemed Entitlement/Policy amendments and be subject to the procedural requirements applicable to that category of amendments. For example, a property that has an underlying designation of Rural Community Very Low Density Residential and an overlay of Commercial Retail would be eligible to file for, and receive approval of, a General Plan Amendment to Commercial Retail inside of (that is, without waiting out) the eight-year period. However, unless the property qualified under one of the other specified exemptions, the property would not be eligible to request a General Plan Amendment to any land use designation not addressed by the Overlay, for example Medium Density Residential, during that period.

In situations where a Specific Community Development Designation Overlay (other than a Community Center Overlay) is applied over a different Community Development designation, consult the applicable Area Plan text for an explanation. For the specific land use and planning assumptions associated with various Specific Community Development Designation located throughout the county, see Table E-13 of General Plan Appendix E-1.

Policy Areas

Since not all sectors within an area plan are the same, Area Plan land use designations don't always reflect the unique features found in an area. To preserve these distinctive land use patterns of different communities, policies tailored towards these unique features may be required. Accordingly, a Policy Area is a portion of an area plan that contains special or unique characteristics that merit detailed attention and focused policies. For example, the Hot Springs Policy Area in the Western Coachella Valley Area Plan is a thermal resource area with hot mineral water that is clean, clear, and free of sulfur odor. Therefore, even though most of the policy area is designated as Rural Desert in the Rural Foundation Component, additional land uses (more consistent with the Community Development Foundation Component) that utilize the natural resources, such as hotels, motels, recreational vehicle parks, mobile home parks, residential developments and institutional uses, may be considered without requiring a Foundation Component amendment.

Within a Policy Area, land use related requirements such as minimum lot sizes, allowable uses and project design may be more or less restrictive than the underlying Area Plan land use designation depending upon the purpose of that specific Policy Area. The Policy Areas are identified in their respective Area Plan maps and text. Most Policy Areas do not directly alter land use designations or planning assumptions. However, for the dozen or so that do, the specific land use and planning assumptions are associated with each of these Policy Areas are listed in Table E-14 of General Plan Appendix E-1.

Closed Landfill Policy Area

The Closed Landfill Policy Area may be applied to either publicly or privately owned properties that were once the sites of landfills, waste disposal or dump sites, or "burn" (former trash incineration) sites. The purpose of the policy area is to alert landowners and future land users that the subject parcel was utilized for this purpose in the past and to provide for review of development proposals by the Riverside County Department of Waste Management.

Policies:

The following policy applies to properties designated with the Closed Landfill Policy Area on an Area Plan Land Use Map:

- LU ~~35.4~~ 37.1 Require that proposed projects on properties designated with the Closed Landfill Policy Area be reviewed by the Department of Waste *Resources Management* and the Department of Environmental Health to assure that future development is designed to protect public health and safety.

Wilderness Policy Area

Under the Wilderness Act of 1964, the U.S. Congress is empowered to designate lands as "Wilderness" to ensure special protection of their unique values as lands "affected primarily by the forces of nature," "untrammelled by man" and with "outstanding opportunities for solitude." These Wildernesses are strictly managed, generally by the U.S. Bureau of Land Management (BLM), according to an adopted management plan.

Much of the far eastern third of Riverside County is comprised of public (federal) land designated as federal Wilderness. The purpose of the policy area is to alert landowners and future land owners of the location of

“

A wilderness, in contrast with those areas where man and his own works dominate the landscape, is hereby recognized as an area where the earth and its community of life are untrammelled by man, where man himself is a visitor who does not remain.

”

*- From the
Wilderness Act
of 1964*

these unique public lands in their vicinity. The goal is to prevent conflicts between future uses and existing Wilderness areas by ensuring any new land uses proposed within or adjacent to a Wilderness are properly considered in terms of their potential effects to these sensitive natural areas.

The Wilderness Policy Area may be applied to generally indicate areas that have been federally designated as Wilderness. The policy area may extend over both public and private lands. However mapping notwithstanding, County of Riverside jurisdiction and the policies herein only apply to the private lands. Similarly, federal Wilderness regulations only apply to the public federal lands so designated by Congress; the County’s Wilderness Policy Area designation has no effect on their management or any other BLM actions.

Policies:

The following policies apply to properties designated with the Wilderness Policy Area on an Area Plan Land Use Map:

- LU 38.1 *When reviewing project proposals for private lands within or directly adjacent to a Wilderness Policy Area, County shall ensure that the proposal does not cause or encourage new intrusions into any federally-designated Wilderness by vehicles or equipment. This includes issues such as, avoiding creating new roads leading up to or into the federal Wilderness and ensuring grading and fire fuel modification zones do not encroach into the federal Wilderness.*

- LU 38.2 *To prevent conflicts between public and private land uses, development applications on private land within or adjacent to a Wilderness Policy Area shall provide the following additional information:*
 - a. *Show the boundaries of any federally-designated Wilderness, National Park or similar protected public land.*
 - b. *Show all adjacent public lands on project site plans and indicate public use designations. Any other relevant federal land use designation or protection shall also be indicated, including, but not limited to named: Areas of Critical Environmental Concern (ACEC), Desert Wildlife Management Areas (DWMAs) and Wildlife Habitat Management Areas (WHMAs). This information is available from either the California Desert Conservation Area (CDCA) Plan or the Northern and Eastern Colorado Desert Cooperative Management Plan (NECO), both of which are available from the Bureau of Land Management.*
 - c. *Show how land use consistency shall be achieved between the boundary of the proposed use and the Wilderness area.*

