CHAPTER 1 **Introduction**

Overview of the General Plan

This document is the first comprehensive update of the San Diego County General Plan since 1978 and is the result of the collective efforts of elected and appointed officials, community groups, individuals, and agencies who spent countless hours developing a framework for the future growth and development of the unincorporated areas of the County. This document replaces the previous General Plan and is based on a set of guiding principles designed to protect the County's unique and diverse natural resources and maintain the character of its rural and semi-rural communities. It reflects an environmentally sustainable approach to planning that balances the need for adequate infrastructure, housing, and economic vitality, while maintaining and preserving each unique community within the County, agricultural areas, and extensive open space ~~areas within the County~~.

Rural landscape

Public meeting

Lakeside community

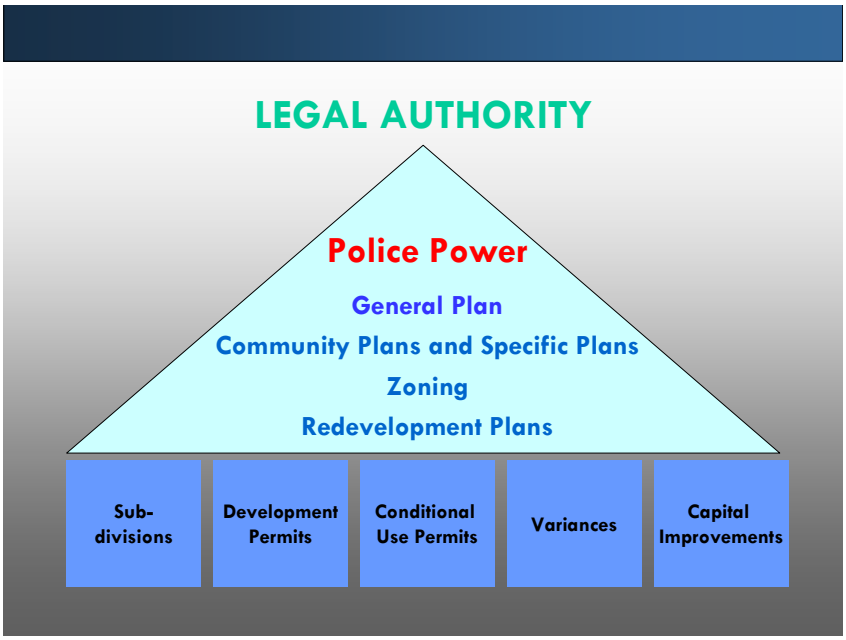
The General Plan directs future growth in the unincorporated areas of the County with a projected capacity that ~~would~~ will accommodate more than 238,500~~600~~ existing and future homes. This growth is targeted to occur primarily in the western portions of the unincorporated County where there is the opportunity for additional development. Compared to the previous General Plan, this update reduces housing capacity by 15 percent and shifts 20 percent of future growth from eastern backcountry areas to western communities. This change reflects the County's commitment to a sustainable growth model that facilitates efficient development near infrastructure and services, while respecting sensitive natural resources and protection of existing community character in its extensive rural and semi-rural communities. The General Plan provides a renewed basis for the County's diverse communities to develop Community Plans that are specific to and reflective of their unique character and environment consistent with the County's vision for its future.

What Is a General Plan?

State law requires each city and county to prepare and adopt a comprehensive and long-range general plan for its physical development. The General Plan provides a consistent framework for land use and development decisions consistent with an established community vision. As the equivalent of a local "constitution" for land use and development, the General Plan's diagrams, goals, and policies form the basis for the County's zoning, subdivision, and infrastructure decisions. A number of important themes that are integral components of the County's vision for its future are woven throughout the General Plan rather than structured as separate elements such as community character, environmental sustainability, and global

warming. As required by State law, the seven required elements of the General Plan are highly correlated and are presented in six chapters of the San Diego County General Plan as shown in the following matrix.

San Diego County General Plan Elements	Legally Required General Plan Topics						
	Lands Use	Circulation	Housing	Conservation	Open Space	Noise	Safety
Land Use	●						
Housing			●				
Circulation (Mobility)		●					
Conservation & Open Space				●	●		
Safety							●
Noise						●	
Implementation Plan	●	●	●	●	●	●	●



The General Plan serves as the "constitution" for decision-making regarding the County's physical development

How Is It Organized?

Following the Introduction and Vision, Chapters 3 through 8 comprise the "elements" of the General Plan required by State law. Each element includes a purpose and scope, the context of the planning issues, and the goals and policies for the various element topics. Chapter 9 describes the broad actions that implement the Plan's policies and the final chapter presents the acronyms and a glossary of terms. Map figures depicted in the General Plan are also available online or hard copies are available for purchase at the County DPLU.

The General Plan also includes appendices and other documents such as community plans that are separately bound. An overview of the Plan's chapters follows:

1. **Introduction** presents information about the Plan's purpose and organization, describes the General Plan process, and provides a profile of San Diego County.
2. **Vision Statement and Guiding Principles** presents the vision and overarching themes that guided development of the goals, policies, and implementation programs.
3. **Land Use Element** presents a policy framework for shaping the type and location of new development and strategies to maintain and enhance existing development and community character.
4. **Circulation (Mobility) Element** provides a framework for providing a balanced, multi-modal transportation system for the movement of people and goods within the County.
5. **Conservation and Open Space Element** provides ~~direction to balance the accommodation of future growth and development with~~policies relating to the conservation, protection, and management of natural resources and the preservation of open space, along with provision of park and recreation resources.
6. **Housing Element** presents goals, policies, and programs designed to assist the development of housing for the County's current and future residents at all income levels.
7. **Safety Element** establishes policies that minimize the risk of personal injury, loss of life, and property and environmental damage associated with natural and man-made hazards.
8. **Noise Element** provides a process to control and abate environmental noise and to protect citizens from excessive exposure.
9. **Implementation of the General Plan** summarizes the general categories of the actions to be taken to carry out the vision of the General Plan as specified in the goals and policies. The Implementation Plan, a separate document from the General Plan, is envisioned to be a fluid document that will be used for developing annual work programs and establishing funding needs and priorities for County departments, as appropriate.
10. **Acronyms and Glossary** provides a listing and full description of acronyms used in the General Plan and a glossary that defines terminology used in the General Plan.

Appendices that provide technical information and maps in support of the elements:

- Land Use Maps are community-level maps that depict designations as color or graphic patterns that indicate allowable uses and permitted development densities or intensities.
- Mobility Element Roadway Network is depicted on community-level maps that show the road classification series and the general route of each road.
- Forest Conservation Initiative language enacted in 1993.

Separately Bound Documents

- Community Plans, adopted as an integral parts of the County of San Diego's General Plan, are policy plans specifically created to address the issues, characteristics, and visions of communities within the unincorporated County.
- Housing Element Background Report

How to Use the General Plan

The General Plan is intended for use by all members of the community as described below. The General Plan must be referred to in it's entirety, including separately bound portions (such as community plans). While the General Plan is internally consistent, some issues are addressed through multiple policies and some receive refined and more detailed direction in community plans.

If you are a San Diego County resident or property owner, the General Plan indicates the general types of uses that are permitted around your home and changes that may affect your neighborhood, and the policies the County will use to evaluate development applications that might affect you and your neighbors. The Plan also informs you regarding how ~~it~~ the County plans to improve mobility infrastructure, continue to provide adequate parks, schools, police, fire, and other public services, protect valued open spaces and environmental resources, and protect you from the risks of earthquakes, fires, and other natural hazards.

If you are interested in developing land within the County or moving your household or business to the County, the Plan will introduce you to the community and provides an overview of the County's overall approach to land development within its jurisdiction. However, it is also important to review other County planning documents and regulations to get a complete perspective on how and where development may take place. A complete listing of relevant documents and regulations is available on the Department of Planning and Land Use website (http://www.sdcounty.ca.gov/dplu/).

