

4.24 ANCILLARY ANNEXATION AREA

1. SUMMARY

This section describes the ancillary annexation area (AAA) and general processes regulating the City of Santa Clarita and Los Angeles County Local Agency Formation Commission (LAFCO) proceedings that would facilitate incorporation of the area into the City. This section also identifies the existing environmental conditions within the AAA, potential project-specific and cumulative environmental impacts, and feasible mitigation measures to reduce impacts associated with the proposed ancillary annexation. When assessing potential environmental impacts, the analysis considers the change in zoning (i.e., from County to City), the change between the existing development and potential maximum buildout scenario in the AAA, as well as the change to the City's service area.¹

To preface, most of the AAA is built out. As such, the proposed changes to the land use designations in the built out portion of the AAA and the re-assignment of those areas to a different land use jurisdiction, practically speaking, would not result in any potentially significant environmental impacts. Therefore, the following analysis primarily focuses on the potential environmental impacts that may result from further build out within the Sand Canyon and Jakes Way areas (the only areas within the AAA with remaining, unapproved development potential). Additional environmental review would be required before most of the currently undeveloped portions of the AAA could be built out; the subsequent environmental review processes would evaluate impacts and identify mitigation measures in further detail than provided in this section due to the preparation of specific development plans. At this point, it is not known whether, when or how the undeveloped portions of the AAA would be built out, thereby rendering a programmatic level of environmental review more appropriate.

2. PROJECT DESCRIPTION/ANCILLARY ANNEXATION AREA

The project proposes to annex to the City of Santa Clarita various properties surrounding the Vista Canyon project site that currently are located within the County's jurisdiction. In total, the AAA is approximately 3,065 acres, and includes Fair Oaks Ranch (approximately 1,082 acres), the Jakes Way multi-family area (approximately 260 acres), and the Sand Canyon area (approximately 1,723 acres).

¹ Generally speaking, existing development within the AAA constitutes the existing environmental baseline against which environmental impacts are assessed, such that the annexation of such existing development would not create environmental impacts. (See *State CEQA Guidelines*, Section 15125.) However, when annexation is being proposed, it also is appropriate to consider the extent to which the proposed ancillary annexation would expand and impact the City's service area relative to law enforcement services, fire protection services, etc.

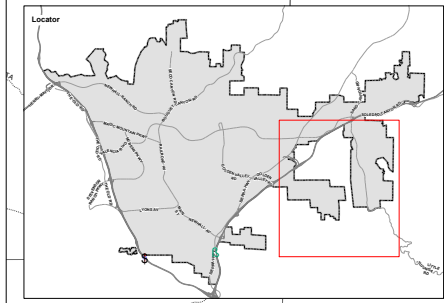
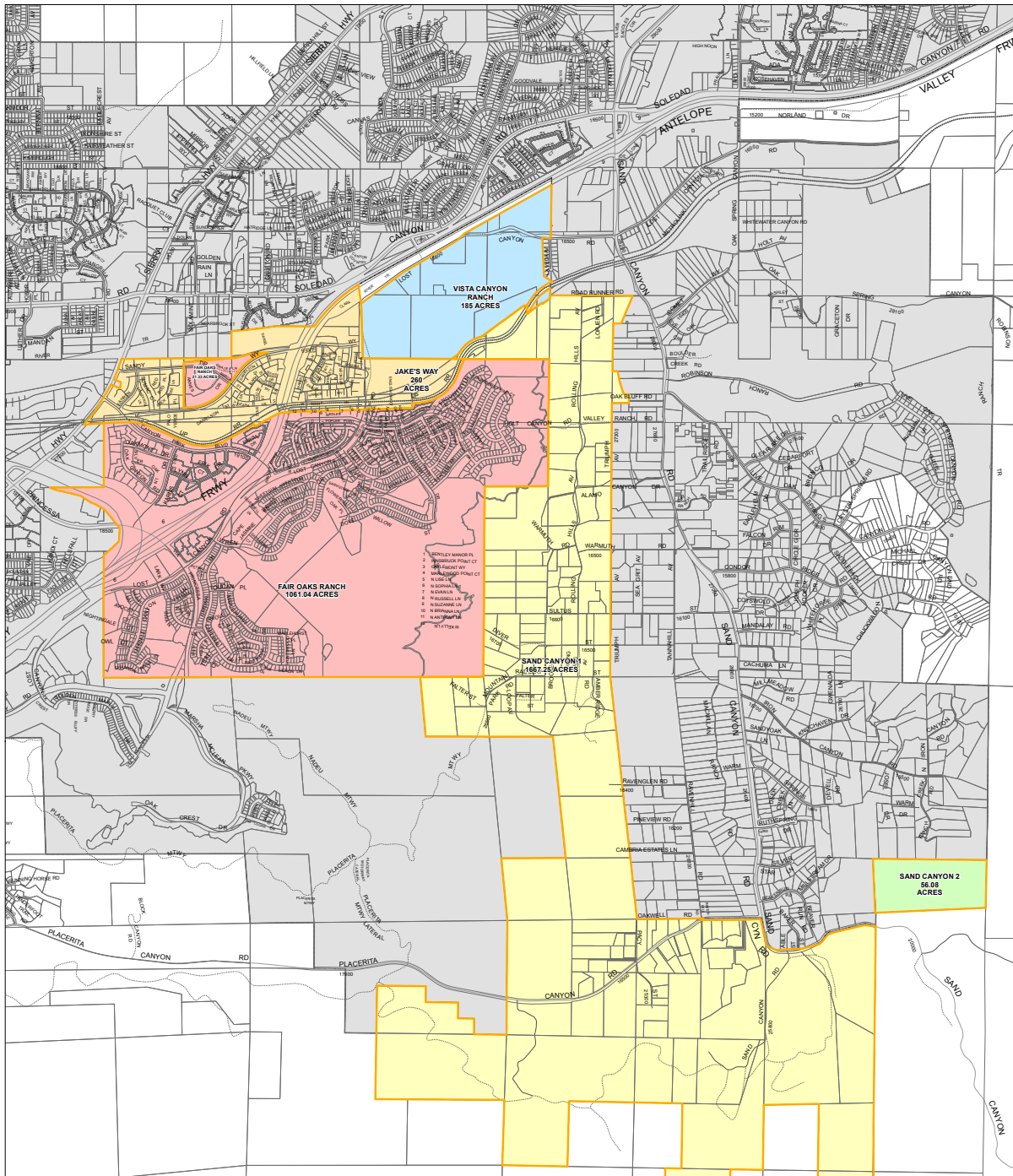
The majority of the AAA is built out; therefore, the City's proposed ancillary annexation of these properties generally would not result in any significant additional future development. However, there are undeveloped areas within the AAA that could result in additional development, depending upon future market and economic conditions. The City projects that the following additional development within the AAA could occur, although the timing, rate, and exact amount of development is unknown: (a) completion of the unbuilt portion of the previously approved Fair Oaks Ranch project (approximately 500 approved dwelling units remain to be constructed, with other construction ongoing); (b) construction of approximately 150 single-family dwelling units in undeveloped or underutilized areas within Sand Canyon based upon the City's existing General Plan; and (c) construction of up to 436,000 square feet of business park and related uses within the Jakes Way area under the City's existing General Plan.

As indicated above, the project proposes to annex a 3,065-acre site into the City of Santa Clarita. This action would require a Sphere of Influence Amendment, general plan amendment, and rezoning of the AAA. Currently, the AAA is within the Planning Area addressed by the City of Santa Clarita's General Plan. Rezoning of the AAA site would be consistent with: (i) existing development in the AAA, where existing, and (ii) land use designations in the City's existing General Plan for undeveloped areas.

Table 4.24-1, Ancillary Annexation Area Summary, list the sub-areas to be annexed into the City in addition to the Vista Canyon site. Please also see **Figure 1.0-4**, which shows the locations of each sub-area to be annexed, **Figure 4.24-1**, which shows existing land uses for each sub-area, **Figure 4.24-2**, which shows existing General Plan Land Use Designations, and **Figure 4.24-3**, which shows the proposed general plan land use designations.

It should be noted that various areas within the Fair Oaks Ranch and Jakes Way portions of the AAA have been developed since the City's adoption of its General Plan. Therefore, in both areas the proposed land use designations and zoning reflect the existing land uses.

A brief summary of the proposed General Plan and zoning designations identified in **Table 4.24-1** is provided below.



City of Santa Clarita

West Sand Canyon /Fair Oaks Ranch Communities

- Fair Oaks Ranch Boundary
- FAIR OAKS RANCH
- JAKE'S WAY
- SAND CANYON 1
- SAND CANYON 2
- VISTA CANYON
- Parcel Outlines
- City Limits

Parcel data: Copyright May 2007, County of Los Angeles. All rights reserved.
 The City of Santa Clarita does not warrant the accuracy of the data and assumes no liability for any errors or omissions.

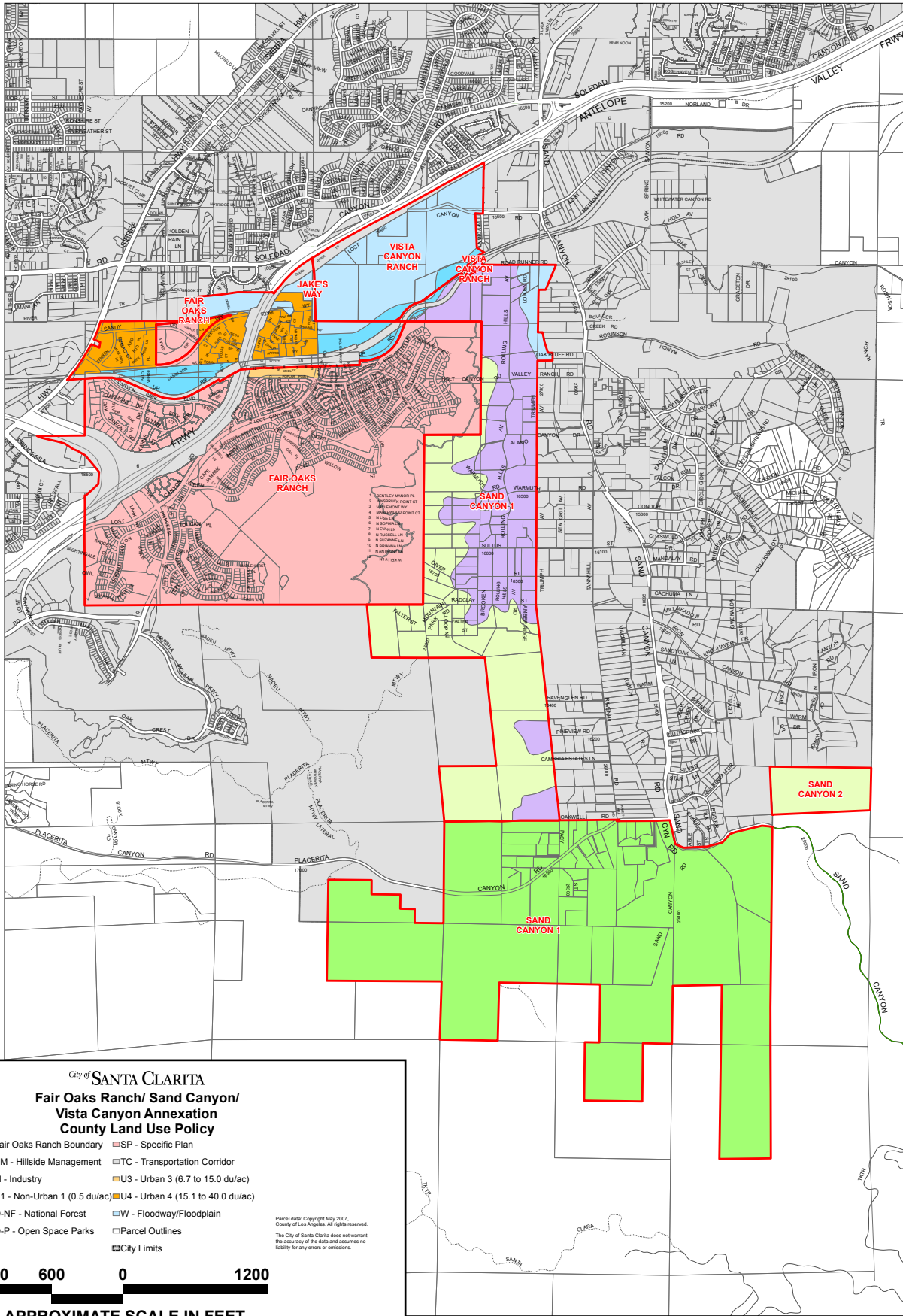


APPROXIMATE SCALE IN FEET

SOURCE: City of Santa Clarita - October 2010

FIGURE 4.24-1

Existing Land Use for Each Sub-Area



City of **SANTA CLARITA**
**Fair Oaks Ranch/ Sand Canyon/
 Vista Canyon Annexation
 County Land Use Policy**

■ Fair Oaks Ranch Boundary	■ SP - Specific Plan
■ HM - Hillside Management	■ TC - Transportation Corridor
■ M - Industry	■ U3 - Urban 3 (6.7 to 15.0 du/ac)
■ N1 - Non-Urban 1 (0.5 du/ac)	■ U4 - Urban 4 (15.1 to 40.0 du/ac)
■ O-NF - National Forest	■ W - Floodway/Floodplain
■ O-P - Open Space Parks	■ Parcel Outlines
	■ City Limits

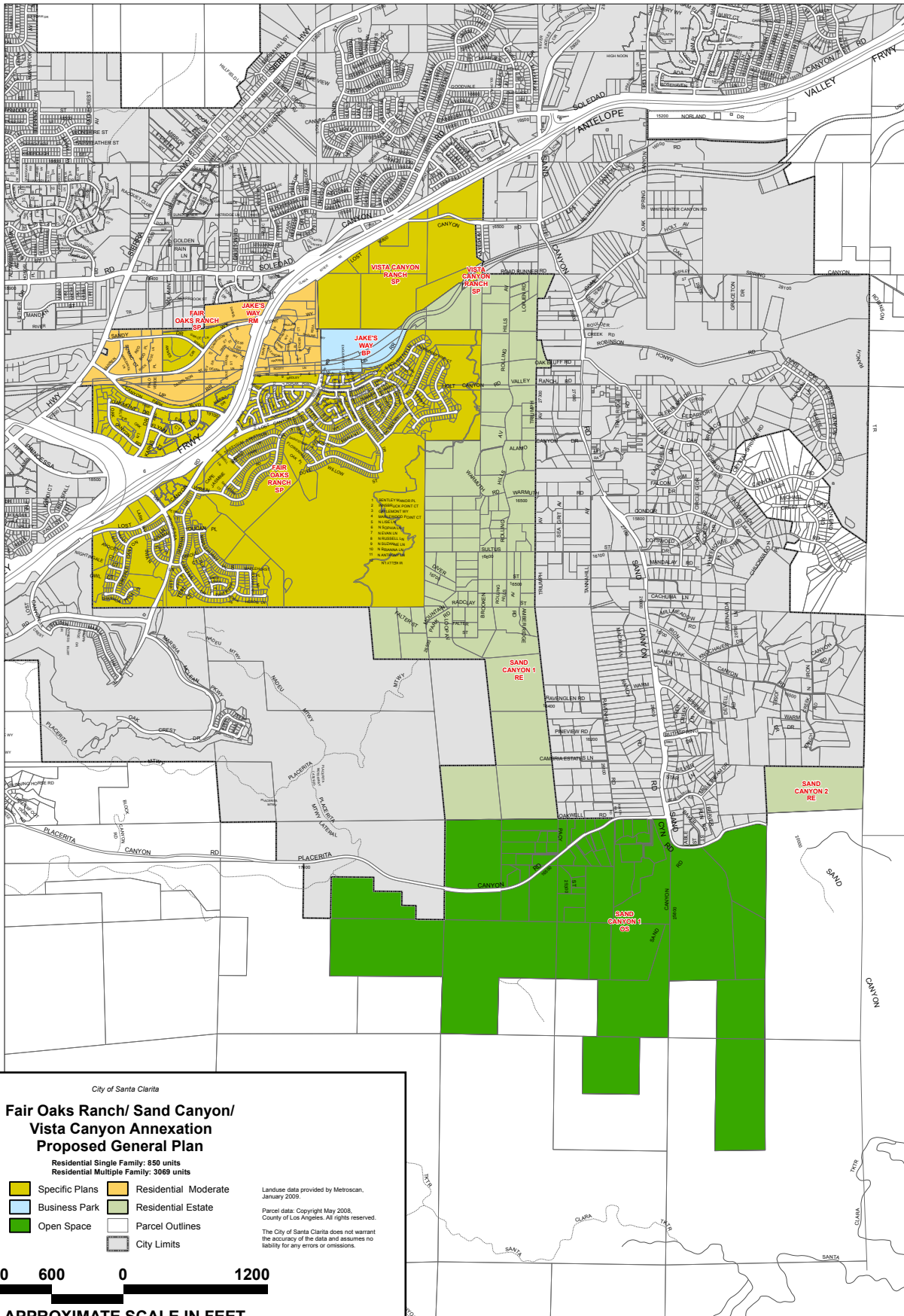
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APPROXIMATE SCALE IN FEET

SOURCE: City of Santa Clarita - October 2010

FIGURE 4.24-2

Existing County General Plan Land Use Designations



City of Santa Clarita

Fair Oaks Ranch/ Sand Canyon/ Vista Canyon Annexation Proposed General Plan

Residential Single Family: 850 units
Residential Multiple Family: 3069 units

Specific Plans	Residential Moderate
Business Park	Residential Estate
Open Space	Parcel Outlines
	City Limits

Landuse data provided by Metroscan, January 2009.
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The City of Santa Clarita does not warrant the accuracy of the data and assumes no liability for any errors or omissions.

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APPROXIMATE SCALE IN FEET

SOURCE: City of Santa Clarita - October 2010

FIGURE 4.24-3

Proposed City General Plan Land Use Designations

**Table 4.24-1
Ancillary Annexation Area Summary**

	Acres	Current City of Santa Clarita General Plan Designation	Proposed City of Santa Clarita General Plan Designation	Proposed City of Santa Clarita Pre-Zone (Zoning)
Fair Oaks Ranch	490.57	Residential Estate (RE)	Specific Plan (SP)	Specific Plan (SP)
	284.19	Residential Moderate (RM)		
	254.48	Business Park (BP)		
	26.21	Community Commercial (CC)		
	26.92	Commercial Office (CO)		
	1,082.37 total			
Jakes Way	237.94	Residential Moderate (RM)	Residential Moderate (RM)	Residential Moderate (RM)
	22.06	Business Park (BP)	Business Park (BP)	Business Park (BP)
	260.00 total			
Sand Canyon Area 1	645.28	Residential Estate (RE)	Residential Estate (RE)	Residential Estate (RE)
	17.42	Business Park (BP)		
	1,004.55	Open Space (OS)		
	1,667.25 total			
Sand Canyon Area 2	56.08	Residential Estate (RE)	Residential Estate (RE)	Residential Estate (RE)

SP (Specific Plan). This land use designation/zone corresponds to Fair Oaks Ranch, which is part of the approved Canyon Park Specific Plan. This Specific Plan provides for the development of approximately 1,000 acres with up to 5,400 residential units. The Specific Plan includes a mix of residential density and product types, including recreational uses, as well as supporting infrastructure.

RM (Residential Moderate). This land use designation/zone corresponds to small groupings of attached dwellings, such as duplexes, triplexes, and quadplexes, with a density of up to 11 dwelling units per acre. This designation/zone is also consistent with typical densities for mobile home parks. Additional uses are permitted that are complementary to, and can exist in harmony with, a residential neighborhood. The City RM rezoning would be reflective of the existing multi-family units within areas covered by this zoning designation.

RE (Residential Estate). This land use designation/zone is intended to ensure that the rural character of certain portions of the AAA is maintained. Any future residential development is expected to consist of large, custom single-family homes on uniquely configured lots that are designed to be sensitive to topographic and environmental considerations. The minimum lot size is 2 gross-acres, thereby allowing

for the development of up to 0.5 dwelling unit per acre. The boarding of horses and related animals as an accessory use is generally found acceptable in this zone.

OS (Open Space). This land use designation/zone corresponds mostly to publicly owned land. All publicly owned land, such as City and County parks, forestlands, wilderness preserves, floodplains, SEAs, corporation yards, fire stations, police stations, and other similarly owned facilities and lands, are considered open space. Privately owned land that is designated for open space is permitted with residential development at a maximum density of one unit per 20 to 40 net acres, depending upon environmental, aesthetic, and topographic constraints. Limited recreational uses may be permitted when they do not interfere or present a potential to damage significant aesthetic, environmental, or topographic constraints of the site.

BP (Business Park). This land use designation/zone provides areas for clean industry, offices related to industrial usage, research and development, limited retail commercial, employee recreation opportunities, and warehousing uses. Development in campus-like settings within the City and near major traffic corridors, such as I-5, SR-126 and SR-14, is anticipated. Industrial activities with a retailing or wholesaling function that is related to the industrial activities are encouraged. BP areas are expected to provide major employment for the City and the Valley. Development intensity for this category will be governed by floor area ratios ranging between 0.5 to 1.5:1.

3. ANNEXATION PROCEDURES

The overriding objective of LAFCOs is to encourage the orderly formation and extension of public agencies. Accordingly, LAFCOs determine public agency boundary changes, as well as establish, update and amend spheres of influence. (See, e.g., Gov. Code, Sections 56375, 56425.) Annexation is the means by which an existing city extends its corporate boundaries. In its most basic form, annexation can be considered a four-part process, as outlined below:

- **Filing.** Applications may be filed with LAFCOs by resolution. In many cases, LAFCOs require rezoning of the site by the affected city.
- **Application Consideration.** LAFCOs have 30 days in which to review an annexation application and determine whether it is complete. Once the application has been accepted as complete, LAFCOs analyze the proposed ancillary annexation in light of state-mandated evaluation criteria and responsibilities and its own adopted policies. LAFCOs may approve, conditionally approve, or deny a proposed ancillary annexation. The lead agency, whether it is the LAFCO or the involved city, must comply with CEQA requirements prior to LAFCO action.
- **Protest Hearing.** A public protest hearing is held in order to determine whether the proposed ancillary annexation must be approved without an election, terminated, or proceed with an election.

