

# City of Santa Paula General Plan Conservation and Open Space Element

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## I. PURPOSE AND AUTHORITY

This element of the Santa Paula General Plan addresses conservation and open space issues as required by California state law. Government Code Section 65302(d), requires that a Conservation Element be prepared as part of a city's General Plan, as follows:

*"..for the conservation, development and utilization of natural resources, including water and its hydraulic force, forest, soils, rivers and other waters, harbors, fisheries, wildlife, minerals, and other natural resources."*

The Conservation Element may also address:

*"(1) the reclamation of land and waters; (2) prevention and control of the pollution of streams and other waters; (3) regulation of the use of land in stream channels and other areas required for the accomplishment of the conservation plan; (4) prevention, control and correction of the erosion of soils, beaches and shores; (5) protection of watersheds; (6) the location, quantity and quality of the rock, sand and gravel resources; and (7) flood control."*

California State law defines open space land as:

*"Any parcel or area of land or water which is essentially unimproved and devoted to an open space use..."*

Section 65560 of the California Government Code describes the requirements for the Open Space Element as follows:

*(1) for the preservation of natural resources, including but not limited to, areas required for the preservation of plant and animal life...; areas required for ecologic and other scientific study purposes; rivers, streams, bays and estuaries; coastal beaches, lakeshores, banks of rivers, and streams and watershed lands;*

*(2) open space used of the managed production of resources, including but not limited to forest lands, rangeland, agricultural lands, and areas of economic importance for the production of food and fiber; areas required for recharge of groundwater basins; bays, estuaries, marshes, rivers, and streams which are important for the management of commercial fisheries; and areas containing major mineral deposits, including those in short supply;*

*(3) open space for outdoor recreation, including but not limited to, areas of outstanding scenic, historic and cultural value; areas particularly suited for park and recreation purposes, including access to lakeshores, beaches, and rivers and streams; and areas which serve as links between major recreation and open space reservations, including utility easements, banks of rivers and streams, trails, and scenic highway corridors;*

*(4) open space for public health and safety, including areas which require special management or regulation because of hazardous or special conditions such as earth quake zones, unstable soil areas, flood plains, water sheds, areas presenting high fire risks, areas required for the protection*

*of water quality and water reservoirs, and areas required for the protection and enhancement of air quality.*

The Santa Paula General Plan Conservation and Open Space Element contains descriptive information related to natural resources and open space that is relevant and of concern to Santa Paula. Specific goals, policy statements, and implementation measures that carry out the goals are also presented. Conservation, open space, and parks/recreation issues are closely related and can be combined into one document to establish a comprehensive policy and action plan. Since topics covered in the conservation element can overlap those of an open space element, the discussions and policies can be linked.

The purpose of the Conservation and Open Space Element is to maintain the overall quality of life for Santa Paula residents through the management and protection of natural resources and open space lands. The goals, objectives, policies, and implementation measures in this element provide guidelines and mandates for community actions.

The discussions and policies in this document address both City lands and those lands that are in the City's planning area and outside the City boundaries but have an important relationship to the City. Many of the discussions refer to the planning area, which is the same as the Area of Interest. The proposed updated 1998 Sphere of Influence includes the incorporated City lands as well as the expansion areas subject to the CURB called for in the Land Use Element, which include the following: Adams Canyon, Fagan Canyon, East Area 1, East Area 2, West Area 2, and South Mountain. These expansion areas are depicted in Figure LU-5; the CURB is depicted in LU-4a, Exhibit "A".

## II. EXISTING CONDITIONS AND ISSUES

This Conservation and Open Space Element identifies and plans for the open space and natural resources that are available in the Santa Paula planning area and it addresses the legal mandates and requirements in planning for natural resources. These resources include:

- *Open Space*
- *Agricultural and Soil Resources*
- *Air Quality*
- *Biological Resources*
- *Cultural and Historical Resources*
- *Energy Conservation*
- *Mineral Resources*
- *Water Resources - Watershed/Rivers, Water Supply, Flood Plains*
- *Scenic Resources*
- *Parks and Recreation*

The City can adopt policies relevant to these resources in its General Plan. These policies will plan for preserving and adding additional conservation and open space opportunities. Policies are presented to protect natural resources and to utilize the renewable resources, such as water and air, in ways that do not deplete or degrade them. Nonrenewable resources, such as oil, agricultural soils, and gravel, will be managed in a way that is not wasteful and leaves the earth unscarred. These policies are established to coordinate with other agencies, particularly the County.

The following discussions outline the existing natural resources in the Santa Paula planning area, as well as the conservation, open space, and recreation conditions and issues.

### A. Open Space

As defined in this element, open space land is any parcel of land that is undeveloped for urban uses. Within the City, open space can be found in parks, along river and creek floodways, on steep hillside slopes, in public gathering spaces, and on agricultural parcels. According to California law, the General Plan must address open space for the following uses:

- *Open space for the preservation of natural resources, such as watersheds, habitat, and archaeological sites.*
- *Open space for the managed production of resources, such as agricultural lands and mineral resources.*
- *Open space for outdoor recreation and trails including active uses, passive uses and trails.*
- *Open space for public health and safety including fuel breaks, flood ways, and steep slopes.*
- *Open space for aesthetics and urban form including areas of outstanding scenic value, buffers and separations, and scenic roadways.*

This element is directed toward improving the character and quality of the City's existing open

spaces and adding to its future inventory. The focus is on reinforcing the social, environmental, safety, and recreational role of open space within the City. The preservation of open space is also an important consideration as lands develop within the City's identified expansion areas. Provisions for future open space areas are mandated for future development outside the current City boundaries.

Because a variety of open space functions overlap, a particular open space area may serve several purposes. An example is the Santa Clara River floodway that provides biological habitat, a major scenic resource, an area for maintenance of mineral resources, and a flood hazard area.

The purposes and relevance of open space areas also overlap with many issues covered in other elements of the Santa Paula General Plan. The Land Use Element designates certain open space lands in the City and provides policies for the preservation and enhancement of these lands. The Safety Element contains discussions relevant to the open space issues in the hazards associated with geology and fire. This Conservation and Open Space Element contains discussions of biological resources, water resources, agricultural resources, mineral resources, scenic resources, and parks/recreational resources. This section of the element will provide an inventory of important open space resources in the planning area while detailed discussion of each specific resources are covered in subsequent sections. Policies for the protection and enchantment of open space are provided at the end of this document.

There are several assumptions that underlie the City's goals for open space:

- *Open space is a necessary complement to urban land uses and contributes to a desirable urban form.*
- *Open space is a method of conserving and protecting resources.*
- *Open space is a method of managing hazardous conditions.*
- *Open space can mean lands that will remain uncommitted to future land uses and development.*

Table CO-1 summarizes the open space resources within the planning area and categorizes their function. Most open space areas are listed as a resource in more than one category.

The City's General Plan Land Use Map establishes an "Open Space" land use designation. Lands currently designated for open space include: parks, creeks, barrancas and river floodways. The plan also applies the designation to mineral resource production areas and other areas where hazards are present.

## **B. Agricultural and Soil Resources**

Agriculture has historically been important to the economy of Santa Paula and this importance continues today. As the area urbanizes, commercial agriculture is very slowly being replaced by other land uses. The presence of prime agricultural soils in the planning area is a natural resource that must be conserved to provide opportunities for ongoing and expanded agricultural operations.

**Table CO-1. Santa Paula Area Open Space Resources**

<b>Resource Type</b>	<b>Natural Resource Preservation</b>	<b>Managed Resources</b>	<b>Health and Safety</b>	<b>Aesthetics and Urban Form</b>
Santa Clara River	X	X	X	X
Santa Paula Creek	X	X	X	X
Adams Barranca	X		X	X
Fagan Barranca	X		X	X
Agricultural Lands	X	X		X
Fuel Breaks; Utility Easements; Mineral Production Zones; Fault Setbacks			X	
Santa Paula Airport			X	X
Parks and Plazas				X
Public School Grounds				X
Scenic Highways and Drives				X
Cemetery			X	X
Historic Districts	X			X
Mountains to the South	X		X	X
Mountains to the North	X			X
Hillsides to the East	X			X
Hillsides with Slopes over 30%	X		X	X

Future land use decisions which affect agricultural operations and prime soils must recognize the irreplaceable nature of these resources. The value of these resources are to be given equal weight to other factors being considered in the decision making process. Goals, policies, and implementing measures for protection of agricultural and soil resources are provided at the end of this element. The following text describes the context of the City’s agriculture and soil resources.

**Agriculture.** In terms of productivity per acre, Ventura County is one of the leading agricultural areas in the nation. The combination of fertile soil and mild climate allow high value crops to be planted year round. Lemons, strawberries, and celery were the three leading crops grown in the county in 1992, with a combined value of nearly \$350 million dollars. In all,

gross revenue sales of agriculture in the county was approximately \$725 million. This was somewhat lower than in previous years, due to late season rains which damaged the strawberry crop. While strawberries and celery are not significant crops in the Santa Paula area, lemons are one of the staples of the local economy.

In Ventura County, the U.S. Soil Conservation Service Important Farmlands Inventory (IFI) system is used to inventory lands considered to have agricultural value. This system classifies land based upon the productive capabilities of the land, rather than the mere presence of ideal soil conditions. Land is divided into several categories of diminishing agricultural importance. Figure CO-1 shows the distribution of Important Farmlands within the Area of Interest, based on 1996 IFI maps currently used by Ventura County.

The areas considered to have the highest agricultural potential are classified as Prime or of Statewide Importance. **Prime** farmland includes areas with irrigated soils (Class I and II) at least 40 inches deep, a water holding capacity of at least 4 inches, and with the capability of producing sustainable high yield crops. Farmland of **Statewide Importance** is land other than Prime that have a good combination of physical and chemical characteristics, but without minimum soil depth and water holding capacity requirements. About 18% of the City's Area of Interest (8,727 acres) are classified as Prime or of Statewide Importance.

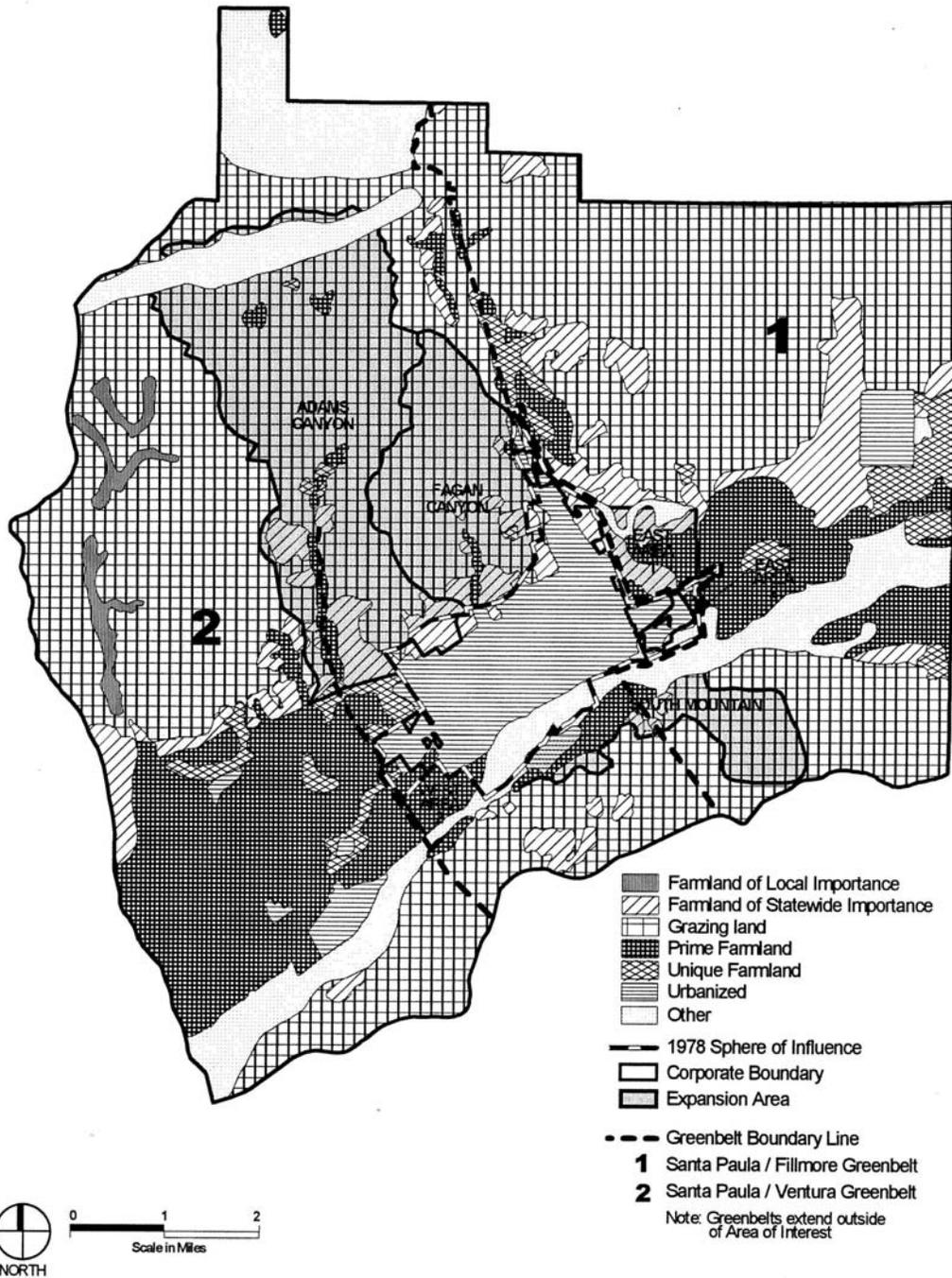
Other productive farmlands are classified as Unique, or of Local Importance. **Unique** farmland is land other than prime or statewide importance that supports high value food and fiber crops. Farmland of **Local Importance** includes dry farming and other non-irrigated lands.

Lands that have lesser agricultural potential are classified as "Grazing", "Urban" or "Other." The latter classification includes areas that are generally unsuitable for agriculture because of geographic or regulatory constraints.

Nine of Ventura County's ten cities, the Local Agency Formation Commission (LAFCO), and the County have adopted greenbelt agreements between jurisdictions to further the objectives of the County's Guidelines for Orderly Development by preserving agriculture and open space between urban areas. The underlying purpose of a greenbelt is to establish a mutual agreement between cities regarding the limit of urban growth for each city. Annexation is discouraged within greenbelt. Any change to those boundaries would require mutual consent between the cities and LAFCO.

Santa Paula has a greenbelt agreement with the neighboring Santa Clara River Valley cities of Ventura and Fillmore. Figure CO-1 illustrates the boundaries of the two greenbelt areas within the Area of Interest. The Santa Paula-Ventura Greenbelt, the first greenbelt in Ventura County, was adopted in 1967 to maintain the land generally between the Franklin Barranca and Adams Barranca in agricultural production. However, no northern or southern boundaries were established under this agreement.