County Administration Center

The General Plan is also a tool to assist County supervisors and planning commissioners as well as County staff in making land use and public infrastructure decisions. It provides the framework for the County's Zoning Ordinance. It identifies mobility and infrastructure improvements, community services, and environmental sustainability initiatives to sustain the County's quality of life. Future development decisions must be consistent with the Plan. Finally, the Plan is intended to help other public agencies, from Caltrans to local school districts, as they contemplate future actions in the County.

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

- *Goals* describe ideal future conditions for a particular topic, such as town centers, rural character, protection of environmental resources, traffic congestion, or sustainability. Goals tend to be very general and broad.
- *Policies* provide guidance to assist the County as it makes decisions relating to each goal and indicates a commitment by the County to a particular course of action. The policy is carried out by implementation measures. While every effort has been made to provide clear and unambiguous

policies, the need for interpretation will inevitably arise. The authority of interpretation lies with the County and will be enacted through its implementation measures and decisions. Therefore, the Implementation Plan should be reviewed for a complete understanding of each policy.

- *Implementation Measures*, adopted by the County in a separate Implementation Plan, identify all the specific steps to be taken by the County to implement the policies. They may include revisions of current codes and ordinances, adoption of plans and capital improvement programs, ~~programs,~~ financing actions, and other measures that ~~should~~ will be assigned to different County departments after the General Plan is adopted.

The following diagram is intended to serve as a "reader's guide" to the goals and policies of the General Plan.

Process for Preparing the General Plan

Steps in the Planning Process

The process of preparing the General Plan included the following key steps:

- Prepare background reports and technical studies
- Develop alternative growth plans and select a preferred plan through a public outreach process
- Prepare draft goals and policies
- Prepare the Draft General Plan
- Prepare the Implementation Plan
- Prepare the Draft Environmental Impact Report
- Conduct public hearings to adopt the General Plan and certify the EIR
- Publish the final General Plan and EIR

TECHNICAL STUDIES AND BACKGROUND REPORTS

As required by State law, a General Plan must be based upon existing conditions and trends in a community and be responsive to the needs and issues identified in an analysis of existing conditions. Background Reports were prepared for each of the seven State-mandated topical areas to be covered in the General Plan including Land Use, Mobility, Housing, Safety, Conservation, Open Space, and Noise. In addition, technical studies such as traffic impacts, noise, and commercial and industrial lands needs analyses were conducted as a basis to develop a Land Use Plan responsive to community needs and issues.

How to Use the General Plan

SECTION HEADER
Identifies the section (if on an even-numbered page) or element (if on an odd-numbered page).

GOAL NUMBERING
Each goal number starts with the element acronym and is followed by the number of the goal (e.g., S-14 = Safety Element, fourteenth goal).

GOAL TITLE
Each goal contains a leading title in bold for a quick reference to the goal.

GOALS
A goal is a general direction-setter. Each goal has one or more policies associated with the goal.

POLICIES
A policy is a specific statement that guides decision-making. It indicates a commitment to a particular course of action carried out by implementation measures. Each policy is associated with a specific goal.

POLICY NUMBERING
Continuing from the goal numbering, the policy number is shown as the last number, supporting the goal it follows (e.g., Policy S-14.3 = Safety Element, fourteenth goal, third policy).

POLICY TITLE
Each policy contains a leading title in bold for a quick reference to the policy.

SAFETY ELEMENT GOALS AND POLICIES

GOAL S-5

Regional Fire Protection. Regional coordination among fire protection agencies.

Policies

S-5.1 **Regional Coordination Support.** Advocate and support regional coordination among fire protection and emergency service providers.

S-5.2 **Fire Service Provider Agreements.** Encourage agreements between fire service providers to improve fire protection and to maximize service levels in a fair, efficient, and cost effective manner.

GOAL S-6

Adequate Fire and Medical Services. Adequate levels of fire and emergency medical services (EMS) in the unincorporated County.

Fire station in Pine Valley

Policies

S-6.1 **Water Supply.** Ensure that water supply systems for development are adequate to combat structural and wildland fires.

S-6.2 **Fire Protection for Multi-Story Development.** Coordinate with fire services providers to improve fire protection services for multi-story construction.

Multi-story structures are associated with densities of 15 to 30 dwelling units per acre–particularly in areas within the County Water Authority (CWA) Boundary. Design features may include safe zones and increased building design features.

S-6.3 **Funding Fire Protection Services.** Require development to contribute its fair share towards funding the provision of appropriate fire and emergency medical services as determined necessary to adequately serve the project.

S-6.4 **Fire Protection Services for Development.** Require that development demonstrate that fire services can be provided that meet the minimum travel times identified in Table S-1 (Travel Time Standards).

Travel times are to be calculated using accepted methodology based on the travel distance from the fire station to the furthest dwelling unit of the development. Fire stations must be staffed year-round, publicly supported, and committed to providing service. These do not include volunteer stations, seasonal fire stations, and stations that are not obligated by law or agreement to automatically respond to an incident. Table S-1 establishes a service level standard for fire and first responder emergency medical services that is appropriate to the area that a development is located. Standards are intended to (1) help ensure development occurs in areas with adequate fire protection and/or (2) help improve fire service in areas with inadequate coverage by requiring services level improvements prior to project approval.

COUNTY OF SAN DIEGO 7-9 GENERAL PLAN

PAGE NUMBER
Shows the chapter and page number (e.g., 7-28 = Chapter 7, page 28).

POLICY BACKGROUND AND SIDEBARS
Provides further clarification and reasoning for the policy.

ALTERNATIVE LAND USE/GROWTH PLANS

Prior to ~~selection~~ adoption of the ~~preferred~~ Land Use Map, four alternative maps were considered. These alternatives included (1) a Referral Map that the Board of Supervisors created during the land use mapping phase of the project to incorporate a number of property~~-~~-specific requests not included in the Draft Land Use Map, (2) a Draft Land Use Map that was created out of a stakeholder~~-~~-driven process and includes land uses to meet the County's Housing Element allocation and achieve a balanced road network, (3) a Hybrid Map that strikes a balance between the Referral Map and the Draft Land Use Map in meeting the County's targeted growth consistent with its guiding principles, and (4) an Environmentally Superior Map that reflects more stringent and aggressive application of the principles to restrict growth in portions of the Semi-Rural and Rural Lands Regional Categories.

GOALS, POLICIES, AND IMPLEMENTATION PLAN

Goals, policies, and an Implementation Plan were prepared based on the land use maps, current issues, and community needs, understandability, effectiveness in previous applications, practicality, and feasibility, embodiment of state-of-the-art planning practices, consistency with current legislation and court decisions, community values, and past Board of Supervisors policy decisions. General guiding principles, goals, and policies developed by the advisory committees served as the foundation for this undertaking. Specific goals, policies, and implementation measures were then prepared by working with internal and external technical review committees for inclusion in the Draft General Plan.

DRAFT GENERAL PLAN

The Draft General Plan was first circulated for public review in November 2008, ~~published~~ incorporating an overview of background data, goals, and policies~~, and an Implementation Plan~~. ~~The~~ As part of this review, the Draft General Plan ~~and Implementation Plan were~~was reviewed by the advisory committees, stakeholders, and relevant public agencies. Comments were incorporated and the revised Draft General Plan was circulated for public review in July 2009, along with the Draft Environmental Impact Report, Implementation Plan, and revisions to the Community Plans. ~~It was also made available for a public review and comment period.~~

ENVIRONMENTAL IMPACT ~~ASSESSMENT~~REPORT

A Draft EIR was prepared in accordance with the requirements of the *California Environmental Quality Act* (CEQA). ~~From the date of publication~~In July 2008, the Draft EIR was circulated for a ~~45~~60-day public review and comment period. Responses to all comments were prepared and incorporated into the Final EIR, which was reviewed and certified by the Board of Supervisors.

ADOPTION AND CERTIFICATION

The Planning Commission and Board of Supervisors conducted public hearings on the Draft General Plan and EIR. In consideration of the public input, the Commission made a recommendation to the Board of

Supervisors regarding the General Plan and certification of the Final EIR. The Board of Supervisors considered the Commission's input and based on its findings, the Board of Supervisor adopted the General Plan with changes and certified the Final EIR.