- LU 38.3 *Where appropriate, the Wilderness Policy Area designation may be applied to areas where there is a need to coordinate private land uses near protected public lands to ensure that approved development does not conflict with public land uses, particularly conservation. This method may be applied to any area encompassing a combination of private and public lands, whether federal, state or other, where there is a need to coordinate with public land use plans.*

- LU 38.4 *Review any proposed project on private property within or adjacent to the Sand-to-Snow Wilderness Policy Area to ensure the proposed development would not create a significant land use conflict with proposed plans to protect public lands identified and mapped by BLM as having wilderness characteristics within the Policy Area (namely the identified public lands linking the San Bernardino National Forest to the west and Joshua Tree National Park to the east).*

LU 38.5 Periodically review and update existing Wilderness Policy Areas to ensure they continue to reflect current federal Wilderness areas. The periodic review should also be used to evaluate other public lands to determine if there is a need for a Wilderness Policy Area to prevent conflicts between public and private lands.

Far Eastern Riverside County Desert Areas (Non-Area Plan)

Most areas in the western half of Riverside County, plus portions of the county's eastern half are located within a specific Area Plan boundary. However, there are some lands in the eastern portion of the county that are not located within an Area Plan. These portions of eastern Riverside County are shown in Figure LU-4, Area Plan Boundary Map, and are the focus of this section.

The portion of eastern Riverside County located easterly of the Coachella Valley is characterized by expansive, primarily undeveloped desert and mountainous areas. This vast sub-region consists of a variety of geographic features, including flat desert valleys, rolling sand dunes, stark hillside and mountain ranges, and lush riparian corridors along the Colorado River. The dramatic desert terrain of the Joshua Tree National Park can also be found here.

Some of the more prominent natural features and land uses located here include:

- Joshua Tree National Park;
- Several clustered mountain ranges, including the Orocopia, Chuckwalla, Little Chuckwalla, Mule, Arica, Little Maria, Palen, McCoy, Pinto, Big Maria and Riverside Mountains;
- Chuckwalla Valley, which is bisected by Interstate 10 east of the I-10/ SR-177 junction;
- Northern portion of the Chocolate Mountain Aerial Gunnery Range;
- Banks of the Colorado River;
- The Colorado River Aqueduct owned and operated by the Metropolitan Water District of Southern California.
- *Several large-scale solar power plants;*
- Several mining operations, including the small mining enclave of Midland; and
- Scattered rural residential uses.

Interstate 10, State Route 95, State Route 177, and State Route 62 are the primary highways providing vehicular access throughout this region. In addition, a substantial portion of the Desert Tortoise Reserve Area is located here.

The intent of the land use plan shown in Figure LU-6 is to preserve the unique and spectacular open space character of this desert region, and to maintain those existing rural and mineral resource land uses scattered throughout the area. Table LU-6 below lists the land use acreage distribution and dwelling



For additional policies related to desert tortoise habitat, see the **CV-MSHCP**.

unit/population buildout potential for this portion of the county.

Policies:

- LU ~~36.1~~ 39.1 Preserve the character of the *Far* Eastern Riverside County Desert Areas (*FERCO*) through application of those land use designations reflected on Figure LU-6, Eastern Riverside County Desert Areas Land Use Plan.
- LU ~~36.2~~ 39.2 Development within two miles of the Chocolate Mountain Aerial Gunnery Range shall remain limited and compatible with the Open Space Foundation Component.
- LU ~~36.3~~ 39.3 Prohibit residential development, except construction of a single-family dwelling on a legal residential lot of record, within the current 60 dB CNEL contours of the Chocolate Mountain Aerial Gunnery Range.
- LU ~~36.4~~ 39.4 New development within 3 miles of the Chocolate Mountain Aerial Gunnery Range (CMAGR) outer boundary shall be required to disclose through recordation of an Environmental Constraints Note, avigation (or other) easement, or other instrument as deemed suitable, the potential for noise, vibrations or interference emanating from aviation activities and other military operations performed within or above the CMAGR.

**Table LU-6
Far Eastern Riverside County Desert Areas (*FERCO*) Land Use Summary**

Land Use	Acres	Dwelling Units	Population
Rural Residential	0	0	0
Open Space-Rural ^{1,2}	1,302,365*	32,559	99,908
Open Space-Conservation Habitat	468,162	0	0
Open Space-Water	2,084	0	0
Indian Lands	2,740	N/A	N/A
Total	1,775,351	32,559	99,908

NOTES:

- 1 Includes 108,363 acres in the Chocolate Mountain Aerial Gunnery Range.
- 2 Includes 1,228,313 acres of public lands and 74,052 acres of private lands.

Public Lands in Far Eastern Riverside County

Large swaths of open lands within the County fall under state or federal jurisdictions. This is particularly true in the eastern third of Riverside County, where roughly 80% of the land is owned or managed by the United States government. The State of California, Indian Tribes and various local and regional agencies also have extensive holdings in Far Eastern Riverside County. The boundaries of many of these resources, particularly the National Parks and Forests, typically stretch beyond Riverside County. Most of the federal lands in this region fall within the California Desert Conservation Area (CDCA) Plan of 1980, as amended, which is managed by the U.S. Bureau of Land Management (BLM).