- **Certification.** The annexation is not complete until a certificate of completion has been issued.

(See Governor's Office of Planning & Research, *LAFCOs, General Plans, and City Annexations* (August 1997), available at <http://ceres.ca.gov/planning/lafco/lafco.htm>.)

This EIR addresses annexation of the AAA into City boundaries, a corresponding amendment to the City's sphere of influence, and pre-zoning of the annexation area by the City. The Los Angeles County LAFCO would be a responsible agency for this annexation.

4. PROJECT OBJECTIVES

The objectives of the proposed ancillary annexation of the AAA are to:

- Logically extend the City's physical boundary and municipal service area within an area presently bounded on the north, east and west by the City.
- Limit development of undeveloped portions of the AAA to no more than what is permitted under the City's proposed land use designations and zoning.

5. ENVIRONMENTAL SETTING

The location of the AAA relative to the regional and local setting is illustrated in **Figure 1.0-4**. As shown, the AAA is situated in the eastern portion of Santa Clarita Valley (Valley) in unincorporated Los Angeles County. The City of Santa Clarita borders the AAA to the north, west and east, and this mostly urbanized region is characterized by a variety of existing land uses and physical features.

Vehicular access to the Valley is primarily from I-5, which is the major north-south freeway corridor in the area, and SR-14, which runs along the eastern side of the Valley and then northeasterly to the cities of Lancaster and Palmdale in the Antelope Valley. SR-126 provides a westerly connection to the Valley. The closest major airport is the Burbank-Glendale-Pasadena Airport, located approximately 16 miles southeast of the AAA.

A variety of topographic features contribute to the regional setting of the AAA. The Valley is generally flat with some gently rolling hills that range in elevation from approximately 1,200 to 1,600 feet. The Valley is bordered on the south by the Santa Susana Mountains, to the east by the San Gabriel Mountains, and to the north and west by the Angeles National Forest. The mountain ranges that surround the Valley can be viewed from great distances and from the other more dominant visual features in the area. For example, Whitaker Peak to the north of the project site has an elevation of 4,148 feet, Oat Mountain to the south is 3,747 feet high, and Mt. Gleason to the east has an elevation of 6,502 feet. Several watercourses, the largest of which is the Santa Clara River, cross the Valley floor. However, the watercourses in the area

usually are dry, maintaining surface water flow only during storms in the winter months. Other prominent topographic features of the Valley are the north-south trending canyons.

The Valley has a Mediterranean-type climate characterized by warm, dry summers, and mild winters. Most rainfall occurs between November and March, and typically totals approximately 15 to 18 inches annually. Santa Ana winds often sweep through the area in the fall and winter months, bringing periods of warm, dry weather. The Southern California area has been divided into a number of geographical air basins. The Valley is located within the South Coast Air Basin, which includes all of Orange County and the non-desert portions of Los Angeles, San Bernardino, and Riverside counties. Due to the topography and climate within the basin, the South Coast Air Basin consistently generates the highest levels of smog in the United States and, therefore, is considered to have the worst air quality in the nation.

The Valley is divided into two jurisdictional regions: (1) the City of Santa Clarita, and (2) the unincorporated areas of Los Angeles County. The City of Santa Clarita generally is located in the more central portions of the Valley, with unincorporated County areas surrounding the City. The AAA is located in the unincorporated portion of the Valley, but borders the City boundary along the north, east and west. As proposed, the AAA would be annexed into the City of Santa Clarita.

a. Local Setting

1. Surrounding Land Uses

The AAA is mostly developed and primarily surrounded by developed land uses, which include residential and commercial uses. Golden Valley Ranch (a residential and commercial development) and portions of the Angeles National Forest are located to the south; the Metrolink right-of-way, SR-14 and Vista Canyon property are located to the north; the existing Sand Canyon community is located to the east; and, the Sierra Highway and various residential and commercial uses are located to the west.

2. Site Characteristics/Existing Neighborhoods

The AAA is irregularly shaped and consists of approximately 3,065 acres. The AAA is mostly developed, includes a portion of the Santa Clara River (in the northwest portion), and includes hillsides and undeveloped land (in southern and easterly portions). Elevations across the AAA vary from approximately 1,400 feet above sea level in the middle of the Santa Clara River to over 2,000 feet in elevation in the southerly portion of the AAA.

Environmental conditions on much of the AAA vary from disturbed, developed land in northern, western and eastern portions of the AAA to undeveloped, natural, open space areas in southern portions

of the AAA. Please see **Figure 4.24-4**, which depicts blue lines stream. Please see **Figures 4.24-5** through **4.24-7**. The AAA consists of three neighborhoods, which include:

Fair Oaks Ranch

The Fair Oaks Ranch residential community is located east of SR-14 and is predominately built out. This master-planned residential community, with varying residential product types (including single- and multi-family attached units), presently includes a total of 1,670 residential units on approximately 1,082 acres. The area also includes an elementary school and several private recreational facilities. There are approximately 500 approved residential units left to be constructed in Fair Oaks Ranch, and construction is ongoing.

Jakes Way

The Jakes Way portion of the AAA presently consists of 3,225 multi-family residential units on approximately 260 acres. The majority of the Jakes Way area is built out. However, there is undeveloped property directly south of the western portion of the Vista Canyon project site that could be developed with up to 436,000 square feet of business park uses under the City's existing General Plan land use designation.

Sand Canyon

The Sand Canyon portion of the AAA is predominately rural and consists of 96 large-lot, single-family homes on approximately 1,723 acres. A majority of the Sand Canyon portion of the AAA is built out; however, it is estimated that up to 150 additional, single-family units could be constructed on vacant or underutilized properties within this area under the City's General Plan land use designation and taking into account environmental constraints.

b. Existing Environmental Conditions

(1) Geological Resources

Generally speaking, the Valley is geologically complex and characterized by many structural variations. The area contains a wide array of generally disarranged rock types, which are dissected by many prominent faults. The region is in the youthful stage of geologic evolution and is tectonically unstable. Further, there is a history of major earthquakes occurring in the Southern California region.

The AAA is situated within the Soledad Basin, north of the Santa Susana Mountains and south of the Angeles National Forest, and is located within the tectonically active Transverse Ranges of Southern

California. The active San Andreas Fault is located about 20 miles northeast of the AAA, and the San Gabriel Fault is located approximately 0.5 mile southwest of the AAA.

The major geologic hazard for existing and future residents and occupants of the AAA would be ground shaking related to earthquake activity originating along these faults. Much of the Valley is within a zone of potential liquefaction hazard. Even though there was a Peak Ground Acceleration (PGA) in excess of 0.5 standard gravity in much of the Valley during the 1994 Northridge Earthquake, liquefaction was not observed. There are numerous reasons for the absence of liquefaction-related stress at the ground surface. One reason is that the thickness of non-liquefiable soils is greater than the liquefiable layers and the effects of liquefaction of deep layers do not manifest themselves at the ground surface. Nonetheless, there is a potential for permanent deformation of the ground surface and liquefaction in the AAA during a seismic event.

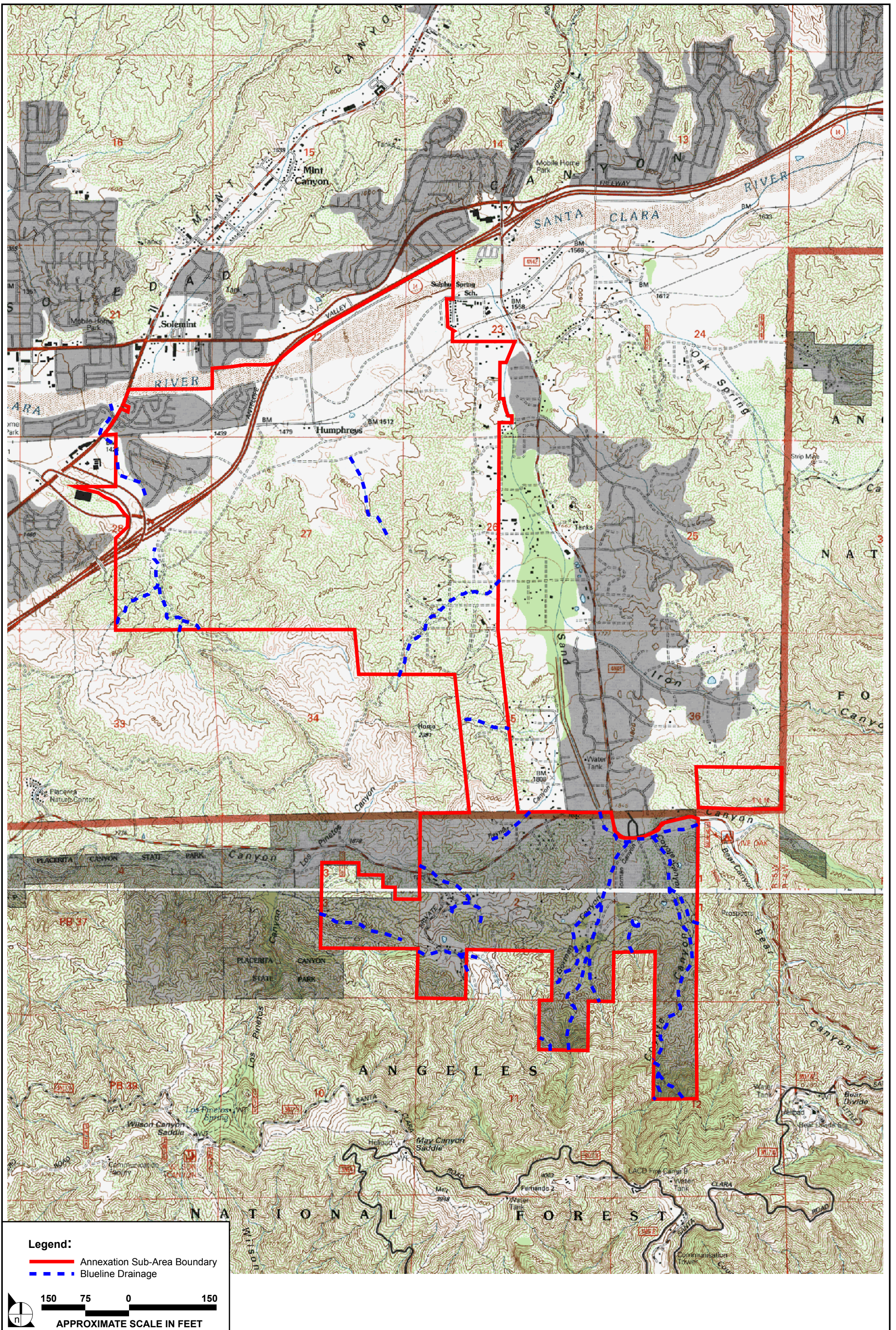
Please see **Section 4.1** of this EIR for additional information on existing geotechnical conditions in the Valley, and a complete discussion of the regulatory setting for geologic resources.

(2) Flood

The Valley is located within the Santa Clara River basin. The river flows, after large storm events, through the northwestern portion of the AAA from east to west. The entire watershed of the Santa Clara River basin is 1,634 square miles in area. The watershed drains portions of the Los Padres National Forest from the north, Angeles National Forest from the northeast and east, and Santa Susana Mountains from the south and southeast. From its headwaters in the San Gabriel Mountains to the east, to its terminus at the Pacific Ocean, the Santa Clara River flows approximately 84 miles.

Flows within the river are largely a result of stormwater runoff in the rainy months, and wastewater treatment discharges in the drier months.² As such, the reach of the river upstream from Bouquet Canyon Road overpass to Lang Station is typically dry except in periods following storm events. Historically, rising groundwater supported perennial (year-round) flow in the river from I-5 westward past the Los Angeles/Ventura County Line. However, the perennial sections currently extend approximately three miles east of I-5, largely due to the discharge of effluent from a wastewater treatment plant (WRP). Principal tributaries to the upper Santa Clara River include Mint Canyon, Bouquet Canyon, San Francisquito Canyon, Castaic Creek Canyon, Oak Spring Canyon, Sand Canyon, and Potrero Canyon.

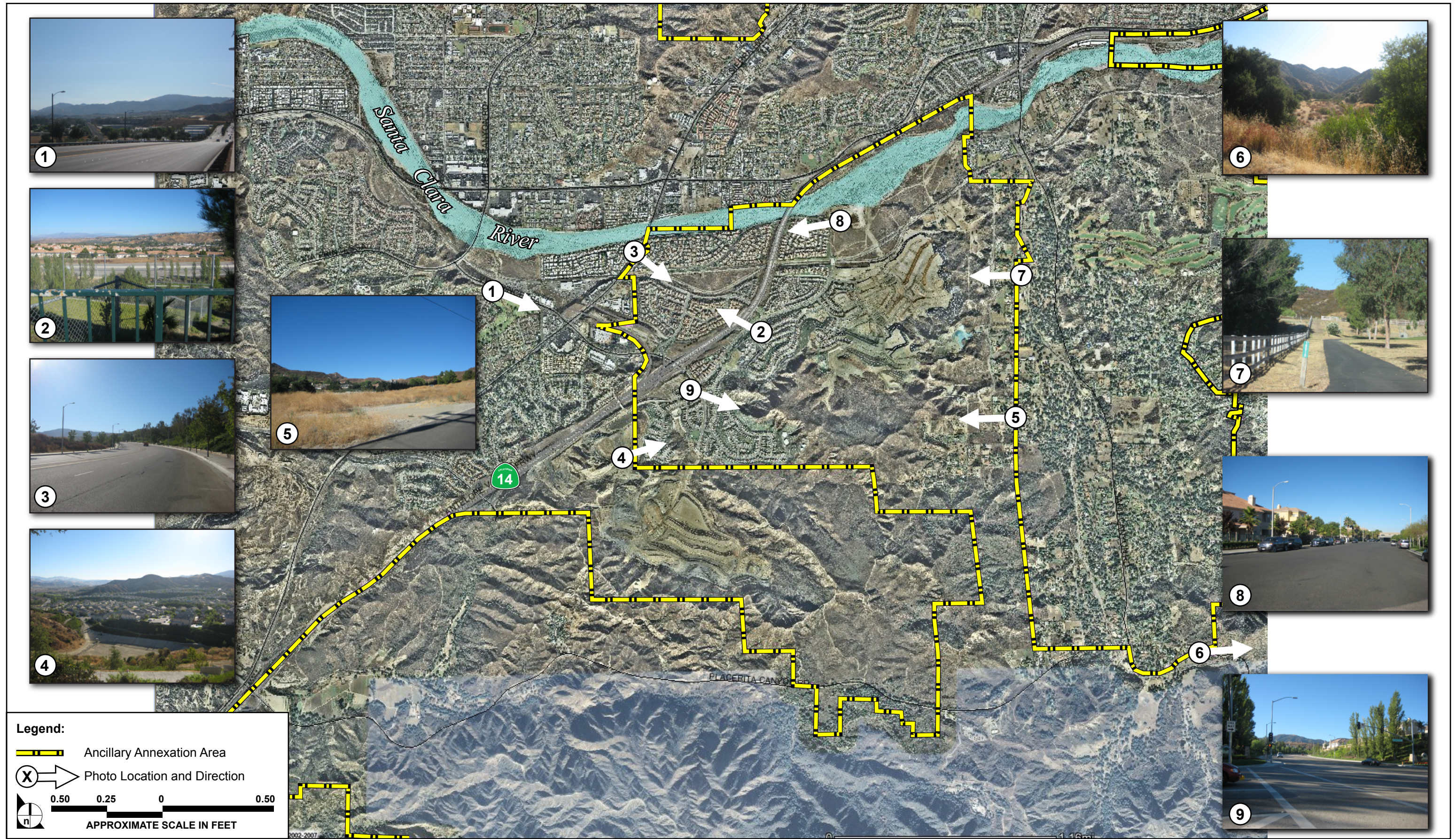
² Effluent from the Saugus WRP and Valencia WRP accounts for up to 40 percent of total stream flow within the Santa Clara River during the winter and 90 percent during summer months.



SOURCE: USGS Topographic Maps, Impact Sciences, Inc. – September 2010

FIGURE 4.24-4

Annexation Sub-Areas Blueline Drainages



SOURCE: City of Santa Clarita – August 2010

FIGURE 4.24-5

Ancillary Annexation Area Photographs Key Map



Photo Location 1



Photo Location 2



Photo Location 3

SOURCE: City of Santa Clarita – August 2010

FIGURE 4.24-6



Ancillary Annexation Area Photographs 1 – 3

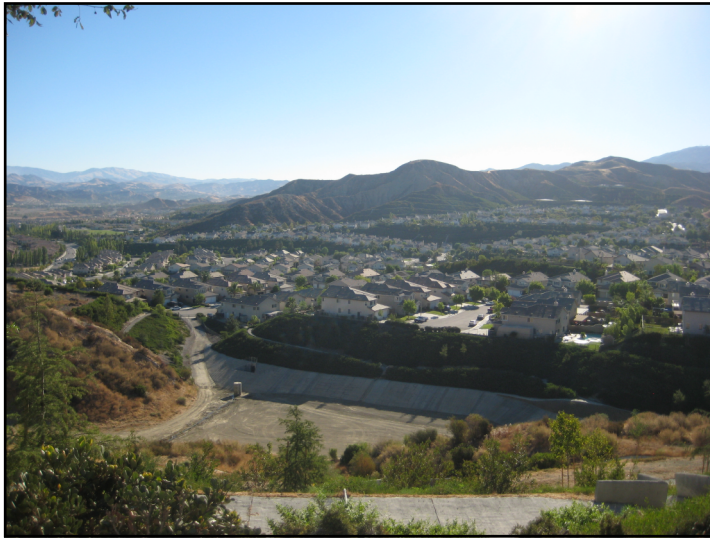


Photo Location 4



Photo Location 5



Photo Location 6

SOURCE: City of Santa Clarita – August 2010

FIGURE 4.24-7



Ancillary Annexation Area Photographs 4 – 6

Developed areas in the Sand Canyon area drains into Sand Canyon Creek, one of the primary tributaries to the Santa Clara River. In addition, portions of the Sand Canyon area contain properties within the Federal Emergency Management Agency's (FEMA) flood hazard zones. Developed areas within Jakes Way and Fair Oaks Ranch would drain, via storm drain systems, to the Santa Clara River. Properties within Jakes Way and Fair Oaks Ranch would be outside of FEMA's flood hazard zones.

Please see **Section 4.2, Flood**, of this EIR for additional information on the existing environmental conditions, and a complete discussion of the regulatory setting.

(3) Traffic and Access

I-5, the Golden State Freeway, which connects the Southern California region to California's Central Valley, runs along the western edge of the Valley merging with SR-14 in the Newhall Pass just north of the City of Los Angeles.

Newhall Ranch Road/Golden Valley Road and Valencia Boulevard/Soledad Canyon Road provide the primary east/west connections through the Valley, connecting I-5 with SR-14. Soledad Canyon Road also provides the primary nonfreeway connection between the City of Santa Clarita and the communities of Agua Dulce and Acton to the east.

Geography in the Planning Area limits major roadway access to two primary freeway corridors: the I-5 and SR-14. These corridors are important links in the larger north Los Angeles County and Southern California transportation system and provide vital connections between the communities in the Valley and the surrounding regions to the north and the south. The Newhall Pass has traditionally been one of the most congested regional corridors in Southern California and is expected to remain a major corridor in need of additional capacity improvements.

The following summarizes the freeways, arterials, and local streets that would provide access to the AAA.

(a) Antelope Valley Freeway

SR-14 (Antelope Valley Freeway) is a north-south freeway that extends from I-5 in northern Los Angeles County through Santa Clarita and into the Antelope Valley. As noted below, traffic counts indicate that traffic levels on SR-14 diminish as the freeway extends north. Accordingly, the number of travel lanes is also reduced as it gradually narrows from 11 lanes just north of I-5 to 6 lanes north of Sand Canyon Road. It has a posted speed limit of 65 miles per hour (mph). SR-14 has a continuous High Occupancy Vehicle (HOV) lane in each direction throughout the study area. The HOV lane operates southbound from 5:00 to

9:00 AM and northbound from 3:00 to 7:00 PM. Outside of those hours, it functions as a general purpose lane. The following describes the cross-sections of SR-14 in the study area.

- North of I-5 – Northbound: five mixed-use and one HOV lane; Southbound: four mixed-use and one HOV lane. Average Annual Daily Traffic (AADT) is 169,000 vehicles.
- North of Newhall Avenue (formerly San Fernando Road) – three mixed-use lanes and one HOV lane in each direction. AADT is 156,000 vehicles.
- Between Golden Valley Road and Via Princessa/Sierra Highway interchanges – three mixed-use lanes, one HOV lane, and one auxiliary lane in each direction. AADT is 148,000 vehicles.
- Between Via Princessa/Sierra Highway and Sand Canyon Road interchanges – three mixed-use lanes and one HOV lane in each direction. AADT is 118,000 vehicles.
- North of Sand Canyon Road interchange – two mixed-use lanes and one HOV lane in each direction. AADT is 107,000 vehicles.

The Caltrans 2007 Highway Congestion Monitoring Program indicates that segments of SR-14 between I-5 and Via Princessa/Sierra Highway are congested (defined as travel speeds below 35 mph for at least 15 consecutive minutes) for multiple hours of the morning commute period in the southbound direction and for multiple hours of the evening commute period in the northbound direction.

(b) Major Highways

Major highways are six or more lane arterials designed for high mobility and limited vehicular access to driveways and cross streets. Major highways that provide access to/from the AAA include:

- Soledad Canyon Road – parallels SR-14 in the eastern area of Santa Clarita as a four-lane major highway with a posted speed limit of 50 mph. It continues in a westerly direction into central Santa Clarita, widening to six lanes at Galetton Road with a posted speed limit of 45 to 50 mph. It continues as a six-lane arterial to Bouquet Canyon Road where it becomes Valencia Boulevard. The posted speed limit west of Sierra Highway ranges from 35 to 50 mph. The segment east of Galetton Road, which is closest to the project site, carried 24,500 ADT in November 2008.
- Lost Canyon Road (Via Princessa to Jakes Way) – is a four-lane divided major highway with a posted speed limit of 35 mph from Via Princessa to Medley Ridge Drive. East of this street, it has the same cross-section but is striped for only one lane in each direction. A bridge (of sufficient width to ultimately provide six lanes) across the Metrolink railroad tracks provides a temporary emergency access to the Colony Townhomes located on Jakes Way. This emergency access will be removed when Lost Canyon Road is extended. West of Via Princessa, it has a posted speed limit of 35 mph and extends in a southwesterly direction to connect with Golden Valley Road. In November 2008, Lost Canyon Road carried 8,900 ADT east of Via Princessa and 6,300 ADT east of Canyon Park Boulevard.