Meeting of the County Board of Supervisors

PLAN IMPLEMENTATION

Once adopted, implementation of the County of San Diego General Plan will begin in accordance with the Implementation Plan. Associated changes to zoning, other regulations, policies, and procedures will be made. Implementation of the General Plan will be monitored and reported on an annual basis.

Planning Commission meeting

Public Outreach and Involvement in the Planning Process

The General Plan planning process involved a broad spectrum of the community through an extensive public outreach program that included hundreds of meetings, mailings, and e-mail updates, a hotline, and a website. The outcome of the effort led to the development of land use maps and a road network, the development of goals and policies, and the preparation of the General Plan based upon input from the numerous workshops, open houses, and community meetings.

Interest Group meeting

Steering Committee meeting

Community meeting

The entire process was guided by two regional advisory committees:

- *Steering Committee*—Chairpersons or designated representatives from 26 Community Planning and Sponsor Groups
- *Interest Group*—Designated representatives from environmental groups, professional organizations, building industry representatives, and the Farm Bureau

These groups made policy recommendations to staff, the Planning Commission, and Board of Supervisors. All meetings were advertised, open to the public, and held in accordance with the Brown Act.

Through frequent work sessions, the public and stakeholders were provided the opportunity for involvement throughout the entire planning process from the initial establishment of population growth targets, to development of a land use framework, identification and refinement of desired goals and policies, and

review of land use map and road network alternatives. In addition to the advisory groups, the community planning and sponsor groups served as the primary conduit for public outreach throughout the planning process. Community planning groups worked closely with staff throughout the development of the land use map, along with town center and road network planning efforts. Since 2000, staff participated in over 212 meetings with the full Planning and Sponsor groups, 109 workshops, and 216 subcommittee meetings. All meetings were advertised to the general public through standard planning and sponsor group agendas or through the General Plan Update mailing lists described below. Most meetings were advertised in multiple ways.

Public workshop

Other groups involved in the planning process included:

- *Native American Tribal Nations*—A tribal outreach strategy that invited the 18 tribes in the County to participate in the process coordinated through the Native American Heritage Commission.
- *City Planning Directors*—Staff coordinated with the Planning Directors from incorporated cities within the County to provide status reports on the progress of the General Plan Update and solicit their feedback.

In an effort to continually involve interested parties in the planning process to obtain valuable feedback, other methods of public outreach over the course of the project included a General Plan Update Hotline number, informational flyers, and a General Plan website where members of the public could find out up-to-date information about the project.

- *Hotline*—An unmanned telephone hotline was established that allowed the public direct access to the San Diego County Department of Planning and Land Use with an ability to leave a message (i.e., be placed on mailing lists), or could get general questions answered.
- *Project Initiation Postcard*—All property owners in the unincorporated County in January 2001 were mailed a postcard introducing the General Plan Update to inform the public about the update and encourage their involvement.
- *Flyer*—In 2002, an informational flyer was developed to inform the public about the proposed changes to land use density and announce a Land Use Map. This flyer was mailed to every property owner in the unincorporated County.
- *Monthly Newsletter*—A monthly e-mail newsletter was used to inform interested parties of project progress, major milestones, website updates, documents available for review, and upcoming meetings or events.
- *Mailing Lists*—Mailing lists were accumulated over the project duration of individuals and organizations interested in receiving the newsletter, notices of specific meetings, hearings, and documents available for review. Parties were notified through their requested method, mail or e-mail, when appropriate.

- *Website*—A website was developed and maintained by County Staff to inform the public about the General Plan Update, including its progress and any upcoming public meetings. The site also provided the population forecast projections, land use and circulation frameworks, and land use distribution and road network maps for each community for quick access to information as they evolved throughout the planning process. In addition, complete reports to the Planning Commission and Board of Supervisors were posted prior to each public hearing to inform the public of the issues and other information that were planned to be addressed during the hearing. http://www.sdcounty.ca.gov/dplu/gpupdate/index.html
- *Local Newspapers*—Several regional and local newspapers published notices, stories, and editorials related to the General Plan Update.

Community Plans

~~While the Land Use Framework inclusive of Land Use Maps, and Goals and Policies apply to all lands throughout the unincorporated County, there are special land use issues and objectives that uniquely pertain to each of its diverse communities. These are addressed by **Community Plans** in which~~Community plans are policy plans specifically created to address the issues, characteristics, and visions of communities within the County. These diverse communities each have a distinct physical setting with a unique history, culture, character, life style, and identity. Community and subregional plans, thus provide a framework for addressing the critical issues and concerns that are unique to a community and are not reflected in the broader policies of the Land Use Element of the General Plan. These goals and policies are ~~defined~~designed to provide more precise guidance regarding the character, land uses, and densities within each community planning area. Generally, these goals and policies are more limiting and restrictive than the countywide goals and policies, consistent with State legislation for internal consistency. The Community Plans are ~~a part~~adopted as integral parts of this General Plan but bound separately, and must be referenced in determining the types and density of land use that may be considered for any property within the community planning area.

When updating Community Plans, communities are encouraged to delineate areas within their plans that will assist with the future planning of developments, infrastructure, facilities, and regulations. An Urban Limit Line and/or Village Boundary may be defined in the Community Plan as a community-specific growth boundary that identifies an area to which development should be directed. These boundaries may also serve as the basis for community specific goals and policies.

Another convention that is encouraged for use in Community Plans is the designation of Special Study Areas. Special Study Areas define areas for further planning and implementation and should be further defined in more detail in the Community Plan for each area that is identified. The scope of the additional planning will vary widely between areas and communities but some possibilities include (but are not limited to): Specific Plans; master development plans; design guidelines; circulation networks including local public roads, bicycle and pedestrian facilities; and plans for civic, park and recreational facilities. Special Study Areas are particularly useful for town centers, village cores where revitalization is desired, areas designated for mixed use, transit nodes, and areas that are generally undeveloped or developed at low intensities but are planned as future growth areas. Where appropriate, the Community Plan may restrict development within the Special

Study Area until more detailed plans are prepared and approved, so that interim development does not preclude the preparation and implementation of the study.

As integral components of the County of San Diego General Plan, Community Plans have the same weight of law and authority in guiding their physical development. The Community Plans are introduced by a vision statement defining intentions regarding the role, character, and values of each community. This is followed by a description of the community and goals and policies corresponding to each of the countywide elements. In some cases, there may be no unique local policies applicable to a countywide element topic.

The Community Plans are prepared for the following communities and subregional planning areas:

- Alpine
- Bonsall
- Central Mountain
  - Cuyamaca
  - Descanso
  - Pine Valley
- Crest/Dehesa/Harbison Canyon/Granite Hills
- Desert
  - Borrego Springs
- Fallbrook
- Jamul/Dulzura
- Julian
- Lakeside
- Mountain Empire
  - Boulevard
  - Jacumba
  - Campo/Lake Morena
  - Potrero
  - Tecate
- North County Metro
  - Twin Oaks Valley
  - Hidden Meadows
- North Mountain
- Otay
- Pala-Pauma Valley
- Pendleton/ De Luz
- Rainbow
- Ramona
- San Dieguito
- Spring Valley
- Sweetwater
- Valle de Oro
- Valley Center

Related Documents

Background Reports and GIS

The General Plan is based upon a series of Background Reports containing relevant topical data and analyses as well as identification of relevant issues and trends to be considered in preparation of the General Plan. These reports and technical studies serve as the existing conditions or existing setting for the General Plan elements and the Environmental Impact Report (EIR). These background reports are not adopted by the County and may be expanded or modified without an amendment to the General Plan. Also, separate from the General Plan but utilized as background data for analysis is the County's Geographic Information System (GIS) database. Data related to land use, physical constraints, and resources, included in various figures in the General Plan are available from the San Diego Geographic Information Source (SanGIS) at www.sangis.org.