Among the designations and protections applied to public lands, certain key types are worth notice. First and foremost is the Joshua Tree National Park, along with 11 federal Wildernesses that fall within Riverside County. See Table LU-7, below. The Wilderness areas were created through acts of Congress and come with strict land use restrictions pursuant to the Wilderness Act of 1964. County Wilderness Policy Areas, as shown in Figure LU-7, are designated in the General Plan to improve planning and coordination between these protected public lands and any adjacent private uses. See page LU-75 for the policies associated with Wilderness Policy Areas.

**Table LU-7
Protected Federal Wilderness Areas in Eastern Riverside County**

Resource ¹	Unit Name	Located Within Area Plans ²	Acreage in FERCO	Total Acreage in County
Wilderness	Beauty Mountain	REMAP	0	19,550
Wilderness	Big Maria Mountains	FERCO, PVV	35,950	46,460
Wilderness	Chuckwalla Mountains	FERCO, DC	101,520	108,760
Wilderness ³	Joshua Tree ³	FERCO, WCV, ECV, DC	397,090	493,750
National Park ⁴	Joshua Tree ⁴	FERCO, WCV, ECV, DC	125,690	159,650
Wilderness	Little Chuckwalla Mountains	FERCO	26,330	26,330
Wilderness	Mecca Hills	ECV	0	33,350
Wilderness	Orocopia Mountains	FERCO, ECV	10,960	61,610
Wilderness	Palen / McCoy	FERCO, PVV	248,850	251,090
Wilderness	Palo Verde Mountains	PVV	0	540
Wilderness	Pinto Mountains	FERCO	23,110	23,110
Wilderness	Rice Valley	FERCO	43,440	43,440
Wilderness	Riverside Mountains	FERCO	25,130	25,130
Wilderness	San Gorgonio	WCV	0	13,060
Wilderness	San Jacinto	REMAP, PASS, WCV	0	226,810
Wilderness	Santa Rosa	REMAP, WCV, ECV	0	96,010
Proposed National Monument ⁵	Sand-to-Snow	WCV	0	(36,850) ⁶
Total			1,038,060	1,628,650

NOTES:

- 1 All areas listed are federal lands and all are managed by the U.S. Bureau of Land Management (BLM).
- 2 Area Plan abbreviations: WCV = Western Coachella Valley; ECV = Eastern Coachella Valley; DC = Desert Center; REMAP = Riverside Extended Mountains; PVV = Palo Verde Valley; PASS = San Gorgonio Pass; FERCO = Far Eastern Riverside County (areas not in any existing Area Plan). See Land Use Tables of the individual Area Plans for totals by Area Plan.
- 3 Portion of Joshua Tree Wilderness excluding Joshua Tree National Park.
- 4 Joshua Tree National Park portion of Joshua Tree Wilderness. Managed by the U.S. National Park Service.
- 5 Area proposed for federal National Monument designation pursuant to the proposed federal California Desert Protection Act of 2011.
- 6 Proposed area, therefore not included in totals.

Renewable Energy Development in Far Eastern Riverside County

Over the last decade, renewable energy development in California has greatly expanded, triggered by the shifting economies of the State's increasing demand for "green" electricity. Since 2006, over 1,700 megawatts (MW) of wholesale renewable energy generation have been built within the desert in the far eastern third of Riverside County. By 2020 up to an additional 2,500 megawatts (MW) of solar generating capacity is expected to be added based on currently pending applications before the state. As the State of California develops and implements policies to reach its updated Renewable Energy Portfolio Standards, demand for land suitable for renewable energy development will likely continue to grow. With these needs in mind, the State and federal government have engaged in multiple rounds of planning aimed at ensuring the need for renewable energy is not met at the expense of the West's desert bounty. The sections below briefly discuss these planning efforts as they relate to land use planning for Riverside County.

BLM Riverside East Solar Energy Zone

In 2012, the BLM adopted a Solar Energy Program (SEP) to guide utility-scale (20 megawatts or more) solar energy development on public lands in six southwestern states, including California. Within the SEP is the Riverside East Solar Energy Zone (SEZ), which applies to federal land within Riverside County and identifies areas BLM consider provisionally suitable for commercial solar development. The State subsequently entered into a related planning effort to develop the Desert Renewable Energy Conservation Plan (DRECP) over portions of six southern and eastern counties in the State, including 2.1 million acres in far eastern Riverside County.

While the State’s plan is not yet adopted, BLM has analyzed federal public lands within the proposed DRECP boundaries and adjusted its land uses, including SEZs, where necessary to ensure consistency between the SEP and the DRECP. Figure LU-8 shows both the SEZ areas adopted by BLM and additional areas proposed under the DRECP. Notwithstanding the Riverside East SEZ boundaries, the BLM program does not explicitly apply to privately-owned land.

The Riverside East SEZ encompasses approximately 203,000 acres within the County, of which 148,000 acres are considered developable for utility-scale solar power plants, 11,500 acres are deemed undevelopable (that is, solar exclusion areas) and 15,800 acres are already permitted for solar energy projects. See Figure LU-8. Projects approved within the Riverside East SEZ collectively produce nearly 1,200 MW of electricity annually.

At full buildout capacity, BLM estimates the Riverside East SEZ could produce between 13,000 to 24,000 MW of new electrical generation capacity (although full buildout is unlikely; BLM estimates 80% buildout as the expected upper end). New transmission lines and upgrades of existing transmission lines would be required to convey the electricity to load centers throughout the state.