- Sand Canyon Road (Soledad Canyon Road to Lost Canyon Road) – is a north-south major highway featuring two continuous travel lanes (plus turn lanes) in each direction south of Soledad Canyon Road and on the SR-14 overcrossing. South of the NB SR-14 ramp intersection, it gradually narrows to two lanes and is a two-lane bridge over the Santa Clara River. It has a posted speed limit of 45 mph. In November 2008, Sand Canyon Road carried 11,100 ADT north of Lost Canyon Road.
- Via Princessa (Lost Canyon Road to current western terminus) – is a four- to six-lane major highway. It is four lanes with a posted speed limit of 35 mph from Lost Canyon Road to Jason Drive, six lanes from north of Jason Drive to north of Sierra Highway, narrowing to four lanes as it continues in a northwesterly direction. It heads in a westerly direction west of Whites Canyon Road, terminating about 0.75 of a mile from Golden Valley Road. The posted speed limit ranges from 40 to 50 mph. In November 2008, Via Princessa carried 12,600 ADT south of SR-14.
- Sierra Highway – is a generally north-south regional travel route that parallels SR-14 from Palmdale/Lancaster southerly to I-5 where it becomes San Fernando Road. It is four lanes south of Via Princessa, six lanes between Via Princessa and Soledad Canyon Road, and four lanes north of Soledad Canyon Road, narrowing to two lanes north of Sand Canyon Road. Sections of Sierra Highway within the northerly portion of the study area are undivided (i.e., left-turns are made from the inside through lane). The posted speed limit is 45 mph. The segment south of Soledad Canyon Road carried 35,000 ADT in November 2008.

(c) Secondary Highways

Secondary highways are arterials planned for a maximum of four lanes and designed for high mobility and limited vehicular access to driveways and cross streets. The following roadways provide access to the AAA:

- Sand Canyon Road (Soledad Canyon to Sierra Highway) – is a two-lane north-south arterial street. The southerly portion of this segment is separated by a two-way left-turn lane. The northerly portion is undivided. It has a posted speed limit of 45 mph. This segment carried 7,100 ADT in 2005.
- Canyon Park Boulevard – begins at Lost Canyon Road and extends under SR-14 to Sierra Highway. It is generally a four-lane divided arterial with a posted speed limit of 45 mph, with the exception of the segment between Sierra Highway and Jakes Way, which is two lanes with on-street parking. The Metrolink railroad tracks cross Canyon Park Boulevard at-grade less than 100 feet south of Jakes Way. This segment carries approximately 5,100 ADT (estimated from peak hour counts).
- Lost Canyon Road (west of Sand Canyon Road) – is a two-lane undivided roadway with a posted speed limit of 30 mph (25 mph when children are present). It currently terminates just west of La Veda Avenue. Sulphur Springs Community School and Pinecrest School are accessed from this street and described in more detail later in this chapter. This segment carries approximately 1,500 ADT (estimated from peak hour counts).
- Placerita Canyon Road (Sierra Highway to Sand Canyon Road) – is a four-lane divided arterial from Sierra Highway to just east of SR-14, where it becomes a two-lane undivided road. The segment east of SR-14 has a posted speed limit of 50 mph. This segment carries approximately 4,000 ADT (estimated from peak hour counts).

- Via Princessa (Lost Canyon Road to Golden Valley Road) – is a recently constructed four-lane arterial with a posted speed limit of 35 mph. This segment carries approximately 3,600 ADT (estimated from peak hour counts).

(d) Limited Secondary Highways

Limited secondary highways are two-lane streets with more limited mobility and greater access to adjacent land uses. These roadways are typically undivided and may include on-street parking. Limited secondary highways that provide access to the AAA include:

- Jakes Way – extends easterly from Canyon Park Boulevard under SR-14 to provide access to the Colony Townhomes. It is a wide street with one lane in each direction (a center left-turn lane in some sections), and on-street parking. It has a posted speed limit of 40 mph. The segment east of Canyon Park Boulevard carried 5,500 ADT in November 2008.
- Sand Canyon Road (Lost Canyon Road to Placerita Canyon Road) – is a two-lane north-south undivided roadway. It has a posted speed limit of 45 mph. The northerly portion of this segment carried 9,300 ADT in November 2008.

Please see **Section 4.3, Traffic and Access**, of this EIR for additional information on the existing transportation and circulation conditions, and a complete discussion of the regulatory setting for traffic-related issues.

(4) Air Quality

(a) Regional Climate

Southern California lies in a semi-permanent high-pressure zone of the Eastern Pacific region. Summertime weather is dominated by the movement and intensity of a semi-permanent high-pressure system that is normally centered several hundred miles southwest of California. In the spring, summer, and fall, the climate is heavily influenced by marine air; light winds in the region allow marine air to regulate temperatures and airflow during these periods. In the winter, low-pressure weather systems originating in the northern Pacific Ocean bring clouds, wind, and rain into Southern California. Santa Ana winds, caused by high pressure in the high plateau region located northeast of California, intermittently occur during winter and fall.

The climate of Southern California is semi-arid, and characterized by warm summers, mild winters, infrequent seasonal rainfall, moderate daytime onshore breezes, and moderate humidity. Annual average temperatures throughout the region vary from the low to middle 60 degrees Fahrenheit (°F). However, due to decreased marine influence, the inland areas show greater variability in average annual minimum and maximum temperatures. January is the coldest month, with average minimum temperatures of 47°F

in downtown Los Angeles and 36°F in San Bernardino. Virtually all portions of the region have recorded maximum temperatures above 100°F.

In general, more than 90 percent of the region's rainfall occurs from November through April. Annual average rainfall varies from approximately 9 inches in Riverside to 14 inches in downtown Los Angeles. Monthly and yearly rainfall totals are extremely variable. Summer rainfall usually consists of widely scattered thundershowers near the coast and slightly heavier shower activity in the eastern portion of the region and near the mountains. Rainy days comprise 5 to 10 percent of all days, with the frequency being higher near the coast. The influence of rainfall on the air pollutant levels in the region is minimal. Although some washout of pollution would be expected with winter rains, air masses that bring precipitation of consequence are very unstable and provide dispersion that masks wash-out effects. Summer thunderstorm activity affects pollution only to a limited degree. However, heavy clouds associated with summer storms minimize ozone production because of reduced sunshine and cooler temperatures.

Due to the generally clear weather, about 75 percent of available sunshine is received; clouds absorb the remaining 25 percent. The ultraviolet portion of this abundant radiation is a key factor in photochemical reactions. On the shortest day of the year, there are approximately 10 hours of possible sunshine, and approximately 14 hours on the longest day of the year. The percentage of cloud cover during daylight hours varies from 47 percent at Los Angeles International Airport (LAX) to 35 percent at Sanberg, a mountain location. The number of clear days also increases with distance from the coast: 145 days at LAX and 186 days at Burbank. The region typically receives much less sunshine during the first six months of the year than the last six months. This difference is attributed to the greater frequency of deep marine layers and the subsequent increase in stratus clouds during the spring and to the fact that the rainy season begins late in the year (November) and continues through early spring.

The vertical dispersion of air pollutants in the region is frequently restricted by the presence of a persistent temperature inversion in the atmospheric layers near the earth's surface. Normally, the temperature of the atmosphere decreases with altitude. However, when the temperature of the atmosphere increases with altitude, the phenomenon is termed an inversion. An inversion condition can exist at the surface or at any height above the ground. The bottom of the inversion, known as the mixing height, is the height of the base of the inversion.

Two distinct temperature inversion structures control the vertical mixing of air pollution in the region. During the summer, warm, high-pressure descending (subsiding) air is undercut by a shallow layer of cool marine air. The boundary between these two layers of air is a persistent marine subsidence/inversion. This boundary prevents vertical mixing that effectively acts as an impervious lid to

pollutants over the entire region. The mixing height for this inversion structure is normally situated 1,000 to 1,500 feet above mean sea level.

A second inversion-type forms in conjunction with the drainage of cool air off the surrounding mountains at night followed by the seaward drift of this pool of cool air. The top of this layer forms a sharp boundary with the warmer air aloft and creates nocturnal radiation inversions. These inversions occur primarily in the winter when nights are longer and onshore flow is weakest. They are typically only a few hundred feet above mean sea level. These inversions effectively trap pollutants, such as oxides of nitrogen and carbon monoxide from vehicles, as the pool of cool air drifts seaward. Winter is, therefore, a period of high levels of primary pollutants along the coastline.

In general, inversions in the region are lower before sunrise than during the daylight hours. As the day progresses, the mixing height normally increases as the warming of the ground heats the surface air layer. As this heating continues, the temperature of the surface layer approaches the temperature of the base of the inversion layer. When these temperatures become equal, the inversion layer's lower edge begins to erode and, if enough warming occurs, the layer breaks up. The surface layers are gradually mixed upward, diluting the previously trapped pollutants. The breakup of inversion layers frequently occurs during mid to late afternoon on hot summer days. Winter inversions usually break up by mid morning.

(b) Local Climate

The AAA, with the Sierra Pelona Mountains on the north, and the Santa Susana and San Gabriel Mountains to the south, east, and west, is in a transitional microclimatic zone located between two climatic types, termed "valley marginal" and "high desert." The AAA is situated far enough from the ocean to escape coastal damp air and fog, and also far enough from the high desert to escape extremely hot summers and harsh winters. As a result, summers are dry and warm, with daytime temperatures ranging from 70 to 100°F. Winters are temperate, semi-moist, and sunny, with daytime temperatures ranging from 40 to 65°F.

The topography surrounding the AAA has resulted in two separate wind flow patterns through the southern and northern parts of the Valley. Diurnal winds in the southern part of the Valley flow northerly from the San Fernando Valley through the Newhall Pass. These daytime wind flows are oftentimes enhanced by localized up-valley or mountain pass winds, and are most dominant during summer, which is the peak smog season. Diurnal winds in the northern part of the Valley flow easterly from Ventura County through the Santa Clara River Valley. During the night, mountain, desert, and valley air cools and flows southerly and westerly back towards the ocean, producing a gentle "drainage

wind.” On most days, these two flow patterns meet and form a convergence zone, usually in the northern half of the Valley, during which wind speeds accelerate.

During the spring and the early part of summer, the diurnal wind patterns disperse air pollutants through and out of the Valley. However, this dispersion is less pronounced during the late summer and winter months because of lighter wind speeds, except during an occasional winter storm or during strong Santa Ana wind conditions when winds flow southerly and southwesterly from the desert of the Great Basin through canyons to the northeast and Tejon Pass to the north. The Santa Ana winds are usually warm, always very dry, and often carry great amounts of dust. The winds are particularly strong in mountain passes and at the mouths of canyons. On the average, Santa Ana winds occur 5 to 10 times per year and can last up to several days per occurrence.

In 2004, the South Coast Air Quality Management District (SCAQMD) provided an expanded air quality analysis of the Valley subregion. The *Santa Clarita Subregional Analysis* indicated that the Valley “is a relatively small contributor to the total emissions of the key pollutants” in both Los Angeles County and the South Coast Air Basin (SoCAB). Emissions occurring in the Valley typically comprise less than 3 percent of the County and 2 percent of the SoCAB, based on 2002 emissions inventory data. While the Valley contributes a small amount of pollutants to the region, it experiences disproportionately high concentrations of ozone and particulate matter. The subregional analysis stated that “the overwhelming contribution of pollution transport to the Santa Clarita Valley comes from the San Fernando Valley and metropolitan Los Angeles.” This is evidenced by meteorological monitoring data for the Valley that show the primary daytime wind vectors are from the southern and upwind emission source areas. The subregional analysis also indicated that, “in general, average transport, which is characterized by a moderate-to-strong sea breeze through the Newhall Pass, occurs two-thirds of all days” and that “in contrast, Santa Clarita is mostly impacted from local emissions under calm winds and weak offshore flow which occurs less than 10 percent of all days.” Therefore, the disproportionate impact of air pollutants in the Valley is caused by the regional and local climate, as described above. The SCAQMD’s *Santa Clarita Subregional Analysis* is included in **Appendix 4.4** of this EIR.

(c) South Coast Air Basin Attainment Status

The attainment status of the SoCAB with respect to the National Ambient Air Quality Standards (NAAQS) and California Ambient Air Quality Standards (CAAQS) is summarized in **Table 4.24-2, NAAQS Designations – South Coast Air Basin (Los Angeles County)** and **Table 4.24-3, CAAQS Designations – South Coast Air Basin (Los Angeles County)**. Because the attainment/nonattainment designation is pollutant-specific, an area may be classified as nonattainment for one pollutant and attainment for another. Similarly, because the state and federal ambient air quality standards differ, an

area could be classified as attainment under the federal standards and as nonattainment under the state standards for the same pollutant. As shown in **Table 4.24-2**, the SoCAB is in nonattainment for the federal standards for ozone (8 hour), PM₁₀, and PM_{2.5}. As shown in **Table 4.24-3**, the air basin is in nonattainment for the state standards of ozone (1 hour and 8-hour), PM₁₀, and PM_{2.5}. States with regions that are not in attainment with the NAAQS are required to submit a State Implementation Plan (SIP) that describes how the air basin will achieve the federal standards by specified dates. The stringency of emission control measures in a given SIP depends on the severity of the air quality exceedances within the specific air basin.

Table 4.24-2
NAAQS Designations – South Coast Air Basin (Los Angeles County)

Pollutant	Averaging Time	Designation
Ozone (O ₃)	8 Hour	Nonattainment/Severe-17**
Carbon Monoxide (CO)	1 Hour, 8 Hour	Attainment
Nitrogen Dioxide (NO ₂)	Annual Arithmetic Mean*	Attainment/Unclassifiable
Sulfur Dioxide (SO ₂)	24 Hour, Annual Arithmetic Mean	Attainment
Respirable Particulate Matter (PM ₁₀)	24 Hour	Nonattainment/Serious
Fine Particulate Matter (PM _{2.5})	24 Hour, Annual Arithmetic Mean	Nonattainment***
Lead (Pb)	Calendar Quarter	Attainment

Source: United States Environmental Protection Agency, "Region 9: Air Programs, Air Quality Maps," http://www.epa.gov/region9/air/maps/maps_top.html. 2008.

- * The U.S. EPA has promulgated a new 1-hour NAAQS for NO₂. The new 1-hour standard is 0.100 parts per million (188 micrograms per cubic meter) and became effective on April 12, 2010. The U.S. EPA will make nonattainment area designations by 2012.
- ** Nonattainment/Severe 17: When the U.S. EPA promulgated the 8-hour ozone standard in 2004, it classified the South Coast Air Basin as Severe-17, which means it has 17 years to reach attainment of the standard (by 2021). It is anticipated that the U.S. EPA will formally grant CARB's request to reclassify the SoCAB as extreme nonattainment, with a deadline of 2024, sometime in 2010.
- *** The U.S. EPA has not made classifications for PM_{2.5}.

**Table 4.24-3
CAAQS Designations – South Coast Air Basin (Los Angeles County)**

Pollutant	Averaging Time	Designation/Classification
Ozone (O ₃)	1 Hour, 8 Hour	Nonattainment*
Carbon Monoxide (CO)	1 Hour, 8 Hour	Attainment
Nitrogen Dioxide (NO ₂)	1 Hour	Attainment
Sulfur Dioxide (SO ₂)	1 Hour, 24 Hour	Attainment
Respirable Particulate Matter (PM ₁₀)	24 Hour, Annual Arithmetic Mean	Nonattainment
Fine Particulate Matter (PM _{2.5})	Annual Arithmetic Mean	Nonattainment
Lead (Pb)**	30 Day Average	Attainment
Sulfates (SO ₄)	24 Hour	Attainment
Hydrogen Sulfide (H ₂ S)	1 Hour	Unclassified
Vinyl Chloride**	24 Hour	Unclassified
Visibility-Reducing Particles	8 Hour (10:00 AM–6:00 PM)	Unclassified

Source: California Air Resources Board, "Area Designations Maps/State and National," <http://www.arb.ca.gov/design/adm/adm.htm>. 2007.

* CARB has not issued area classifications based on the new state 8-hour standard. The previous classification for the 1-hour ozone standard was extreme.

** CARB has identified lead and vinyl chloride as "toxic air contaminants" with no threshold level of exposure for adverse health effects determined.

Please see **Section 4.4, Air Quality**, of this EIR for additional information on the existing environmental conditions, and a complete discussion of the regulatory setting for air quality-related issues.

(5) Noise

Motor vehicle noise, on SR-14 and area roadways, is the primary noise source in the AAA. The Union Pacific Railroad/MetroLink, which runs adjacent to and within the AAA, is also a significant noise source. The railroad line handles two types of trains in the Santa Clarita area: MetroLink commuter rail and freight. Of the two, freight rail noise is the more dominant noise source. Based on 2008 train schedules, 24 MetroLink trains traverse Valley each day. No precise numbers of daily freight trains could be provided; however, it is estimated that up to 12 freight trains pass through the Valley each day.

On June 29, June 30, July 1, July 14, and July 15, 2009, 24-hour (long-term) weekday sound level measurements were taken at six locations on and near the Vista Canyon project site, which is directly adjacent to the AAA. Measurements were also taken at a seventh location (Jan Heidt MetroLink Station) to characterize the noise environment at an existing MetroLink Station. These measurements were taken in order to characterize the ambient noise environment. **Figure 4.5-7, Noise Monitoring Locations** (within **Section 4.5** of this EIR), depicts the seven noise monitoring locations.

The resulting noise levels are provided in **Table 4.24-4, Twenty-Four-Hour Monitored Noise Levels** (see also **Section 4.5**). The dominant source of noise from these monitoring locations is traffic along SR-14 and Metrolink commuter rail and freight trains along the Union Pacific Railroad/Metrolink tracks. The measurements include both mobile (traffic and rail) and point source noise.

**Table 4.24-4
Twenty-Four-Hour Monitored Noise Levels**

Map Ref.	Location	Noise Level dB(A) CNEL
1	Vista Canyon site: Northwestern area of Vista Canyon and South of Santa Clara River	63
2	Vista Canyon site: North-central area of Vista Canyon and South of Santa Clara River	61
3	Vista Canyon site: Northeastern area of Vista Canyon and South of Santa Clara River	66
4	Vista Canyon site: Immediately South of SR-14	67
5	Vista Canyon site: South-central area of Vista Canyon and North of the Railroad Tracks	62
6	Vista Canyon Site: Southeastern area of Project Site and North of the Railroad Tracks	68
7	Jan Heidt Newhall Metrolink Station (Directly North of Station)	69

Source: Impact Sciences, Inc., (2009)

*The 24-hour noise measurements are provided in **Appendix 4.5** of this EIR.*

In southern portions of the AAA, the dominant noise source would be vehicle noise associated with Sand Canyon Road and Placerita Canyon Road. Based on existing traffic volumes, noise generated by traffic on Sand Canyon Road (near the intersection of Placerita Canyon Road) does not exceed 65.5 dB(A) CNEL at a point 50 feet from centerline. Noise generated on Placerita Canyon Road west of Sand Canyon is 60.4 dB(A) CNEL at a point 50 feet from centerline.

Please see **Section 4.5, Noise**, of this EIR for additional information and a complete discussion of the regulatory setting for noise-related impacts.

(6) Biological Resources

The AAA is mostly developed; however, existing sensitive biological resources and habitat types occur primarily in the southern portions of the AAA. The AAA is located south of the Santa Clara River with portions of the area situated within the Sand Canyon watershed and other portions directly tributary to

the Santa Clara River. The biological resources of the AAA are similar to those found within the Vista Canyon site. The vegetation communities found within the AAA include coast live oak woodland, southern coast live oak riparian forest, southern cottonwood-willow riparian forest, southern sycamore-alder riparian woodland, southern willow scrub, chaparral, coastal sage scrub, coastal sage scrub-chaparral mixed scrub, non-native and native grasslands, Riversidian alluvial fan sage scrub, and a small vernal pool within the dedicated open space associated with Fair Oaks Ranch.

The sensitive plant communities within the AAA include hollyleaf cherry woodland and scrub unique stands, Riversidian alluvial fan sage scrub, southern coast live oak riparian forest, southern cottonwood willow riparian forest, southern sycamore alder riparian woodland, southern willow scrub and vernal pool. Each of these communities is described below.

- **Hollyleaf cherry woodland and scrub unique stand** is not well described but is typically composed of tall stands of hollyleaf cherry found in association with alluvial scrub along the bottom of drainages.
- **Riversidian alluvial fan sage scrub**, sometimes also known as floodplain sage scrub, generally consists of a mixture of shrubs that colonize and persist within infrequently scoured and flooded terrain such as floodplains or alluvial plains. The dominant shrub in most washes is scalebroom, but Great Basin sage brush, rabbitbrush, and foothill yucca also usually occur in the habitat type.
- **Southern coast live oak riparian forest** is a variation of coast live oak woodland wherein the canopy is more closely grown, and the trees occur in narrower formations along watercourses. Willow, California bay, mulefat, and other riparian species often occur in the understory.
- **Southern cottonwood-willow riparian forest** is a broad-leaved winter-deciduous habitat dominated by Fremont cottonwood, various species of willow, and on drier sites, western sycamore. Southern cottonwood-willow riparian forest occurs in the main tributaries of the Santa Clara River.
- **Southern sycamore-alder riparian woodland** is a formation that most often occurs along narrow creeks and streams with high-energy, permanent flows. Alders typically occur along the watercourse, while sycamores usually grow a bit further from the active flowing channel. This community is uncommon, occurring only in the upper reaches of the Sand and Placerita Canyons.
- **Southern willow scrub** is a riparian community consisting of dense, winter-deciduous riparian thickets occurring within and adjacent to seasonal or permanent water courses. The “scrub” formation generally is sub-mature, a state that is maintained by frequent heavy over-flooding. Dominant species of this community are mulefat, sandbar willow, and arroyo willow. This community occurs in drainages, wherever the habitat structure is maintained or repeatedly altered by frequent high water flows.