Figure CO-1 Greenbelts and Important Farmlands



Greenbelts and Important Farmlands within the Santa Paula Area of Interest

Figure CO-1

CO-7

CO-7

The Santa Paula-Fillmore greenbelt is more precisely defined. The 1980 agreement recognized the shortcomings of the Santa Paula-Ventura greenbelt by establishing boundaries on all sides. The western boundary is generally coterminous with Santa Paula Creek and the existing 1990 Conservation and Open Space Line (roughly the 1978 Sphere of Influence), as well as a southeasterly extension of Twelfth Street. The northern extent of the greenbelt agreement is the Los Padres National Forest boundary, while the southern border of the greenbelt is the South Mountain/Oak Ridge ridgeline.

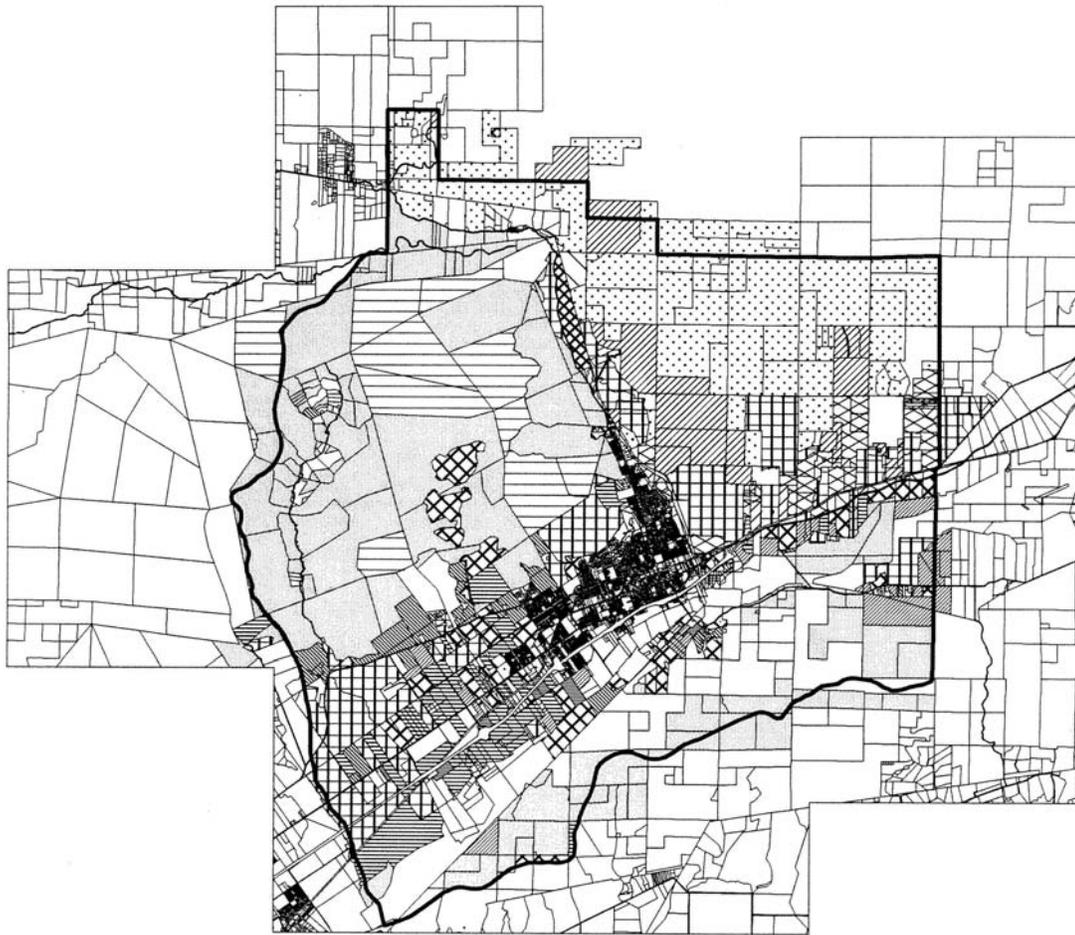
An important tool used to preserve farmlands in California is the California Land Conservation Act (LCA) or Williamson Act contract program. Under the Act, landowners may voluntarily enter into a long-term contract (10-year minimum) to maintain their property in agriculture or open space in exchange for reduced property tax assessment. The term of an LCA contract is generally 10 years and automatically renews itself annually for another 10 year period unless a Notice of Non-Renewal is filed. Since its inception in 1962, the program has provided the backbone for agricultural preservation efforts statewide.

Within the Area of Interest, 196 parcels totaling 13,570 acres are under LCA contract. This is about 40 percent of all the agricultural acreage in the planning area. Almost all of this area is outside the City's 1978 Sphere of Influence. No land within the existing City limits is under LCA contract, and only 94 acres within the City's 1978 Sphere of Influence are under contract. Within the proposed expansion areas, most of East Area 1 is currently under LCA contract, particularly the large avocado orchards; however, LCA contracts within East Area 1 will expire as of 1998. Portions of West Area 2 are also under contract, mostly citrus groves near the Santa Clara River. The large avocado and lemon orchards in lower Fagan Canyon are currently under contract as well. However, none of the existing agricultural land in Adams Canyon is presently under LCA contract.

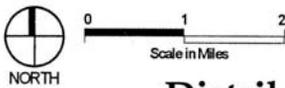
Agriculture plays a central role in Santa Paula's economy. Approximately 33,719 acres within the Area of Interest are devoted to agriculture, which is about 78 percent of the total area. Over half (57 percent) of this acreage is used as grazing and pasture land. The remaining 43 percent of the area is generally used for growing crops, including avocados, lemons, oranges, other orchard crops and row crops. Figure CO-2 shows the distribution of agriculture throughout the City's Area of Interest. The most important crops to the local economy are avocados, oranges, and lemons, a fact reflected in the official seal of the City of Santa Paula. All three crops have an extremely high value per ton. Avocados in particular stand out, as they had the highest value per acre (\$4,053/acre) of any crop grown in the county in 1996, except strawberries (\$27,852/acre). Approximately 2,972 acres within the planning area are devoted to avocados, about 21 percent of the 14,409 acres given to crop production. Lemons comprise 2,062 acres, or about 14 percent of all planning area crop acreage. Approximately 37 percent of all the land devoted to avocados, lemons, and oranges is under LCA contract.

Most of the land surrounding the current City limits has a long history of agricultural use. Its continued agricultural use is critical to the local economy. As evidence, agriculture is the single largest industry in the City, employing over 15 percent of all job-holding citizens. Since there are few undisturbed agricultural areas remaining in southern California, it is doubtful that the Santa Clara River Valley's agricultural productivity could be replaced elsewhere if it were developed with urban uses. If the existing greenbelt agreement with Fillmore is to be redefined

Figure CO-2 Distribution of Agriculture throughout the City's Area of Interest (GIS Map 5)



- LEGEND**
- ▤ Mixed Crops
  - ▨ Avcados
  - ▧ Oranges
  - ▩ Lemons
  - ░ Pasture Rangeland
  - ▩ Other Crops
  - ▤ Mixed Orchards
  - ░ Others
  - Area of Interest



**Distribution of Agriculture throughout  
the City's Area of Interest**

Figure CO-2

CO-9

CO-9

to accommodate future Sphere of Influence amendments, additional lands not now under the greenbelt should be added as a tradeoff. A suggested addition to the greenbelt is the Santa Paula Canyon area.

**Soils.** The suitability of soils for agricultural use depends on many factors, including fertility, slope, texture, drainage, depth, and salt content. A variety of classification systems have been devised to categorize soil capabilities. The two systems which have been most widely used are the Capability Classification System and the Storie Index. The first system classifies soils from Class I to Class VIII based on their ability to support agriculture. The Storie Index takes into account other factors such as slope and texture to arrive at a rating.

Based on either system, most soils in the Santa Paula area are highly suitable for agriculture, due to their high mineral content, good drainage, and loamy quality. The State of California's Important Farmland Inventory (IFI), which is based in part on the two classification systems described above. According to the IFI (1996), much of the planning area is considered to have prime farmland potential. Soil within the northern portion of the planning area are of the Mocho-Sorrento-Garretson association. These soils are generally located on level to moderate slopes, are very deep, poorly drained loams to silty loams (Soil Conservation Service, 1970).

Within the City of Santa Paula soils are of the Pico-Metz-Anacapa association. Soils of this association are located on level to moderate slopes, are very deep, well-drained sandy loam, and very deep, somewhat excessively drained loamy sands (Soil Conservation Service, 1970).

Along the Santa Clara River soils are of the Riverwash-Sandy alluvial land-Coastal beaches association which tend to be located on level to gentle slopes. These soils are excessively drained to poorly drained, with material consisting of stratified sand, gravel, and cobbles (Soil Conservation Service, 1970). Soils on South Mountain are of the Calleguas-Arnold association. These soils are located on strongly to very steep slopes, are well-drained shaley loams that are shallow over shale or sandstone, and somewhat excessively drained sands that are very deep over sandstones (Soil Conservation Service, 1970).

### **C. Air Quality**

Santa Paula is a small part of the Oxnard Air Basin, which has a limited capacity to absorb and eliminate air contamination. When this capacity is exceeded, air quality deteriorates.

The air quality in Ventura County has improved appreciably since controls were established and enforced over the past 10-12 years. Although easy cleanup measures have been employed to meet the federal and state standards, measures have not been implemented that would affect more people and necessitate lifestyle changes.

The City of Santa Paula has adopted an ordinance to control pollution by transportation control measures that save vehicle miles driven through alternative modes of transportation which will aide in reducing pollution. This ordinance requires employers of 40 or more people to provide information on alternative transportation to work instead of the single occupant vehicle used by most people. An employer of 50-100 workers will have to provide the aforementioned

information plus other more substantial measures, such as reserved vanpool spaces, bike lockers, and showers, etc.

The ordinance further requires residential development projects with 100 or more dwellings to provide improved accessibility for pedestrians and bicyclists. Projects with 500 or more dwellings must provide these features plus they must incorporate, to the greatest extent possible, commercial services such as dry cleaners, child care facilities, markets, etc., to reduce the distance people drive to obtain the services and to allow pedestrians and bicyclists to get to these services.

## **D. Biological Resources**

The natural biological environment of the City has been highly modified, although some parts of the City still retain significant biological resource value. Much of the area available for expansion surrounding the City has not been disturbed by urban development and still supports a diversity of plant and animal life. The canyons and hillsides provide habitats that are distinct from those found in the river valley. The creeks and barrancas that traverse the City lands contribute small partially natural spaces to urbanized neighborhoods.

The greatest threats to the various biological communities are urbanization and other forms of human intrusion. Problems such as pollution, night lighting, noise, fire danger and the introduction of exotic species are the result of urban development. Also, habitats become smaller and less able to support a balanced ecosystem.

Future land use decisions that affect the community's natural environment must recognize the irreplaceable nature of biological resources. The value of these resources is to be given equal weight to other factors being considered in the decision-making process. Goals, policies and implementing measures for protection of biological resources are provided at the end of this element.

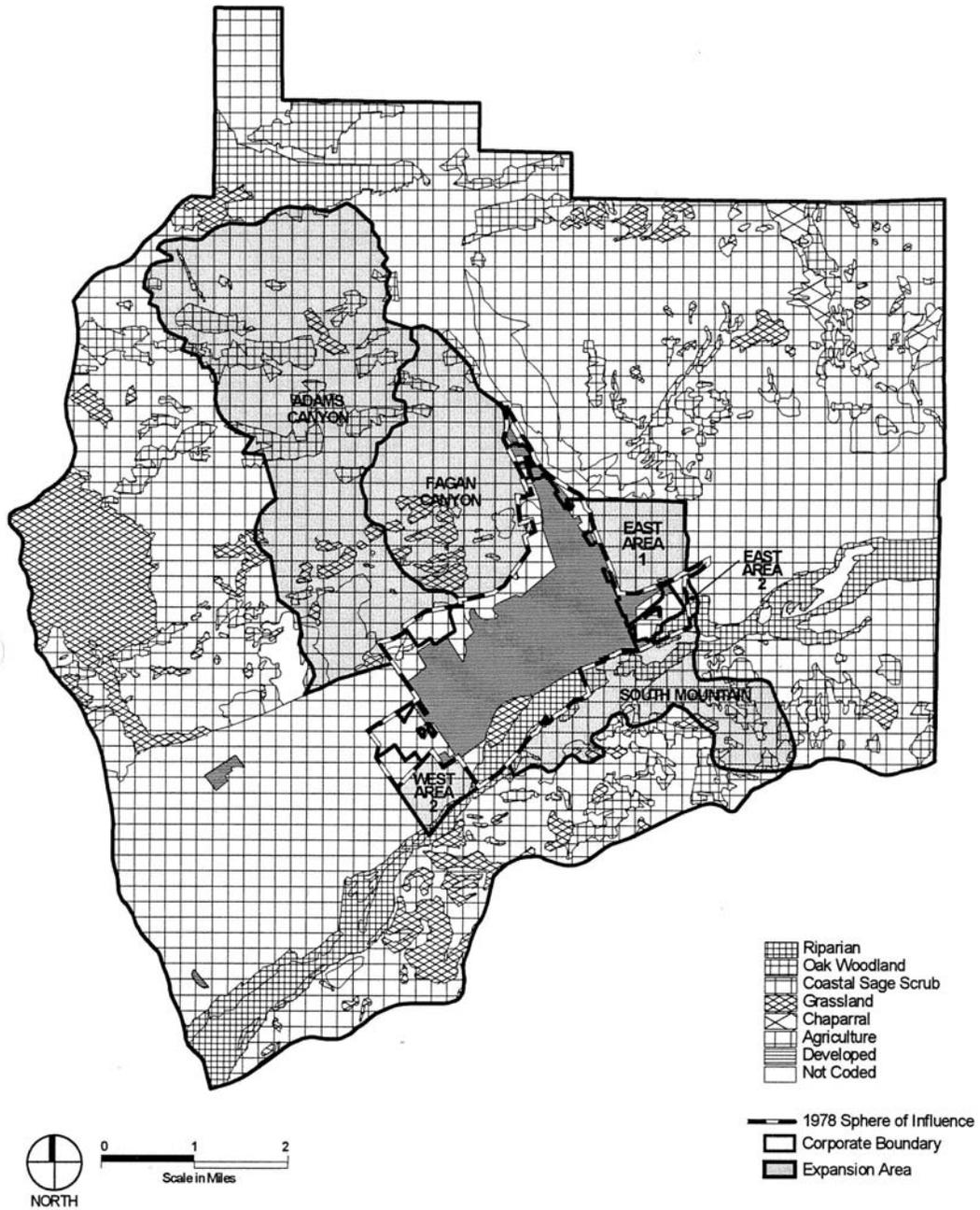
The following is a description of the biological communities and species within the City of Santa Paula Area of Interest which are considered sensitive by recognized monitoring agencies such as the California Department of Fish and Game (CDFG) and the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service (USFWS).

**Habitats.** The vegetation within the planning area can be characterized as agriculture (primarily citrus and avocado), riparian (Santa Clara River, Santa Paula Creek and other large drainages), sage scrub (South Mountain and within canyon areas), oak woodland (scattered patches mostly on north-facing slopes at lower elevations) and grassland (primarily grazed lands). Figure CO-3 shows the distribution of vegetation throughout the Area of Interest.