The Riverside East SEZ is supported by two main energy corridors: a two-mile (3-km) wide corridor federally designated under Section 368 of the Energy Policy Act of 2005 runs along Interstate 10, generally south of the Riverside East SEZ which carries 500-kilovolt (kV) transmission lines; and a second corridor which runs north-south along the east edge of the Riverside East SEZ and carries slightly smaller lines. In addition, several major lines run roughly north-south through from the San Geronio Pass area connecting Riverside County with San Bernardino County. The ability of solar facilities to connect to the regional electricity market via these transmission corridors is critical to successful energy development.

The following policies are designed to ensure that any future renewable energy development occurring in the far eastern desert region of Riverside County is carried out in a manner that avoids both land use conflicts and adverse effects to sensitive natural and cultural resources.

Policies:

- LU 40.1 *Support solar power plants, in a fiscally and environmentally responsible manner, on BLM land within the Riverside East Solar Energy Zone and suitable adjacent public, private, state, tribal or Department of Defense-withdrawn lands, particularly lands with low resource conflicts, degraded, disturbed, previously disturbed or contaminated areas and idle or underutilized industrial sites.*
- LU 40.2 *Encourage solar power plants in areas where collocation with other energy development may be feasible (such as, wind, geothermal and other appropriate uses).*
- LU 40.3 *Encourage solar power plants to locate in areas that avoid significant impacts to sensitive resources, such as rare and special status species, unique plant communities, important biological connectivity areas, designated wildlife habitat management areas, lands with wilderness characteristics and areas with high concentrations of ethnobotanical resources of importance for Native American use.*



The U.S. Bureau of Land Management (BLM) is tasked by law with managing **National Conservation Lands** throughout the country. Lands included in the NCL system include Wilderness Areas, Wilderness Study Areas, Wild and Scenic Rivers, National Scenic and Historic Trails and other special areas as identified through acts of Congress.

California Desert Renewable Energy Conservation Plan (DRECP)

In 2009 the State of California initiated the Desert Renewable Energy Conservation Plan (DRECP), an ambitious planning effort to develop a comprehensive plan that “provides for renewable energy and transmission development projects and for the conservation of sensitive species and ecosystems in California’s Mojave and Colorado/Sonoran deserts.”

The proposed DRECP spans nearly 22.6 million acres across seven counties—roughly 2.1 million acres in Riverside County alone. See Figure LU-9. Of the 22.6 million acres, roughly 10% is proposed for renewable energy development as “Development Focus Areas,” including up to 42,000 acres of public and private lands in Riverside County.

As of 2015, the DRECP is being developed in collaboration among the California Energy Commission (CEC), California Department of Fish and Wildlife (CDFW), U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service (FWS) and the federal Bureau of Land Management (BLM).

Unlike the BLM’s Solar Energy Program, which only applies to federal lands, the DRECP is intended to address both public and private lands, including those under the jurisdictions of BLM and California State Lands Commission (CSLC), as well as the County of Riverside and its cities for private lands. However, nothing in the DRECP changes Riverside County’s jurisdiction or land use authority. The DRECP only addresses development of renewable energy and related transmission projects.

This ambitious plan is yet to be finalized. In the interim, the County of Riverside has developed the following policies to recognize the DRECP and coordinate land use planning within the County’s jurisdiction in a manner that is consistent with or complementary to the objectives of the DRECP as currently proposed in 2015.

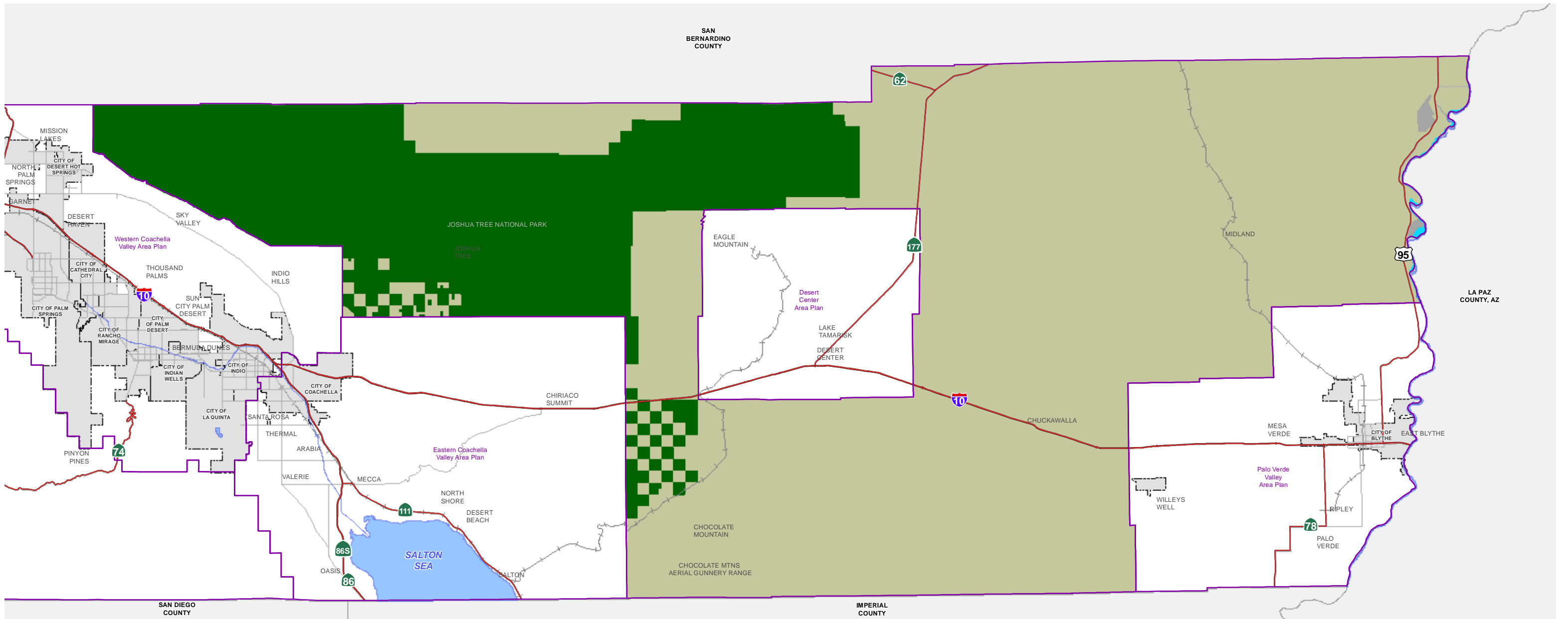
Policies:

- LU 41.1 Encourage protection of existing values of specially designated areas and lands with wilderness characteristics when reviewing utility-scale renewable energy projects proposed within the far eastern desert region of Riverside County.*
- LU 41.2 When reviewing utility-scale renewable energy projects within the far eastern desert region of Riverside County, coordinate with federal and state agencies, property owners, Tribes and other stakeholders as early as possible in the planning process to identify potentially sensitive land uses and issues.*
- LU 41.3 Require that proposed projects on properties within or adjacent to a proposed or adopted Desert Renewable Energy Conservation Plan (DRECP) Development Focus Area be reviewed by the County Environmental Programs Department to assure that future development is designed to avoid significant adverse effects to lands identified for conservation or other such natural resource protection under the DRECP.*
- LU 41.4 Require development applications on private land within or adjacent to a Desert Renewable Energy Conservation Plan (DRECP) Development Focus Area to:*
- a. For all land within one mile of the project site, show all land uses proposed or adopted pursuant to the DRECP, including, but not limited to:*
 - i. Existing protected or conserved lands (Wilderness, Areas of Critical Environmental Concern, Desert Wildlife Management Areas and other protected lands).*

- ii. *BLM multiple use class (MUC) land use designations for any public (federal) lands within the one-mile radius. This information is available from either the California Desert Conservation Area (CDCA) Plan or the Northern and Eastern Colorado Desert Cooperative Management Plan (NECO), both of which are available from the Bureau of Land Management.*
 - iii. *Lands proposed for conservation as part of the DRECP General Conservation Plan and/or Natural Community Conservation Plan, including any “Conservation Planning Areas” identified for the DRECP Plan-Wide Reserve Design or as Biological Conservation Priority Areas on non-BLM lands.*
 - iv. *Any lands otherwise identified for conservation by the BLM pursuant to the National Landscape Conservation System.*
- b. *Analyze and show how land use consistency shall be achieved between the proposed use and any adjacent or surrounding proposed DRECP uses, including any of the DRECP conservation areas/ uses indicated in item a, above.*
 - c. *Analyze potential impacts on any/all “Covered Species” included in the DRECP known or expected to occur on the project site, and outline how the project will minimize, reduce or avoid any such significant impacts to the maximum extent feasible.*
 - d. *Analyze potential impacts (including reasonably foreseeable indirect and cumulative) on any tribal cultural resources known or expected to occur on the project site, and outline how the project will minimize, reduce or avoid any such significant impacts to the maximum extent feasible.*

LU 41.6 *Require all development projects in the far eastern desert region of Riverside County involving temporary use areas in open space to develop and implement restoration plans to ensure all temporary use areas are restored appropriately.*

LU 41.8 *Once the Desert Renewable Energy Conservation Plan (DRECP) is finalized and adopted by the State, the County shall examine existing General Plan land use designations for all private land falling within the DRECP boundaries and consider revisions as deemed appropriate in the next General Plan update. Particular emphasis should be given to land use designations reflecting potential renewable energy development on high-priority lands within identified Development Focus Areas and for conservation designations reflecting adopted conservation areas, as appropriate.*



COMMUNITY DEVELOPMENT	Highest Density Residential	Community Center	Rural Mountainous	Open Space Rural	Area Plan Boundary	Data Source: Riverside County (2010)
Estate Density Residential	Commercial Retail	Mixed Use Planning Area	Rural Desert	Mineral Resources	City Boundary	
Very Low Density Residential	Commercial Tourist	RURAL COMMUNITY	AGRICULTURE	Water	Waterbodies	
Low Density Residential	Commercial Office	Rural Community - Estate Density Residential	Agriculture	MISCELLANEOUS	Highways	
Medium Density Residential	Light Industrial	Rural Community - Very Low Density Residential	OPEN SPACE	City		
Medium High Density Residential	Heavy Industrial	Rural Community - Low Density Residential	Conservation	Tribal Lands		
High Density Residential	Business Park	RURAL	Conservation Habitat			
Very High Density Residential	Public Facilities	Rural Residential	Open Space Recreation			