Environmental Impact Report

A program EIR was prepared for the General Plan in accordance with the substantive and procedural requirements of the *California Environmental Quality Act* (CEQA). The EIR describes~~d~~ environmental conditions in the County, assesses~~d~~ the possible adverse environmental impacts~~effects~~ that the General Plan adoption will have on these conditions, identifies~~d~~ actions that will be undertaken to reduce these impacts,

and evaluates~~d~~ the comparative impacts of alternatives to adoption of the General Plan. Mitigation measures in the EIR ~~were~~ are incorporated both as policies in the General Plan and as implementation measures in the Implementation Plan and, consequently, the General Plan is generally considered to be "self-mitigating."

The document is considered a "program level" EIR, meaning that it examines the general nature of impacts at a Countywide scale. The findings of the EIR help determine the appropriate level of environmental review that should be performed when subsequent projects consistent with the Plan are proposed. ~~Although the EIR is certified by the Board of Supervisors, it is not adopted as a policy document.~~

Implementation Plan

The Implementation Plan is a set of the principal actions and procedures necessary to achieve the goals and policies set forth in the General Plan. It is a separate document that is directly correlated and cross referenced to the policies in the General Plan, but it may be modified and updated as necessary without the necessity of a General Plan amendment. An overview of the Implementation Plan is provided in Chapter 9.

Regional and Multi-Jurisdictional Plans

There are 19 jurisdictions in San Diego County, including the unincorporated County, with local land use authority along with the responsibility for preparing their own general plans. Regional coordination is necessary to guide overall development and ensure an efficient allocation of infrastructure funding. The San Diego Association of Governments (SANDAG) serves as the region's Metropolitan Planning Organization (MPO) responsible for areawide coordination and as the technical and informational resource for the region's local jurisdictions. SANDAG prepares regional land use and transportation plans, which provide a basis for allocating federal and state funds used for specific items such as land use incentives and transportation improvements.

The Regional Comprehensive Plan (RCP) identifies existing and planned Smart Growth Opportunity Areas (SGOAs)—compact, mixed use, pedestrian-oriented development patterns where a higher priority is placed on providing transportation facility improvements. A specific SGOA category was developed to accommodate the unique community character and development patterns found in village centers for some unincorporated communities. Therefore, the SGOA is closely related to the community development model, which is one of the fundamental components of this General Plan Update. The Regional Transportation Plan (RTP) seeks to improve transportation connections to SGOAs. Road network planning for the County General Plan Update considered the RTP when identifying the necessary improvements to the County's Mobility Element road network.

The Multiple Species Conservation Program (MSCP) is a County conservation planning program designed to establish connected preserve systems that ensures the long-term survival of sensitive plant and animal species and protects the native vegetation found throughout the unincorporated County. Plans created under this program are both a federal Habitat Conservation Plan (HCP) and a State Natural Community Conservation Planning (NCCP). The MSCP addresses the potential impacts of urban growth, natural habitat loss, and species endangerment and creates plans to mitigate for the potential loss of sensitive species and

their habitats. The MSCP Plan covers 582,243 acres over twelve jurisdictions. Each jurisdiction has its own Subarea Plan and each differs in how it implements the MSCP Plan. The MSCP is also an important program that significantly contributes to the County's ability to realize its watershed protection and climate change goals.

The County also works with the San Diego County Regional Airport Authority (SDCRAA) on a regular basis to ensure land use compatibility around each of the eight County-owned airports. The SDCRAA serves as San Diego County's Airport Land Use Commission (ALUC), responsible for protecting public health and safety surrounding airports. The ALUC is responsible for adopting Airport Land Use Compatibility Plans (ALUCPs) for all public-use and military airports in San Diego County. ALUCPs provide guidance on appropriate land uses surrounding airports to protect the health and safety of people and property within the vicinity of an airport, as well as the public in general.

The San Diego Local Agency Formation Commission (LAFCO) is a regulatory agency responsible for annexation and detachment of territory, incorporation of cities, and the formation of special districts. LAFCO also develops and adopts spheres of influence for each city and special district within the unincorporated county. A sphere of influence is defined as a "plan for the probable physical boundaries and service area of a local government agency. In addition to LAFCO, t~~T~~he County of San Diego also coordinates planning efforts with tribal governments and special district agencies, such as fire, water, school, and sanitation districts.

Other County Policies and Ordinances

A number of local plans and ordinances are impacted by the County's General Plan:

- **Zoning Ordinance**—The County administers its General Plan primarily through its Zoning Ordinance. While the General Plan identifies general land use designations, zoning identifies specific uses and development standards. As mandated by the State, the General Plan must be consistent with the County Zoning Ordinance. Changes in this General Plan Update require an update to the County Zoning Ordinance.
- **Subdivision Ordinance**—State law, through the *Subdivision Map Act*, governs local approval of land subdivision, which is further directed in the County Subdivision Ordinance. Review of proposed subdivisions and parcel maps includes a determination of consistency with General Plan goals and policies.
- **Specific Plans**—Specific plans provide an alternative to the Zoning Ordinance in that they are customized plans that delineate land uses, infrastructure, development standards and criteria, and implementation measures. Specific plans must be consistent with the General Plan, and can be used to implement the General Plan within a limited area.
- **The Forest Conservation Initiative** (FCI)—Enacted in 1993 with the goal of preserving the area's unique resources and the rural environment and open space, the FCI affects nearly 91,000 acres of privately owned land in the unincorporated County within the Cleveland National Forest by establishing a 40-acre minimum parcel size with a restriction of one dwelling unit per parcel. This initiative only remains in effect until December 31, 2010, and is included as an appendix to this General Plan. Upon expiration, a General Plan amendment will be required to redesignate the FCI lands ~~in accordance~~to be consistent with the General Plan Update.

Implementing and Amending the Plan

This comprehensive update to the General Plan will be implemented through a variety of ordinances, programs, and activities. These specific actions are described in the Implementation Plan, which is a separate document to the General Plan.

The General Plan is intended to be a dynamic document and must be periodically updated to respond to changing community needs. An annual review of the Plan is required to ensure that it remains relevant. Moreover, any of the Plan's mandatory elements may be amended up to four times a year. Any proposed amendment will be reviewed to ensure that the change is in the public interest and would not be detrimental to public health, safety, and welfare. Environmental review is ~~typically~~ required for substantive General Plan amendments. A comprehensive update to the General Plan requires an assessment of all seven mandated regional elements, including the Land Use and Mobility Element network maps. This General Plan includes policies that require a comprehensive General Plan update to accommodate significant land use changes.

Global Climate Change: AB 32 Compliance

The issue of global climate change has received greater attention from governments around the world in recent years. Global climate change refers to the transformation in the average weather of the earth as observed in wind patterns, storms, precipitation, and temperature.

Human activities associated primarily with the use of carbon-based fossil fuels have led to changes in the composition of the atmosphere. The combustion of carbon-based fossil fuels creates greenhouse gas (GHG) emissions such as carbon dioxide (CO_2), methane (CH_4), and nitrous oxide (N_2O), which has caused the earth's atmosphere to absorb more heat from the sun. The concentration of greenhouse gases in the atmosphere has significantly increased as a result of combustion of fossil fuels primarily associated with automobile use and energy production. Scientists have already observed some of the negative effects of climate change, and expect more changes in the future. Governments, organizations, and private citizens all over the world are looking for ways to reduce GHG emissions to create a better future, while preparing to adapt as necessary to the ~~enviable~~ inevitable repercussions of this situation.

In 2006, the California State Legislature took a proactive role in addressing the challenges of climate change with the adoption of the California *Global Warming Solutions Act of 2006*, Assembly Bill 32 (AB 32). AB 32 focuses on reducing GHG emissions in California. By 2020, AB 32 requires the California Air Resources Board (CARB), the state agency charged with regulating statewide air quality, to adopt rules and regulations that would achieve GHG emissions equivalent to statewide levels in 1990. Since 2006, the State Legislature has adopted several other pieces of legislation to further efforts in addressing climate change. Senate Bill 375 (SB 375), adopted in 2008, is one of those bills and is significant because it connects land use planning with AB 32. SB 375 will result in development of regional greenhouse gas emission reduction targets by the State

that will then be implemented by regional transportation planning agencies. In San Diego, this responsibility falls to the San Diego Association of Governments (SANDAG).