Sensitive habitats which have been reported or have the potential to occur within the planning area are discussed below. These habitats are considered to be sensitive by the CDFG Natural Diversity Data Base due to their limited extent and potential for loss:

- *Southern willow scrub;*
- *Coast live oak riparian forest;*

Figure CO-3 Vegetation Types (GIS Map 6)



## Vegetation Types

Figure CO-3

CO-12

CO-12

Cottonwood-willow riparian forest; and

- Southern walnut woodland.

Southern willow scrub occurs within most intermittent streams and larger drainages such as Santa Paula Creek and the Santa Clara River in locations which are frequently scoured by flood flows. Coast live oak riparian forest occurs in patches along drainages with deep soils and dependable groundwater. Cottonwood-willow riparian forest occurs within Santa Paula Creek and the Santa Clara River (and possibly other larger drainages) in areas of dependable groundwater and less frequent flood scouring. Southern walnut woodland is limited in the planning area to the north-facing slopes along State Route 150 (SR 150) near Sulfur Springs.

**Wildlife.** The following summary information is intended to indicate the generalized habitat preferences of sensitive species that are likely to occur in the Santa Paula vicinity, where suitable habitat is present. The potential for a species occurrence in the project area was based on discussions with knowledgeable biologists and the *California's Wildlife* series published by the CDFG as part of the California Statewide Wildlife Habitat Relationships System. Specific, focused surveys for sensitive species would be required to verify the presence or absence of these species.

**Table CO-2. Sensitive Wildlife Species Potentially Occurring in the Santa Paula Vicinity**

Common Name	Scientific Name	State Status	Federal Status
Southern steelhead	<i>Oncorhynchus mykiss gairdneri</i>	CSC	FE
Santa Ana sucker <sup>a</sup>	<i>Catostomus santaanae</i>	CSC	None
Arroyo chub <sup>a</sup>	<i>Gila orcutti</i>	CSC	None
Western spadefoot toad	<i>Scaphiopus hammondi</i>	CSC	None
Arroyo southwestern toad	<i>Bufo microscaphus californicus</i>		FE
Southwestern pond turtle	<i>Clemmys marmorata marmorata</i>	CSC	None
California red-legged frog	<i>Rana aurora draytonii</i>	CSC	FT
Coast horned lizard	<i>Phrynosoma coronatum frontale</i> and <i>P. c. blainvillei</i>	CSC	None
Coastal western whiptail	<i>Cnemidophorus tigris multiscutatus</i>	CSC	None
Silvery legless lizard	<i>Aniella pulchra pulchra</i>	CSC	None
Coastal patch-nosed snake	<i>Salvadora hexalepis virgulata</i>	CSC	None
Two-striped garter snake	<i>Thamnophis hammondi</i>	CSC	None
California condor	<i>Gymnogyps californianus</i>	SE	FE
Western least bittern	<i>Ixobrychus exilis hesperis</i>	CSC	None
White-faced ibis	<i>Plegadis chihi</i>	CSC	None
Cooper's hawk	<i>Accipiter cooperi</i>	SE	FE
Sharp-shinned hawk	<i>Accipiter striatus</i>	CSC	None
Golden eagle	<i>Aquila chrysaetos</i>	CSC	None
Bald eagle	<i>Haliaeetus leucocephalus</i>	SE	FE
Osprey	<i>Pandion haliaetus</i>	CSC	None
Ferruginous hawk	<i>Buteo regalis</i>	CSC	None
Swainson's hawk	<i>Buteo swainsoni</i>	ST	None
Northern harrier	<i>Circus cyaneus</i>	CSC	None
White-tailed kite	<i>Elanus caeruleus</i>	CSC	None

Common Name	Scientific Name	State Status	Federal Status
Merlin	<i>Falco columbarius</i>	CSC	None
Prairie falcon	<i>Falco mexicanus</i>	CSC	None
Western yellow-billed cuckoo	<i>Coccyzus americanus occidentalis</i>	ST	None
Long-eared owl	<i>Asio otus</i>	CSC	None
Burrowing owl	<i>Speotyto cunicularia</i>	CSC	None
Southwestern willow flycatcher	<i>Empidonax traillii extimus</i>	SE	FE
Vaux's swift	<i>Chaetura vauxi</i>	CSC	None
California horned lark	<i>Eremophila alpestris actia</i>	CSC	None
Bank swallow	<i>Riparia riparia</i>	ST	None
California coastal gnatcatcher	<i>Polioptila californica californica</i>		FT
Loggerhead shrike	<i>Lanius ludovicianus</i>	CSC	
Least Bell's vireo	<i>Vireo bellii pusillus</i>	SE	FE
Tricolored blackbird	<i>Agelaius tricolor</i>	CSC	None
Southern California rufous-crowned sparrow	<i>Aimophila ruficeps canescens</i>	CSC	None
Bell's sage sparrow	<i>Amphispiza bellii bellii</i>	CSC	None
Yellow warbler	<i>Dendroica petechia brewsteri</i>	CSC	None
Yellow-breasted chat	<i>Icteria virens</i>	CSC	None
Pallid bat	<i>Antrozous pallidus</i>	CSC	None
California mastiff bat	<i>Eumops perotis californicus</i>	CSC	None
Pale big-eared bat	<i>Plecotus townsendii pallescens</i>	CSC	None
San Diego black-tailed jackrabbit	<i>Lepus californicus bennetti</i>	CSC	None
San Diego desert woodrat	<i>Neotoma lepida intermedia</i>	CSC	None
American badger	<i>Taxidea taxus</i>	*	None
Mountain lion	<i>Felis concolor</i>	*	None

<sup>a</sup> Introduced to Santa Clara River drainage.

CSC = California Species of Special Concern

\* = Taxa that are biologically rare, very restricted in distribution, declining throughout their range.

SE = State Endangered, ST = State Threatened

FE = Federally Endangered, FT = Federally Threatened

Source: California Department of Fish and Game, August 1994; April 1997; Reed Smith, Ventura Audubon Society, personal communication, September 17, 1997.

Southern steelhead, a federally endangered species, are known to migrate up the Santa Clara River to spawn in Sespe Creek, north of the planning area. Santa Paula Creek historically supported a run of southern steelhead, but the channelization of lower Santa Paula Creek and loss of the fish ladder at the Santa Paula diversion site has resulted in the loss of this run. However, about 10 miles of good spawning and rearing habitat is reported to still exist upstream of the diversion dam that could potentially still be used (McEwan and Jackson, February 1996).

Other sensitive fishes found in the Santa Clara River include the arroyo chub, which is present throughout the Santa Clara River system, and the Santa Ana sucker, which is limited to the portion of the River upstream of Santa Paula. Both of these species are considered to have been introduced to the Santa Clara River system.

Several sensitive amphibian species have the potential to occur in the Santa Paula area including the western spadefoot toad, arroyo southwestern toad (a federally endangered species), and the California red-legged frog. The California red-legged frog was recently listed as threatened by the US Fish and Wildlife Service due to loss of habitat and the introduction of competitors and predators. Suitable red-legged frog habitat is generally limited to those portions of the Santa Clara River and Santa Paula Creek with dense, shrubby or emergent riparian vegetation closely associated with deep still or slow-moving water. Adult frogs become inactive during the summer (estivate) when stream flows halt or the creeks dry up. Estivation habitat includes any landscape feature that provides cover and moisture during the dry season within 300 feet of the riparian habitat, including natural riparian corridors, boulders, rocks, downed trees, thick leaf litter, and agricultural features, such as drains, watering troughs, and spring boxes.

The southwestern pond turtle is an aquatic reptile that is expected to occur in vegetated, shallow pools within the Santa Clara River and possibly Santa Paula Creek. Other sensitive reptiles include the coast horned lizard, which may be found in open areas with sandy, loose soil and abundant ant prey. Horned lizards are typically found most commonly along drainages and washes. The silvery legless lizard is generally found in areas with loose organic soils or sand, especially where there is abundant leaf litter, such as under oak trees (Zeiner et. al. 1988).

Many birds-of-prey (raptors) have experienced population declines because of the loss of suitable nesting habitat (large trees) that are undisturbed by human activity. Because of the loss of such habitat and notable decreases in population levels, many hawks are listed as sensitive species by the California Department of Fish and Game. The sharp-shinned hawk and northern harrier may forage within the planning area during the winter and during migration, but are not known to nest in Ventura County.

The loggerhead shrike is a small, predatory bird that prefers open habitats with scattered shrubs, trees and fences for use as perches (Zeiner et. al. 1990a). This species primarily feeds on large insects generally found in grasslands such as grasshoppers. Loss of grasslands and natural perches have resulted in the concentration of loggerhead shrikes along fencelines. Sixteen of 27 pairs of loggerhead shrikes banded, nested within 10 meters of a fenceline (Yosef 1994). This species is expected to be found in the planning area in grasslands and open scrub in the vicinity of fencelines.

The loss of riparian habitats due to channelization for flood control, diversion of water, and conversion to other uses has caused significant declines in the populations of small perching birds that are dependent on this type of habitat for breeding and foraging. The yellow warbler and yellow-breasted chat generally breed in riparian thickets such as southern willow scrub and cottonwood-willow riparian forest. These species have been reported breeding along the Santa Clara River upstream of Santa Paula. These species may also breed within Santa Paula Creek, upper Orcutt Canyon and other larger drainages.

Least Bell's vireo breeds on the Santa Clara River, maintaining about 15 to 20 breeding pairs. Recent trapping of Least Bell's vireo brood parasites (brown-headed cowbirds) has resulted in an increase in local population levels. This species occurs in three populations within the

planning area: the vicinities of Saticoy, Briggs Road, and Timber Canyon Road (Sweetwater Environmental Biologists, Inc. 1992). However, Least Bell's vireo could be found anywhere along the larger rivers and streams of the Santa Paula Area of Interest.

The conversion of open grasslands throughout southern California has led to a decrease in the population of the animals closely associated with this habitat. The San Diego black-tailed jackrabbit prefers open shrub and tree habitats with abundant grasses and forbs (Zeiner et. al. 1990b). This species is expected to occur within the planning area in dense grassy and brushy areas in the vicinity of South Mountain and north of Santa Paula.

## E. Cultural and Historical Resources

Lands throughout the City and the surrounding Area of Interest contain a wide variety of resources which are significant in the area's local history, regional architecture, archaeology, and culture. The resources considered significant usually meet the following criteria:

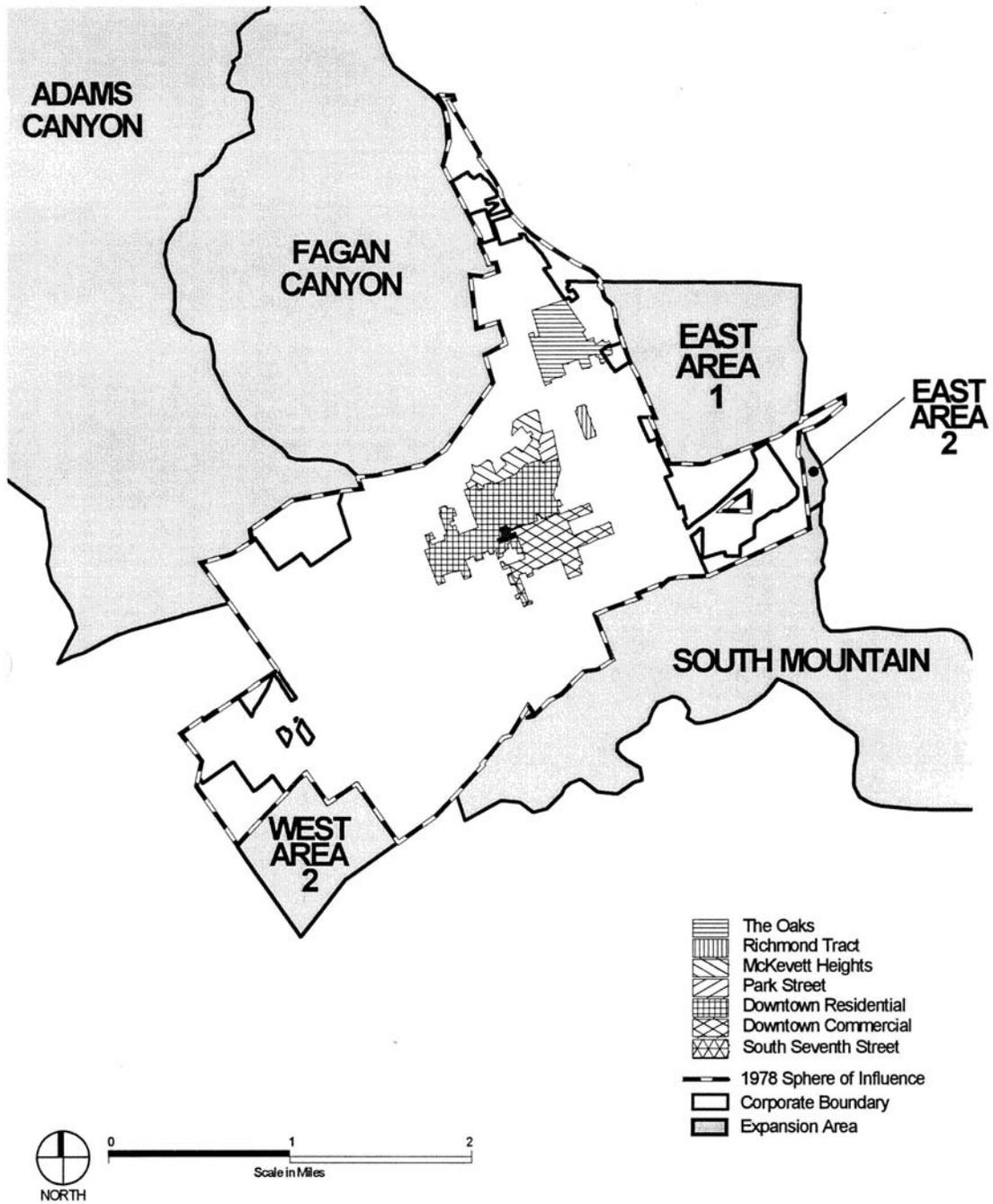
- *The resource is associated with events that made a significant contribution to the broad patterns of our history; or*
- *The resources are associated with the lives of persons significant in our past; or*
- *The resources embody the distinct characteristics of a type, period or method of construction, or represent the work of a master, or possess high artistic values, or represent a significant distinguishable entity; or*
- *The resources have yielded or may likely yield information on history or prehistory.*

Future land use decisions which affect the community's heritage must recognize the irreplaceable nature of cultural resources. The value of these resources are to be given equal weight to other factors being considered in the decision-making process. Goals, policies and implementing measures for protection of cultural resources are provided at the end of this element. The following text describes the context of the City's history and some of the known cultural resources in the Santa Paula area. A detailed discussion of the City's history, historic resources, and prehistoric/archaeologic resources are found in **Appendix A**.