December 16, 2013

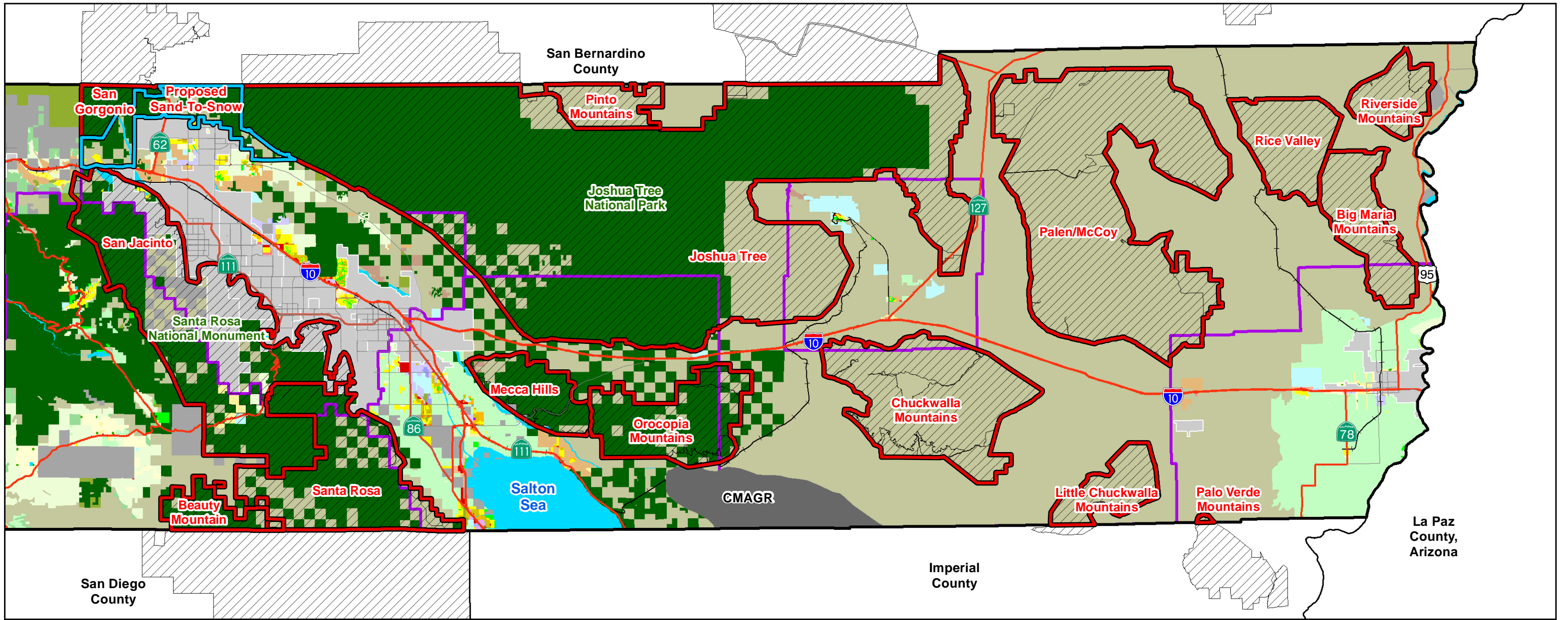
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EASTERN RIVERSIDE COUNTY LAND USE PLAN

Figure LU-6

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COMMUNITY DEVELOPMENT		RURAL COMMUNITY		AGRICULTURE		MISCELLANEOUS		Data Source: Desert Renewable Energy Conservation Plan Gateway (2015); Riverside County GIS (2010)		
	Estate Density Residential		Highest Density Residential		Community Center		Rural Mountainous			Sand-To-Snow Wilderness Policy Area (WPA)
	Very Low Density Residential		Commercial Retail		Mixed Use Planning Area		Rural Desert			Wilderness Policy Areas (WPA)
	Low Density Residential		Commercial Tourist		Rural Community - Estate Density Residential		Water			Federal Wilderness - National Conservation Lands
	Medium Density Residential		Commercial Office		Rural Community - Very Low Density Residential		Agriculture			Military
	Medium High Density Residential		Light Industrial		Rural Community - Low Density Residential		Conservation		City	
	High Density Residential		Heavy Industrial		Rural Residential		Conservation Habitat		Tribal Lands	
	Very High Density Residential		Business Park		Public Facilities		Open Space Recreation			