In California, carbon dioxide accounts for approximately 84 percent of all greenhouse gases, while methane makes up approximately eight percent and nitrous oxide and hydrocarbons contributing an additional six and two percent, respectively. Fossil fuel combustion is the principal source, an estimated 98 percent, of carbon dioxide emissions. Of this, transportation and development are the primary sources of fossil fuel combustion. In California, more than half of fossil fuel emissions of carbon dioxide are related in some way to transportation. Worldwide, buildings contribute 40 percent of greenhouse gases, though this is comparatively less in the County due to the rural character of many areas. Clearly, dispersed development patterns that necessitate extensive vehicle trips and gasoline consumption and the predominance of buildings that use extensive climate control systems play a significant role in affecting greenhouse gases.

An underlying premise of the San Diego County General Plan is to conserve natural resources and develop lands and infrastructure more sustainably in the future. Planning and developing a truly sustainable future depends on a healthy environment, strong economy, and the social well-being of the County's residents. Throughout the General Plan are goals and policies that contribute to achieving this goal, including the following:

- Environment: conserving air, water, land, soils, minerals, natural habitat, energy, and aesthetic resources; while protecting life and property from the risks of wildfires, flooding, and other hazards.
- Economy: creating good jobs, income, and financial resources.
- Equity and Social Well-Being: providing library, park and recreations facilities, along with programs that contribute to improvements in ~~good~~ education, income, health, safety, arts, and cultural attainment for all.

AB 32's mandate to reduce greenhouse gas emissions represents a key element in meeting sustainability objectives. The General Plan takes steps to address the challenging issue of climate change by reducing GHG emissions, retaining and enhancing natural areas, improving energy efficiency, reducing waste, recycling, and managing water use. The General Plan will reduce GHG emissions primarily through minimizing vehicle trips and approving land use patterns that support increased density in areas where there is infrastructure to support it, increased opportunities for transit, pedestrians, and bicycles, and through green building and land development conservation initiatives. Policies also address adaptation to climate change, such as continued wildfire management and protection, monitoring flood hazards, and regional collaboration on biological preservation, water use and supply, and other areas of concern.

The sources, impacts, and solutions to climate changes are complex. Climate change and GHG emissions reduction are addressed in policies and programs from multiple elements of this General Plan rather than in a single section. Table I-1 (General Plan Policies Addressing Climate Change) identifies the policies in the San Diego County General Plan that carry out the primary objectives of AB 32: mitigation (reduce greenhouse gas~~es~~ emissions) and adaptation (changing current strategies to adapt to climate change). Table I-1 further categorizes the General Plan policies according to the strategies identified to accomplish the two primary objectives. The primary objectives of AB 32 are identified below.

- **Mitigation (Objective A)**—Responses producing a strategy that seeks to reduce greenhouse gas emissions
- **Adaptation (Objective B)**—Responses adapting current strategies so that Climate Change is integral to planning activities and decisions

Table I-1 General Plan Policies Addressing Climate Change

Element	Policies	
OBJECTIVE A: MITIGATION—REDUCTION IN GREENHOUSE GAS EMISSIONS		
Strategy A-1: Reduce vehicle trips generated, gasoline/energy consumption, and greenhouse gas emissions		
Land Use	LU-1.4	Leapfrog Development
	LU-1.5	Development Patterns
	LU-1.6	Village Expansion
	LU-3.3	Complete Neighborhoods
	LU-5.1	Reduction of Vehicle Trips within Communities
	LU-5.2	Sustainable Planning and Design
	LU-5.4	Planning Support
	LU-5.5	Projects that Impede Non-Motorized Travel
	LU-6.4	Sustainable Subdivision Design
	LU-9.5	Village Uses
	LU-9.7	Town Center Planning and Design
	LU-9.8	Village Connectivity and Compatibility with Adjoining Areas
	LU-9.10	Internal Village Connectivity
	LU-9.12	Achieving Planned Densities in Villages
	LU-10.1	Residential Connectivity
	LU-10.4	Commercial and Industrial Development
	LU-11.1	Location and Connectivity
	LU-11.3	Pedestrian-Oriented Commercial Centers
	LU-11.6	Office Development
	LU-11.8	Permitted Secondary Uses
Mobility	M 1.2	Interconnected Road Network
	M-3.1	Public Road Rights-of-Way
	M-3.2	Traffic Impact Mitigation
	M-4.1	Walkable Village Roads
	M-4.2	Interconnected Local Roads
	M-4.3	Rural Roads Compatible with Rural Character
	M-5.1	Regional Coordination
	M-6.5	Adaptive Reuse of Abandoned Rail Lines
	M-8.1	Transit Service for Transit-Dependent Populations
	M-8.2	Transit Service to Key Community Facilities and Services

Table I-1 General Plan Policies Addressing Climate Change

Element	Policies	
	M-8.3	Transit Stops That Facilitate Ridership
	M-8.4	Transit Amenities
	M-8.5	Improved Transit Facilities
	M-8.6	Park and Ride Facilities
	M-8.7	Inter-Regional Travel Modes
	M-8.8	Shuttles
	M-9.1	Transportation Systems Management
	M-9.2	Transportation Demand Management
	M-9.3	Preferred Parking
	M-9.4	Park-and-Ride Facilities
	M-10.1	Parking Capacity
	M-10.2	Parking for Pedestrian Activity
	M-10.3	~~Parking for Pedestrian Activity~~Maximize On-Street Parking
	M-10.5	Reduced Parking
	M-10.6	On-Street Parking
	M-11.1	Bicycle Facility Design
	M-11.2	Bicycle and Pedestrian Facilities in Development
	M-11.3	Bicycle Facilities on Roads Designated in the Mobility Element
	M-11.4	Bicycle Network Connectivity
	M-11.5	Funding for Bicycle Network Improvements
	M-11.6	Coordination for Bicycle and Pedestrian Facility Connectivity
	M-11.7	Bicycle and Pedestrian Facility Design
	M-11.8	Coordination with the County Trails Program
	M-12.1	County Trails System
	M-12.2	Trail Variety
	M-12.3	Trail Planning
	M-12.4	Land Dedication for Trails
	M-12.5	Future Trails
	M-12.6	Trail Easements, Dedications, and Joint-Use Agreements
	M-12.7	Funding for Trails
	M-12.8	Trails on Private Lands
Conservation and Open Space	COS-14.1	Land Use Development Form
	COS-14.2	Villages and Rural Villages
	COS-14.3	Sustainable Development
	COS-14.4	Sustainable Technology and Projects
	COS-14.9	Significant Producers of Air Pollutants
	COS-14.10	Low-Emission Construction Vehicles and Equipment