**History.** This section describes the existing historic resources in the City of Santa Paula's Area of Interest. This information is based on a report prepared during July and August 1994, by San Buenaventura Research Associates. Maps illustrating potentially significant groupings of historic properties and representing potential historic districts within the City limits are illustrated in Figure CO-4.

The land on which the City of Santa Paula is located was originally a portion of the 17,773-acre Rancho Santa Paula y Saticoy, granted to Manuel Jimeno Casarin in 1843. The ranch was purchased during the 1850's and utilized to raise sheep and cattle until the disastrous droughts of the late 1850's. In 1861, approximately 15,000 acres of the ranch was purchased and a 160-acre orchard was planted. The ranch was subdivided into 150 acre parcels in 1867 and these parcels were sold primarily to emigrating farmers. In 1872, approximately 2,700 acres of Rancho Santa Paula y Saticoy was purchased by Blanchard and Bradley, and three years later the townsite of Santa Paula was recorded on a portion of it. Blanchard was generally

Figure CO-4. Potential historic districts (GIS Map 19).



Potential Historic Districts

Figure CO-4

CO-17

CO-17

considered the founder of Santa Paula. The Santa Paula townsite was surveyed in 1873 and recorded by Blanchard and Bradley in 1875. Blanchard planted seedling orange trees in 1874, and during the late 1880's, constructed the first packing house, located adjacent to the railroad.

In addition to the development of agriculture, oil exploration was occurring in portions of the Santa Clara Valley as early as the 1860's. Some of the first oil explorations in the Santa Paula area occurred in Adams Canyon and Sulphur Mountain. Representatives of the Pennsylvania Railroad arrived in Ventura in 1867 with the intent of purchasing land for this purpose. By the early 1880's, Santa Paula had become the base of operations for Pennsylvania oil developers Wallace L. Hardison and Lyman Stewart who established the Hardison and Stewart Oil Company offices in 1886. In 1890 several small oil companies owned by Hardison, Stewart and Bard joined forces to become the Union Oil Company.

In 1887, the Southern Pacific railroad arrived in the Santa Clara Valley, and soon after citrus cooperatives, packing houses and warehouses were established within the City. Rapid growth of the community followed the establishment of viable oil and agriculture industries, culminating in the incorporation of the city in 1902. The growing profitability of these industries produced Santa Paula's third building wave, the expansive era of the 1920's in which numerous new buildings and residential tracts were built or remodeled.

The Great Depression of the 1930's curtailed economic growth nationwide, resulting in substantially reduced levels of development in Santa Paula, however, the region's robust agricultural industries drew large numbers of immigrants. During the 1950's and 1960's, a new surge of residential development occurred. The construction of the Santa Paula Freeway during the early 1960's linked the city to the west county, bringing its relative isolation to an end.

**Historic Resources Located Within the 1998 City Corporate Boundary.** These resources include farmsteads and historic commercial and residential land uses in the original urban subdivisions. All of these subdivisions were platted in the typical frontier gridiron plan, with the rectangular blocks divided into standard lots, and the blocks bisected by alleyways. The specific historic resources are listed in **Appendix B**.

The development of Santa Paula's historic downtown followed the traditional, pre-World War II pattern, with narrow lots, rear alleyways and one- and two-story buildings with three-part facades constructed adjacent to the front property lines. Although the original developments have been somewhat modified, buildings retain important scale elements and provide visual clues to the original building materials and architectural intent. The Downtown Commercial area contains historic resources including commercial buildings, churches, fraternal halls, clubhouses, railroad and industrial buildings. The Downtown Residential area of historic resources sensitivity represents the best preserved sections of residential development. Historic resources include the lot pattern, period residences, sheds/garages on alleys, street furniture, parkways, streetlights, stone curbs, sidewalks and mature landscape features, such as street trees. A small portion of the Downtown Residential area has been designated as the City's only historic district.

Of particular historic importance are the residential areas known as the McKeveatt Heights tract and the Oaks subdivision. The McKeveatt Heights tract of the 1920's is distinguished from the

Downtown Residential area by virtue of its elevation, curvilinear street pattern, and architectural character. The architectural styles represented here are primarily late California Bungalows and Period Revivals. The residential subdivision known as The Oaks, developed during the mid-1920's, is characterized by narrow, irregular streets, mature oak trees, river rock walls and generously sized lots.

**Historic Resources Outside the 1998 City Corporate Boundary.** Numerous historic resources related to settlement and growth exist on the lands outside the City's 1998 corporate boundaries. These resources are briefly discussed by geographic area below and are listed in **Appendix B**. The historic resources presently known to exist within each geographic area should be regarded as only a representative sample. A significant number of additional resources representing historical themes related to early water development, homesteading, agriculture, and, in some cases, oil exploration would probably be discovered in site-specific surveys.

Santa Paula Canyon. Portions of Santa Paula Canyon were originally used as agricultural outpost for the Mission during the late 1700's and early 1800's as two nearby Chumash villages provided the labor supply for dry grain farming and stock raising. During the 1860's a growing interest in Sulphur Mountain oil brought the first petroleum prospectors into the canyon who purchased the portions of the land. The completion of the Public Lands Survey opened government-owned land along the east side of the canyon for homesteading. Ferndale Ranch, located on the east side of Santa Paula Creek near the northern end of the canyon, was acquired by a Los Angeles oil industrialist who had a house constructed there during the 1920's. The ranch was donated to the Catholic Church, and it is now the location of the Thomas Aquinas College campus. Likely oil-related resources existing in the area include residences, utility buildings, tunnels, bridges, tanks and oil producing equipment.

Santa Clara River Valley-East Area 1 and 2. Located between Rancho Santa Paula y Saticoy on the west and Rancho Sespe on the east, this area, sometimes referred to as the Santa Clara District, was opened for homesteading, with the first settlers arriving in the late 1860's. The earliest crops were corn and wheat, followed by fruit trees and watermelons. Beekeeping and sheep raising were also practiced during this period. This area is dominated primarily by the 326-acre Teague-McKevett citrus and avocado ranch located primarily on the north side of State Route 126 (SR 126). The ranch contains numerous buildings including residences, barns, sheds and a packing house. The ranch's significance is tied to its associations with C.C. Teague who has been referred to as the "father of co-operative marketing" of citrus products.

Santa Clara River Valley-West Area 2. This historically agricultural area was first settled in 1867. Some of the Santa Clara Valley's most significant farmhouses in terms of age, architectural styles and historical importance are located along Telegraph Road. In addition, these farmhouses have also maintained their historic agricultural setting. Buildings that remain include ranch residences, barns, foreman residences, worker housing, and other agriculture-related buildings.

Adams Canyon. Historically part of Rancho Ex-Mission San Buenaventura, Adams Canyon was primarily developed by the oil industry. The first oil tunnels were drilled into the hillsides in the early 1860's, with later tunnels dug by Union Oil Company during the early

1890's. Many of these tunnels exist today and are significant for their distinctive method of oil extraction (Pederson, 1990: 9-11). In addition, a number of other oil-related structures such as sheds, derricks, tanks, worker residences and other structures and objects may also remain. The canyon has also been home to ranchers and farmers co-existing with the oil interests.

Fagan Canyon. Historically this canyon was part of Rancho Ex-Mission San Buenaventura. Agriculture has been the principal historic use of the canyon. A small number of residences, barns, and sheds related to the historic agricultural uses of the canyon are known to exist, but could not be inventoried due to lack of access.

**Prehistoric/Archaeological Resources.** The City of Santa Paula lies within the historic territory of the Native American group known as the Chumash. The Ventureño were the southernmost Chumash group, occupying most of the area of present day Ventura County, including the Santa Paula area and the southwest corner of Los Angeles County. In the Santa Paula region areas of high archaeological sensitivity include the terrace areas abutting the Santa Clara River and lands adjacent to drainage areas. Nearly all the inhabited or inhabitable areas near the City are highly sensitive, indicating that cultural resources are likely to be found. However, site-specific surveys would be required to determine the presence of such resources.

Twenty-one surveys and/or excavations have been conducted in the City's Area of Interest. Several prehistoric sites have been identified by these surveys, most of which are located near one of the many water resources in the area. However, the specific locations of these sites are not included in this report in order to protect these resources. Qualified archaeologists and historians may view the site records, which are on file with the City of Santa Paula.

## **F. Energy Conservation**

Traditional sources of energy, electric and natural gas, are imported to the City of Santa Paula. Coal deposits, refineries, and processing facilities are not available in this area of Ventura County. Southern California Gas (SCG) provides natural gas services to the City of Santa Paula. Electrical energy is provided to Santa Paula by Southern California Edison (SCE).

Local energy resources are not available in Santa Paula, with the exception of six petroleum resource areas within the Santa Paula Area of Interest. Local petroleum production has reduced steadily in recent years. The oil produced in Santa Paula is classified as a "dirty oil" (thick, with a high sulphur content) which is expensive to refine and transport. Since no refining facilities operate locally, this type of oil must be transported to Los Angeles, Bakersfield, or Texas for refining activities.

## **G. Mineral Resources**

The City's policies for mineral resources are designed to ensure that adequate extraction sites are available while not adversely affecting other land uses. Maintenance and wise use of mineral resources is an integral part of the land use planning and conservation efforts supported by the General Plan and considered in future decision making processes. The Santa Paula area contains significant aggregate and oil resources. This section describes these resources.

**Sand and Gravel.** Most of the aggregate (sand and gravel) is extracted from Santa Paula Creek and the Santa Clara River. The rock is transported from the mountains down the streams by the hydraulic force of storm water runoff. This resource is in demand because much of the rock meets the criteria for Caltrans highway standards. These minerals are used for highways, bridges, parking lots and concrete buildings. Because of its bulk, aggregate material cannot be transported long distances cost-effectively. Consequently, most of the locally-mined aggregate is used in the general Ventura County area.

Mining the river for rock is also important to flood control efforts. The Ventura County Flood Control District controls the amount removed to keep the Santa Clara River bottom at the optimum gradient. Figure CO-5 shows the distribution of mineral resources in the planning area. Rock from Santa Paula Creek will be available in the future from flood control maintenance after improvements are complete.

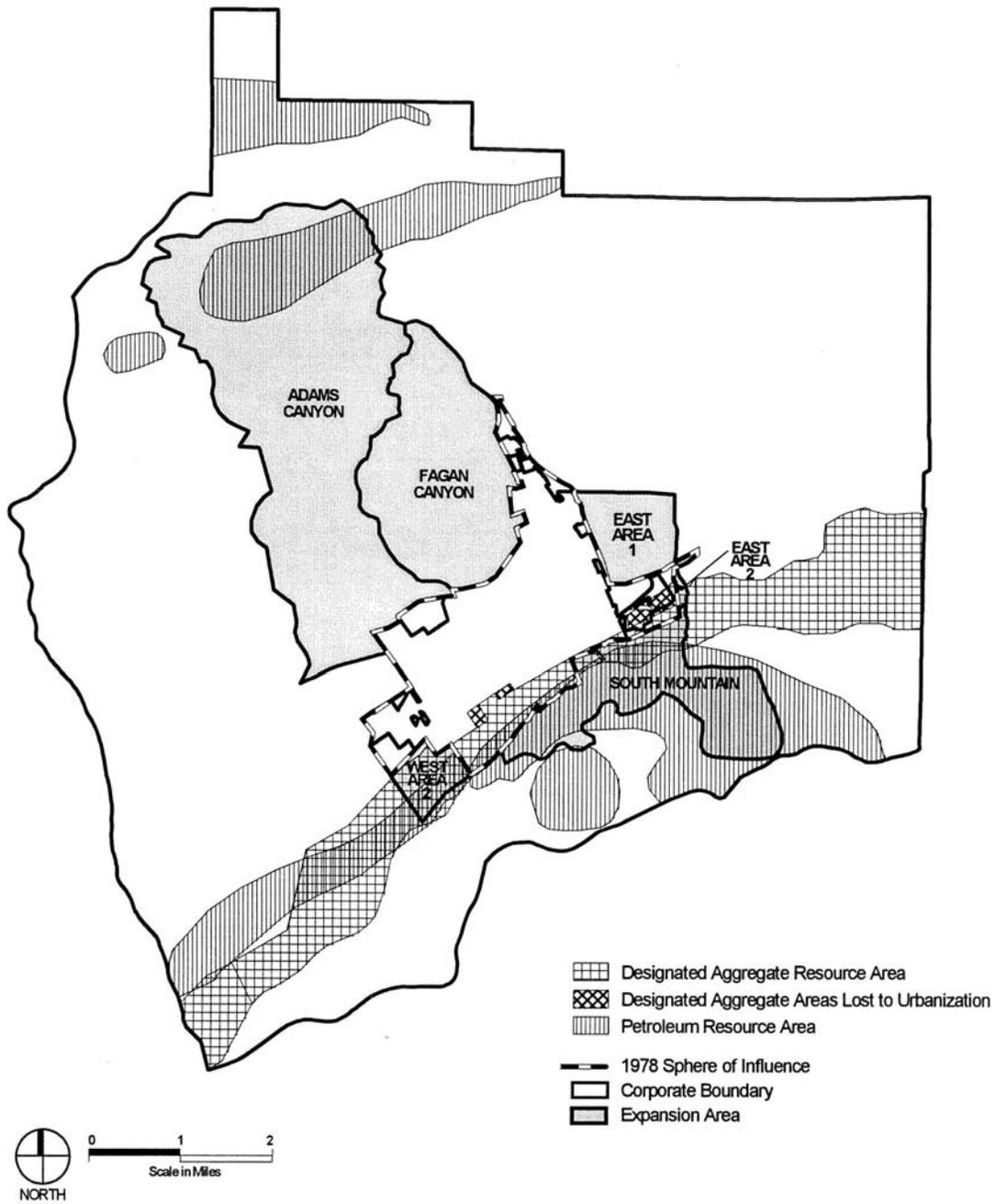
**Petroleum.** The Santa Paula area supports one of the oldest oil fields in California. The Union Oil Company (now Unocal), which was founded in Santa Paula in 1890, combined several of the earliest oil operations in the state. Locally, oil is found in certain geologic strata common to the area. The hills and mountains surrounding the planning area support significant oil resources. Sulphur Mountain and South Mountain have been historically important sites for oil extraction. The hills, mountains and some valleys are dotted by oil wells, many of which can be seen from the air. The south face of Sulphur Mountain has soils that ooze oil. There is also a sulphur spring near SR 150 at the confluence of Santa Paula and Sisar Creeks.

Local petroleum production has declined steadily in recent years. Part of the reason is that locally produced oil is very thick with a high sulfur content. In the industry, it is called "dirty oil" and is costly to transport and refine. Air pollution restrictions make it too costly to refine locally so oil is transported to Los Angeles, Bakersfield or even Texas for refining. Nevertheless, the oil industry still plays an important role in the local economy. This role could increase if, for instance, foreign supplies were cut, as they were on several occasions within the last 25 years.

The City has received copies of the 1993 Update of Mineral Land Classification of Portland Cement Concrete Aggregate in Ventura County. Included in this report are the Designated Aggregated Resource Sectors. The Santa Clara River south of the City is shown on Sector E and other Mineral Resource Zones (MRZs) are shown on a Generalized Land Classification Map.