- **Vernal pool** systems are extremely rare in Los Angeles County and there are only two verified vernal pools within the Valley; Cruzan Mesa and Plum Canyon. However, there is one small seasonal pond with typical vernal pool characteristics within the off-site Golden Valley Ranch portion of the upper Placerita-Sand Canyon watershed break and one small seasonal pool within the Fair Oaks Ranch dedicated open space.

Sensitive species include those listed, or candidates for listing, by the USFWS, CDFG, and CNPS. The special-status plant species recorded or with high likelihood to occur within the AAA include, but are not limited to, Moran's navarretia (*Navarretia fossalis*), Piute Mountains navarretia (*Navarretia setiloba*), Palmer's grappling hook (*Harpagonella palmeri*), slender-horned spineflower (*Dodecahema leptoceras*), San Fernando Valley spineflower (*Chorizanthe parryi* var. *fernandina*), slender mariposa lily (*Calochortus clavatus* var. *gracilis*), and Plummer's mariposa lily (*Calochortus plummerae*).

Special-status wildlife species reported or with high likelihood to occur within the AAA include, but are not limited to, western spadefoot (*Spea hammondi*), silvery legless lizard (*Anniella pulchra pulchra*), coastal western whiptail (*Aspidoscelis tigris stejnegeri*), southwestern pond turtle (*Actinemys marmorata pallida*), coast horned lizard (*Phrynosoma coronatum*), San Bernardino ringneck snake (*Diadophis punctatus modestus*), two-striped garter snake (*Thamnophis hammondi*), coast patch-nosed snake (*Salvadora hexalepis virgulata*), Cooper's hawk (*Accipiter cooperii*), burrowing owl (*Athene cunicularia*), white-tailed kite (*Elanus leucurus*), coastal California gnatcatcher (*Polioptila californica californica*), loggerhead shrike (*Lanius ludovicianus*), Costa's hummingbird (*Calypte costae*), summer tanager (*Piranga rubra*), yellow warbler (*Dendroica petechia brewsteri*), Southern California rufous-crowned sparrow (*Aimophila ruficeps canescens*), grasshopper sparrow (*Ammodramus savannarum*), Bell's sage sparrow (*Amphispiza belli belli*), lark sparrow (*Chondestes grammacus*), California horned lark (*Eremophila alpestris actia*), gray vireo (*Vireo vicinior*), western mastiff bat (*Eumops perotis californicus*), southern grasshopper mouse (*Onychomys torridus ramona*), and San Diego black-tailed jackrabbit (*Lepus californicus bennettii*).

Additional sensitive biological resources include the blueline drainage courses that are tributary to the Santa Clara River and fall under the jurisdiction of CDFG. These drainages within the AAA are indicated in **Figure 4.24-4, Ancillary Annexation Area Blueline Drainages**.

Significant Ecological Area (SEA) is one of several land use classifications set forth in the Land Use Element of the Los Angeles County General Plan. The County designated five locations in the Valley area as containing SEAs. The Santa Clara River SEA (SEA 23) and the Valley Oaks Savannah SEA (SEA 64) are the only two SEAs designated within the boundaries of the City of Santa Clarita. The Santa Clara River SEA, or SEA 23, designation encompasses a small portion of the AAA.

The AAA area also includes undeveloped properties located within the County's proposed expansion of the Santa Clara River SEA, including the Fair Oaks Ranch open space and various undeveloped properties in the Sand Canyon area. The proposed SEA includes the Santa Clara River corridor (existing SEA 23) and potential wildlife linkage zones to promote connectivity and resource values for all of the wildlife species present within the Santa Clara River, which remains relatively intact and open. In the AAA, this SEA designation is identified as a habitat linkage between the Santa Clara River and portions of the Angeles National Forest to the south. As explained in **Sections 4.6** and **4.20**, the primary linkage between the Angeles National Forest and Santa Clara River, as well as north to the Sierra Pelona Mountains, is to the east of the AAA, within Soledad and Agua Dulce Canyons.

Please see **Section 4.6, Biological Resources**, of this EIR for additional information and a complete discussion of the regulatory setting relative to biological resources.

(7) Land Use

The AAA currently is located within unincorporated Los Angeles County and is zoned by the County as Specific Plan, Limited Multiple Use, Light Agricultural, Planned Residential, and Heavy Agricultural.³

(8) Water Services

The Santa Clarita Water Division (SCWD) of the Castaic Lake Water Agency (CLWA) is the local retail water purveyor for the AAA. The SCWD service area includes portions of the City of Santa Clarita and unincorporated portions of Los Angeles County, including the AAA. The SCWD supplies water from local groundwater and CLWA imported water.

CLWA, a wholesale public water agency, was formed in 1962. At that time, CLWA's purpose was contracting with State of California, through the Department of Water Resources (DWR), to acquire and distribute water from the State Water Project (SWP) to its retail water purveyors, including the SCWD. Since 1962, subsequent legislation broadened CLWA's purpose, which now includes, but is not limited to, the following: (1) acquire water from the state, (2) distribute such water wholesale through a transmission system to be acquired or constructed by CLWA, (3) reclaim (recycle) water, (4) sell water at retail within certain boundaries, and (5) exercise other related powers. The CLWA service area comprises approximately 195 square miles (124,800 acres) in Los Angeles and Ventura counties. CLWA serves the incorporated and unincorporated areas in, or adjacent to, the Valley. The service area includes largely urban areas, such as the City of Santa Clarita, other smaller communities, and rural areas.

³ Los Angeles County Department of Regional Planning, Interactive GIS Web Mapping Apps, OVOV-Net, <http://planning.lacounty.gov/gis/interactive>. Accessed May 28, 2010.

Please see **Section 4.8, Water Services**, of this EIR for additional information and a complete discussion of the regulatory setting under water services.

(8.1) Water Quality

The AAA is located within the Santa Clara River Hydrologic Basin and associated watershed, which is approximately 1,634 square miles in area. The watershed drains portions of the Angeles National Forest from the north, south, and southeast, which comprise approximately 40 percent of the watershed area at this location.

The Santa Clara River at the AAA location is generally dry except after periods of heavy rainfall, generally occurring during the winter months. The principal sources of water contributing to the base flow of the Santa Clara River, where regular surface flows are present (approximately 8 miles downstream of the AAA), are: (1) groundwater from the Alluvial aquifer basin, which seeps into the riverbed near, and downstream of, Round Mountain (located just below the mouth of San Francisquito Creek); (2) tertiary-treated water discharged to the Santa Clara River from two existing Los Angeles County Sanitation District WRPs — the Saugus WRP, located near Bouquet Canyon Road bridge and the Valencia WRP, located immediately downstream of I-5; and (3) in some years, DWR-released flood flows from Castaic Lake into Castaic Creek during winter and spring months.

Please see **Section 4.8.1, Water Quality** of this EIR for additional information, including a detailed assessment of relevant constituents, and a complete discussion of the regulatory setting relative to water quality.

(9) Solid Waste Disposal

Like many areas in Southern California, the City of Santa Clarita is faced with a continuous annual increase in solid waste generation and diminishing disposal capacities. The City is responsible for ensuring the provision of adequate trash removal for all properties within its incorporated boundaries. This is achieved through franchise agreements with waste management companies. The City provides the following services to the community through the franchise agreements:

- Weekly curbside residential trash/green waste and recycling service
- Trash and recycling services for multi-family, commercial/industrial and institutional facilities
- Christmas tree recycling
- Green waste recycling

- Annual community clean-up day/neighborhood clean-up events (up to 20 per year at the request of residents)
- Waste management and recycling at various special events throughout the year
- Manure recycling

In addition to the services provided by the waste haulers, the City provides the following:

- Door-to-door household hazardous waste collection (e.g., antifreeze, batteries, oil and paint)
- Comprehensive education program
- Recycling Market Development Zone, which provides low interest loans to businesses that wish to form or expand for the purpose of selling products made from recycled materials, or to process recyclable materials

Currently, there are no permanent recycling facilities located within the City. That being said, it is the goal of the City to ultimately divert as much as 75 percent of the City's trash from landfills to recycling. In 2006, the City's diversion rate was 54 percent.

In 2008, approximately 145,472 tons of solid waste was generated by uses in the City of Santa Clarita. Three private haulers are franchised by the City of Santa Clarita Department of Field Services to collect residential, commercial, and industrial waste in the City of Santa Clarita. These haulers operate under two franchise systems—one for commercial/industrial uses and one for residential uses.

The City of Santa Clarita is served primarily by three Class III (non-hazardous) landfills:

- Chiquita Canyon Landfill
- Antelope Valley II Landfill
- Sunshine Canyon Landfill

A majority of the solid waste generated in the City is exported to the Chiquita Canyon Landfill, with the remaining solid waste exported to the Antelope Valley Landfill and Sunshine Canyon Landfill in Sylmar. Please see **Section 4.9, Solid Waste Disposal**, of this EIR for additional information and a complete discussion of the regulatory setting relative to solid waste disposal.

(10) Education

The AAA is served by Sulphur Springs School District for elementary school, and by the William S. Hart Union High School District for junior and senior high school education.

There are a total of nine elementary schools within the Sulphur Springs District. The total enrollment within the Sulphur Springs District for the 2007 to 2008 school year is 5,779 students, while the total capacity with the use of both permanent and temporary (i.e., portable) classrooms is 6,500 seats. There is remaining capacity, school district wide, for approximately 721 students. All Sulphur Springs District schools currently are operating under capacity, except for Fair Oaks Elementary School, which is currently operating at 123 percent of capacity. As an entirety, the Sulphur Springs District is currently operating at 89 percent of its capacity.

There are a total of six junior high and 11 high schools within the Hart District. Current Enrollment of William S. Hart Union High School District is approximately 23,159 students. The total student capacity for the Hart District is 24,027 seats; therefore, the Hart District is currently operating at 96 percent of its capacity. There is remaining capacity for approximately 868 students. Please refer to this **Section 4.10, Education**, of this EIR for additional information and a complete discussion of the education-related regulatory setting.

(11) Library Services

The County Library operates facilities and services in both incorporated and unincorporated areas of the County. As such, the City of Santa Clarita presently contracts with the County for library services for libraries within the City limits. The AAA currently is located within the County Library's Planning Area 1 (Santa Clarita Valley). Following annexation, the AAA would be located within the City of Santa Clarita. Under either scenario (i.e., pre- or post-annexation), the AAA is located within the Canyon Country Jo Anne Darcy Library's service area. The County Library services the entire Valley with four libraries and one bookmobile. The four libraries include the Canyon Country Jo Anne Darcy Library, Valencia Library, Newhall Library, and Castaic Library. Beginning July 1, 2011, the City of Santa Clarita will begin operation of the libraries located in the City limits. Please refer to this **Section 4.11, Library Services** of this for additional information and a complete discussion of the library-related regulatory setting.

(12) Parks and Recreation

The City Department of Parks currently maintains 20 City parks, totaling 246 acres. These parks range in size from slightly more than 0.5 acre to 80 acres, and include numerous recreational facilities. The City's parks are categorized into four common types (neighborhood, community, special use facilities and regional). In addition, within the City, the County of Los Angeles Department of Parks and Recreation owns and maintains the William S. Hart Park, Cheseborough Park and Northbridge Park, all of which constitute an additional 239.2 acres of parkland. Please refer to this EIR, **Section 4.12, Parks and**

Recreation, for additional information and a complete discussion of regulatory setting regarding such parks and recreation facilities and services.

(13) Fire Services

Fire protection service is provided to the AAA and the City of Santa Clarita by the Los Angeles County Fire Department. The Valley is serviced by 14 fire stations with 12 engine companies, one assessment engine company, five paramedic squads, one hazardous materials squad, and two ladder trucks. The nine-person Hazardous Materials Task Force (comprised of a four-person engine and a five-person hazardous materials squad) operates out of Fire Station 76. The 14 fire stations that serve the Valley area have approximately 67 firefighters on duty every day, 24 hours per day (not including chief officers and fire prevention staff). The jurisdictional station for the AAA is Fire Station 107, located at 19239 West Soledad Canyon Road, in the City of Santa Clarita. Additional fire protection services would be provided by Station 132, located at 29310 Sand Canyon Road, which also is located in Santa Clarita. Should a significant incident occur, the project site would be served by the full resources of the Fire Department, not just the stations closest to the site or the fourteen that have primary jurisdiction within the Valley.

The Fire Department has designated the AAA, consistent with the rest of the Valley, as a Fire Zone 4, Very High Fire Hazard Severity Zone. Fire Zone 4 typically has the following vegetation types: chaparral, coastal sage, riparian, and oak woodlands vegetation communities. Wildland fires are relatively common occurrences in these vegetation communities, which are similar to the types found in Valley and surrounding areas. Please refer to **Section 4.13** (Fire Services) of this EIR for additional information and a complete discussion of the regulatory setting under fire services.

(14) Sheriff Services

The Valley (including the AAA) is served by the Los Angeles County Sheriff's Department's Santa Clarita Valley Station. The Sheriff's service area covers 656 square miles that includes the City of Santa Clarita and portions of Los Angeles County unincorporated areas. In addition to urbanized areas, the service area encompasses major recreational destinations including the Angeles National Forest, Magic Mountain Amusement Park, Castaic Lake, Pyramid Lake, and Hungry Valley Off-Road Recreational Vehicle Park. The Los Angeles County Sheriff's Department oversees general law and traffic enforcement within the City of Santa Clarita, while the California Highway Patrol has jurisdiction over traffic on state highways and in the unincorporated area. Please refer to **Section 4.14, Sheriff Services**, of this EIR for additional information and a complete discussion of the regulatory setting under police protection.

(15) Human-Made Hazards

California law provides the general framework for regulation of hazardous wastes by the Hazardous Waste Control Law (HWCL) passed in 1972. The Department of Toxic Substances (DTSC) is the State's leading agency in implementing the HWCL. The HWCL provides for State regulation of existing hazardous waste facilities, which include "any structure, other appurtenances, and improvements on the land, used for treatment, transfer, storage, resource recovery, disposal, or recycling of hazardous wastes," and requires permits for, and inspections of, facilities involved in generation and/or treatment, storage and disposal of hazardous wastes. Although there are numerous State policies dealing with hazardous waste materials, the most comprehensive is the Tanner Act (AB 2948) that was adopted in 1986. The Tanner Act governs the preparation of hazardous waste management plans and the siting of hazardous waste facilities in the State of California. The act also mandates that each county adopt a Hazardous Waste Management Plan. To be in compliance with the Tanner Act, local or regional hazardous waste management plans need to include provisions that define (1) the planning process for waste management, (2) the permit process for new and expanded facilities, and (3) the appeal process to the state available for certain local decision.

The regulatory responsibility of hazardous waste in the Santa Clarita Valley belongs primarily to the Los Angeles County Fire Department. The Fire Department's Health Hazardous Material Division (HHMD) has authority as the Certified Unified Program Agency (CUPA) in the Planning Area. As the CUPA, HHMD directly administers programs related to waste generation, hazardous materials inventories, and risk management. The Los Angeles County Department of Public Works is a participating agency under the CUPA and implements the underground storage tank program.

There are three Los Angeles County fire stations that handle hazardous materials incidents (known as Haz Mat stations), one of which, Station 76, is located in Valencia and serves the Santa Clarita Valley. In addition, HHMD's mission is to protect the public health and the environment throughout Los Angeles County from accidental release and improper handling, storage, transportation, and disposal of hazardous material and wastes through coordinated efforts of inspections, emergency response, enforcement, and site mitigation oversight.

According to the Los Angeles County Department of Public Works, untreated hazardous waste is shipped to distant disposal facilities in other counties and states. However, federal and state restrictions/regulations may preclude the County's continued reliance on distant disposal as its principal waste management method. As of January 1, 2003, there are no known hazardous waste treatment facilities located in the Planning Area. Currently, Los Angeles County has a Hazardous Waste Management Plan describing and defining existing and future hazardous waste conditions, needed

off-site management facilities, and recommended action programs on a countywide basis. It pertains to all of Los Angeles County, which includes the Santa Clarita Valley. Specific components of the plan include the following:

- Data regarding current hazardous waste generation
- Descriptions of current hazardous waste treatment facilities
- Feasibility of recycling or reducing hazardous waste generation
- Consideration of household and small generator hazardous waste
- Determination of the need for additional off-site hazardous waste treatment facilities
- Identification of facilities that can be expanded and general areas for future disposal of hazardous wastes or criteria for selecting sites
- A schedule to implement the County Hazardous Waste Management Plans

The plan also establishes siting criteria for development of needed off-site hazardous waste management facilities and designates general geographic areas within the unincorporated County and City areas where the siting criteria might be met. However, specific sites for hazardous waste management facilities are not identified because any future proponents of off-site hazardous waste management facilities must show a proposed project to be consistent with the plan. In addition, each off-site hazardous waste management project must undergo a rigorous site-specific assessment and permitting process at local, state, and federal levels, including addressing all environmental concerns as mandated by CEQA.

As indicated previously, the majority of the AAA is built out with residential land uses and, therefore, human made hazards impacts are not anticipated. However, a small portion of the AAA (approximately 140 acres in the southern portion of the AAA) was formerly owned and occupied by Special Devices Incorporated (SDI). Operations began at this site in the late 1950s and ceased in the mid 1990s, and were related to manufacturing in connection with aerospace and defense industries. These operations were contained in a number of buildings that have since been removed from the property. SDI worked with the DTSC to address small areas of residual contaminants associated with the past use. On June 30, 2009, DTSC issued a final approval of the Corrective Measures Study and Proposed Remedy.

Please see **Section 4.15, Human-Made Hazards**, of this EIR for additional information and a complete discussion of the regulatory setting for hazardous materials.

(16) Visual Resources

The majority of the AAA is built out; therefore, the City's proposed ancillary annexation of these properties generally would not result in any significant additional future development or substantial changes in visual resources in the AAA. **Figures 4.24-5 through 4.24-8** illustrate the existing conditions in the AAA.

Please see **Section 4.16, Visual Resources**, for additional information and a complete discussion of the City's visual resources-related policies.

(17) Population, Housing, and Employment

A significant amount of the existing population growth in Los Angeles County over the past two decades has occurred in the northern portions of the County, including both the Santa Clarita Valley and Antelope Valley. In 2000, the City of Santa Clarita had the fourth largest population within the County, following the cities of Los Angeles, Long Beach, and Glendale.

In 2008, the estimated population of the entire Valley was 252,000, with 75,000 residing in unincorporated County areas. The City's growth during this period is partially due to the annexation of adjoining communities. In 2006, the City annexed three areas that added 2,643 units and 7,901 residents to the City's population.

According to the State's Department of Finance, there were 58,714 households in the City of Santa Clarita in January 2008. The average housing occupancy was 3.09 persons per household. Between 2000 and 2008, the City's housing stock increased by 6,258 units, including 2,643 units that were annexed into the City in 2006. The remaining 3,615 units were newly constructed within the City.

The total number of jobs in the Santa Clarita Valley in 2005 was 124,200, of which 74,889 jobs (approximately 60 percent) were located within the City limits. The remaining 49,311 jobs were located in the unincorporated County areas, primarily west of I-5. From 1992 to 2005, approximately 40,000 new jobs were created in the Santa Clarita Valley. Between 2000 and 2005, job growth averaged about 3,900 jobs per year. Most of this job growth occurred in the manufacturing, services, retail trade, and construction sectors.

Please see **Section 4.17, Population, Housing, and Employment**, for additional information and a complete discussion of the regulatory setting.



Photo Location 7



Photo Location 8



Photo Location 9

SOURCE: City of Santa Clarita – August 2010

FIGURE 4.24-8



Ancillary Annexation Area Photographs 7 – 9

(18) Cultural Resources

The Tataviam are thought to have inhabited the upper Santa Clara River drainage from about Piru eastwards to just beyond the Vasquez Rocks/Agua Dulce area; southwards as far as Newhall and the crests of the San Gabriel and Santa Susana Mountains; and northwards to include the middle reaches of Piru Creek, the Liebre Mountains and the southwesternmost fringe of the Antelope Valley. Their northern boundary most likely ran along the northern foothills of the Liebre Mountains (i.e., the edge of the Antelope Valley), and then crossed to the southern slopes of the Sawmill Mountains and the Sierra Pelona, extending as far east as Soledad Pass.

Culturally-speaking, the Tataviam were in most respects similar to their Fernandeño and Chumash neighbors, to the south and west, respectively. In this sense, they were hunters-gatherers, with subsistence emphasizing yucca, acorns, juniper berries, sage seeds and islay. Game was also hunted, with small animals, such as rabbits/hares and rodents, probably representing more significant contributions of meat protein than larger game, such as deer.

Little is known of Tataviam social and political organization. Based on analogies with surrounding groups, however, it can be suggested that they were organized in a series of tribelets, similar to the *naciones* of the Antelope Valley, and found to be characteristic of much of California aboriginal socio-political organization. It is also likely that Tataviam religion followed the patterns of their surrounding neighbors. In this case, shamanism would have functioned as the central element. This posits a direct and personal relationship between each individual and the supernatural world, with this relationship enacted by entering a trance or hallucinatory state (usually based on the ingestion of psychoto-mimetic plants, such as jimsonweed or native tobacco). Shamans, *per se*, who were considered individuals with an unusual degree of supernatural power, served as ritual specialists: ceremonies and rites were infrequent in occasion and limited in type. Perhaps most importantly, shamans served as healers or curers, with the etiology of disease as well as its cure held to lie in the supernatural world. Shamans are also known to have produced the rock art of this region, which depicted the hallucinations and spirits they observed in their vision quests.

Archaeologically speaking, more information is available on the Santa Clarita area, although here, too, less is known than for many of the surrounding regions of Southern California. In general terms, the prehistory of this inland area appears to parallel that of the Santa Barbara Channel/Southern California coastal zone.

Correspondingly, the earliest evidence for human occupation of this region corresponds to the Early Millingstone Period (or, alternatively, the Early Horizon), dated from about 7,000 to 4,000 years before

present (B.P.). Evidence for an Early Millingstone occupation of the Upper Santa Clara Valley region is, admittedly, very limited, and has been found at only two sites. Both of these are located near Vasquez Rocks, with temporal attribution based on the presence of a small number of Olivella barrel beads.