Table I-1 General Plan Policies Addressing Climate Change

Element	Policies	
	COS-14.13	Incentives for Sustainable and Low GHG Development
	COS-15.1	Design and Construction of New Buildings
	COS-15.2	Upgrade of Existing Buildings
	COS-16.1	Alternative Transportation Modes
	COS-16.2	Single-Occupancy Vehicles
	COS-16.3	Low Emission Vehicles
	COS-16.5	Transit-Center Development
	COS-21.5	Connections to Trails and Networks
	COS-23.2	Regional Coordination
Housing	H-1.2	Development Intensity Relative to Permitted Density
	H-1.3	Housing near Public Services
	H-1.4	Special Needs Housing near Complementary Uses
	H-1.5	Senior and Affordable Housing near Shopping and Services
	H-1.6	Land for All Housing Types Provided in Villages
	H-1.7	Mix of Residential Development Types in Villages
Strategy A-2: Reduce non-renewable electrical and natural gas energy consumption and generation (energy efficiency)		
Land Use	LU-5.2	Sustainable Planning and Design
Conservation and Open Space	COS-6.5	Best Management Practices
	COS-14.4	Sustainable Technology and Projects
	COS-14.5	Building Siting and Orientation in Subdivisions
	COS-14.6	Solar Access for Infill Development
	COS-14.7	Alternative Energy Sources for Development Projects
	COS-14.12	Heat Island Effect
	COS-15.1	Design and Construction of New Buildings
	COS-15.2	Upgrade of Existing Buildings
	COS-15.3	Green Building Programs
	COS-15.4	Title 24 Energy Standards
	COS-15.5	Energy Efficiency Audits
Strategy A-3: Increase generation and use of renewable energy sources		
Land Use	LU-4.6	Planning for Adequate Energy Facilities
	LU-5.2	Sustainable Planning and Design
Conservation and Open Space	COS-6.5	Best Management Practices
	COS-14.4	Sustainable Technology and Projects
	COS-14.5	Building Siting and Orientation in Subdivisions
	COS-14.6	Solar Access for Infill Development
	COS-14.7	Alternative Energy Sources for Development Projects

Table I-1 General Plan Policies Addressing Climate Change

Element	Policies	
	COS-15.2	Upgrade of Existing Buildings
	COS-15.3	Green Building Programs
	COS-16.4	Alternative Fuel Sources
	COS-17.5	Methane Recapture
	COS-18.1	Alternate Energy Systems
	LU-18.2	Energy Generation from Waste
Strategy A-4: Reduce water consumption		
Land Use	LU-5.2	Sustainable Planning and Design
	LU-6.4	Sustainable Subdivision Design
	LU-6.8	Development Conformance with Topography
Conservation and Open Space	COS-4.1	Water Conservation
	COS-4.2	Drought-Efficient Landscaping
	COS-4.5	Recycled Water
	COS-14.4	Sustainable Technology and Projects
	COS-14.11	Native Vegetation
	COS-15.1	Design and Construction of New Buildings
	COS-15.2	Upgrade of Existing Buildings
	COS-15.3	Green Building Programs
Strategy A-5: Reduce and maximize reuse of solid wastes		
Land Use	LU-5.2	Sustainable Planning and Design
	LU-6.1	Environmental Sustainability
	LU-6.4	Sustainable Subdivision Design
	LU-16.3	New Waste Management Facilities
Conservation and Open Space	COS-10.7	Recycling of Debris
	COS-14.4	Sustainable Technology and Projects
	COS-15.1	Design and Construction of New Buildings
	COS-15.2	Upgrade of Existing Buildings
	COS-15.3	Green Building Programs
	COS-17.1	Reduction of Solid Waste Materials
	COS-17.2	Construction and Demolition Waste
	COS-17.4	Composting
	COS-17.6	Recycling Containers
	COS-17.7	Material Recovery Program
	COS-18.2	Energy Generation from Waste

Table I-1 General Plan Policies Addressing Climate Change		
Element	**Policies**	
Strategy A-6: Promote carbon dioxide consuming landscapes		
Land Use	LU-1.5	Development Patterns
	LU-2.4	Greenbelts to Define Communities
	LU-5.2	Sustainable Planning and Design
	LU-5.3	Rural Land Preservation
	LU-6.1	Environmental Sustainability
	LU-6.2	Reducing Development Pressures
	LU-6.3	Conservation-Oriented Project Design
	LU-6.6	Integration of Natural Features into Project Design
	LU-6.8	Development Conformance with Topography
	LU-7.1	Agricultural Land Development
	LU-7.2	Parcel Size Reduction as Incentive for Agriculture
	LU-9.10	Internal Village Connectivity
Conservation and Open Space	COS-14.4	Sustainable Technology and Projects
	COS-14.11	Native Vegetation
Strategy A-7: Maximize preservation of open spaces, natural areas, and agricultural lands		
Land Use	LU-1.5	Development Patterns
	LU-1.6	Village Expansion
	LU-1.8	Conversion of Public Lands to Private Ownership
	LU-3.3	Complete Neighborhoods
	LU-5.2	Sustainable Planning and Design
	LU-5.3	Rural Land Preservation
	LU-6.1	Environmental Sustainability
	LU-6.2	Reducing Development Pressures
	LU-6.3	Conservation-Oriented Project Design
	LU-6.4	Sustainable Subdivision Design
	LU-6.6	Integration of Natural Features into Project Design
	LU-6.7	Open Space Network
	LU-6.8	Development Conformance with Topography
	LU-7.1	Agricultural Land Development
	LU-7.2	Parcel Size Reduction as Incentive for Agriculture
	LU-9.11	Integration of Natural Features in Villages
	LU-10.2	Development—Environmental Resource Relationship
Mobility	M-2.3	Environmentally Sensitive Road Design

Table I-1 General Plan Policies Addressing Climate Change

Element	Policies	
Conservation and Open Space	COS-1.1	Coordinated Preserve System
	COS-1.2	Minimize Impacts
	COS-1.3	Management
	COS-1.4	Collaboration with other Jurisdictions
	COS-1.5	Regional Collaboration
	COS-2.1	Restoration and Enhancement
	COS-2.2	~~Development Siting and~~Habitat Protection Through Site Design
	COS-3.1	Wetland Protection
	COS-3.2	Minimize Impacts of Development
	COS-7.2	Open Space Easements
	COS-14.11	Native Vegetation
	COS-23.2	Regional Coordination
	COS-24.1	Park and Recreation Contributions
	COS-24.2	Funding Opportunities
Housing	H-2.2	Projects with Open Space Amenities in Villages
OBJECTIVE B: ADAPTATION—ADAPTING CURRENT STRATEGIES SO THAT CLIMATE CHANGE IS INTEGRAL TO PLANNING ACTIVITIES AND DECISIONS		
Strategy B-1: Reduce risk from wildfire, flooding, and other hazards resulting from climate change		
Land Use	LU-1.4	Leapfrog Development
	LU-1.6	Village Expansion
	LU-5.2	Sustainable Planning and Design
	LU-5.3	Rural Land Preservation
	LU-6.3	Conservation-Oriented Project Design
	LU-6.4	Sustainable Subdivision Design
	LU-6.7	Open Space Network
	LU-6.8	Development Conformance with Topography
	LU-6.9	Protection from Hazards
	LU-6.10	Protection from Wildfires and Unmitigable Hazards
	LU-6.11	Flooding
Mobility	M-2.3	Environmentally Sensitive Road Design
Conservation and Open Space	COS-5.1	Impact to Floodways and Floodplains
	COS-5.3	~~Development Siting and Design~~Downslope Protection
	COS-5.4	Invasive Species
	COS-14.4	Sustainable Technology and Projects
Safety	S-1.3	Risk Reduction Programs
	S-2.2	Participation in Mutual Aid Systems
	S-2.3	Familiarity with National and State Response Plans

Table I-1 General Plan Policies Addressing Climate Change		
Element	**Policies**	
	S-2.5	Existing Development within 100-year Flood Zones
	S-2.6	Effective Emergency Evacuation Programs
	S-3.1	Defensible Development
	S-3.2	Development in Hillsides and Canyons
	S-3.3	Minimize Flammable Vegetation
	S-3.4	Service Availability
	S-3.5	~~Secondary~~ Access Roads
	S-3.6	~~Mitigation~~ Fire Protection Measures
	S-4.1	Fuel Management Programs
	S-5.1	Regional Coordination Support
	S-5.2	Fire Service Provider Agreements
	S-6.1	Water Supply
	S-6.4	Fire Protection Services for Development
	S-9.1	Floodplain Maps
	S-9.2	Development in Floodplains
	S-9.3	Development in Flood Hazard Areas
	S-9.4	Development in Villages
	S-9.5	Development in Semi-Rural and Rural Lands
	S-9.6	Development in Dam Inundation Areas
	S-10.1	Land Uses within Floodways
	S-10.2	Use of Natural Channels
	S-10.3	Flood Control Facilities
	S-10.4	Stormwater Management
	S-10.5	Development Site Improvements
	S-10.6	Stormwater Hydrology
Strategy B-2: Conserve & improve water supply due to shortages from climate change		
Land Use	LU-5.2	Sustainable Planning and Design
	LU-6.2	Reducing Development Pressures
	LU-6.4	Sustainable Subdivision Design
	LU-6.5	Sustainable Stormwater Management
	LU-6.8	Development Conformance with Topography
	LU-8.1	Density Relationship to Groundwater Sustainability
	LU-8.2	Groundwater Resources
	LU-8.3	Groundwater-Dependent Habitat
	LU-8.4	Program for Borrego Valley Aquifer
	LU-13.1	Adequacy of Water Supply
	LU-13.2	Commitment of Water Supply