Land uses considered to be compatible with mining may include very low density residential, geographically extensive but low impact industrial, recreational, agriculture, grazing, and open space. Land uses inherently incompatible with mining may include high density residential, low density residential with high unit value, public facilities, intensive industrial, and general commercial uses.

This element recommends the use of a special purpose overlay zone, Mineral Resources, to identify the presence of known mineral deposits and restrict the encroachment of incompatible land uses in those areas that are to be conserved.



Distribution of Mineral Resources

Figure CO-5

CO-22

CO-22

## H. Water Resources - Watershed/Rivers, Water Supply, Flood Plains

The mountains surrounding Santa Paula and the Santa Clara River provide a large watershed area that contributes water for urban and agricultural uses, as well as habitat and scenic qualities. In addition to the river that runs along the southern City boundary, several major and minor drainages run out of the hills and through the urbanized City lands. The City depends on this watershed for a dependable supply of potable water for household, business and fire-fighting purposes. The watershed is a naturally defined planning area, and is part of an adjudicated basin.

Significant flood hazards are posed by the drainages that pass by and through the urbanized City lands. Major flooding results from high intensity rainfall that produces heavy run-off in a short period of time. Often flood waters collect channel debris which clog the streams and obstruct the flood flows. The potential for flooding affects both developed properties in the City and undeveloped lands in the City's expansion areas. Capital improvement projects and flood proofing have been done but more projects need to be undertaken to protect existing development. Undeveloped lands that are flood prone must be addressed with appropriate land uses and the requirement for adequate protection and drainage facilities.

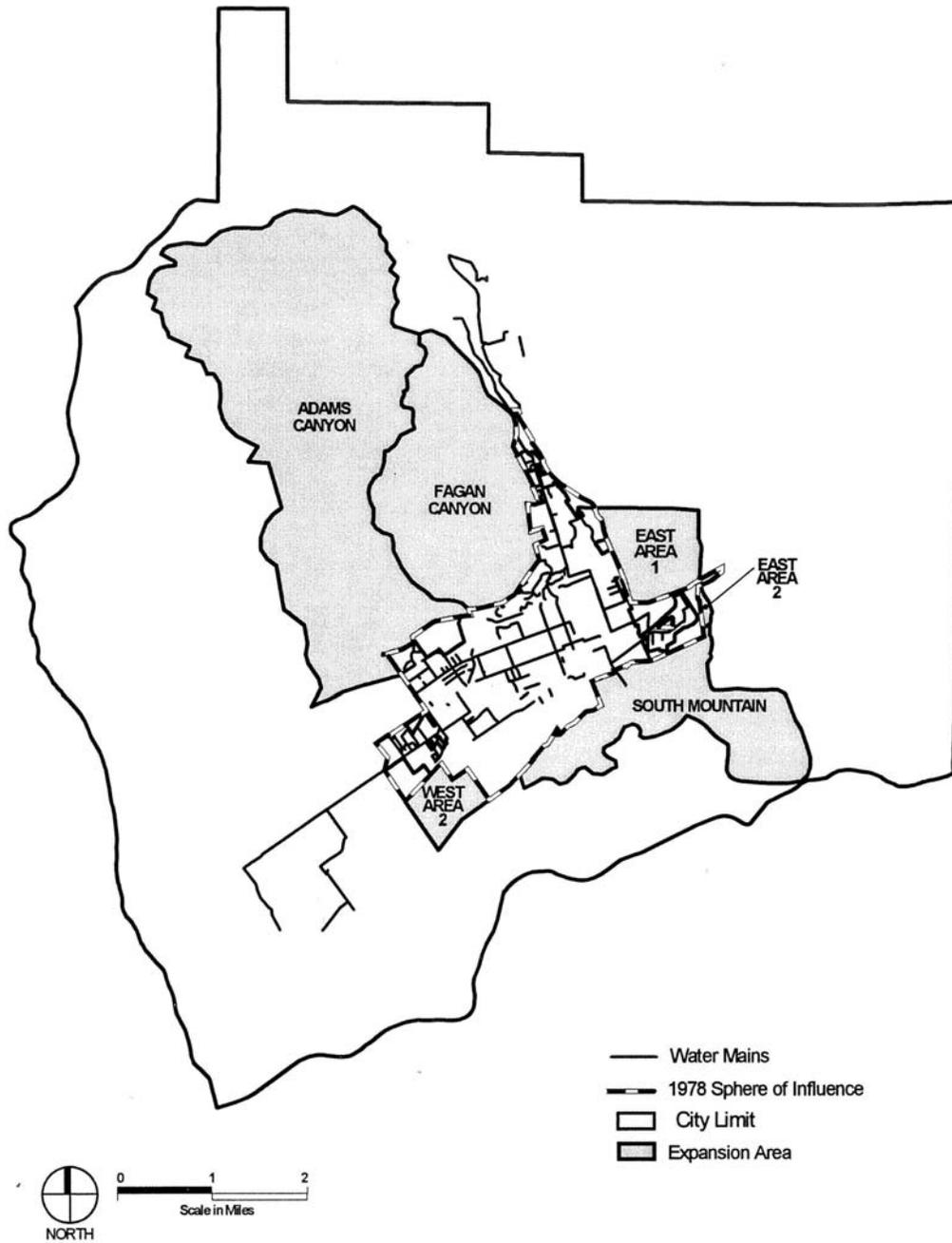
Future land use decisions that affect the community's water-related resources must recognize the unreliable nature of water resources. The value of these resources is to be given equal weight to other factors being considered in the decision making process. Goals, policies and implementing measures for water resource protection are provided at the end of this element. The following text describes the context of the water-related resources in the Santa Paula area.

**Watershed/Rivers.** The Santa Clara River is 100 miles long and its watershed is vast. The City of Santa Paula's planning area lies entirely within the Santa Clara River watershed, whose main channel passes through the City on its southern flank. Local tributary drainages include Santa Paula Creek, Haun Creek, Timber Creek, Adams Barranca, Fagan Barranca, Todd Barranca, and Haines Barranca.

**Water Supply.** The Santa Paula Groundwater Basin is a major natural resource. The basin lies north of the Oak Ridge Fault which is just to the south of the city. The Basin contains a huge amount of water. However, in some areas the groundwater is some distance below the surface and can be costly to reach. The quality of the water in the basin is a matter of concern because of its high mineral content. The Santa Paula Basin is one of a series of interconnected ground water basins underlying the Santa Clara River Valley. Although the basin is estimated to hold 15 million acre-feet of water (1 acre-foot = 325,850 gallons), the users of this basin are collectively contributing to its potential overdraft. Figure CO-6 shows the extent of the water distribution system within the planning area.

The City of Santa Paula, provides water for residential and businesses in the City and the surrounding area. Several water tanks are located at various elevations on the hills above the City. Water is piped into the tanks from wells and then supplied to the public by gravity flow out of the tanks. During warm periods, water is used from the tanks faster than it can be replenished. During prolonged heat waves, the potential for temporary shortages exists. With

Figure CO-6 Water system (GIS Map 7)



Water Distribution System

Figure CO-6

CO-24

CO-24

no water pressure, the risk of introducing contaminants into the system increases, and fire-fighting becomes difficult or impossible.

It is currently estimated that storage capacity does not fully meet the City's current needs. Additional capacity will soon be added in the form of new tanks or more wells. The City is working on developing the new capacity by drilling wells to replace wells that were lost due to age or poor water quality. The last well drilled in 1992, which is in the Lemonwood Industrial Park (Well 12) and near the river, did not meet State water quality standards and could be used for drinking water only after a plant for the removal of manganese was constructed. Since then, Wells 13 and 14 have been drilled near Fagan Barranca, and will also require manganese removal. A central plant will be built in 1998.

Although no short-term supply shortages are anticipated to meet current demand, there are significant problems associated with over-drafting the basin. Over-draft, or "mining" occurs when water is being extracted faster than it can be replenished. In the long term, this condition would result in the draining of the aquifer. However, other serious problems could occur in the interim. Sea water intrusion is already occurring in the Oxnard area, as dropping ground water levels allow the ocean water to flow inland underground. Ground subsidence may occur as the porous ground structure collapses due to the lack of support that the water had provided. This does not preclude reasonable development and growth in the City. Projects that include water conservation measures and, in some cases, use reclaimed water will allow Santa Paula to grow into the foreseeable future. Drought-tolerant landscaping and low-flow toilets are only two examples of how new development can minimize future water consumption. Finally, in some cases, urban development uses less water than the agriculture it replaces.

Some existing wells are very old; thus, new wells will be needed in the future to replace other failed wells and to service additional growth. Engineers have studied the question of the best location geologically to locate a new well that will produce the best quality water. A well field near Fagan Barranca is being developed. Manganese is the only mineral present that does not meet drinking water standards.

The City calculated that approximately 8,600 acre feet per year (AFY) of water will be needed to serve future growth within the current City boundaries and in the expansion areas recommended in the Land Use Element. Local water resources are presently in place or can be implemented with minimal regulatory risk or legal barriers. These future water supply resources include the following:

Existing Adjudicated Ground Water Rights	6,085 AFY
Santa Paula Creek Surface Rights Transfer (potential)	500 AFY
Water Rights Transfer after Agricultural Land Converted to Urban Use (potential)	3,000 AFY
State Water (potential)	<u>2,000 AFY</u>
<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>11,585 AFY</b>

There is also an estimated 2,500 to 3,000 AFY of reclaimed wastewater, which could be used for irrigating parks, golf courses, and other open lands.

This element provides policies for locating new water wells, requiring adequate water quality for existing City residents and businesses, and for water conservation. Policies also address the provision of adequate water supply for new development consistent with the Land Use Element.

**Flood Plains.** Santa Paula is very susceptible to flood hazards because it is located at the confluence of two uncontrolled waterways. Approximately half of the City is located in the 100-year floodplain of Santa Paula Creek.. This floodplain will be drastically reduced with the implementation of improvements to Santa Paula Creek. Other areas are in the floodplain of the Santa Clara River, Fagan Barranca and Adams Barranca. The Safety Element illustrates the floodplain areas.

The "100-year flood" means that in any given year, there is a 1 percent chance that a flood of that magnitude may occur. A storm event may result in a "100-year flood" at certain areas within the identified floodplain but not in others. High-intensity short-duration storms will have the tendencies to overburden local storm drains, while low-intensity storms that last longer are more likely to induce flooding on creeks and rivers. The flood map simply identifies all the areas that are susceptible to 100-year flood events of all types.

Several areas have been identified that are in need of flood control improvements in and near the City. These include the length of Santa Paula Creek, as well as significant portions of Adams Barranca, Fagan Barranca, Todd Lane, and Peck Road Drain. Bank protection is also required along portions of the Santa Clara River. The Adams Barranca and Todd Lane drainage needs could be affected by future development in Adams Canyon and the industrial area of the City. If an appropriate flood retention basin is constructed in Adams Canyon, the need for improvements on Adams Barranca below Telegraph Road may be reduced. Development in Fagan Canyon may have a similar affect on the Fagan Barranca project needs.

Although, the floodplain on Santa Paula Creek and the barrancas may be significantly altered through flood control improvements, this is not likely on the Santa Clara River. Thus, future development south of the river should be viewed with this in mind.

The City of Santa Paula does not have a master plan of storm drains. Instead, a number of regional studies have been done to develop solutions to known problems. Several localized areas of recurring flood problems are found in Santa Paula, including Harvard Boulevard at Warren Avenue, and Twelfth Street above the railroad tracks. The City has planned projects to improve these deficiencies.

Santa Paula has the highest number of properties on the federal flood insurance program in the county. Approximately 1,500 properties are paying \$400 or more each year for flood insurance. Most of the area is classified as shallow flooding where the risks are fairly low, but the insurance burden is a major concern. A project on Santa Paula Creek will save a million dollars or more each year in flood insurance premiums alone.

The portions of town that are already developed or partially developed in the floodplain are not prohibited from expanding further. The City has an ordinance regulating building in the flood areas. It requires that various flood protection measures be taken during construction. The

most significant is the requirement to build structures at elevations above the flood level. In most cases, this is just a foot or two above ground. Many projects have proceeded under these regulations in the past 13 years.

Land development projects can have a major affect on flood problems, either positive or negative. Properly designed projects can solve existing problems to the benefit of the general public. Poorly designed projects, on the other hand, can cause new problems where there were none. Some flood control projects can be constructed in conjunction with land development to the benefit of the general public.

The floodplains of the Adams Barranca, Fagan Barranca, and even Santa Paula Creek may someday be eliminated. Thus, in the long run these streams may not have an impact on the selection of land uses to be allowed along their banks. The floodplain of the Santa Clara River, on the other hand, is likely to be with us always; therefore, land uses below the freeway must be addressed with ongoing flooding concerns in mind. Open space designations for floodway areas along the river side of the flood protection and levy area would provide a transition out of the riverbed into the urban area. A multi-agency study is now under way to create a management and enhancement plan for the river. In all likelihood, the results of the study will determine how the riverbank and fringe areas may be developed.

Flooding from a dam failure is also a possibility in Santa Paula. Santa Paula suffered one of the country's greatest manmade disasters when the Saint Francis Dam collapsed in March 1928. The City suffered the most damage of any community in the Santa Clara River Valley, with structures damaged or destroyed and lives lost as far northward as Santa Paula High School. Today, there are four large dams upstream of Santa Paula, some larger than the Saint Francis. Should one of the large dams fail suddenly, the City would have less than two hours warning in which time two-thirds to three-quarters of the population must be evacuated. The high water mark would extend up Santa Paula Canyon into the Oaks area. It would then pass around the base of the hill above the intersection of Tenth Street and Virginia Terrace and extend westward, passing through the high school campus. Figure S-4 in the Safety Element shows the extent of inundation if any of these dams were to fail. The likelihood of such a failure is extremely low.

## **I. Scenic Resources**

The aesthetic qualities of the City of Santa Paula vary as widely as the topography and the built environment. The proximity of the distinct land forms from the mountains to the river valley, the lush agricultural fields that border the City and the historic downtown buildings provide an exceptional scenic environment.

It is important to conserve both natural and developed land areas and that are high in scenic value. This element serves not only to identify these resources, but also to recommend policies that will conserve and enhance the resources for future generations.