The second temporal unit is the Intermediate Period (or Middle Horizon), dated from 3,500 to 1,500 years B.P. Evidence for Intermediate Period occupation of the Upper Santa Clara Valley region is substantial, in that it has been found at a number of sites and has been based on radiocarbon, obsidian hydration and typological dating. The Agua Dulce village complex, for example, includes occupation extending back to the Intermediate Period, at which time population of the village may have been 50 or more people. Furthermore, the Intermediate Period appears to represent a time during which a substantial exploitation of mid-altitude environments first began, with considerable use, for example, of portions of the nearby Hathaway Ranch (located to northwest of the study area) beginning at this time.

Assuming that the Upper Santa Clara River region was first significantly occupied during the Intermediate Period, as existing evidence now suggests, a parallel can be drawn with the inland Ventura County region, where a similar pattern has been identified, as well as possibly the Antelope Valley and western Mojave Desert. In all of these areas a major expansion in settlement, the establishment of large site complexes, and an increase in the range of environments exploited, appear to have occurred sometime roughly around 3,000 years ago. Although most efforts to explain this expansion have focused on very local circumstances and events, it is increasingly clear that this was a major Southern California-wide occurrence, and therefore that explanation of it must be sought at a larger level of analysis.

There is continuity in the inland regions between the Intermediate Period and subsequent times, labeled the Late Prehistoric Period, lasting from 1,500 years B.P. to historic contact, at about 200 years B.P. A large number of Late Prehistoric Period sites are known from the Upper Santa Clara River/Agua Dulce region, with the Agua Dulce village complex estimated to have grown to a population of 200 to 300 people around A.D. 1500–1600. Sometime during this period the Tataviam can be hypothesized to have occupied this region, although it is likely that they may have appeared somewhat earlier. However, the important point is that, during the Late Prehistoric Period, the patterns of lifeways recorded for the ethnographic period were fully in operation.

During the Historic Period, the aboriginal population appears to have dropped considerably. This, without doubt, can be attributed to the effects of missionization and its attendant relocation of the aboriginal population to centralized locales, along with the depredations of introduced Old World diseases. The Upper Santa Clara River region appears to be one of those inland zones, like the Antelope Valley to the north that quickly and completely lost its aboriginal population. In particular, the aboriginal

population from the Upper Santa Clara Valley was moved into Mission San Fernando, in the San Fernando Valley, and the area was effectively depopulated.

Apparently the first Euro-American identification of the Santa Clarita region occurred in the chronicles of the Portolá expedition of 1769. This expedition passed through the San Fernando Valley to Newhall, then to the Castaic Junction area, and then down the Santa Clara River to Ventura, on its way to Monterey. Although the region was traversed by a number of Spanish explorers in subsequent years, it initially remained isolated due to rugged topography, even though it had been suggested as a locale for a mission. Thus, with the establishment of Missions San Buenaventura in 1782, and San Fernando in 1797, late 18th-century historical events largely occurred in areas to the west and south of the upper Valley proper.

As the missions increased in size and their herds grew, it became necessary for many of them to establish mission ranchos, or estancias, to allow their cattle to graze some distance from the mission vineyards and fields. With this geographical expansion of mission influence and activities, the upper Valley region became important, if not pivotal, in a number of events central to the development of Southern California. Rancho San Francisco, comprising the upper reaches of the Valley down to Piru, served as the estancia for Mission San Fernando, and was established a few years after the founding of the mission itself.

The Rancho San Francisco and the upper reaches of the Valley figured in three important episodes in Southern California, two of which are landmarks in the economic history of the state. The first was the discovery of gold in Placerita Canyon in 1842 by Francisco Lopez, Manuel Cota and Domingo Bermudez. The upper Valley was also the first location of true oil drilling. Petroleum exploration began about 1865, when oil seeps were discovered in Pico Canyon. This led to discoveries of oil on Rancho San Francisco and, ultimately, throughout the Valley. Lack of a local market and cost of shipping prevented major development of this natural resource until 1876, when the Southern Pacific Railroad crossed the region. This initiated an oil boom in the area, with the development of the Newhall oil field, and the establishment of the Pioneer Oil Refinery (Ultimately, the predecessor to Chevron Oil) in 1876.

The third local event of historical importance in Southern California was the collapse of the St. Francis Dam and the resulting flood of the Santa Clara River Valley on March 12 and 13, 1928. With the failure of the dam near midnight on the March 12th, water raged down San Francisquito Canyon, to Castaic Junction, which it effectively leveled, and then on to Fillmore, Santa Paula and ultimately to the Pacific. The flood caused at least 336 deaths, and destroyed 990 homes and many acres of orchards. It is likely that prehistoric archaeological deposits would have been washed away or covered with alluvium.

The AAA itself falls outside of the original Rancho San Francisco/Newhall Ranch boundaries, is upstream of both the gold discovery at Placerita Canyon and the floodwaters that came down San Francisquito Canyon. It did not play a direct role in any of the historical events associated with the Newhall Ranch. It nonetheless has substantial history, primarily associated with Col. Thomas Mitchell, who settled in the area in 1860.

Although Mitchell's ranch initially was isolated from historical activities and even traffic, two events made the Santa Clara Valley/Soledad Canyon area around his ranch central to subsequent settlement and use. The first was the discovery and exploitation of copper and then gold further upstream in Soledad Canyon, at Ravenna and beyond, in the Acton area. Combined with growing trade from eastern California (especially the Cerro Gordo camp in Inyo County), this led to the establishment of a toll road up the valley. Whether it crossed Mitchell's property is uncertain, but possible. Perhaps even more importantly, the route for the railroad from southern to Northern California went up the valley in order to avoid the steep grades near the Grapevine. The railroad was completed in 1876, and a short section of it crossed his property. A siding called Humphrey's was located outside and immediately SW of Mitchell's property and within the AAA. This became a minor focus for development in the area.

Eventually Mitchell increased his holdings to nearly a thousand acres, raising cattle, producing honey, and farming. With increasing population, and thus children, in the valley, the Sulphur Springs School District was founded, circa 1872. The school opened initially in the kitchen of the Mitchell's adobe, was taught by Mrs. Mitchell, and was the first school building in the Santa Clara Valley area. Circa 1885 the student population had outgrown the single room and a wooden schoolhouse was constructed at Sulphur Springs, on land donated by Mitchell. The Sulphur Springs school location falls outside (east) of the AAA.

Please see **Section 4.18, Cultural Resources**, of this EIR for additional information and a complete discussion of the regulatory setting under cultural resources.

(19) Agricultural Resources

According to the California Department of Conservation's Farmland Monitoring and Mapping Program (CDOC-FMMP), the AAA is designated as Other Land and Urban and Built-Up Land.⁴ The land within the AAA is *not* designated as Prime Farmland, Unique Farmland, or Farmland of Statewide Importance; further, the AAA is not the subject of a Williamson Act Contract.

⁴ California Department of Conservation, Farmland Mapping and Monitoring Program, Los Angeles County, [ftp://ftp.consrv.ca.gov/pub/dlrp/FMMP/pdf/2008/](http://ftp.consrv.ca.gov/pub/dlrp/FMMP/pdf/2008/). Accessed May 28, 2010.

The AAA is not zoned for forest land. Further, upon preliminary consultation of the Land Cover Map developed in collaboration by the U.S. Forest Service and CalFire, the AAA is classified as shrub land, and is not classified as forest land (which would include conifer-forest, conifer-woodland, hardwood-woodland, and hardwood-forest).⁵ Please see **Section 4.19, Agricultural Resources**, of this EIR for additional information and a complete discussion of the agriculture-related regulatory setting.

(20) River Corridor

A small portion of the AAA contains the Santa Clara River Corridor. This portion of the River Corridor is directly adjacent to existing development in the Jakes Way area. The River Corridor in this area has been channelized in conjunction with adjacent development. No additional improvements are associated with this portion of the River Corridor.

Please see **Section 4.20, Santa Clara River Corridor Analysis**, of this EIR for additional information and a complete discussion of the regulatory setting.

(21) Wastewater Disposal

Wastewater facilities and services for public sewer systems in the AAA are provided by the Santa Clarita Valley Sanitation District (SCVSD). Most wastewater generated within the Valley is treated at two existing WRPs, which are operated by the SCVSD. The existing Saugus WRP is located at 26200 Springbrook Avenue in Saugus. The existing Valencia WRP is located at 28185 The Old Road in Valencia. These two facilities provide primary, secondary, and tertiary treatment. The SCVSD has a permitted treatment capacity of 28.1 mgd and a treated average of 20.5 mgd.

There are portions of the AAA that are located outside of the service area boundaries for the SCVSD. Many of these properties utilize private sewage systems (septic tanks, etc.) *or* are not presently developed. If these properties were to connect to public sewers in the future, annexation into the Santa Clarita Valley Sanitation District would be required. Please refer to **Section 4.21, Wastewater Disposal**, of this EIR for additional information and a complete discussion of the regulatory setting under wastewater disposal.

(22) Global Climate Change

Global warming and global climate change are both terms that describe changes in the earth's climate. Global climate change is a broad term used to describe any worldwide, long-term change in the earth's

⁵ California Department of Forestry and Fire Protection, Fire and Resource Assessment Program, Land Cover Map.

climate. This change could be, for example, an increase or decrease in temperatures, the start or end of an ice age, or a shift in precipitation patterns. The term global warming is more specific than global climate change and refers to a general increase in temperatures across the earth. Though global warming is characterized by rising temperatures, it can cause other climatic changes, such as a shift in the frequency and intensity of rainfall or hurricanes. Global warming does not necessarily imply that all locations will be warmer. Some specific, unique locations may be cooler even though the world, on average, is warmer. All of these changes fit under the umbrella of global climate change.

While global warming can be caused by natural processes, there is a general scientific consensus that most current global warming is the result of human activity on the planet. This man-made, or anthropogenic, warming is primarily caused by increased emissions of “GHGs” that keep the earth’s surface warm. This is called “the greenhouse effect.”

The earth’s greenhouse effect has existed far longer than humans have and has played a key role in the development of life. Concentrations of major GHGs, such as carbon dioxide (CO₂), methane (CH₄), nitrous oxide (N₂O), and water vapor have been naturally present for millennia at relatively stable levels in the atmosphere, adequate to keep temperatures on Earth hospitable. Without these GHGs, the earth’s temperature would be too cold for life to exist.

As human industrial activity has increased, atmospheric concentrations of certain GHGs have grown dramatically. In the absence of major industrial human activity, natural processes have maintained atmospheric concentrations of GHGs, and, therefore, global temperatures at constant levels over the last several centuries. As the concentrations of GHGs increase due to human activity, more infrared radiation is trapped, and the earth is heated to higher temperatures. This is the process that is described as human-induced global warming.

In 2007, the Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change (IPCC) began releasing components of its Fourth Assessment Report on climate change. In February 2007, the IPCC provided a comprehensive assessment of climate change science in its Working Group I Report. That report states that there is a scientific consensus that the global increases in GHGs since 1750 are mainly due to human activities such as fossil fuel use, land use change (e.g., deforestation), and agriculture. In addition, the report states that it is likely that these changes in greenhouse gas (GHG) concentrations have contributed to global warming.

(1) GHG Emission Sources

The term “GHGs” includes gases that contribute to the natural greenhouse effect, such as CO₂, CH₄, and N₂O, as well as gases that are only man-made and that are emitted through the use of modern industrial

products, such as hydrofluorocarbons (HFCs), chlorinated fluorocarbons (CFCs), and sulfurhexafluoride (SF₆). These last three families of gases, while not naturally present in the atmosphere, have properties that also cause them to trap infrared radiation when they are present in the atmosphere, thus making them GHGs. These six gases comprise the major GHGs that are recognized by the Kyoto Accords.⁶ There are other GHGs that are not recognized by the Kyoto Accords, due either to the smaller role that they play in climate change or the uncertainties surrounding their effects. For example, atmospheric water vapor is not recognized by the Kyoto Accords because there is not an obvious correlation between water concentrations and specific human activities. Water appears to act in a positive feedback manner; higher temperatures lead to higher water concentrations, which in turn cause more global warming.

The effect each of these gases has on global warming is a combination of the volume of their emissions and their global warming potential (GWP). GWP indicates, on a pound for pound basis, how much a gas will contribute to global warming relative to how much warming would be caused by the same mass of CO₂. CH₄ and N₂O are substantially more potent than CO₂, with GWPs of 21 and 310, respectively. However, these natural GHGs are nowhere near as potent as SF₆ and fluoromethane, which have GWPs of up to 23,900 and 6,500 respectively. GHG emissions are typically measured in terms of mass of CO₂e, which is calculated as the product of the mass of a given GHG and its specific GWP.

The most important GHG in human-induced global warming is CO₂. While many gases have much higher GWPs than the naturally occurring GHGs, CO₂ is emitted in such vastly higher quantities that it accounts for 85 percent of the GWP of all GHGs emitted by the United States. Fossil fuel combustion, especially for the generation of electricity and powering of motor vehicles, has led to substantial increases in CO₂ emissions and thus substantial increases in atmospheric CO₂ concentrations.

(2) *Current and Projected Impacts of Global Warming*

There is a general scientific consensus that global climate change will increase the frequency of heat extremes, heat waves, and heavy precipitation events. Other likely direct effects include an increase in the areas affected by drought and by floods, an increase in tropical cyclone activity, a rise in sea level, and recession of polar ice caps. The impacts of global warming have already been demonstrated by substantial ice loss in the Arctic.

Global temperature increases may have significant negative impacts on ecosystems, natural resources, and human health. Ecosystem structure and biodiversity will be compromised by temperature increases and associated climatic and hydrological disturbances. The availability and quality of potable water

⁶ The Kyoto Accords sets legally binding targets and timetables for cutting the GHG emissions of industrialized countries; however, the US Congress did not approved this international treaty.

resources may be compromised by increased salinisation of ground water due to sea-level rises, decreased supply in semi-arid and arid locations, and poorer water quality arising from increased water temperatures and more frequent floods and droughts. These impacts on freshwater systems, in addition to the effects of increased drought and flood frequencies, can reduce crop productivity and food supply.

In addition to compromising food and water resources, there are other means through which climatic changes associated with global warming can affect human health and welfare. Warmer temperatures can cause more ground-level ozone, a pollutant that causes eye irritation and respiratory problems. Ranges of infectious diseases will likely increase, and some areas will face greater incidences of illness and mortality associated with increased flooding and drought events.

California, in particular, is an area that could be negatively impacted by global warming. And, because climate change is already affecting California and current emissions will continue to drive climate change in the coming decades, regardless of any mitigation measured that may be adopted, the necessity of adaptation to the impacts of climate change is recognized by the State of California. Climate change risks are evaluated using two distinct approaches: (1) projecting the amount of climate change that may occur using computer-based global climate models and (2) assessing the natural or human system's ability to cope with and adapt to change by examining past experience with climate variability and extrapolating this to understand how the systems may respond to the additional impact of climate change.

Consistent with Governor Schwarzenegger's Executive Order (No. S-13-08), which called on state agencies to develop strategies for the identification and mitigation of expected climate impacts, the California Natural Resources Agency (CNRA) recently issued a document—the *2009 California Climate Adaptation Strategy (Adaptation Strategy; December 2009)*—that discusses the impacts of climate change upon California, as well as California's climate adaptation strategy. The major anticipated climate changes expected in the State of California include increases in temperature and sea level, and decreases in precipitation, particularly snowfall. These gradual changes will also lead to an increasing number of extreme events, such as heat waves, wildfires, droughts, and floods. This would impact public health, ocean and coast resources, water supply, agriculture, biodiversity and the transportation and energy infrastructure.

Please see **Section 4.22, Global Climate Change**, of this EIR for additional information on existing environmental conditions, and a complete discussion of the regulatory settings relative to climate change.

(23) Utilities

The AAA is located within the Southern California Edison (SCE) service area; SCE would provide the site with electricity service. Meanwhile, the Southern California Gas Company (SCGC) would provide the

AAA with natural gas. Phone service is provided by AT&T, and cable service is provided by Time Warner. Please see **Section 4.23, Utilities**, of this EIR for additional information and a complete discussion of the regulatory setting pertaining to natural gas and electricity.

6. IMPACTS AND MITIGATION MEASURES

As indicated previously, most of the AAA is built out. As such, the proposed changes to the land use designations in the built out portion of the AAA and the re-assignment of those areas to a different land use jurisdiction, practically speaking, would not result in any potentially significant environmental impacts. Therefore, the following analysis primarily focuses on the potential environmental impacts that may result from further build out within the Sand Canyon and Jakes Way areas (the only areas within the AAA with remaining, unapproved development potential). These unbuilt areas within the AAA would require project-level environmental review under CEQA. Because such additional development, should it occur, cannot be accurately predicted, particularly as to rate, timing, location, and extent, it is not reasonably possible to undertake an in-depth analysis in this EIR for the AAA that is comparable to that provided for the Vista Canyon project. Accordingly, this analysis provides the lead agency's good faith efforts to assess and disclose the environmental impacts associated with the buildout of those areas with remaining development potential in the AAA. (The only remaining area of development potential within Fair Oaks Ranch already has been studied and approved for development.)

a. Geotechnical Hazards

(1) Significance Threshold Criteria

Pursuant to Appendix G of the *State CEQA Guidelines* and the City's *Local Guidelines and Procedures for Implementation of the Provisions of the California Environmental Quality Act (Local Guidelines; adopted via Resolution 05-38 on April 26, 2005)*, impacts related to geotechnical hazards would be considered significant if the proposed ancillary annexation would:

- expose people or structures to potential substantial adverse effects, including the risk of loss, injury, or death involving:
 - rupture of a known earthquake fault, as delineated on the most recent Alquist-Priolo Earthquake Fault Zoning Map issued by the State Geologist for the area or based on other substantial evidence of a known fault? Refer to Division of Mines and Geology Special Publication 42.
 - strong seismic ground shaking.
 - seismic-related ground failure, including liquefaction.
 - landslides.

- result in substantial wind or water soil erosion or the loss of topsoil, either on or off site.
- be located on a geologic unit or soil that is unstable, or that would become unstable as a result of the project, and potentially result in on- or off-site landslide, lateral spreading, subsidence, liquefaction, or collapse.
- be located on expansive soil, as defined in Table 18-1-B of the Uniform Building Code (1997), creating substantial risks to life or property.
- have soils incapable of adequately supporting the use of septic tanks or alternative wastewater disposal systems where sewers are not available for the disposal of wastewater.
- change topography or ground surface relief features.
- require earth movement (cut and/or fill) of 10,000 cubic yards or more.
- develop and/or grade on a slope greater than 10 percent natural grade.
- destroy, cover, or modify any unique geologic or physical feature.

(2) Impacts

Any additional development proposed within the AAA would be subject to the same general requirements and mitigation measures as the proposed Vista Canyon project, such as compliance with various City ordinances designed to reduce the impacts of development. For example, the City's Building Code is designed to reduce seismic risk to a level below significant and the City requires project applicants to comply with mitigation recommendations of any soils or geotechnical report that is submitted to and accepted by the City. In summary, because development of the AAA would comply with all applicable federal, state, and local requirements regarding geotechnical resources and would also be subject to environmental review requiring the mitigation of potential impacts, any future projects within the AAA would not result in significant impacts relative to geotechnical hazards.

(3) Mitigation Measures

Design-level mitigation measures would be identified, as necessary and as feasible, during the subsequent project-level environmental review that would be undertaken in conjunction with any additional development in the AAA, and specifically the Sand Canyon and Jakes Way areas. That being said, it is reasonable to assume and recommend that further development within the AAA would utilize mitigation measures comparable to those recommended for the Vista Canyon project due to the similar nature of the development types (see **Section 4.1, Geotechnical Hazards**).

(4) Cumulative Impacts

Generally, impacts related to geotechnical hazards are site-specific and, in this case, would be limited to the development boundaries of the AAA. That said, soil stability and erosive conditions for the AAA are expected to be similar to those found on the Vista Canyon site. Any buildings or facilities proposed in the future for construction in the AAA would be sited, designed, and constructed in accordance with geotechnical, geologic, and seismic building codes. Future related projects would also be expected to mitigate their respective impacts to a less than significant level with the implementation of site-specific/project-specific mitigation set forth in their respective soils and geotechnical reports. Therefore, the contribution of the AAA to cumulative geological and soils impacts would be less than significant.

b. Flood

(1) Significance Threshold Criteria

Pursuant to Appendix G of the *State CEQA Guidelines* and the City's *Local Guidelines*, the proposed ancillary annexation would have a significant effect on the environment if it would:

- substantially alter the existing drainage pattern of the site or area, including through the alteration of the course of a stream or river, in a manner, which would result in substantial erosion or siltation on or off site.
- substantially alter the existing drainage pattern of the site or area, including through the alteration of the course of a stream or river, or substantially increase the rate or amount of surface runoff in a manner, which would result in flooding on or off site.
- create or contribute runoff water that would exceed the capacity of existing or planned storm water drainage systems or provide substantial additional sources of polluted runoff.
- place housing within a 100-year flood hazard area mapped on a federal Flood Hazard Boundary or Flood Insurance Rate Map or other flood hazard delineation.
- place housing within a 100-year flood area or structures, which would impede or redirect flows.
- be inundated by seiche, tsunami, or mudflow.⁷

⁷ The AAA, like the Vista Canyon site, is too far inland from the Pacific Ocean to be affected by inundation by either a seiche or tsunami. Furthermore, no large, continuously filled body of water exists within or in proximity to the AAA or the tributary area that would be subject to a seiche.

(2) Impacts

Any additional development proposed within the AAA would be subject to the same general requirements and mitigation measures as the proposed Vista Canyon project, such as compliance with various City ordinances designed to reduce the impacts of development. For example, the City has adopted ordinances addressing floodplain management and standard urban stormwater mitigation plan implementation, which may be applicable to any development within the AAA. In summary, because development of the AAA would comply with all applicable federal, state and local requirements regarding flood and would also be subject to environmental review requiring the mitigation of potential impacts, any future projects in the AAA would not result in significant impacts relative to flooding.

(3) Mitigation Measures

Design-level mitigation measures would be identified, as necessary and as feasible, during the subsequent project-level environmental review that would be undertaken prior to further buildout of the AAA, and specifically the Sand Canyon and Jakes Way areas. That being said, it is reasonable to assume and recommend that development within the AAA utilize mitigation measures comparable to those recommended for the Vista Canyon project due to the similar nature of the development types (see **Section 4.2, Flood**).