Table I-1 General Plan Policies Addressing Climate Change

Element	Policies	
	LU-16.1	Location of Waste Management Facilities
Mobility	M-2.5	Minimize Excess Water Runoff
	M-10.7	Parking Area Design for Stormwater Runoff
Conservation and Open Space	COS-4.1	Water Conservation
	COS-4.2	Drought-Efficient Landscaping
	COS-4.3	Stormwater Filtration
	COS-4.4	Groundwater Contamination
	COS-4.5	Recycled Water
	COS-5.2	Impervious Surfaces
	COS-5.5	Impacts of Development
	COS-14.4	Sustainable Technology and Projects
	COS-19.1	Sustainable Development Practices
	COS-19.2	Recycled Water in New Development
Strategy B-3: Promote agricultural lands for local food production		
Land Use	LU-1.5	Development Patterns
	LU-5.2	Sustainable Planning and Design
	LU-5.3	Rural Land Preservation
	LU-6.1	Environmental Sustainability
	LU-6.2	Reducing Development Pressures
	LU-6.3	~~Conservation-Oriented Project Design~~Compatibility with Recreational Open Space
	LU-6.4	Sustainable Subdivision Design
	LU-7.1	Agricultural Land Development
	LU-7.2	Parcel Size Reduction as Incentive for Agriculture
	LU-12.9	Environmental and Agricultural Resources
Conservation and Open Space	COS-6.1	Economic Diversity
	COS-6.2	Protection of Agricultural Operations
	COS-6.4	Conservation Easements
Housing	H-3.6	Housing for Special Need Populations
	H-3.7	Alternative Affordable Housing Options
Strategy B-4: Provide education & leadership		
Conservation and Open Space	COS-17.8	Education
	COS-20.1	Climate Change Action Plan
	COS-20.2	GHG Monitoring and Implementation
	COS-20.4	Public Education
Safety	S-1.5	Emergency and Disaster Education Programs
	S-2.4	Emergency and Disaster Education Programs

San Diego County History and Community Profile

The San Diego County Profile is described below in terms of its history, physical setting, economy, population and growth patterns, and the unique communities in the unincorporated County.

History

The County of San Diego was established on February 18, 1850, as one of the original 27 counties of California. The newly created County covered nearly 40,000 square miles including the present counties of San Diego, Imperial, Riverside, and San Bernardino, along with the eastern portion of Inyo County.

The territory comprising San Diego County was under Mexican rule from 1821 until 1846 during which time private land grants covering 948 square miles were bestowed throughout the County. The grants resulted in the formation of private ranchos, some of which are recognizable areas today, such as Rancho Santa Fe (Rancho San Dieguito), Marine Corps Base Camp Pendleton (Rancho Santa Margarita y Las Flores), Rancho Santa Maria (Ramona), and Rancho El Cajon (El Cajon, Lakeside, Santee, and Bostonia). Many ranchos were transformed into incorporated cities; for example, National City and Chula Vista were formed from Rancho de la Nación. Today, the County includes 18 incorporated cities, but retains a large unincorporated area which is the subject of this General Plan.

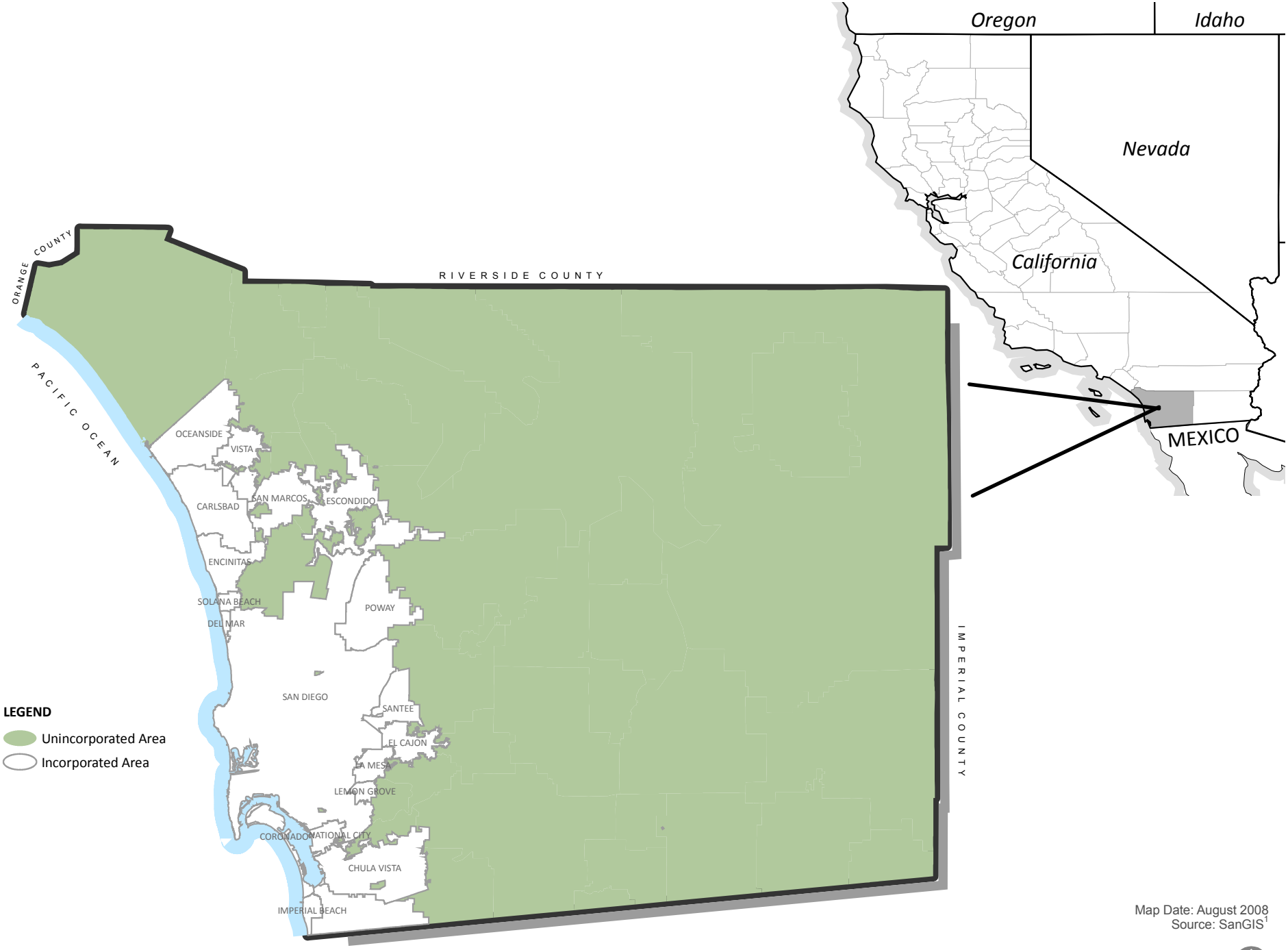
Physical Setting and Community Planning Areas

San Diego County, including incorporated cities, contains approximately 4,261 square miles that cover 65 miles north to south and 86 miles east to west. The County is bordered by Riverside County and Orange County to the north; Imperial County to the east; the nation of Mexico to the south; and the Pacific Ocean to the west as shown in Figure I-1 (Regional Context). The County's western portion includes 18 cities, while in the unincorporated area specifically designated subregions and community planning areas encompass the remainder of the County. These community and subregional planning areas are shown in Figure I-2 (Unincorporated County Communities). A majority of the land in the unincorporated area is open space or undeveloped and includes large tracts of federal, state, or regional parklands, and agricultural production areas. Residential land uses account for the majority of the developed land in the unincorporated County.