### **Inventory of Natural Scenic Resources.**

- *Santa Clara River*

- *Santa Paula Creek*
- *Adams Canyon*
- *Fagan Canyon*
- *Santa Paula Canyon*
- *Barrancas*
- *Mountains to the north and south*
- *Hillsides to the east*
- *Agricultural lands*

#### **Inventory of Developed/Man Made Scenic Resources.**

- *State Route 126 (eligible state scenic highway)*
- *State Route 150 (eligible state scenic highway)*
- *City scenic routes: Foothill Road, Highways 126 and 150, Twelfth Street south of the Highway*
- *Historic districts*
- *In-town scenic drive*
- *Open space of agricultural lands*
- *Open space of city parks*
- *Views of the town from the hillsides*

### **J. Parks and Recreational Resources**

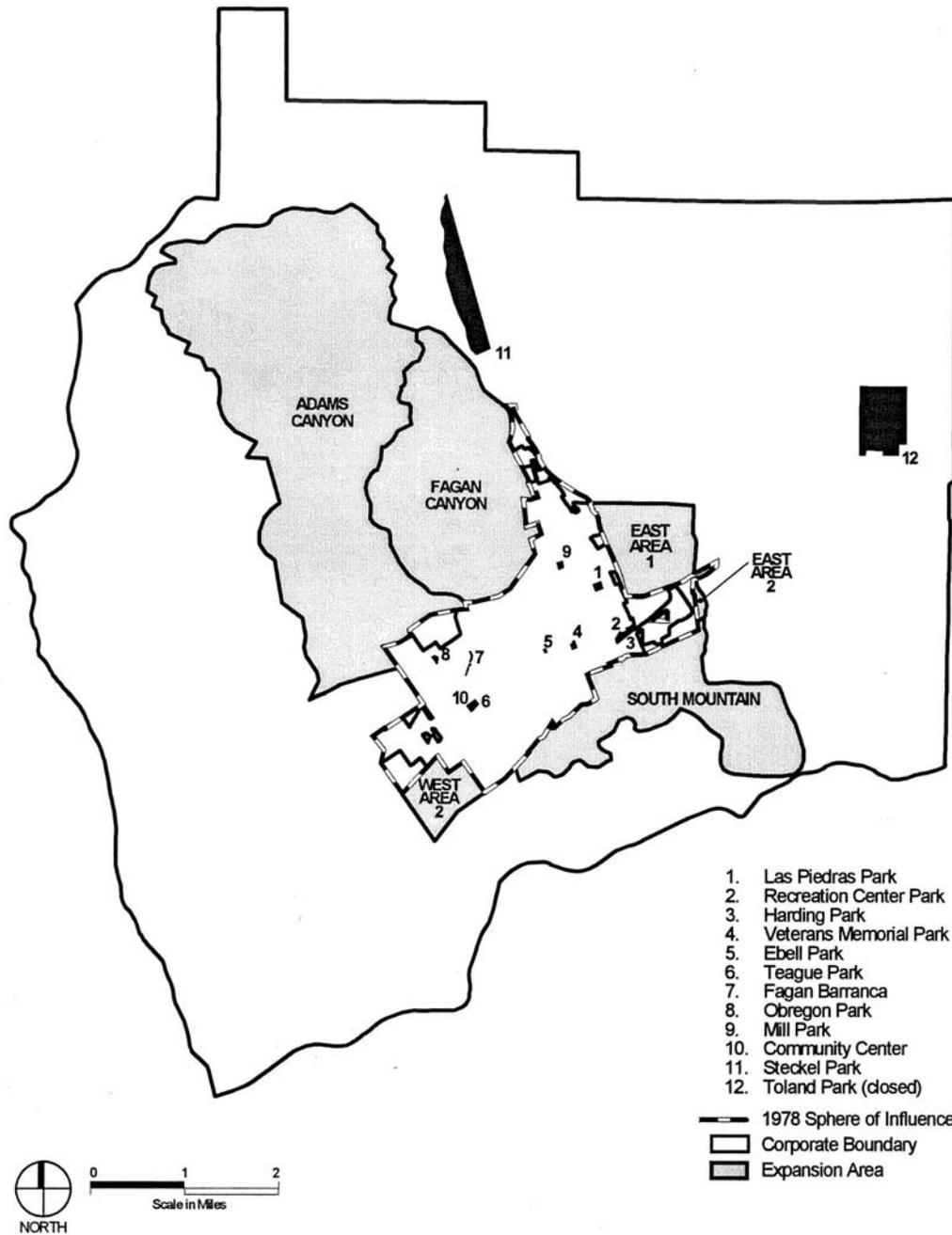
Due to the city's concern of providing sufficient parkland for residents and the open space role that parks play within the community, parks are considered an important resource to be conserved, enhanced and expanded. It is the City's goal to provide a variety of park experiences including those for intense recreational activity, community activities and passive open space enjoyment. This element serves not only to identify park and recreation resources, but also to recommend policies that will conserve and enhance the resources for future generations.

**City Sponsored Resources.** The City's recreational system is composed of an array of parks, special recreation facilities, and community-wide activities. In addition to a Community Center and a Boys and Girls Club, there are nine public parks in the City (see Figure CO-7). George Harding Park is the largest at 13 acres, and includes picnic tables, playground equipment, and lighted fields. Most of the other parks range in size between 1 and 6 acres, and would be considered neighborhood or community facilities.

The local schools also serve as recreational facilities. Santa Paula High School has lighted tennis courts, a swimming pool, lighted soccer and softball fields, and indoor basketball courts. Most of the schools in the City have outdoor basketball courts and playing fields.

In addition, through City programs there are structured leagues for various youth and adult sports throughout the year. The Santa Paula Community Center is used for instructional classes and other activities. The facility is also available to local civic groups and residents on a rental basis to hold planned meetings, dinners and receptions. Additionally, the Boys and Girls Club

is used for recreational programs and community meetings.  
 CO-7 City Parks (GIS Map 18)



**Parks and Community Centers**

**Figure CO-7**

CO-29

**Linear Recreation Systems.** A number of natural and man-made corridors in the Santa Paula planning area serve as linear recreation systems. These systems will link together parks and open space areas as part of an overall network. Such systems include:

- *Bicycle Routes*
- *Trails*
- *Santa Paula Creek*
- *Fagan Barranca*
- *Santa Clara River*
- *Railroad Right of Way*

**Parkland Acquisition and Development Standards.** The Quimby Act allows the City to require new development to provide for park and recreation needs. These needs can be addressed through the dedication of land or imposition of fees or a combination of both. The City's capital improvement program establishes standards and schedules for the acquisition and development of new parkland or rehabilitation of existing facilities.

National standards for the desirable amount of parkland have been established by the National Recreation and Park Association. These define acceptable ratios of park space per capita based on national averages. The standard for local parks is 5 to 8 acres of total parkland per 1,000 residents. The standard for neighborhood parks is 1 to 2 acres per 1,000 residents.

Using a ratio of 5 acres of park land per capita, the City of Santa Paula should provide 132.5 acres for its estimated population of 26,500. The City currently provides 1.33 acres of local parks per 1,000 residents. This is a shortfall of 96 acres for local parks. This shortfall is lessened somewhat by the fact that there are some regional parks adjacent to Santa Paula and many school sites provide recreational activities and open space. This plan recommends the development of a Quimby Ordinance and the preparation of a five-year Capital Improvement Plan for park and recreation facilities. Also, the presence of the Los Padres National Forest just north of Santa Paula provides year-round active and passive recreational opportunities.

### III. IMPLICATIONS OF GENERAL PLAN BUILD-OUT

#### A. Opportunities and Constraints within the Planning Area

As development proceeds within the newly updated 1998 Sphere of Influence (existing City corporate boundary plus the expansion areas), there will be issues and constraints that must be addressed to avoid certain hazards. There will also be many opportunities for conservation of resources that still exist within the urban environment. The general constraints and conservation opportunities for development within the City are addressed below. Constraints and opportunities in the expansion areas are further described in Section B, *Opportunities and Constraints within the Expansion Areas*.

##### **Constraints.**

Airport Operations. Most of the area south of the freeway is in the traffic pattern zone of the Santa Paula Airport. Under the *Airports Comprehensive Land Use Plan Update for Ventura County* (1991), land uses are restricted in this area for safety reasons, and are primarily limited to activities which minimize human exposure to aviation hazards. For example, residential development would be limited to lower densities, subject to Airport Land Use Commission approval. Industrial and commercial development would be similarly restricted. Within the inner and outer safety zones at either end of the runway, land uses are further restricted; residential development is not allowed. Public gathering places (schools, churches, hospitals) would not be allowed anywhere in the general traffic pattern area. The City is pursuing strategies to eliminate residential uses from these hazard areas. This plan endorses continuing to implement all safety recommendations in the Airports Land Use Plan.

Flooding. Flood hazards are a major constraint to development in the City. About half the City is located in the 100-year flood zone of Santa Paula Creek. As of 1994, about 3,200 parcels in the City are located in the flood plain (as defined by FEMA), including over 2,300 residential properties. Other areas are in the flood plains of Fagan Barranca, Adams Barranca, and the Santa Clara River. Several projects to remove portions of the City from the flood zone are currently under consideration. None is more important, or would have as important an economic impact, than the Santa Paula Creek improvement project, a project endorsed by this plan. A second flood control project relates to the Santa Clara River Enhancement and Management Plan, which has defined a Public Levy and Bank Protection Line. This line is endorsed in this plan as the extent of City-sponsored flood control improvements for the Santa Clara River.

Portions of the expansion areas are also subject to flood hazards. The area adjacent to Adams Barranca is of particular concern, as floodwaters sometimes back up north of the freeway. The constraints would be largely eliminated with the construction of new flood control facilities upstream, possibly in Adams Canyon as part of new development.

The other area of concern is east of Santa Paula Creek, along the freeway. Most of this area is in the 100-year flood zone of Santa Paula Creek, and localized flooding is a common occurrence

after a significant rainfall. Development in the areas east of Santa Paula Creek would be contingent on the implementation of the flood control project on the creek.

Geologic Hazards. Several seismic hazards affect City lands. The Oak Ridge Fault, which parallels the Santa Clara River, may be the source of a significant earthquake in the future. The groundshaking effects from an earthquake would likely be similar throughout the City. However, the southern portion of the City, up to about Main Street, has a high liquefaction potential due to the high ground water table in this area. Consequently, seismic events would be more likely to cause structural damage here than in other areas with a lower ground water table. The liquefaction potential increases on lands that are closer to the Santa Clara River. This plan, through its Safety Element, includes numerous geologic hazard protection policies.

### **Conservation Opportunities.**

Historic Buildings and Districts. Santa Paula has one of the best collections of historic structures of any community in Southern California. Numerous historic resources related to the founding of the City and its growth and development between 1873 and 1945 are located within the present City limits. Included are commercial and residential land uses in the urban subdivisions of the original Santa Paula townsite, as well as many other areas. Many agricultural buildings which were at one time located outside the City, still remain even as the City grows around them.

The development of the City's historic downtown followed the traditional, pre-World War II pattern, with narrow lots, rear alleyways, and one- and two-story buildings with facades constructed adjacent to front property lines. While the first generation of wood frame commercial buildings are gone, the majority of their brick replacements remain, with a large degree of architectural integrity intact. These resources should be maintained and protected. Historic districts should be established, and strict architectural guidelines should apply to development in such areas. The preservation of this resource is critical to the local visitor and tourist economy, which depends in part on its unique historic character.

Santa Paula Wastewater Treatment Plant. The wastewater treatment plant can produce more than 2,000,000 gallons of reclaimed wastewater each day which could be used for a variety of purposes such as the construction of a golf course or the establishment of wetland preserves. There is a growing demand for wetlands mitigation banking, where a wetland is established at one location as mitigation for losses at another site. Reclaimed wastewater may also be used for various industrial uses or for groundwater basin recharge.

Habitat. Small pockets of native habitats still exist along creeks and barrancas as well as the large expanses along the Santa Clara River. When considering new development or flood control projects, these areas should be maintained and protected.

The Santa Clara River flows south of the City, and is probably the most important natural resource in the Santa Paula area. The river presents opportunities to conserve important riparian/wetland habitat. A few parcels at the east end of the City south of the freeway are adjacent to the river. Future planning efforts in these areas should emphasize conservation of

this crucial resource. Open space buffers should be included between future development and the river. These buffers could include agriculture, natural open space, parks, or continued aggregate operations, if compatible with proposed development.

Urban Forest. The many existing native trees that grow on private property are a resource for the urban environment that should be protected through ordinance standards for tree removal as well as project specific restrictions. The urban forest should be promoted through a city sponsored street tree planting program as well as requirements for new development.

Aggregate Resources. The Santa Clara River is an important source of high quality aggregate (sand and gravel) resources. Much of the area east of Santa Paula Creek supported mining operation at one time. Today, most of this area has been converted to industrial or commercial uses. Only a small portion of the aggregate mining operation still exists. There is a small potential of maintaining this resource within the planning area. A greater potential exists for excavation of materials for flood control purposes.

Agriculture. A little over 200 acres, or about half of the land within the 1978 Sphere of Influence is in agricultural production. Most of the larger unincorporated parcels in the planning area are in agriculture, typically avocados, lemons, or oranges. None of these parcels are located in a greenbelt area, and most are not under Land Conservation Act (LCA) contract. The only agricultural parcels still under LCA contract are in the large parcels north of Steckel Drive (north of Foothill Road and Anacapa Terrace). Much of the agriculture in the planning area is cultivated on prime farmland, including nearly all the area on the west side of town north and south of the freeway. This plan will endorse planning techniques to address compatibility between developed areas and agricultural areas.

Scenic Resources. The unincorporated areas located at either end of the City are adjacent to SR 126, which is an eligible state scenic highway. Development in these areas should be sensitive to the fact that they are at the gateway of the City, and should complement the existing character of the City. For example, there are good opportunities for commercial or industrial development at either end of the City. Special architectural standards should be addressed for development at the gateway of the City, with attention to building design, materials, and signage that reflect the area's heritage.

Ventura County Transportation Commission Santa Paula Branch Line Right-of-Way. In 1996, the Ventura County Transportation Commission purchased the entire 32-mile Santa Paula branch line extending from near U.S. Highway 101 in Ventura to about three miles east of Piru. A hiking and bicycle trail is proposed along with continued rail use, future commuter rail use and other possibilities. The trail could become the backbone of a significant system of non-motorized transportation.

The rail line traverses unincorporated areas at the City's eastern and western boundaries. If these areas are annexed, the corridor could provide recreational and transportation opportunities. At the east end of town, a multi-purpose trail along this right-of-way could link with a similar trail along Santa Paula Creek, which should be included as part of the proposed flood control improvements along the creek.

Santa Paula Creek Flood Protection Improvement Project. The U.S. Army Corps of Engineers is actively studying flood control options for Santa Paula Creek. A new project approach is being undertaken using a natural-bottom channel with sloping sides, alleviating the need for a massive dam structure. This project, anticipated to be completed in 1999, would improve development potential on the east bank of the creek. In addition, passive recreation uses could be allowed in the areas adjacent to the Creek once improvements to the channel have been made.

## **B. Opportunities and Constraints within the Expansion Areas**

The following discussion highlights constraints and conservation opportunities affecting the expansion areas. These expansion areas are proposed to be added to the City's 1978 Sphere of Influence and eventually annexed in a phased process. Each of these issues will need to be addressed in project specific studies as build-out occurs.

### **East Area 1 and 2**

#### **Constraints.**

Flood Hazard. The area is located within the 100-year flood plain of both Santa Paula Creek and Orcutt Creek. Santa Paula Creek in particular poses a significant constraint to development, as the flood zone extends about a mile eastward of the creek into the neighboring farmlands. The proposed flood control improvements to this creek would significantly reduce this constraint. However, improvements to Orcutt Creek would probably be necessary to allow more extensive development near Orcutt Road.