New Figure LU-7

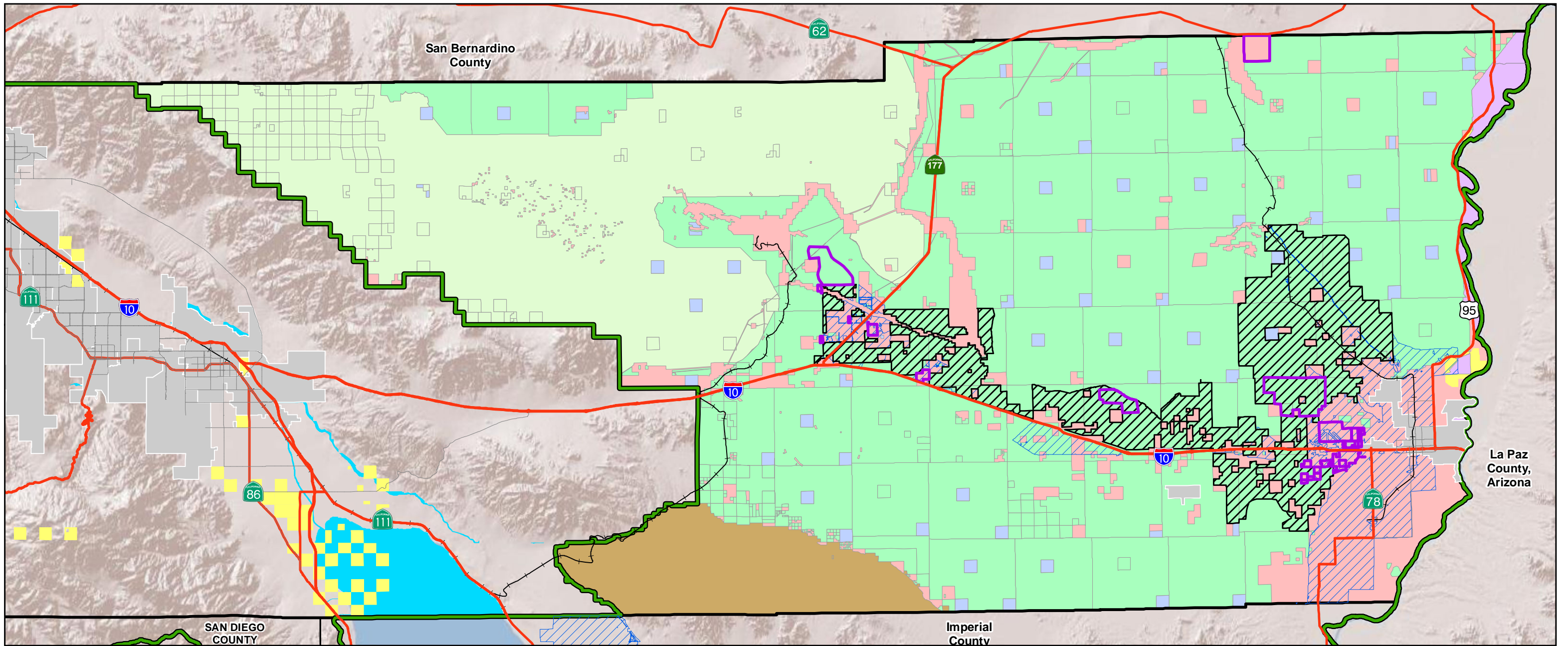
February 8, 2016

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FAR EASTERN RIVERSIDE COUNTY WILDERNESS POLICY AREAS











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Data Source: Desert Renewable Energy Conservation Plan Gateway (2015), Riverside County GIS (2010), ArcGIS Online (2015)

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Legend

-  Existing Large Scale Solar Projects
-  Federal Lands - Bureau of Land Management
-  Tribal Lands - Colorado River Reservation
-  DRECP Boundary
-  Federal Lands - Chocolate Mountain Aerial Gunnery Range
-  State Lands
-  BLM Eastern Riverside Solar Energy Zone (SEZ)
-  Federal Lands - Joshua Tree National Park
-  Tribal Lands - Other
-  DRECP Proposed Development Focus Areas (DFAs)