(4) Cumulative Impacts

All development within the portion of the Santa Clara River watershed located in Los Angeles County, including that within the City of Santa Clarita, is required to comply with the County's Qcap requirements in order to ensure that upstream or downstream flooding does not occur. The AAA is located in the Santa Clara River watershed and would be required to be consistent with the County's Qcap (capacity flow) model, which was developed assuming buildout of the Santa Clara River watershed. Pursuant to Los Angeles County Department of Public Works (LACDPW) requirements, all drainage systems in developments that carry runoff from developed areas must be designed for the 25-year urban design storm, while storm drains under major and secondary highways, open channels (main channels), debris carrying systems, and sumps must be designed for the 50-year capital flood storm. As a result of this regulatory compliance program, overall storm runoff discharge quantities from the watershed under post-development runoff conditions would be less than or equal to existing conditions largely because the runoff would be free of the debris that is typical of undeveloped watersheds and flow velocities would not increase significantly. In summary, because the cumulative project drainage improvements in the City and County would be required to conform to the requirements of the City of Santa Clarita Department of Public Works and LACDPW, in order to handle the capital

flood from the effected watershed, no significant cumulative project flooding impacts are expected to occur from the AAA in conjunction with other projects in the watershed.

c. Traffic/Access

(1) Significance Threshold Criteria

In order to assist in determining whether a project will have a significant effect on the environment, Appendix G identifies criteria for conditions that may be deemed to constitute a significant or potentially significant impact relative to transportation/traffic. The One Valley One Vision (OVOV) Joint Valleywide General Plan EIR incorporates essentially the same criteria; where different, City text is noted in [brackets]. While all potentially applicable thresholds of significance are identified below, due to the level of environmental analysis provided for the AAA, and/or the inapplicability of a threshold, environmental analysis under certain thresholds is not yet appropriate; in such cases, an *italicized* explanation is provided in a parenthetical.

According to Appendix G, potentially significant impacts on transportation and circulation would occur if the proposed ancillary annexation would:

- cause an increase in traffic which is substantial in relation to the existing traffic load and capacity of the street system (*i.e., result in a substantial increase in either the number of vehicle trips, the volume to-capacity ratio on roads, or congestion at intersections*).
- exceed, either individually or cumulatively, a level of service standard established by the County congestion management agency for designated roads or highways.
- result in a change in air traffic patterns, including either an increase in traffic levels or a change in location that results in substantial safety risks. (*This threshold is not applicable as the AAA is not zoned for the development of aviation-related land uses and no public or private use airports, or helipads, are or would be constructed; therefore, the AAA would not result in a change to air traffic patterns.*)
- substantially increase hazards due to a design feature (e.g., sharp curves or dangerous intersections) or incompatible uses (e.g., farm equipment). (*Any additional access infrastructure associated with development of the AAA would be designed to conform with all applicable regulations and standards governing access conditions.*)
- result in inadequate emergency access. (*The adequacy of the emergency access for development within the AAA would be evaluated and mitigated, as necessary, at the time of project-level design and environmental review.*)
- result in inadequate parking capacity (generate a parking demand that exceeds municipal code–required parking capacity). (*The adequacy of parking for development within the AAA area would be evaluated and mitigated, as necessary, at the time of project-level design and environmental review.*)

- conflict with adopted policies, plans, or programs supporting alternative transportation (e.g., bus turnouts, bicycle racks) [cause a hazard or barrier for pedestrians or bicyclists]. (*Potential conflicts between adopted policies, plans, or programs and proposed development within the AAA would be evaluated and mitigated, as necessary, at the time of project-level design and environmental review.*)

The City's *Local Guidelines* also contain a number of discrete thresholds of significance that should be utilized to determine the significance of impacts related to traffic and access. (Please see **Section 4.3, Traffic and Access**, of this EIR for additional information.)

(2) Impacts

Incorporation of the AAA into the City would not result in any additional land development or additional vehicle trips beyond that already provided for under the Santa Clarita Valley Consolidated Traffic Model (SCVCTM) 2030 cumulative scenario. The analysis undertaken for the AAA assumes the area bounded by SR-14, Golden Valley Road, Placerita Canyon Road, and the east City limits (which includes the area to be annexed) would be developed by 2030 with a combined total of 5,257 total dwelling units; this is an increase of approximately 3,700 units over the 1,547 units assumed in the base year (2004) model. The traffic generated by these additional 3,700 units considered as part of the cumulative analysis is sufficient to encompass any additional vehicle trips that potentially would be generated by future development of the Fair Oaks Ranch, Jakes Way, and Sand Canyon areas. The analysis also accounts for the recently opened shopping center on Golden Valley Road between SR-14 and Via Princesa, and assumes an additional 300,000 square feet of retail and manufacturing.

The growth in traffic associated with the AAA is illustrated by comparing the existing and cumulative traffic volumes on the primary gateway streets to the proposed ancillary annexation area. In 2008, the combined volume on Sand Canyon Road and Via Princesa south of SR-14 was about 24,000 vehicles per day. Under the "cumulative no project" condition, these roadways are expected to carry a combined 55,000 vehicles per day. While some of the growth is likely associated with through travel, much of it is due to new development assumed by 2030 and accounted for in the cumulative analysis.

Environmental review for future projects in the AAA would be required to identify and mitigate (to the extent feasible) impacts to traffic and circulation.

(3) Mitigation Measures

Design-level mitigation measures would be identified, as necessary and as feasible, during the subsequent project-level environmental review that would be undertaken in conjunction with proposed development within the AAA, and specifically the Sand Canyon and Jakes Way areas. That being said, it is reasonable to assume and recommend that development within the AAA utilize mitigation measures

comparable to those recommended for the Vista Canyon project due to the similar nature of the development types (see **Section 4.3, Traffic**, Mitigation Measures).

(4) Cumulative Impacts

A site-specific analysis of traffic impacts resulting from any future projects in the AAA in combination with cumulative traffic levels would determine if there would be cumulative impacts. As vehicle trips associated with the future development of 150 single-family residential units and 436,000 square feet of business park use would be well within the number of future trips assumed in the 2030 cumulative scenario SCVCTM for the AAA, there would be no significant impacts.

d. Air Quality

(1) Significance Threshold Criteria

Based on the thresholds of significance identified in Appendix G of the *State CEQA Guidelines* and the City's *Local Guidelines*, the proposed ancillary annexation would have a significant effect on air quality if it would:

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

The City of Santa Clarita also refers to the thresholds recommended by the South Coast Air Quality Management District (SCAQMD) in its *CEQA Air Quality Handbook*. Please see **Section 4.4, Air Quality**, of the Draft EIR for additional information regarding SCAQMD's thresholds for construction emissions, sensitive receptors, operational emissions, toxic air contaminants, and cumulative thresholds.

(2) Impacts

Any additional development within the AAA would have the potential to impact occupants of the Vista Canyon project and other occupants within the AAA. In particular, construction-related emissions near sensitive receptors located on the Vista Canyon project site and within the AAA may be exposed to

pollutant levels that exceed SCAQMD's thresholds, depending on the level of construction activity. In addition, construction and operational emissions have the potential to exceed SCAQMD's significance thresholds and to contribute cumulatively considerable emissions impacting the region at large. That being said, any additional development would need to comply with the SCAQMD's applicable rules and regulations, just like the Vista Canyon project. Environmental review for future projects would be required to identify impacts to the air basin generally, and on- and off-site receptors, and implement feasible mitigation measures.

(3) Mitigation Measures

Design-level mitigation measures would be identified, as necessary and as feasible, during project-level environmental review that would be undertaken in conjunction with proposed development in the AAA, and specifically the Sand Canyon and Jakes Way areas. That being said, it is reasonable to assume and recommend that development within the AAA utilize mitigation measures comparable to those recommended for the Vista Canyon project due to the similar nature of the development types (see **Section 4.4, Air Quality**).

(4) Cumulative Impacts

A site-specific analysis of air quality impacts associated with development in the AAA in combination with other projects would determine if there would be cumulative impacts relative to air quality. However, because development is not proposed as part of this ancillary annexation, it is not possible to determine definitively whether cumulative air quality impacts would result. That being said, it is worth noting that the three areas comprising the AAA are mostly built out and consistent with current land use designations in unincorporated Los Angeles County; as such, emissions associated with the development of such uses has been accounted for in regional growth projections and SCAQMD's air quality management plan.

e. Noise

(1) Significance Threshold Criteria

According to Appendix G of the *State CEQA Guidelines*, the AAA would have a significant impact on noise if it would:

- expose persons to or generate noise levels in excess of standards established in the local general plan or noise ordinance, or applicable standards of other agencies.
- expose persons to or generate excessive groundborne vibration or groundborne noise levels.

- cause a substantial permanent increase in ambient noise levels in the project vicinity above levels existing without the project.
- cause a substantial temporary or periodic increase in ambient noise levels in the project vicinity above levels existing without the project.

The City also utilizes additional thresholds of significance that are based on the City of Santa Clarita's *City Land Use Compatibility Guidelines*, as well as the noise standards outlined in the City's Noise Ordinance. Please see **Section 4.5, Noise**, of the Draft EIR for additional information on the City's thresholds for construction noise, stationary source noise, mobile source noise, and interior noise.

(2) Impacts

Any additional development within the AAA has the potential to result in both on- and off-site noise impacts. In particular, sensitive receptors may be exposed to construction and/or mobile source noise levels that exceed the levels established in the *Land Use Compatibility Guidelines*. That being said, such development would need to comply with the City's construction noise ordinance, and similar regulations, just like the Vista Canyon project. Environmental review for future projects would be required to identify and mitigate (to the extent feasible) impacts to on- and off-site receptors.

(3) Mitigation Measures

Design-level mitigation measures would be identified, as necessary and as feasible, during project-level environmental review that would be undertaken in conjunction with proposed development in the AAA, and specifically the Sand Canyon and Jakes Way areas. That being said, it is reasonable to assume and recommend that further development within the AAA would utilize mitigation measures comparable to those recommended for the Vista Canyon project due to the similar nature of the development types (see **Section 4.5, Noise**).

(4) Cumulative Impacts

A site-specific analysis of noise impacts associated with further development in the AAA in combination with other projects would determine if there would be cumulative impacts. At this point, it is not possible in this document to determine definitively if the AAA would result in cumulative noise impacts.

f. Biological Resources

(1) Significance Threshold Criteria

Pursuant to Appendix G of the *State CEQA Guidelines* and the City's *Local Guidelines*, the proposed ancillary annexation would have a significant impact on the environment if it would:

- have a substantial adverse effect, either directly or through habitat modifications, on any species identified as a candidate, sensitive, or special-status species in local or regional plans, policies, or regulations or by the CDFG or USFWS.
- have a substantial adverse effect on any riparian habitat or other sensitive natural community identified in local or regional plans, policies, or regulations or by the CDFG or USFWS;
- have a substantial adverse effect on federally protected wetlands as defined by Section 404 of the Clean Water Act (including, but not limited to, marsh, vernal pool, coastal, etc.) through direct removal, filling, hydrological interruption, or other means.
- interfere substantially with the movement of any native resident or migratory fish or wildlife species or with established native resident or migratory wildlife corridors, or impede the use of native wildlife nursery sites.
- conflict with any local policies or ordinances protecting biological resources, such as a tree preservation policy or ordinance.
- conflict with the provisions of an adopted Habitat Conservation Plan, Natural Community Conservation Plan, or other approved local, regional, or State Habitat Conservation Plan.
- remove any heritage oak tree, as defined in Unified Development Code 17.17.090, remove more than five (5) oak trees for a project on a site that has an existing single-family residence, or remove more than three (3) oak trees, proposed as part of any project.
- disturb or encroach into, any river, river tributary, riparian habitat, stream or similar waterway identified on a United States Geological Survey map as a "blue-line" watercourse, or any waterway otherwise identified as a significant resource by the City of Santa Clarita.
- disturb any habitat known or suspected to contain a plant or animal species listed as endangered on such federal and/or state lists.
- disturb any Significant Ecological Area (SEA) as identified by the City of Santa Clarita.

(2) Impacts

Any additional development proposed within the AAA would be subject to the same general requirements as the proposed project, such as compliance with various City ordinances designed to reduce the impacts of development. For example, the City has adopted an oak tree preservation

ordinance, which may be applicable to any future development within the AAA. Environmental review for proposed development would be required to identify and mitigate (to the extent feasible) impacts to sensitive biological species and their habitats. Nonetheless, at this point in time, it is not possible to determine definitively if future development within the AAA area would result in potentially significant impacts relative to biological resources.

(3) Mitigation Measures

Design-level mitigation measures would be identified, as necessary and as feasible, during the project-level environmental review that would be conducted in conjunction with proposed development in the AAA, and specifically the Sand Canyon and Jakes Way areas. That being said, it is reasonable to assume and recommend that further development within the AAA would utilize mitigation measures comparable to those recommended for the Vista Canyon project due to the similar nature of the development types (see **Section 4.6** (Biological Resources)).

(4) Cumulative Impacts

A site-specific analysis of impacts to biological resources associated with further development in the AAA in combination with other projects would determine if there would be cumulative impacts. However, at this time, it is not possible to determine definitively if development in the AAA would result in cumulative biological resource impacts.

g. Land Use

(1) Significance Threshold Criteria

Pursuant to Appendix G of the *State CEQA Guidelines* and the City's *Local Guidelines*, the proposed ancillary annexation would have a significant effect on the environment if it would:

- disrupt or physically divide an established community (including a low-income or minority community).
- conflict with any applicable land use plan, policy, or regulation of an agency with jurisdiction over the project (Including but not limited to the general plan, specific plan, local coastal program, or zoning ordinance) adopted for the purpose of avoiding or mitigating an environmental effect.
- conflict with any applicable habitat conservation plan or natural community conservation plan, and/or policies by agencies with jurisdiction over the project.

(2) Impacts

Preliminarily, the AAA is within the Planning Area addressed by the City's General Plan. Rezoning under the proposed ancillary annexation would be consistent with the land use designations included for the site in the City's existing General Plan as shown in **Table 4.24-1** above. Annexation also would not disrupt or physically divide an established community; as previously noted, much of the AAA is built out.

Additionally, there are several pending projects within the AAA. These projects are identified in **Table 4.24-5** below. Development of the AAA, including those projects listed below, would comply with all applicable local requirements regarding land use and would also be subject to environmental review. Appropriate mitigation measures applied to any projects within the AAA would ensure that no significant impacts occur.

**Table 4.24-5
AAA-Pending Development Cases**

Case No.	Project Description/Location	Status
TPM 25884	Two single family lots on 5.52 acres/Sand Canyon	Pending
TPM 65342	Four- lot subdivision/Sand Canyon	Pending
TPM 67405	Two-lot subdivision/Sand Canyon	Pending
TTM 70070	15-lot subdivision/Sand Canyon	Pending

(3) Mitigation Measures

Design-level mitigation measures would be identified, as necessary and as feasible, during the project-level environmental review that would be completed in conjunction with proposed development in the AAA, and specifically the Sand Canyon and Jakes Way areas. That being said, it is reasonable to assume and recommend that further development within the AAA utilize mitigation measures comparable to those recommended for the Vista Canyon project due to the similar nature of the development types (see **Section 4.7, Land Use**).

(4) Cumulative Impacts

As land use is a site-specific issue, the AAA would not result in cumulative land use impacts.

h. Water Services

(1) Significance Threshold Criteria

Pursuant to Appendix G of the *State CEQA Guidelines* and the City's *Local Guidelines*, the AAA would have a significant impact on water resources if it would:

- require or result in the construction of new water facilities or expansion of existing facilities, the construction of which could cause significant environmental effects.
- not have sufficient water supplies available to serve the project from existing entitlements and resources, and new or expanded entitlements are needed.

(2) Impacts

A preliminary water supply demand has been estimated for the undeveloped portions of the Sand Canyon and Jakes Way areas, which could accommodate up to 150 additional single-family units (including those units referenced above in **Table 4.24-5**) and 436,000 square feet of additional business park and related uses. Based on the remaining development potential, a total of 175 acre-feet per year (afy) for both the residential and business park uses is estimated. Each project, as it develops, must be able to prove availability of water service prior to approval. Moreover, with respect to the previously approved or built-out portion of the AAA, existing water service would remain in place.

(3) Mitigation Measures

Design-level mitigation measures would be identified, as necessary and as feasible, during the subsequent project-level environmental review that would be undertaken prior to further buildout of the AAA, and specifically the Sand Canyon and Jakes Way areas. Because no specific development within the AAA is proposed at this time, it is not reasonably possible to identify site-specific mitigation measures. That being said, it is reasonable to assume and recommend that further buildout within the AAA utilize mitigation measures comparable to those recommended for the Vista Canyon project due to the similar nature of the development types (see **Section 4.8, Water Services**).

(4) Cumulative Impacts

A site-specific analysis of impacts to water resources associated with further development in the AAA in combination with other projects would determine if there would be cumulative impacts. However, because development is not proposed as part of this ancillary annexation, it is not possible to determine definitively if the AAA would result in cumulative water resource impacts.

i. Water Quality

(1) Significance Threshold Criteria

Pursuant to Appendix G of the *State CEQA Guidelines* and the City's *Local Guidelines*, the proposed ancillary annexation would normally have a significant effect on the environment if it would:

- violate any water quality standards or waste discharge requirements.
- create or contribute runoff water, which would...provide substantial additional sources of polluted runoff.
- otherwise substantially degrade water quality.
- impact stormwater management in any of the following ways:
 - Potential impact of project construction and project post-construction activity on stormwater runoff;
 - Potential discharges from areas for materials storage, vehicle or equipment fueling, vehicle or equipment maintenance (including washing), waste handling, hazardous materials handling or storage, delivery areas or loading docks, or other outdoor work areas;
 - Significant and environmentally harmful increases in erosion of the project site or surrounding areas; and/or
 - Stormwater discharges that would significantly impair or contribute to the impairment of the beneficial uses of receiving waters or areas that provide water quality benefits (e.g., riparian corridors, wetlands, etc.).

(2) Impacts

As previously discussed, the AAA contains remaining development potential within the Sand Canyon and Jakes Way areas. Pollutant export from the site could increase significantly as a result of soil disturbance and construction operations. However, as the areas that likely would be disturbed are larger than 1 acre, any additional development would be required to comply with the State General Construction Activity Storm Water Permit and the General MS4 Permit, which entails: (1) retaining sediments generated on the site using adequate treatment control or structural control best management practices (BMPs); (2) retaining construction-related materials, wastes, spills, or residues at the site to avoid discharge to streets, drainage facilities, receiving waters, or adjacent properties by wind or runoff; (3) containing non-storm water runoff from equipment and vehicle washing and any other activity at the site; and (4) controlling erosion from slopes and channels by implementing an effective combination of BMPs (as approved in Regional Water Quality Control Board [RWQCB] Resolution No. 99-03), such as

inspecting graded areas during rain events, planting and maintenance of vegetation on slopes, and covering erosion susceptible slopes. The Storm Water Pollution Prevention Plan (SWPPP) would also be designed and implemented to address site-specific conditions related to project construction, including PDFs. Finally, development of the AAA would be required to comply with all applicable requirements of the City, such as their stormwater and urban runoff pollution control ordinance, and would also be subject to environmental review requiring the mitigation of potential impacts. Compliance with the BMPs and PDFs prescribed for any future projects within the AAA would ensure that impacts relative to water quality would be less than significant.

(3) Mitigation Measures

Design-level mitigation measures would be identified, as necessary and as feasible, during the subsequent project-level environmental review that would be undertaken prior to further buildout of the AAA, and specifically the Sand Canyon and Jakes Way areas. Because no specific development within the AAA is proposed at this time, it is not reasonably possible to identify site-specific mitigation measures. That being said, it is reasonable to assume and recommend that further buildout within the AAA utilize mitigation measures comparable to those recommended for the Vista Canyon project due to the similar nature of the development types (see **Section 4.8.1, Water Quality**).

(4) Cumulative Impacts

A site-specific analysis of impacts to water quality associated with further development in the AAA in combination with other projects would determine if there would be cumulative impacts. However, because development is not proposed as part of this ancillary annexation, it is not possible to determine definitively if the AAA would result in cumulative water quality impacts. That being said, all cumulative projects within the tributary watershed and other undeveloped areas of the City, including the AAA, are required to meet the same or similar general water quality requirements, and other site-specific requirements that the LACDPW Flood Control Division, Watershed Management Division, and the RWQCB may specifically identify for those projects. These requirements serve to avoid the potential for cumulative water quality impacts in the Santa Clara River and its tributaries.

j. Solid Waste Disposal

(1) Significance Threshold Criteria

Pursuant to Appendix G of the *State CEQA Guidelines* and the City's *Local Guidelines*, the proposed ancillary annexation would have a significant impact on solid waste disposal services if it would:

- be served by a landfill with insufficient permitted capacity to accommodate the project's solid waste disposal needs.
- not comply with federal, state, and local statutes and regulations related to solid waste.

The *State CEQA Guidelines* do not identify any quantitative standards for determining the significance of a new development project's solid waste generation.

(2) Impacts

Any additional development within the AAA, and particularly the Sand Canyon and Jakes Way areas, would have the potential to increase generation of solid waste disposed of in local landfills. The remaining development potential within the AAA could generate approximately 7,379.8 tons of solid waste per year, (which equates to 40,437 pounds of solid waste per day or 20.2 tons of solid waste per day), as shown in **Table 4.24-6, Estimated Solid Waste Generation For The Ancillary Annexation Area.**

**Table 4.24-6
Estimated Solid Waste Generation For The Ancillary Annexation Area**

Land Use	Units	Generation Factor	Total Waste Generation (pounds/day)	Total Waste Generation (tons/day)	Total Waste Generation (tons/year)
Single-Family Residential	150 du	11.18 lbs/du/day ¹	1,677	0.8	306.1
Business Park	436,000 sq. ft.	0.06 lbs/sq. ft./day	38,760	19.4	7,073.7
Total			40,437	20.2	7,379.8
Total Diverted To be Recycled (54 percent diversion rate)			21,836	10.9	3,985.1
Total Solid Waste Disposed of in Landfills			18,601	9.3	3,394.7

lbs = pounds; sq. ft. = square feet.