Geologic Hazards. The area is located 1-2 miles north of the Oak Ridge Fault, a major fault which may be the source of a significant earthquake in the future. In addition, a small unnamed fault traverses the area west of Orcutt Road. The groundshaking effects from an earthquake would likely be similar here as elsewhere in the City. However, the southern portion of the area, up to a half-mile north of the freeway, has a high liquefaction potential due to the high ground water table in this area. Consequently, seismic events would be more likely to cause structural damage here than in other areas with a lower ground water table. As a rule, liquefaction potential increases as one moves closer to the Santa Clara River.

#### **Conservation Opportunities.**

Santa Paula Creek Flood Protection Improvement Project. A comprehensive flood control project on Santa Paula Creek would offer conservation opportunities, including habitat enhancement and protection of existing agricultural and urban development. The U.S. Army Corps of Engineers is actively studying flood control options for Santa Paula Creek. A new project approach is being undertaken using a natural-bottom channel with sloping sides, alleviating the need for a massive dam structure. This project, anticipated to be completed by 1999 would be necessary before development could occur in the areas east of the creek. In addition, passive recreation uses could be allowed in the areas adjacent to the Creek once improvements to the channel have been made.

Historic Buildings. The area east of Santa Paula Creek has a rich agricultural heritage. The area is associated with Charles C. Teague, who was an influential figure in both local and statewide agricultural industry. Many ranch buildings and residences located in this area date from the early 20th century, and are historically significant because of their association with Santa Paula's economic heritage. This area offers opportunities to preserve these structures as an important reminder of the City's agricultural history.

Agriculture. All of the area east of Santa Paula Creek and north and south of SR 126 is located in an established greenbelt that the City of Santa Paula shares with Fillmore. The area includes significant agricultural cultivation, primarily avocados and other orchard crops on parcels near the creek. Most of the area (nearly 700 acres) is under productive crop cultivation, however, the property owners have indicated that some of this land is marginal for economic agricultural production. All of the avocado orchards north of SR 126 are under Land Conservation Act (LCA) contract. This includes most of the developable land north of the freeway. LCA contracts are used by the State of California to preserve and maintain the viability of agriculture by providing tax incentives for property owners who enter into such agreements. In exchange, these lands cannot be converted to urban uses until the contract expires, which can only occur once the property owner files a Notice of Non-Renewal. At this time, none of the property owners have filed for non-renewal. Much of the productive agricultural land in the Santa Clara River Valley east of the current City limit is either considered prime or unique farmland. Most of the avocado orchards are on prime farmland. Based on the State's Important Farmlands Inventory system, such prime farmland has the highest potential for continued agricultural use. These lands should be preserved as long as possible and buffered from urban development.

Habitat. Santa Paula Creek flows along the western boundary of the area. The creek presents limited opportunities to conserve riparian habitat. Habitat potential in this area would be higher, except for the existing urban uses and channelization of the creek at the lower reaches of the waterway. The Santa Clara River presents opportunities to conserve important riparian/wetland habitat. Southern willow scrub and cottonwood-willow riparian forest are identified as sensitive habitats found along the Santa Clara River. The yellow warbler and yellow-breasted chat generally breed in riparian thickets, and have been reported breeding in the river upstream of Santa Paula. Least Bell's vireo (listed by both the state and federal government as endangered) also breeds in the river. To the extent possible, the habitat value of this critical resource should be maintained. A comprehensive river study is currently being prepared that addresses the ultimate use of the Santa Clara River corridor.

Scenic Resources. All of the Santa Clara River Valley may be considered a scenic resource. SR 126 and SR 150 are eligible state scenic highways. East of Santa Paula, excellent views of the surrounding mountains as well as the agriculture contribute to the scenic quality of the area. These resources should be maintained through as these areas develop.

Linear Parkway. Santa Paula Creek is an identified scenic corridor. In conjunction with the Circulation Element, this corridor is endorsed as a linear park system, including a multi-purpose trail which links Telegraph Road to Ojai Road. Such a park would provide a buffer between any more intensive urban development to the east and the sensitive habitat near the creek. This park should include interpretive signage to educate the public about local flora and

fauna found near the creek.

The flood control improvements along Santa Paula Creek may afford limited recreation opportunities. A multi-purpose trail along the creek would support the use of alternative modes of transportation while increasing public awareness of the value of the creek as a natural resource. The Santa Paula Creek flood control project may present important conservation and limited recreation opportunities. The flood control project should also be viewed as a prerequisite to any development in this area.

## **West Area 2**

### **Constraints.**

Flood Hazard. Adams Barranca runs along the western boundary of this area. After heavy rainfall, the portion of Adams Barranca immediately north of SR 126 is subject to flooding, as runoff backs up against the freeway. This hazard is not shown on the Federal Emergency Management Agency's (FEMA) 100-Year flood map. Flood control measures would be required prior to development of the land in this general area. There are two possible solutions to this problem. Downstream improvements which allow for better flow under the freeway could be constructed in conjunction with development in the area. Alternatively, development in Adams Canyon could provide flood control measures (retention basins, for example) which regulates downstream flow. Either approach could work, but the provision of appropriate retention basins in Adams Canyon would reduce or eliminate the need for downstream improvements. Consequently, the planned development (or conservation) of the entire Adams Barranca/Canyon watershed should be coordinated from the outset.

Geologic Hazards. The area is located 1-2 miles north of the Oak Ridge Fault, a major fault which may be the source of a significant earthquake in the future. The groundshaking effects from an earthquake would likely be similar here as elsewhere in the City. However, the southern portion of the area, up to about Telegraph Road, has a high liquefaction potential due to the high ground water table in this area. Consequently, seismic events would be more likely to cause structural damage here than in other areas with a lower ground water table. As a rule, liquefaction potential increases closer to the Santa Clara River.

### **Conservation Opportunities.**

Historic Buildings. The area west of the current City limits has a rich historic agricultural heritage. The area is associated with George G. Briggs, who originally subdivided the area for agricultural purposes in 1867. Some of the valley's most significant farmhouses in terms of age, architectural styles, and historical importance are located along Telegraph Road, including a large number of Victorian-era farmhouses dating from the 1870's through the 1890's. In addition, these farmhouses have maintained their historic agricultural setting from that time, a fact which enhances their significance.

Agriculture (Greenbelt). All of the area west of the City in the Santa Clara River Valley has high agricultural potential. Most of this area supports a mixture of orchards, including lemons, avocados and oranges. The Calavo and Limoneira plants are located nearby, and are

the largest area agricultural businesses growing avocados and lemons, respectively. The agricultural industry has been entrenched in the areas just west of the City for well over 100 years, and is one of the most important facets of the local economy. Surprisingly, none of the area east of Adams Barranca is located in the Ventura-Santa Paula greenbelt. However, many Santa Paulans believe that it is, and the City of Santa Paula has historically not pursued urban expansion into this area largely for that reason. The Land Use Element calls for no urban expansion beyond Adams Barranca to maintain these areas in agriculture and to maintain the physical buffer between Santa Paula and the neighboring City of Ventura. Most of the parcels west of the City and east of Adams Barranca are not under LCA contract. One large parcel in lemon production (located south of the freeway) is under contract. Consequently, LCA contracts do not present a significant constraint to future planning efforts affecting this area. Much of the productive agricultural land in the Santa Clara River Valley west of the current City limit is either considered prime farmland or farmland of statewide importance. Most of the area is prime farmland, including nearly all of the area south of the freeway and east of Adams Barranca. Based on the State's Important Farmlands Inventory system, such prime farmland has the highest potential for continued agricultural use.

Scenic Resources. All of the Santa Clara River Valley may be considered a scenic resource. SR 126 and SR 150 are eligible state scenic highways. West of Santa Paula, excellent views of the surrounding mountains as well as the agriculture contribute to the scenic quality of the area. Good views of the Santa Clara River may also be obtained from the freeway. This resource should be maintained through Conservation Element policies.

## **Adams Canyon**

### **Constraints.**

Topography. Adams Canyon is topographically diverse, from the more level areas near the Creek, to the steep hillsides which surround the area. Any development which occurs in the canyon would be subject to topographic constraints, and would be generally be limited to the areas with a gentler slope. It is estimated that about 2,000 acres in the canyon support low to moderate slopes ranging between 0% and 25%.

High Fire Hazard. All of Adams Canyon is within a high fire hazard risk area. Historically, Adams Canyon has experienced many wildland fires, most recently a 1993 blaze which blackened thousands of acres in the mountains northwest of Santa Paula. The 1985 Ferndale fire also burned through Adams Canyon. The steep slopes and thick brush in the canyon contribute to the spread of fires into other areas. New development in this area would be at high risk. If development occurs, a secondary access to the canyon would be necessary, primarily to accommodate emergency vehicles and provide an evacuation route in the event such as a wildfire. It may be possible to construct a secondary road that provides access to Santa Paula Canyon from SR 150 in the vicinity of Steckel Park. This road could follow the basic alignment of an existing service road connecting the two canyons. Much of Adams Canyon is beyond the acceptable response time radius from existing fire stations. As a mountainous area with a high fire risk, fast emergency response is critical. It may be necessary to construct a substation either in the canyon or near the canyon in the event that development occurs.

Geologic Hazards. Adams Canyon has relatively few geologic hazards in comparison with other portions of the Santa Paula area. A portion of the Steckel Fault underlies the upper reaches of the canyon, and the mouth of the canyon is about two miles north of the Oak Ridge Fault, often cited as the most likely source of a significant earthquake centered in the area. In the event of a major earthquake, ground shaking in the canyon would be similar to that experienced elsewhere near Santa Paula, no matter which fault the quake would be centered on. The steep canyon walls are subject to landslides in the event of an earthquake. Mudslides can occur following heavy rains. Landslides can also occur in steeply sloped areas. Liquefaction and subsidence potential are low.

Flood Control. Adams Canyon, like other canyons, is inherently subject to localized flooding, particularly after significant rainfall. Potential residential development in Adams Canyon would require flood retention basin facilities to mitigate flooding and drainage impacts. A secondary benefit of this would be to minimize downstream flooding impacts along Adams Barranca. Flood control facilities constructed in Adams Canyon may reduce or eliminate the need for downstream facilities in the event development occurs on the valley floor vicinity of Adams Barranca.

### **Conservation Opportunities.**

Habitat. Adams Canyon supports significant wildlife habitat, including oak woodland, grassland and coastal sage scrub habitat. Deer, bobcat, and coyote are among the larger mammals that have been observed in the canyon, as have a variety of birds and reptiles. Oaks and sycamores are among the native vegetation found in the canyon. Impacts to these resources could be significant, depending on the extent of proposed development. The preservation of native vegetation, such as oaks and sycamores, is a policy of this Conservation Element and are endorsed in this plan.

Agriculture. The City's greenbelt agreement with Ventura includes lands located west of Adams Barranca, but this greenbelt does not include a northern or southern boundary. It is unclear if the mountainous areas, including Adams Canyon, are subject to the greenbelt agreement. However, the intent of the agreement is to preserve agriculture, and to provide an open space buffer between the urban areas of Ventura and Santa Paula. Development in Adams Canyon affords an opportunity to properly define the Santa Paula-Ventura greenbelt agreement in conjunction with the General Plan update process. Most of the agricultural activity in the canyon is limited to grazing. However, there are a few parcels that support orchards, including one large property at the mouth of the canyon in lemon production. None of these parcels are under Land Conservation (LCA) contracts. Small portions of the canyon floor, particularly near the creek, are considered prime farmland based on the Important Farmlands Inventory criteria. However, most of Adams Canyon is not considered prime farmland.

Petroleum Resources. The upper reaches of Adams Canyon have long been used for petroleum extraction. This area is located on a historically important oil field. Although the value and utility of oil extraction in the area has declined over the last decades, such activities can still be productive on a limited basis. Setbacks and buffers will be needed between any new

residential and commercial development in the canyon and these petroleum resources.

Scenic Resources. Adams Canyon is a scenic resource that currently is largely inaccessible to the general public. Currently, no public roadway serves the canyon. However, Adams Canyon is one of several canyons in the area which contribute to the scenic beauty of the Santa Paula area. The canyon's scenic qualities include excellent views of the surrounding hillsides, rock formations, and native oaks, in a pastoral setting. The basic character of the area would be changed in the event of urban development. However, most of this development would not be visible from the valley floor, or scenic roadways serving the area, such as Foothill Road or SR 126. The canyon's aesthetic qualities should be maintained in future development proposals. As development occurs, it should be sensitive to the natural amenities of the canyon, and should preserve views of the surrounding hillsides and natural vegetation. Clustering techniques, as described in the Land Use Element, can help in preserving scenic canyon areas.

## **Fagan Canyon**

### **Constraints.**

Topography. Like all the rugged areas north of the City, Fagan Canyon is topographically diverse, from the more level areas near the canyon floor, to the steep hillsides which surround the area. Any development which occurs in the canyon would be subject to topographic constraints, and would be limited to the areas with a gentler slope. About 1,000 acres within the canyon support low to moderately-sloping terrain ranging from 0% to 25%.

High Fire Hazard. All of Fagan Canyon is within a high fire hazard risk area. Like all the rugged areas north of the City, Fagan Canyon has experienced or been threatened by many wildland fires, including the 1993 Steckel Park blaze. The steep slopes and thick brush in the canyon contribute to the spread of fires into other areas. New development in this area would be at high risk. In addition to improving general traffic flow, a secondary access to the canyon would be necessary to accommodate emergency vehicles and provide an evacuation route in the event such as a wildfire. It may be possible to construct a secondary road that provides access to Santa Paula Canyon from SR 150 in the vicinity of Mupu School. This road could follow the basic alignment of an existing service road connecting the two canyons. An Adams-Fagan Canyon roadway connection would serve a similar purpose.

Geologic Hazards. Fagan Canyon has relatively few geologic hazards in comparison with other portions of the Santa Paula area. The mouth of the canyon is about two miles north of the Oak Ridge Fault, often cited as the most likely source of a significant earthquake centered in the area. In the event of a major earthquake, ground shaking in the canyon would be similar to that experienced elsewhere near Santa Paula, no matter which fault the quake would be centered on. The steep canyon walls are subject to landslides in the event of an earthquake. Mudslides can occur following heavy rains. Landslides are an issue in steeply sloping areas. Liquefaction and subsidence potential are low.

Flood Control. Depending on its intensity, new development may require significant flood control infrastructure, including a retention basin. Downstream flood impacts in the City would be minimal.

## **Conservation Opportunities.**

Habitat. Fagan Canyon supports significant wildlife habitat, including grassland and coastal sage scrub habitat. There is also a limited amount of oak woodland habitat in the canyon. The preservation of native vegetation, including oaks, is a goal of the current general plan. In addition, a variety of wildlife, including deer, coyote, and birds inhabit the area. Impacts to these resources could be significant, depending on the extent of proposed development.

Agriculture. The lower part of Fagan Canyon supports a variety of orchard crops. Avocados are grown on one large parcel in the lower part of Fagan Canyon adjacent to the City, while another nearby parcel is used for lemon production. The less accessible parts of Fagan Canyon are used primarily for ranching activities. Fagan Canyon is not located in an established greenbelt. The only parcels under LCA contract are in the lower part of the canyon. These parcels support avocado and lemon groves. The remaining parcels in Fagan Canyon are not under LCA contract. Most of Fagan Canyon is not prime farmland. Only the area immediately adjacent to Fagan Barranca (in the lower part of the canyon) qualifies as prime farmland under the state's Important Farmlands Inventory system.