Valley landscape

Borrego desert

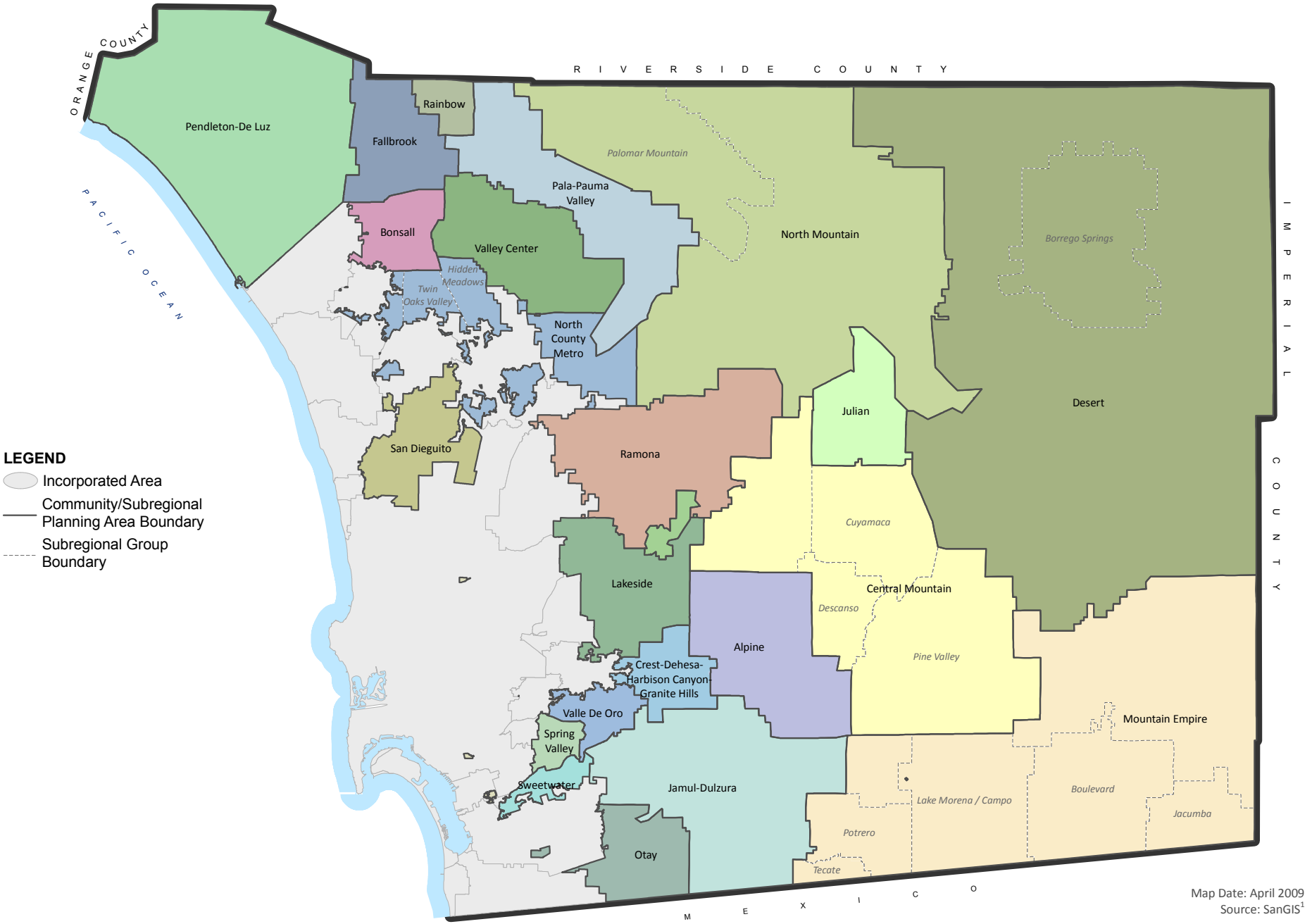
Fallbrook community



REGIONAL CONTEXT

San Diego County General Plan

Figure I-1



UNINCORPORATED COUNTY COMMUNITIES

Relative to the incorporated areas located near the coast, development opportunities in the unincorporated areas of the County are generally more highly constrained due to more rugged terrain, more occurrences of sensitive species and habitat, and less opportunity for the provision of infrastructure and essential services. These physical, environmental, and infrastructure considerations, particularly the limited availability of water service from the County Water Authority (CWA), and the limited availability of other urban services such as sewer, fire, and emergency services, are major factors that shape the County's future growth and development potential.

The most developed communities in the unincorporated County are located at its westernmost boundaries within the CWA boundary; they have access to public services and infrastructure and have sustained growth at a more rapid rate than in other parts of the County. The communities closest to the core metropolitan area of the region have limited potential for future growth because much of their land is already developed. These communities—Valle de Oro, Spring Valley, Sweetwater, the western portions of Lakeside—contain substantial existing populations. These communities desire to retain the existing community character and remaining open space. These more densely populated communities are also concerned about limiting negative impacts caused by road construction and certain developments in incorporated jurisdictions. ~~Some of these communities were built over time without a coordinated plan designed to create balanced community development, making them good candidates for future redevelopment plans.~~

Other communities that are more distant from the San Diego metropolitan center but within the CWA—Alpine, Ramona, Valley Center, North County Metro, Bonsall, Fallbrook, and Otay Mesa—have a greater capacity to grow when compared to other communities. However, in all of these communities, any future growth must be carefully balanced with other factors to preserve their identity and unique resources. Although within the CWA, growth potential is more limited in Rainbow, Twin Oaks, and Hidden Meadows (part of North County Metro), Jamul, and Crest/Dehesa/Harbison Canyon/Granite Hills due to the absence of infrastructure, the rugged terrain, and sensitive habitats~~, and agricultural land~~.

San Diego's remaining major rural communities include Dulzura, Julian, Pala-Pauma, Palomar, Borrego Springs~~)~~, Cuyamaca, Descanso, Pine Valley, Jacumba, Boulevard, Lake Morena, Campo, Potrero, and Tecate. Rugged terrain, agriculture, and sensitive environmental habitats, as well as limited road networks and public services, limit growth in these areas. With few exceptions, these communities are sparsely populated and lack the infrastructure and employment opportunities to support anything more than limited population growth. With the exception of some limited areas of sewer service, these communities rely largely upon septic systems. Without imported water, groundwater is also a limiting factor to growth. Further, this area of the County contains a substantial amount of public lands, tribal land, and land affected by the Forest Conservation Initiative (FCI). Residents in these communities desire to preserve the existing rural setting and character.

Demographic Patterns

The unincorporated County encompasses 3,570~~2~~ squares miles that represent 84 percent of the total land area of San Diego County, yet its 2008 population of 491,764 persons represented only 15.6 percent of the total County population. During the period from 1980 to 2008, the average annual population rate increase

for the unincorporated area was approximately 1.1 percent, whereas the average annual rate of increase for the entire County was 3.4 percent between 1980 and 1990 and 1.3 between 1990 and 2008. Population forecasts for 2030 indicate that the population of the entire County will grow by 42 percent.

Once dependent on the military and defense-related industries, San Diego County now has a diverse economy that includes manufacturing, telecommunications, tourism, trade, biosciences, software, multimedia, and digital technology. These industries are largely located in the 18 cities, with the exception of agricultural production, which is primarily located in the unincorporated County and which is a significant component of its economy.

Valley Center

Fallbrook Village

Twin Oaks agriculture