**New
Figure LU-8**

 January 25, 2016


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**FAR EASTERN RIVERSIDE COUNTY
SOLAR ENERGY AREAS**

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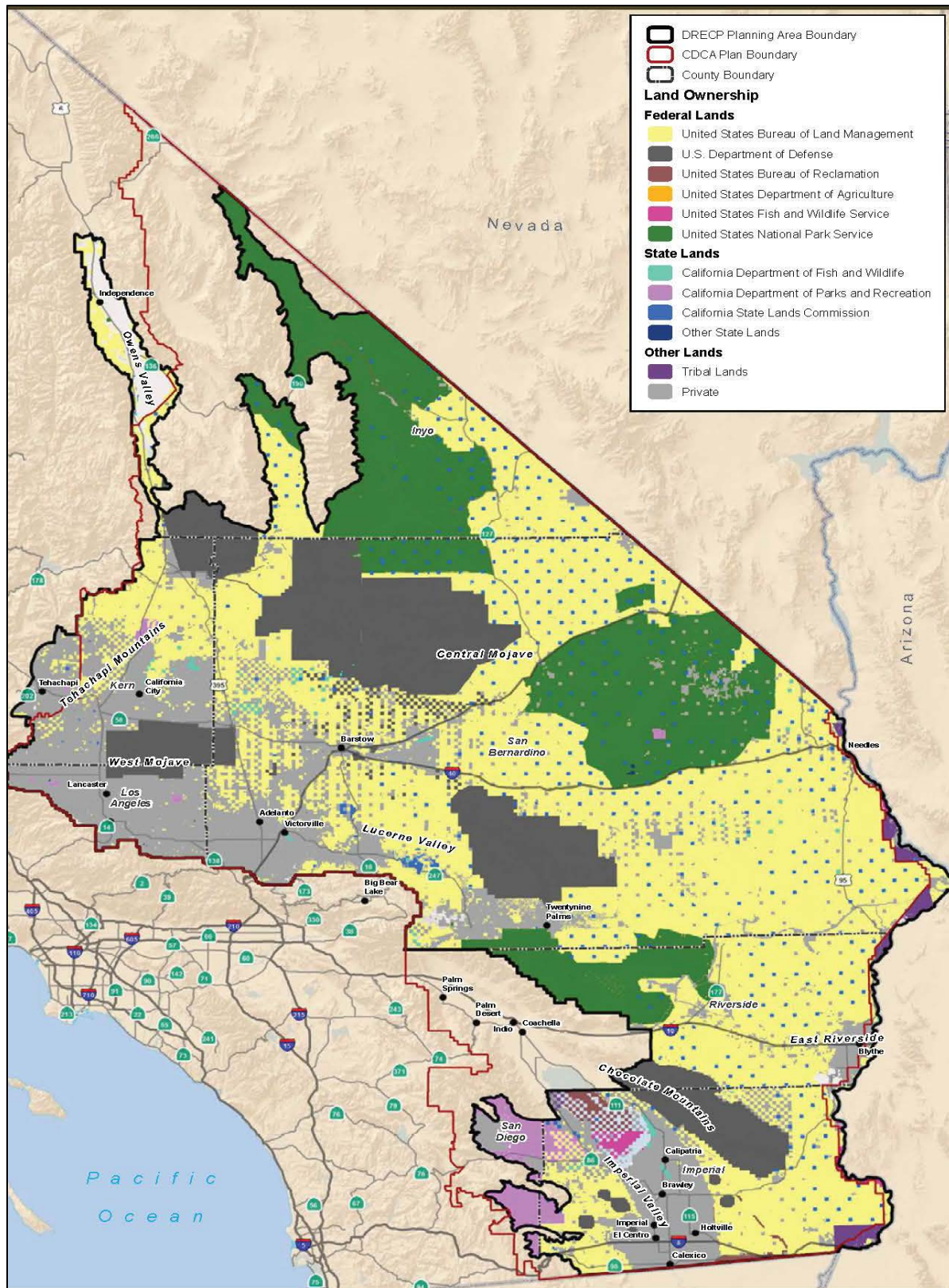


Figure LU-9: Extent of the Proposed California Desert Renewable Energy Conservation Plan (DRECP)

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March Joint Air Reserve Base

The March Joint Air Reserve Base is located along Interstate 215, adjacent to the Cities of Riverside, Perris, and Moreno Valley. The former Air Force Base was established in 1918 and was continually used until 1993. In 1996, the land was converted from an Air Force Base to an Active Duty Reserve Base. A Joint Powers Authority (JPA), comprised of the County of Riverside and the Cities of Moreno Valley, Perris, and Riverside, formed to address the use, reuse, and joint use of the realigned March Joint ARB. The JPA Agreement created the March Joint Powers Commission (JPC), which is the governing body for the authority. The Commission is comprised of eight elected officials (two from each of the four jurisdictions) who are selected by the jurisdictions' respective governing bodies. The March JPA is recognized by the Department of Defense and the State of California as the official local land use and redevelopment agency for March Joint ARB - non-cantonment area.



For additional policies related to the March Joint ARB, see the **General Plan of the March Joint Powers Authority**.

Areas Subject to Indian Jurisdiction

The General Plan and Area Plan maps depict some properties as Areas Subject to Indian Jurisdiction. Properties so depicted are, according to best available records, either located within the boundaries of Indian reservations or owned by Indian tribes or their members in trust. Within Indian reservation boundaries, properties so depicted include parcels owned in fee simple by non-Indians ("Fee Lands"); parcels owned by Tribal members either in trust or in fee ("Allotment Lands"); parcels owned by the Tribe as a government, corporation, or organization, and held either in trust by the United States or in fee ("Tribal Lands"); parcels that are located in those areas of an Indian reservation that are closed to members of the general public as authorized by federal law ("Closed Lands"); and parcels owned in fee or in trust by Indians who are not members of the Tribe which exercises governmental authority over the reservation. This depiction is specifically designed to acknowledge the sovereignty of the various Tribes relative to state and local governments. Because there is potential for conflicting assertions of jurisdictions between the County of Riverside and the Indian Tribes with regard to regulatory authority over Fee Lands located within reservation boundaries, the County of Riverside and various Indian Tribes have entered into inter-governmental agreements which spell out the procedures under which land use regulation authority will be administered with regard to those Tribes' reservation lands.

Policies:

- LU 37.1 The County of Riverside will continue to work with Tribal authorities to implement existing inter-governmental agreements with regard to land use regulatory authority over lands within Indian reservation boundaries.
- LU 37.2 The County of Riverside will continue to work with Tribal authorities to negotiate inter-governmental agreements in situations where such agreements would be mutually beneficial.
- LU 37.3 Where no inter-governmental agreements are in place or can be executed, the County of Riverside and affected Indian Tribe will seek to agree on minimum development standards on Fee Lands that shall be applied to any application submitted to the County of Riverside or the Tribe for approval of development plans. In the event that an agreement is reached between the County of Riverside and the affected Indian Tribe, then the standards shall be designed to ensure

that reservation land remains consistent with the reservation's purpose and character while recognizing the rights of all reservation landowners and residents.

LU 37.4 The County of Riverside will continue to work with Tribes to seek compatibility between Riverside County and Tribal land use plans and policies.

LU 37.5 All new development proposals concerning Fee Lands should be consistent with the surrounding County of Riverside and Tribal land use plans and policies.