¹ CalRecycle, *Estimated Solid Waste Generation Rates*, <http://www.calrecycle.ca.gov/wastechar/wastegenrates/>, Accessed May 28, 2010.

Based on the most current diversion rate of the City of Santa Clarita of 54 percent, it is estimated that the AAA would divert approximately 3,985.1 tons/year of solid waste to be recycled, while approximately 3,394.7 tons/year of solid waste would be disposed of in local landfills, serving both the proposed project (Vista Canyon) and the AAA.

Future development within the AAA would be required to meet City/County codes and requirements relative to providing adequate solid waste disposal services to the individual parcels during both the construction and operational stages of the AAA. Recent expansion approvals and proposals for expansion at several County landfills also compel the conclusion that solid waste disposal facilities and

other options will be available in the future. It is also reasonable to assume that new facilities and other options will be created to meet demand and reap the financial benefits of providing this service. As such, impacts to solid waste disposal would be less than significant.

(3) Mitigation Measures

Design-level mitigation measures would be identified, as necessary and as feasible, during the subsequent project-level environmental review that would be undertaken prior to further buildout of the AAA, and specifically the Sand Canyon and Jakes Way areas. Because no specific development within the AAA is proposed at this time, it is not reasonably possible to identify site-specific mitigation measures. That being said, it is reasonable to assume and recommend that further buildout within the AAA utilize mitigation measures comparable to those recommended for the Vista Canyon project due to the similar nature of the development types (see **Section 4.9, Solid Waste Disposal**).

(4) Cumulative Impacts

As discussed above, new landfills need to be developed and/or other waste disposal options implemented to accommodate future growth. These options may include diversion/transformation as the preferred methods for addressing solid waste, and specific and practical applications (i.e., market development, public education, and public policy initiatives). As additional development in the AAA would undergo environmental review, and as the local jurisdictions and solid waste disposal industry will identify the resources necessary to accommodate future demand, there would be less than significant cumulative impacts to solid waste disposal.

k. Education

(1) Significance Threshold Criteria

Pursuant to Appendix G of the *State CEQA Guidelines* and the *City's Local Guidelines*, the AAA would result in a significant impact if:

- the project results in substantial adverse physical impacts associated with the provision of new or physically altered governmental facilities, or the need for new or physically altered governmental facilities, the construction of which could cause significant environmental impacts, in order to maintain acceptable service ratios, response times, or other performance objectives.

(2) Impacts

As previously discussed, the AAA contains remaining development potential within the Sand Canyon and Jakes Way areas. Further development within the AAA could add approximately 463 new residents

to the area, thereby potentially generating students that would attend schools operated by the Sulphur Springs Elementary School District and Hart District. Based on current generation rates, further development in the AAA would generate approximately 50 elementary school students, 19 middle school students, and 34 high school students, as shown in **Table 4.24-7, Student Generation from Ancillary Annexation Area**.

**Table 4.24-7
Student Generation from Ancillary Annexation Area**

School District	Single-Family Residential Units Generation Rates	Single-Family Units	Students Generated
Sulphur Springs District Elementary School	0.336	150	50
Hart District Junior High School	0.128	150	19
Hart District High School	0.2246	150	34

Depending on the exact location of the residential units that would be developed within the AAA, the Sulphur Springs Elementary School District and Hart District would determine which elementary schools, middle schools, and high schools would accommodate the students. This would be based on the school attendance boundary sites for each district. The Sulphur Springs Elementary School District has a current enrollment of 5,743 elementary school students and a design capacity to accommodate 6,500 elementary school students. With the addition of the 50 elementary school students generated by the AAA, the Sulphur Springs Elementary School District would have an enrollment of 5,793 elementary schools students and would continue to operate below capacity. The Hart School District has a current enrollment of 23,159 middle and high school students and a design capacity to accommodate up 24,027 middle and high school students. With the addition of 53 middle and high school students generated by the AAA, the Hart School District would have an enrollment of 23,212 middle school and high schools students and would continue to operate below capacity.

Notably, all projects within the City of Santa Clarita, including those within the AAA, would be subject to the same generally applicable requirements of the City and would also be subject to environmental review. Appropriate mitigation measures and/or development agreements would ensure that no significant impacts to the Sulphur Springs School District or the Williams S. Hart Union High School District would occur.

With respect to the built-out portion of the AAA, the proposed ancillary annexation would not modify the school district boundaries or re-allocate school assignments, such that the existing and future students generated by existing development in the AAA would continue to be accounted for and serviced by the existing school district providers.

(3) Mitigation Measures

Design-level mitigation measures would be identified, as necessary and as feasible, during the subsequent project-level environmental review that would be undertaken prior to further buildout of the AAA, and specifically the Sand Canyon and Jakes Way areas. Because no specific development within the AAA is proposed at this time, it is not reasonably possible to identify site-specific mitigation measures. That being said, it is reasonable to assume and recommend that further buildout within the AAA utilize mitigation measures comparable to those recommended for the Vista Canyon project due to the similar nature of the development types (see **Section 4.10, Education**).

(4) Cumulative Impacts

Further development of the AAA along with other cumulative projects in the area would increase the number of residential units within the City of Santa Clarita, thus increasing the need for education-related services. That said, as the referenced school districts would continue to operate below capacity levels with complete buildout of the AAA, cumulative impacts are not anticipated to be significant. Moreover, as noted above, the applicants of future development projects will negotiate and coordinate with the school districts to ensure that adequate capacity is available to serve future demand.

1. Library Services

(1) Significance Threshold Criteria

Significance threshold criteria specific to library services are not included in the *State CEQA Guidelines*. However, Appendix G to the *State CEQA Guidelines* addresses public services, such as fire, police, schools, parks, and “other public facilities.” According to Appendix G, the proposed ancillary annexation would have a potentially significant impact on public facilities if it would result in:

- substantially adverse physical impacts associated with the provisions of new or physically altered governmental facilities.
- the need for new or physically altered governmental facilities, the construction of which could cause significant environmental impacts, in order to maintain acceptable service ratios, response times or other performance objectives for any of the public services.

In addition, the County Library has adopted the following planning standards for library services: 0.50 gross square foot of library facilities per capita; 2.75 library material item (books, periodicals, audio cassettes, videos, etc.) per capita; and one computer per 1,000 capita.

(2) Impacts

As previously discussed, the AAA contains remaining development potential within the Sand Canyon and Jakes Way areas. Further development of the AAA would add approximately 463 new residents to the area, which potentially would increase the use of and demand for County libraries that service the area. Based on the County Library's service level guidelines, the development of 150 residential units in the AAA would require a total of 232 square feet of library facilities, 1,274 items, and 0.5 additional public access computers. While residents of the AAA would generate new tax revenues, payment of the library facilities fee (currently \$718.00 per residential unit) also would be required for any future development within the AAA. Payment of such fees would constitute mitigation in full of potential impacts to library services. With respect to the built-out portion of the AAA, the annexation would result in a negotiated revenue neutral tax transfer between the City and County to fund public services.

(3) Mitigation Measures

Design-level mitigation measures would be identified, as necessary and as feasible, during the subsequent project-level environmental review that would be undertaken prior to further buildout of the AAA, and specifically the Sand Canyon and Jakes Way areas. Because no specific development within the AAA is proposed at this time, it is not reasonably possible to identify site-specific mitigation measures. That being said, it is reasonable to assume and recommend that further buildout within the AAA utilize mitigation measures comparable to those recommended for the Vista Canyon project due to the similar nature of the development types (see **Section 4.11, Library Services**).

(4) Cumulative Impacts

Further development of the AAA along with other cumulative projects in the area would increase the number of residential units within the City of Santa Clarita, thus increasing the need for service from County libraries. Similar to the AAA, cumulative projects would require separate analysis to determine the need for additional libraries, staff, and materials. That said, requiring payment of the library facilities fee in effect (currently \$718.00 per unit of residential development) would mitigate any potential cumulative impacts to a level below significant.

m. Parks and Recreation

(1) Significance Threshold Criteria

Pursuant to Appendix G of the *State CEQA Guidelines* and the City's *Local Guidelines*, potentially significant impacts on parks and recreation would occur if the proposed project would:

- result in substantial adverse physical impacts associated with the provision of new or physically altered governmental facilities, need for new or physically altered governmental facilities, the construction of which could cause significant environmental impacts, in order to maintain acceptable service ratios, response times or other performance objectives.
- increase the use of existing neighborhood and regional parks or other recreational facilities such that substantial physical deterioration of the facility would occur or be accelerated.
- Include recreational facilities or require the construction or expansion of recreational facilities, which might have an adverse physical effect on the environment.

Additionally, the State of California (Gov. Code, Section 66477 [Quimby Act]) and the City (see Municipal Code, Chapter 16.15) require 3 acres of parkland per 1,000 residents as the proportionate amount of land necessary to satisfy the parkland requirement for new subdivisions. Fees in lieu of the dedicated parkland, construction of amenities on dedicated parkland that total less than the standard, but are of equal dollar value to the park fee, or a combination of the three are all considered to satisfy the requirement.

With that said, it has been the City's policy to require 5 acres per 1,000 residents on projects requiring General Plan Amendments. The proposed project does require a General Plan Amendment; therefore, consistent with City policy, the proposed project would need to provide 5 acres per 1,000 residents to mitigate parkland impacts.

(2) Impacts

As previously discussed, the remaining development potential within the AAA could allow for the construction of 150 residential units and 436,000 square feet of business park and related uses. Development of the residential units would add approximately 463 new residents to the area, thereby potentially increasing the demand for park and recreation facilities in the City. Based on the adopted planning guideline of 3 acres of parkland per 1,000 residents, further development of the AAA would require a total of 1.4 acres of parkland. Based on the City policy of 5 acres of parkland per 1,000 residents, development would require a total of 2.3 acres of parkland.

All projects within the City of Santa Clarita are subject to the City's parkland dedication requirements. Therefore, development of the AAA would be required to comply with all applicable requirements of the City and would also be subject to environmental review. Appropriate mitigation measures applied to each of the projects within the annexation area would ensure that no significant impacts to the City's park and recreation facilities would occur.

(3) Mitigation Measures

Design-level mitigation measures would be identified, as necessary and as feasible, during the subsequent project-level environmental review that would be undertaken prior to further buildout of the AAA, and specifically the Sand Canyon and Jakes Way areas. Because no specific development within the AAA is proposed at this time, it is not reasonably possible to identify site-specific mitigation measures. That being said, it is reasonable to assume and recommend that further buildout within the AAA utilize mitigation measures comparable to those recommended for the Vista Canyon project due to the similar nature of the development types (see **Section 4.12, Parks and Recreation**).

(4) Cumulative Impacts

The new population associated with further development of the AAA and development in the Valley generally would create demand for parkland and recreation facilities. Each development would be required to meet City parkland requirements by providing either the dedication of land, payment of in-lieu fees, or construction of park amenities, or a combination of the three. Therefore, further development associated with the AAAs would not contribute to the current shortage of local parks, and would not result in a cumulatively considerable impact.

n. Fire Services

(1) Significance Threshold Criteria

Pursuant to Appendix G of the *State CEQA Guidelines* and the City's *Local Guidelines*, the proposed ancillary annexation would adversely impact fire protection services if it would:

- result in substantial adverse physical impacts associated with the provision of new or physically altered governmental facilities, need for new or physically altered governmental facilities, the construction of which could cause significant environmental impacts, in order to maintain acceptable service ratios, response times or other performance objectives.
- expose people or structures to a significant risk of loss, injury, or death involving wildland fires, including where wildlands are adjacent to urbanized areas or where residences are intermixed with wildlands.

Additionally, based upon the Los Angeles County Fire Code, the proposed ancillary annexation would create a significant threat to the safety of future residents and occupants if the project site:

- is located in a high fire hazard area (such as Very High Fire Hazard Severity Zone).
- is in a high fire hazard area, and is served by inadequate access due to length, width, surface material, turnarounds, or grade of access roads.
- is in a high fire hazard area and has more than 75 dwelling units on a single means of access.
- is located in an area having inadequate water and pressure to meet fire flow standards.
- is located in close proximity to potential dangerous fire hazard conditions or uses such as refineries, storage of flammable materials, or explosives manufacturing.

(2) Impacts

As previously discussed, the remaining development potential within the AAA could allow for the construction of 150 residential units and 436,000 square feet of business park and related uses. Development of the residential units would add approximately 463 new residents to the area, which would potentially increase the number of service calls to the Los Angeles County Fire Department.

By way of background, Los Angeles County Fire Station Number 107, located at 18239 W. Soledad Canyon Road in Canyon Country, is the jurisdictional engine company that would respond to a portion of the AAA (i.e., Fair Oaks Ranch and Jakes Way).⁸ Additionally, Fire Station Number 123, located at 26321 N. Sand Canyon Road in Canyon Country, is the jurisdictional engine company that would respond to the remaining portion of the AAA (i.e., Sand Canyon 1 and Sand Canyon 2).⁹

In response to the increased demand for new facilities, equipment and staffing created by new development, the City and County have implemented a developer fee program to fund the purchase of station sites, construction of new stations, and purchase of new equipment. The developer fees, which are currently \$0.99 per square foot (effective March 1, 2010) of new development (all land uses), are adjusted annually by the County in order to maintain adequate levels of service and are collected at the time building permits are issued. This fee constitutes mitigation in full of growth impacts associated with further development of the AAA. In addition, tax revenues from development of the parcels would assist in the continued operation, purchasing of equipment, and hiring of new firefighters, as needed. Finally, the AAA would be required to meet City/County codes and requirements relative to providing adequate

⁸ Written communication with Stephanie English, Los Angeles County Fire Department, with Chris Graham, Impact Sciences, Inc., February 25, 2010.

⁹ Written communication with Stephanie English, February 25, 2010.

fire protection services to the individual parcels during both the construction and operational stages of development. As a result, further development and operation of the AAA associated with the proposed project would not diminish the staffing or the response times of existing fire stations in the Valley, and would not create a special fire protection problem on the individual parcels that would result in a decline in existing service levels in the Valley.

With respect to the built-out portion of the AAA, the annexation would result in a negotiated revenue neutral tax transfer between the City and County to fund public services. Moreover, this portion already is and would continue to be serviced by the County Fire Department.

(3) Mitigation Measures

Design-level mitigation measures would be identified, as necessary and as feasible, during the subsequent project-level environmental review that would be undertaken prior to further buildout of the AAA, and specifically the Sand Canyon and Jakes Way areas. Because no specific development within the AAA is proposed at this time, it is not reasonably possible to identify site-specific mitigation measures. That being said, it is reasonable to assume and recommend that further buildout within the AAA utilize mitigation measures comparable to those recommended for the Vista Canyon project due to the similar nature of the development types (see **Section 4.13, Fire Services**).

(4) Cumulative Impacts

Further development of the AAA along with cumulative projects would increase the residential and employee population within the City of Santa Clarita, thus increasing the amount of calls for services from the Los Angeles County Fire Department. Similar to the AAA, cumulative projects would require separate analysis to determine the need for additional fire stations, firefighters, and firefighting equipment as provided by the Los Angeles County Fire Department. To ensure that the County Fire Department would provide adequate service to the AAA and any cumulative project, the applicants for both would be required to pay into the developer fee program that the City and County have implemented to fund the purchase of station sites, construction of new stations, and purchase of new equipment. This fee constitutes mitigation in full of growth impacts associated with development of the AAA and cumulative projects. In addition, tax revenues from development of the AAA and cumulative projects would fund the County Fire Department, thereby ensuring that cumulative impacts would be less than significant.

o. Sheriff Services

(1) Significance Threshold Criteria

Pursuant to Appendix G of the *State CEQA Guidelines* and the City's *Local Guidelines*, the proposed ancillary annexation would create a significant environmental impact if the following occurs:

- the project results in substantial adverse physical impacts associated with the provision of new or physically altered governmental facilities, or the need for new or physically altered governmental facilities, the construction of which could cause significant environmental impacts, in order to maintain acceptable service ratios (here, the Sheriff Department's desired ratio of 1 deputy per 1,000 residents), response times (here, the Sheriff Department's objectives to respond in: 10 minutes or less for emergency incidents; 20 minutes or less for priority incidents); and, 60 minutes or less for routine incidents) or other performance objectives.
- the project impairs implementation of or physically interferes with an adopted emergency response plan or emergency evacuation plan.

(2) Impacts

As previously discussed, the remaining development potential within the AAA could allow for the construction of 150 residential units and 436,000 square feet of business park and related uses. Development of the residential units would add approximately 463 new residents to the area, thereby potentially increasing the demand for law enforcement services from the Los Angeles County Sheriff's Department and CHP.

The Santa Clarita Valley Station of the Sheriff's Department is responsible for providing general law enforcement to the City, as well as the AAA, under the provisions of a contract between the two agencies. Considering the Sheriff's Department's ideal service ratio of 1 officer per 1,000 residents for the project, the number of deputies required for any further development within the AAA would require 0.5 sworn patrol officers. Additionally, the increase in required field personnel would necessitate a concomitant increase in support resources, such as detectives, complaint desk officers, vehicles, and portable radios.

Tax revenues from property and sales taxes would be generated by the AAA and deposited in the City General Fund. A portion of these revenues would then be allocated, in accordance with the City and County's contractual service agreement, to maintain staffing and equipment levels in response to related demands. As the current City revenue base provides adequate service, it is anticipated that this same level of service would be provided for the AAA through existing funding sources, so long as the City and County maintain service agreements.

In addition, capital facilities and equipment would be funded, in part, by the law enforcement facilities fee, which provides sufficient revenues to pay for land acquisition, engineering, construction, installation, purchasing, or other costs for the provision of capital law enforcement facilities and equipment needed to serve new development in this unincorporated Valley region. Additional operational funding for the Sheriff's Department in the Valley area and the rest of Los Angeles County would be derived from various types of tax revenues (e.g., property taxes, sales taxes, user taxes, vehicle license fees, deed transfer fees) which are deposited in the County's General Fund. Although the project would increase demands for Sheriff's services, these service demands can be met through the allocation of revenues collected from the proposed AAA; therefore, no significant impacts are anticipated.

As noted above, further development within the AAA also would increase demands for CHP services, due to an increase in the number of vehicle trips on SR-14. However, this increase would be offset by the elimination of CHP patrol on local streets in the AAA (due to annexation to the City and subsequent transfer of traffic control to the Sheriff). Additionally, through increased revenues generated by any further development (via motor vehicle registration and drivers license fees paid by new on-site residents and businesses), more than sufficient funding for the additional staffing and equipment needed to serve the area would be generated. This funding can and should be allocated to the CHP by the State CHP for the Santa Clarita Valley station to meet demands. Therefore, impacts relative to the CHP would be less than significant.

(3) Mitigation Measures

Design-level mitigation measures would be identified, as necessary and as feasible, during the subsequent project-level environmental review that would be undertaken prior to further buildout of the AAA, and specifically the Sand Canyon and Jakes Way areas. Because no specific development within the AAA is proposed at this time, it is not reasonably possible to identify site-specific mitigation measures. That being said, it is reasonable to assume and recommend that further buildout within the AAA utilize mitigation measures comparable to those recommended for the Vista Canyon project due to the similar nature of the development types (see **Section 4.14, Sheriff Services**).

(4) Cumulative Impacts

Further development within the AAA along with other cumulative projects would increase the residential and employee population within the City, thus increasing the number of service calls received by the Sheriff's Department. Similar to the AAA, cumulative projects would require separate analysis to determine the need for additional police stations, officers, support staff, and equipment. To ensure that the Sheriff's Department would provide adequate service to the AAA and any cumulative project, tax

revenues, and the payment of the law enforcement facilities fees would assist in the continued operation, purchasing of equipment, and hiring of new officers, as needed. As such, the AAA would not contribute to a cumulative impact.

p. Human Made Hazards

(1) Significance Threshold Criteria

Pursuant to Appendix G of the *State CEQA Guidelines* and the *City's Local Guidelines*, impacts related to human made hazards are considered significant if the proposed ancillary annexation would:

- create a significant hazard to the public or the environment through the routine transport, use, or disposal of hazardous materials.
- create a significant hazard to the public or the environment through reasonably foreseeable upset and accident conditions involving the release of hazardous materials into the environment.
- emit hazardous emissions or handle hazardous or acutely hazardous materials, substances, or waste within one-quarter mile of an existing or proposed school.
- be located on a site which is included on a list of hazardous materials sites compiled pursuant to Government Code Section 65962.5 and, as a result, would it create a significant hazard to the public or the environment.
- for a project located within an airport land use plan or, where such a plan has not been adopted, within 2 miles of a public airport or public use airport, result in a safety hazard for people residing or working in the project area.
- for a project within the vicinity of a private airstrip, result in a safety hazard for people residing or working in the project area.
- impair implementation of or physically interfere with an adopted emergency response plan or emergency evacuation plan.
- expose people or structures to a significant risk of loss, injury, or death involving wildland fires, including where wildlands are adjacent to urbanized areas or where residences are intermixed with wildlands.
- expose people to existing sources of potential health hazards (e.g., electrical transmission lines, gas lines, oil pipelines).

(2) Impacts

Any additional development within the AAA would be subject to the same general requirements as the proposed project, such as compliance with various City ordinances designed to reduce the impacts of

development. In summary, because development of the AAA would comply with all applicable federal, state, and local requirements regarding hazardous materials and would also be subject to environmental review requiring the mitigation of potential impacts, any future projects in the AAA would not result in significant impacts relative to human made hazards.

(3) Mitigation Measures

Design-level mitigation measures would be identified, as necessary and as feasible, during the subsequent project-level environmental review that would be undertaken prior to further buildout of the AAA, and specifically the Sand Canyon and Jakes Way areas. Because no specific development within the AAA is proposed at this time, it is not reasonably possible to identify site-specific mitigation measures. That being said, it is reasonable to assume and recommend that further buildout within the AAA utilize mitigation measures comparable to those recommended for the Vista Canyon project due to the similar nature of the development types (see **Section 4.15, Human-Made Hazards**).

(4) Cumulative Impacts

Human-made hazards are a site-specific issue. Consequently, no cumulative impacts would result from the AAA.

q. Visual Resources

(1) Significance Threshold Criteria

Pursuant to Appendix G of the *State CEQA Guidelines* and the *City's Local Guidelines*, impacts related to visual resources are considered significant if the proposed ancillary annexation would:

- have a substantial adverse effect on a scenic vista.
- substantially damage scenic resources, including, but not limited to, primary/secondary ridgelines, trees, rock outcroppings, and historic buildings within a state scenic highway.
- substantially degrade the existing visual character or quality of the site and its surroundings.
- create a new source of substantial light or glare that would adversely affect day or nighttime views in the area.
- result in changes to the topography of a Primary or Secondary Ridgeline.

(2) Impacts

The remaining development potential within the AAA could allow for the construction of 150 residential units and 436,000 square feet of business park and related uses. Due to the locations of the sub-areas to be annexed, development of the AAA would not substantially obstruct views of scenic resources. The Fair Oaks Ranch sub-area and Jakes Way sub-area are situated within the SR-14 corridor. For the same reasons attributed to the location of the proposed project, development within this area would not obstruct scenic vistas and other viewsheds. The Sand Canyon sub-area, which extends farther south from SR-14 than the Jakes Way and Fair Oaks Ranch sub-areas, would be designated Residential Estate by the City upon annexation. This land use category was created to ensure the continuation of existing ranching activities and to maintain the existing rural character. Further residential development would include large, custom single-family homes on uniquely configured lots that have been designed to be compliant with City's Hillside Development Ordinance and, therefore, sensitive to topographic and environmental considerations. Minimum lot sizes for large custom homes would be two gross acres. Given the development limitations and standards associated with the Residential Estate designation and the City's Hillside Development Ordinance, visual access to scenic resources within the Sand Canyon area would be retained. For these reasons, impacts to scenic vistas and other viewsheds would be less than significant.

The AAA is visible from SR-14, but that highway is not a designated scenic highway. Since further development within the AAA would not damage any scenic resources within a state or otherwise designated scenic highway, impacts would be less than significant.

Further development within the AAA would incrementally contribute to the loss of undeveloped open area within this portion of the Valley. However, the Jakes Way and Sand Canyon sub-areas are surrounded by existing and planned development; therefore, this development would be consistent with the surrounding area. Additionally, the primary scenic resource, the Santa Clara River, would be retained. While development of the AAA may result in the loss of oak trees, such development would be subject to the City of Santa Clarita Oak Tree Preservation Ordinance, and any oak trees removed by new development would be required to be replaced or relocated.

Development of the AAA also would increase sources of nighttime illumination and, therefore, would increase sky glow. However, similar to the proposed project site, the AAA is located in an urbanized area, and a variety of urban and rural land uses that generate light occur in the vicinity. Therefore, light and glare impacts would be less than significant.

Finally, any additional development within the AAA would be required to comply with the City's policies and requirements relative to designated ridgelines; therefore, impacts would not be significant.

(3) Mitigation Measures

Design-level mitigation measures would be identified, as necessary and as feasible, during the subsequent project-level environmental review that would be undertaken prior to further buildout of the AAA, and specifically the Sand Canyon and Jakes Way areas. Because no specific development within the AAA is proposed at this time, it is not reasonably possible to identify site-specific mitigation measures. That being said, it is reasonable to assume and recommend that further buildout within the AAA utilize mitigation measures comparable to those recommended for the Vista Canyon project due to the similar nature of the development types (see **Section 4.16, Visual Resources**).

(4) Cumulative Impacts

The AAA is located in an area largely surrounded by existing, approved, and planned development in the City and County. Due to its location, any changes in the AAA likely would not substantially degrade the existing visual character or quality, and would not result in cumulatively considerable impacts.

r. Population, Housing, and Employment

(1) Significance Threshold Criteria

Pursuant to Appendix G of the *State CEQA Guidelines* and the City's *Local Guidelines*, the proposed ancillary annexation would result in potentially significant impacts on population and housing if it would:

- induce substantial population growth in an area, either directly (for example, by proposing new homes and businesses) or indirectly (for example, through extension of roads or other infrastructure).
- displace substantial numbers of existing housing, necessitating the construction of replacement housing elsewhere (especially affordable housing).
- displace substantial numbers of people, necessitating the construction of replacement housing elsewhere.

(2) Impacts

As previously discussed, the remaining development potential within the AAA could allow for the construction of 150 residential units and 436,000 square feet of business park and related uses. Development of the residential units would add approximately 463 new residents to the area. This

increase in population is considered minimal (less than 0.01 percent of the City's projected 2010 population of 181,974) and does not represent a substantial portion of the projected population for the City.¹⁰ In addition, while an additional 436,000 square feet of business park and related uses may be built in an undeveloped portion of the AAA, it is not anticipated that this non-residential development would increase overall population levels; instead, the business park uses would help improve the City's jobs-housing balance by adding approximately 1,369 new jobs. In sum, the potential buildout of the AAA would not induce substantial population growth. Incorporation of the AAA into City boundaries also would not result in the displacement of a substantial number of homes or people.

(3) Mitigation Measures

Design-level mitigation measures would be identified, as necessary and as feasible, during the subsequent project-level environmental review that would be undertaken prior to further buildout of the AAA, and specifically the Sand Canyon and Jakes Way areas. Because no specific development within the AAA is proposed at this time, it is not reasonably possible to identify site-specific mitigation measures. That being said, it is reasonable to assume and recommend that further buildout within the AAA utilize mitigation measures comparable to those recommended for the Vista Canyon project due to the similar nature of the development types (see **Section 4.17, Population, Housing, and Employment**).

(4) Cumulative Impacts

Potential cumulative impacts to population, housing and employment caused by the AAA and other past, present, and probable future projects are not anticipated to be significant. As previously discussed, the AAA is mostly built out; therefore, the proposed ancillary annexation would neither induce substantial growth nor displace existing uses. Moreover, the remaining development potential consists of a mix of residential and business park uses, thereby demonstrating consistency with the City's overall jobs/housing goals.

s. Cultural Resources

(1) Significance Threshold Criteria

Pursuant to Appendix G of the *State CEQA Guidelines* and the City's *Local Guidelines*, the proposed ancillary annexation would result in significant impacts to cultural resources if it would:

¹⁰ Similarly, the development potential for 150 units is approximately 0.01 percent of projected housing units within the City for year 2010 (59,086 units).

- cause a substantial adverse change in the significance of a historical resource as defined in *State CEQA Guidelines* Section 15064.5.
- cause a substantial adverse change in the significance of an archeological resource pursuant to *State CEQA Guidelines* Section 15064.5.
- directly or indirectly destroy a unique paleontological resource or site or unique geological feature.
- disturb any human remains, including those interred outside of formal cemeteries.

(2) Impacts

Any future development proposed within the AAA would be subject to the same general requirements as the proposed project, such as various City ordinances designed to reduce the impacts of development. In summary, because development of the AAA would comply with all applicable federal, state, and local requirements regarding cultural resources and would also be subject to environmental review requiring the mitigation of potential impacts, any future projects in the AAA would not result in significant impacts relative to cultural resources.

(3) Mitigation Measures

Design-level mitigation measures would be identified, as necessary and as feasible, during the subsequent project-level environmental review that would be undertaken prior to further buildout of the AAA, and specifically the Sand Canyon and Jakes Way areas. Because no specific development within the AAA is proposed at this time, it is not reasonably possible to identify site-specific mitigation measures. That being said, it is reasonable to assume and recommend that further buildout within the AAA utilize mitigation measures comparable to those recommended for the Vista Canyon project due to the similar nature of the development types (see **Section 4.18, Cultural Resources**).

(4) Cumulative Impacts

The AAA may result in an incremental adverse cumulative impact to cultural resources; however, at this point in time, it is not reasonably possible to determine potential impacts as such impacts are assessed on a site-by-site basis. However, provided that mitigation measures are adopted and implemented, further development of the AAA is not anticipated to contribute to significant cumulative impacts.

t. Agricultural Resources

(1) Significance Threshold Criteria

Pursuant to Appendix G of the *State CEQA Guidelines* and the City's *Local Guidelines*, the proposed ancillary annexation would result in significant impacts if it would:

- convert Prime Farmland, Unique Farmland, or Farmland of Statewide Importance (Farmland), as shown on the maps prepared pursuant to the Farmland Mapping and Monitoring Program of the California Resources Agency, to nonagricultural use.
- conflict with existing zoning for agricultural use, or a Williamson Act contract.
- conflict with existing zoning for, or cause rezoning of, forest land (as defined in Public Resources Code section 12220(g)), timberland (as defined by Public Resources Code section 4526), or timberland zoned Timberland Production (as defined by Government Code section 51104(g)).
- result in the loss of forest land or conversion of forest land to non-forest use.
- involve other changes in the existing environment, which, due to their location or nature, could result in conversion of Farmland, to non-agricultural use or conversion of forest land to non-forest use.

(2) Impacts

According to the California Department of Conservation's Farmland Monitoring and Mapping Program (CDOC-FMMP), the AAA is designated as Other Land and Urban and Built-Up Land.¹¹ The land within the AAA is *not* designated as Prime Farmland, Unique Farmland, or Farmland of Statewide Importance. However, any further development would undergo environmental review to ensure compliance with CEQA. The possibility exists that during this environmental review, small portions of the AAA could be designated as an Important Farmland by the CDOC-FMMP. If this were to occur, design-level mitigation measures would be identified, as necessary and as feasible, to reduce impacts associated with the conversion of agricultural resources to a level below significant.

The AAA currently is zoned by the County as Specific Plan, Limited Multiple Use, Light Agricultural, Planned Residential, and Heavy Agricultural.¹² Upon annexation, the AAA would not be zoned for agricultural uses. The AAA is not the subject of a Williamson Act Contract. Therefore, further

¹¹ California Department of Conservation, Farmland Mapping and Monitoring Program, Los Angeles County, <ftp://ftp.consrv.ca.gov/pub/dlrp/FMMP/pdf/2008/>. Accessed May 28, 2010.

¹² Los Angeles County Department of Regional Planning, Interactive GIS Web Mapping Apps, OVOV-Net, <http://planning.lacounty.gov/gis/interactive>. Accessed May 28, 2010.

development of the AAA would not adversely impact agricultural resources that are bound under a Williamson Act Contract.

The AAA is not zoned for forest land, as described above. Therefore, development in the AAA would not adversely impact forest resources by rezoning of forest land, timberland, or timberland production areas. However, further development of the AAA may occur on land with forest land, as defined in Public Resources Code section 12220(g). Upon preliminary consultation of the Land Cover Map developed in collaboration by the U.S. Forest Service and CalFire, the AAA is classified as shrub land, and is not classified as forest land (which would include conifer-forest, conifer-woodland, hardwood-woodland, and hardwood-forest).¹³ Moreover, any further development within the AAA would undergo environmental review to ensure compliance with CEQA, which would identify design-level mitigation measures, as necessary and as feasible, to reduce impacts associated with forest land to a level below significant.

(3) Mitigation Measures

Design-level mitigation measures would be identified, as necessary and as feasible, during the subsequent project-level environmental review that would be undertaken prior to further buildout of the AAA, and specifically the Sand Canyon and Jakes Way areas. Because no specific development within the AAA is proposed at this time, it is not reasonably possible to identify site-specific mitigation measures. That being said, it is reasonable to assume and recommend that further buildout within the AAA utilize mitigation measures comparable to those recommended for the Vista Canyon project due to the similar nature of the development types (see **Section 4.19, Agricultural Resources**).

(4) Cumulative Impacts

Further development within the AAA along with other cumulative projects would increase the residential population within the City, thus potentially leading to the conversion of CDOC-FMMP designated Important Farmland (Prime Farmland, Unique Farmland, and Farmland of Statewide Importance) and forested land to non-forested land. Similar to the AAA, cumulative projects would require separate analysis to determine if agricultural and forest resource would be negatively impacted. While it is not within the scope of this document to quantify the amount of farmland and forestry land that is under pressure to be converted to urban uses in the City, County and the remainder of Southern California, it is highly likely (and probably certain) that such cumulative development pressure exists and

¹³ California Department of Forestry and Fire Protection, Fire and Resource Assessment Program, Land Cover Map.

will continue with or without implementation of the AAA. Given that implementation of the AAA would not jeopardize farmland or forestland, the AAA's impact is not cumulatively considerable.

u. River Corridor

(1) Significance Threshold Criteria

Pursuant to Appendix G of the *State CEQA Guidelines* and the City's *Local Guidelines*, modification of the floodplain would cause a significant impact to biological resources if the change in hydraulic conditions in the Santa Clara River caused:

- widespread and chronic scouring due to increased velocities in the channel bed that removes a significant amount of aquatic, wetland, and riparian habitats from the River channel.
- substantial modification of the relative amounts of these different habitats in the River, essentially altering the nature and quality of the riverine environment.
- direct removal of sensitive habitat by channelization.
- substantial effects to rare, endangered, or sensitive species.

(2) Impacts

Future development within the AAA would not be adjacent to the Santa Clara River corridor. Therefore, future development in the AAA would not result in significant impacts relative to the River corridor.

(3) Mitigation Measures

Based upon the information above, mitigation measures relative to the River corridor would not be required for future development in the AAA.

(4) Cumulative Impacts

As there are no impacts relative to the River corridor from future development in the AAA, there would be no cumulative impacts.

v. Wastewater Disposal

(1) Significance Threshold Criteria

Pursuant to Appendix G of the *State CEQA Guidelines* and the City's *Local Guidelines*, the proposed ancillary annexation would result in significant impacts to wastewater disposal if:

- the project would exceed wastewater treatment requirements of the applicable Regional Water Quality Control Board.
- the project would require or result in the construction of new water or wastewater treatment facilities or expansion of existing facilities, the construction of which could cause significant environmental effects.
- the project would result in a determination by the wastewater treatment provider, which serves or may serve the project that it has adequate capacity to serve the project's projected demand in addition to the provider's existing commitments.

The requirements of the Los Angeles Regional Water Quality Control Board and the proposed ancillary annexation's consistency with those requirements are discussed above in connection with the water quality analysis. Additionally, the environmental impacts associated with construction of the proposed Vista Canyon WRP are evaluated throughout this EIR.

(2) Impacts

As previously discussed, the remaining development potential within the AAA could allow for the construction of 150 residential units and 436,000 square feet of business park and related uses. Development of these uses would increase the demand for wastewater disposal.

The available treatment capacity of the Santa Clarita Valley Joint Sewerage System (SCVJSS) is 28.1 million gallons per day (mgd); currently, the SCVJSS processes an average flow of 21.0 mgd. The development of the AAA would generate 0.13 mgd of wastewater that would need to be treated at the SCVJSS, as shown in **Table 4.24-8, Wastewater Generation of Ancillary Annexation Area**.

**Table 4.24-8
Wastewater Generation of Ancillary Annexation Area**

Land Use	Units	Generation Factor	Total Wastewater Generation (mgd)
Single-Family Residential	150 du	260 gallons/unit/day	0.04
Business Park	436,000 sq. ft.	200 gallons/1,000 sq. ft./day	0.09
Total			0.13

Based on the current intake of the SCVJSS (21.0 mgd) and the current capacity of 28.1 mgd, the addition of wastewater generated by the AAA would represent a 0.6 percent increase in the daily intake of wastewater by the SCVJSS and could be accommodated. Therefore, impacts would be less than significant.

(3) Mitigation Measures

Design-level mitigation measures would be identified, as necessary and as feasible, during the subsequent project-level environmental review that would be undertaken prior to further buildout of the AAA, and specifically the Sand Canyon and Jakes Way areas. Because no specific development within the AAA is proposed at this time, it is not reasonably possible to identify site-specific mitigation measures. That being said, it is reasonable to assume and recommend that further buildout within the AAA utilize mitigation measures comparable to those recommended for the Vista Canyon project due to the similar nature of the development types (see **Section 4.21, Wastewater Disposal**).

(4) Cumulative Impacts

Further development within the AAA along with other cumulative projects would increase the amount of wastewater generated that would need to be treated at the SCVJSS and other wastewater treatment plants serving the cumulative projects. As can be seen from the above, implementation of the AAA would result in a minimal cumulative contribution to wastewater intake and treatment that the SCVJSS experiences on a daily basis. Any cumulative projects that are implemented would be required to undergo individual environmental review to determine the estimated amount of wastewater that would be generated and the capability of the wastewater treatment plants that serve the cumulative projects to adequately intake and treat any additional wastewater. Therefore, the AAA would not result in significant cumulative impacts relative to wastewater disposal.

w. Global Climate Change

(1) Significance Threshold Criteria

For all of the reasons discussed in **Section 4.22, Global Climate Change**, of this EIR, the City has determined it is appropriate to rely on AB 32 as a benchmark for purposes of this EIR and use the statute to inform their judgment as to whether the proposed project's greenhouse gas (GHG) emissions would result in a significant impact. (See *State CEQA Guidelines*, Section 15064, subd. (f)(1).) Accordingly, the following significance criterion is used to assess impacts:

- will the project's GHG emissions impede compliance with the GHG emissions reductions mandated in AB 32?

Please note that while there seems to be a general consensus amongst California lawmakers, scientists and others that global climate change is a cumulative problem, such that one single project rarely has a significant effect, this analysis evaluates the proposed project at the project level as well as the cumulative level.

(2) Impacts

As previously discussed, the remaining development potential within the AAA could allow for the construction of 150 residential units and 436,000 square feet of business park and related uses. Construction and operation of these uses would result in greenhouse gas emissions.

Assuming minimal Title 24 compliance, the greenhouse gas emissions associated with the development of an additional 150 residential units and 436,000 square feet of business park uses are estimated to be 3,632 metric tonnes. Approximately 54 percent (1,963 tonnes) of these emissions are attributable to non-residential building energy use, 28 percent (1,002 tonnes) are associated with mobile sources, 15 percent (550 tonnes) result from residential building energy use, and the remaining 3 percent are associated with area and municipal sources. (Please see **Appendix 4.22** for additional information regarding the emissions inventory.)

As discussed in **Section 4.22**, there is no consensus regarding whether a specific quantity of greenhouse gas emissions is significant. Moreover, because the ultimate design specifications for the buildout of these land uses have not been established, it is not possible to assess the consistency of such buildout with AB 32. As such, and in accordance with the *State CEQA Guidelines*, the analysis is terminated because any significance conclusion would be based on speculation.

(3) Mitigation Measures

Design-level mitigation measures would be identified, as necessary and as feasible, during the subsequent project-level environmental review that would be undertaken prior to further buildout of the AAA, and specifically the Sand Canyon and Jakes Way areas. Because no specific development within the AAA is proposed at this time, it is not reasonably possible to identify site-specific mitigation measures. That being said, it is reasonable to assume and recommend that further buildout within the AAA utilize mitigation measures comparable to those recommended for the Vista Canyon project due to the similar nature of the development types (see **Section 4.22, Global Climate Change**).

(4) Cumulative Impacts

For the reasons discussed above, it is not possible at this time either to assess the consistency of future buildout within the AAA with AB 32, or to determine whether such greenhouse gas emissions related to such development would be cumulatively considerable.

x. Utilities**(1) Significance Threshold Criteria**

Pursuant to Appendix G of the *State CEQA Guidelines* and the City's *Local Guidelines*, the proposed ancillary annexation would result in significant impacts to utilities if the AAA would:

- consume fuel or energy that could not be accommodated within the long-term electricity and natural gas source and distribution planning of SCE and SCGC;
- fail to comply with the energy building regulations adopted by the CEC (i.e., Title 24 of the California Code of Regulations); or
- require utilities or services that are not available to serve the proposed project, or the considerable extension of infrastructure to the project site.

(2) Impacts

As previously discussed, the remaining development potential within the AAA could allow for the construction of 150 residential units and 436,000 square feet of business park and related uses. Construction and operation of these uses would result in the consumption of electricity and natural gas. Assuming minimal Title 24 compliance, development of an additional 150 residential units and 436,000 square feet of business park uses would consume 7,669,764 kilowatt hours per year of electricity and 11,202 million british thermal units per year of natural gas. Because any additional development in the

AAA would be required to comply with applicable state and local regulations governing energy efficiency, impacts would not be significant.

(3) Mitigation Measures

Design-level mitigation measures would be identified, as necessary and as feasible, during the subsequent project-level environmental review that would be undertaken prior to further buildout of the AAA, and specifically the Sand Canyon and Jakes Way areas. Because no specific development within the AAA is proposed at this time, it is not reasonably possible to identify site-specific mitigation measures. That being said, it is reasonable to assume and recommend that further buildout within the AAA utilize mitigation measures comparable to those recommended for the Vista Canyon project due to the similar nature of the development types (see **Section 4.23, Utilities**).

(4) Cumulative Impacts

Further development within the AAA along with other cumulative projects would increase the consumption of electricity and natural gas. However, any cumulative projects that are implemented would be required to undergo individual environmental review to determine the estimated energy consumption and the capability of local energy providers to serve the cumulative projects. Further, all cumulative projects would be required to comply with applicable laws and regulations governing energy efficiency. Therefore, the AAA would not result in significant cumulative impacts relative to wastewater disposal.

7. ALTERNATIVES ANALYSIS

CEQA mandates consideration of the “no project” alternative, which, in this case, would result in the maintenance of the status quo, in the sense that the AAA would remain under the jurisdiction of the County of Los Angeles. (See State CEQA Guidelines Section 15126.6(e).) This alternative would not necessarily preclude further development of the AAA in accordance with the site's existing land use designations or land use designations subsequently adopted by the County; as such, environmental impacts would not necessarily be avoided. However, should development be proposed in the future, such development would be subject to environmental review. The proposed AAA and this alternative would result in similar environmental impacts (due to the fact that neither would preclude additional development).

For purposes of the proposed AAA, no alternative locations to the AAA exist. (See State CEQA Guidelines Section 15126.6(f)(2).) Additionally, the lead agency considered but rejected alternatives that

would result in the annexation of part(s) but not all of the AAA. (See State CEQA Guidelines Section 15126.6(c).

8. CONCLUSION

In summary, the lead agency is proposing to annex the AAA into the City's boundaries in order to logically extend the City's physical boundary and municipal service area within an area presently bounded on the north, east and west by the City. As a constraint of future development within the AAA, the City is proposing to limit additional development to no more than what is permitted under the City's proposed land use designations. Any additional development in the AAA would be subject to additional environmental review in order to identify and mitigate, as necessary and feasible, potentially significant environmental impacts.