Petroleum Resources. Like Adams Canyon, the upper reaches of Fagan Canyon have long been used for petroleum extraction. Although the value and utility of oil extraction in the area has declined over the last decades, such activities can still be productive on limited basis. Setbacks and buffers will be needed between any new residential and commercial development in the canyon and these petroleum resources.

Scenic Resources. Fagan Canyon is a scenic resource that it is largely inaccessible to the general public. No public roadway serves the canyon. However, Fagan Canyon is one of several nearby canyons which contribute to the scenic beauty of the Santa Paula area. The canyon's scenic qualities include excellent views of the surrounding hillsides and the native vegetation. Like Adams Canyon, the basic character of the area would be changed in the event of urban development. However, most of this development would not be visible from the currently developed portions of the City. The canyon's aesthetic qualities should be maintained through the general plan process. As development occurs, it should be sensitive to the natural amenities of the canyon, and should preserve views of the surrounding hillsides and natural vegetation. Clustered development is one technique that can assist in preserving views and is endorsed in this plan.

## **South Mountain**

### **Constraints.**

Access. Access to the South Mountain area is limited. Currently, only the Twelfth Street bridge at the east end of the City provides access across the river. This bridge connects to South Mountain Road, the only public roadway serving development on the south side of the river. Periodic landslides on South Mountain Road illustrate the problems of poor access, as the area can be temporarily cut off from destinations on the south side of the river east of the City.

In addition, there is currently no direct freeway access to the South Mountain area. If substantial new development were envisioned, another bridge linking the area to the City should be considered, possibly at Palm Avenue. This would not only provide direct freeway access, but would establish another access route to the portions of the City north of the river.

Sewer Infrastructure. Although sewer service could be easily provided to the area, a new pumping station would be required to pump sewage through a pipeline in the proposed Palm Avenue bridge or through a pipeline buried in the river bed. Other utilities would be relatively easy to provide in this area.

Geologic Hazards. The area is located near the Oak Ridge Fault, a major fault that may be the source of a significant earthquake in the future. In addition, the several smaller faults also parallel the Santa Clara River in the vicinity of South Mountain. The groundshaking effects from an earthquake would likely be similar here as elsewhere in the City. However, the areas between South Mountain Road and the river have a high liquefaction potential due the high ground water table. Consequently, seismic events would be more likely to cause structural damage here than in other areas with a lower ground water table. As a rule, liquefaction potential increases as one moves closer to the Santa Clara River.

Flood Hazard. The area is located adjacent to the Santa Clara River. However, most of the area is not located within the river's 100-year flood zone. There are large, relatively flat areas currently in agriculture that are outside the flood zone. Most of these areas are located between roughly Twelfth Street and Steckel Drive. Nevertheless, parcels adjacent to the river are still subject to river erosion and other flood-related impacts.

Airport Operations. Most of the area at the base of South Mountain is in the traffic pattern zone of the Santa Paula Airport. Under the Airports Comprehensive Land Use Plan Update For Ventura County, land uses are restricted in this area for safety reasons, and are primarily limited to activities which minimize human exposure to aviation hazards. For example, residential development would be limited to lower densities, subject to Airport Land Use Commission approval. Industrial and commercial development would be similarly restricted. Within the safety zones at either end of the runway, land uses are further restricted; residential development is not allowed. Public gathering places (schools, churches, hospitals) would not be allowed anywhere in the general traffic pattern area.

### **Conservation Opportunities.**

Wildlife Habitat. The Santa Clara River flows through the South Mountain area, and is probably the most important natural resource in the Santa Paula area. The river presents opportunities to conserve important riparian/wetland habitat. Southern willow scrub and cottonwood-willow riparian forest are identified as sensitive habitats found along the Santa Clara River. The yellow warbler and yellow-breasted chat generally breed in riparian thickets, and have been reported breeding in the river upstream of Santa Paula. Least Bell's vireo (listed by both the state and federal government as endangered) also breeds in the river. To the extent possible, the habitat value of this critical resource should be maintained.

A comprehensive river study is currently being prepared that addresses the ultimate use of the Santa Clara River corridor. The City of Santa Paula is represented on the steering committee. The City's representative should be responsible for coordinating this regional planning effort with the City's general plan update.

Petroleum Resources. South Mountain has historically been an important site for oil extraction. Much of the area underlying South Mountain, as well as much of the more level land south of the airport is identified as an important petroleum resource area. This resource area extends along the face of South Mountain, roughly paralleling the Santa Clara River. Development should be limited in this area to preserve the petroleum extraction potential for the future.

Aggregate Resources. The Santa Clara River is an important source of high quality aggregate (sand and gravel) resources. Aggregate mining is a lucrative and economically important industry in the Santa Paula area. However, aggregate mining must be balanced with the goal of preserving the river's wildlife value.

Agriculture. Much of the low-lying area at the base of South Mountain supports agricultural uses, including mixed orchards and oranges. In all, about 200 acres are in cultivation. Although not considered as important a resource as the fields east and west of the City, it is nevertheless a productive and viable agricultural area.

Nearly all of the non-urbanized low-lying areas south of the river is considered prime farmland based on the state's Important Farmland Inventory system. This is due to the rich alluvial soil, which produces excellent orchard crops. The portion of the area generally east of South Mountain Road is within the Santa Paula-Fillmore Greenbelt. However, none of the parcels in the area are under Land Conservation Act (LCA) contract.

## IV. GOALS, OBJECTIVES, AND POLICIES

According to the State General Plan Guidelines, the General Plan is a “collection of development policies.” These policies guide growth within the city limits and the city’s Sphere of Influence. The development that is allowed by the Land Use Element is to be directed by the goals, objectives, and policies in this section of the Conservation and Open Space Element, and implemented through the related implementation measures contained in the following section.

In this element, GOALS are statements that provide direction and state the desired end condition. The OBJECTIVES state a specific step toward goal achievement. POLICIES are specific statements that guide decision-making. They indicate a clear commitment by the city and generally serve as mandatory criteria. The IMPLEMENTATION MEASURES outlined in the following section of this element support the goals, objectives, and policies by providing specific programs and standards to carry out the Conservation and Open Space Plan.

The goals, objectives, and policies that follow are organized according to topics. These topics were selected with input from the Santa Paula City Council and the General Plan Advisory Committee as important topics for the General Plan. Many of the goals and objectives were endorsed by the City Council for use in the General Plan Update process. Following each policy statement are the number(s) of implementing strategy(s) that carry out the policy direction.

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### GENERAL

#### Goals

- 1.1 Natural resources and resource sites should be managed, protected, conserved, reclaimed and used wisely, including but not limited to:
  - *energy*
  - *historic, cultural and archaeological sites*
  - *scenic views, vistas, open spaces, rivers, creeks, mountains and ridge lines*
  - *agricultural lands*
  - *air quality*
  - *mineral resources and mining sites*
  - *wetlands, woodlands, urban forests, native plants, habitat areas and wildlife corridors*
  - *plant and animal species including those that are rare or endangered*
  - *surface and ground waters, water supplies and water quality.*
  
- 1.2 Hazards to natural resources should be controlled or eliminated, including but not limited to:
  - *invasive non-native plants and animals*
  - *pollution*
  - *incompatible activities or land uses*

- 1.3 Public environmental awareness, sound environmental practices and a healthy environment should be promoted.

## **OPEN SPACE**

### **Goals**

- 2.1 Preserve open spaces for future generations.
- 2.2 The amenities needed to enrich the quality of life, including parks, open spaces and natural places, should be provided.
- 2.3 The mountains surrounding Santa Paula are an important asset that should be protected for the views and open space.
- 2.4 The Santa Clara River and Santa Paula Creek should be treated as important assets to be conserved and more public open space opportunities should be provided.
- 2.5 Acquire enough open space to satisfy local needs.
- 2.6 Acquisition of open space shall be based upon the following factors: good visual qualities, significant natural resources, significant physical constraints and/or good passive recreational opportunities.

### **Objectives**

- 2(a) Establish a priority system for acquiring open space.
- 2(b) Employ open space as a means of preserving and enhancing the quality of life for present and future generations.
- 2(c) Encourage that development which is designed in a manner sensitive to the natural features of the site and to the surrounding character
- 2(d) Use the "Open Space" land use designation to preserve scenic, constrained and recreational properties.
- 2(e) Heighten the sense of nature in the City.

### **Policies**

- 2.a.a. Limit land development south of the Santa Clara River to low intensity development requiring few public services or infrastructure such as open space and public/private recreational uses. (IM 1,2,4,5,6,8)

- 2.b.b. The Santa Clara River and Santa Paula Creek should be treated as important assets to be conserved and also utilized to a greater extent by providing more public access and open space opportunities. (IM 1,2,4,5,6,8,11)
- 2.c.c. Provide for open space amenities in all new residential, commercial, and industrial development. (IM 1,2,5,6,7,9,11)

## **AGRICULTURE AND SOILS**

### **Goals**

- 3.1 Preserve and protect viable agricultural lands and operations within the City and the expansion areas.
- 3.2 Development should be compatible with and have minimal adverse impacts upon agriculture and natural resources and should not be wasteful of scarce land.
- 3.3 Urban expansion should be directed away from the most productive agricultural areas.

### **Objectives**

- 3(a) Encourage low intensity land uses and/or barriers near agricultural lands.
- 3(b) Encourage the use of land for agricultural operations.
- 3(c) Include areas for agriculture in the City's land use plan.

### **Policies**

- 3.a.a Preserve viable agriculture and prime agricultural lands as a greenbelt and buffer around the City. (IM 13-19a)
- 3.b.b. Erosion of soils should be controlled and prevented during agricultural use, during storms and especially during the construction phase of new development. (IM 13, 14, 27)
- 3.c.c Develop a transfer of development rights program that provides for easements for the preservation of agricultural land areas within the City's Area of Interest. (IM 18, 19)

## **AIR QUALITY**

### **Goals**

- 4.1 The improvement and protection of air quality should be encouraged and supported.

### **Objectives**

- 4(a) Support regional efforts to improve air quality.

## **Policies**

- 4.a.a. Work with the Ventura County Air Pollution Control District, as the regional authority governing air quality, to implement and carry out their policies. (IM 20, 21, 21a)
- 4.b.b. Review individual development projects to ensure that air quality control measures are incorporated to the greatest extent possible. (IM 21b)

## **BIOLOGICAL RESOURCES**

### **Goals**

- 5.1 Rare and endangered plants and animals and their habitat should be protected as required by Federal and State law.
- 5.2 Development should be compatible with and have minimal adverse impacts upon the environment and natural resources and should not be wasteful of scarce land.
- 5.3 Hazards to natural resources should be controlled or eliminated, including but not limited to:
  - *invasive non-native plants and animals*
  - *pollution*
  - *incompatible activities or land uses*
- 5.4 Public environmental awareness, sound environmental practices and a healthy environment should be promoted.
- 5.5 Riparian habitat should be protected and enhanced.
- 5.6 Native woodlands should be protected and preserved for their aesthetic value and for wildlife habitat.
- 5.7 The urban forest should be protected and enhanced.
- 5.8 The diversity of native plant species and their habitats should be encouraged.
- 5.9 Environmental decisions, mitigation measures and practices should be based on documented information about the local and specific environment.
- 5.10 Public education about local problems and concerns should be incorporated into the environmental review process.
- 5.11 Conserve and enhance Santa Paula's biological resources, facilitating development in a manner that reflects the sensitivities of these resources.

## **Objectives**

- 5(a) Fisheries and habitat in the Santa Clara River and Santa Paula Creek should be maintained.
- 5(b) Preserve important natural environments including barrancas, tree rows, wetlands and wildlife movement corridors.
- 5(c) Site and develop land uses to minimize the impacts on sensitive biological resources.

## **Policies**

- 5.a.a. Prevent the misuse and/or degradation of natural resources. (IM 22-29g)
- 5.b.b. Oak woodlands shall be protected and preserved for their own value and for wildlife habitat and aesthetic purposes. (IM 24, 26, 27, 29)
- 5.c.c. The urban forest should be maintained and protected. (IM 23-25, 27, 29)
- 5.d.d. Fish and their habitat in the river and creek must be protected. (IM 22, 26, 27, 28)
- 5.e.e. The diversity of native plant species and their habitats should be protected and invasive, non-native species, such as the false bamboo (*Arundo donax*) should be eradicated whenever possible and from upstream and downstream to reduce reestablishment. (IM 22, 27, 28, 38)
- 5.f.f. Rare and endangered plants and animals and their habitat must be protected as required by Federal and State law. (IM 22, 27)
- 5.g.g. Riparian and oak woodland habitat should be protected and enhanced. (IM 24)
- 5.h.h. Native trees should be protected. For the removal of trees that cannot be avoided, trees shall be replaced at a specific replacement ratio to be defined by the City. (IM 23, 24)

## **CULTURAL/HISTORICAL RESOURCES**

### **Goals**

- 6.1 The amenities needed to enrich the quality of life, including cultural and historic places, should be protected and preserved.
- 6.2 The historic, cultural and archaeological resources of the community should be preserved for future generations.

## **Objectives**

- 6(a) The City should encourage Historic Preservation as a valuable tool to retain the City's heritage.
- 6(b) Designating historic districts such as the downtown should be encouraged.

## **Policies**

- 6.a.a. Activities and development that could damage or destroy archaeological, historic or architectural resources are to be avoided. (IM 30-34)
- 6.b.b. Historic, cultural and archeological resources should be evaluated in the CEQA process and full mitigation provided. (IM 30-34)

## **ENERGY CONSERVATION**

### **Goals**

- 7.1 The orderly continuation, upgrading and expansion of utility services should meet community needs and accommodate new technologies.
- 7.2 Utility resources should be conserved.

### **Objectives**

- 7(a) Standards for energy conservation should be set for new development.
- 7(b) Energy and water conservation should be promoted as part of land development projects.

### **Policies**

- 7a.a. The environment and public safety should be protected from adverse impacts by utilities. (IM 35)
- 7b.b. The railroad right-of-way should be used as a multi-purpose, publicly owned corridor for utilities, business, transportation and recreation. (IM 35)
- 7c.c. Energy and water conservation should be promoted as part of land development projects. (IM 35)
- 7d.d. Solar energy use is encouraged. (IM 35)

## MINERAL RESOURCES

### Goals

- 8.1 Provide proper management of areas designated for mineral extraction.
- 8.2 Reduce incompatibilities between mineral extraction areas and other land uses.
- 8.3 Ensure adequate reclamation of mineral extraction areas.

### Objectives

- 8(a) Permit the extraction of minerals in the areas designated with a "Mineral" Overlay.
- 8(b) Protect significant mineral resources for long-term availability.
- 8(c) Permit interim uses such as outdoor storage, lumber yards, plant nurseries and recreation that do not preclude extraction uses.

### Policies

- 8.a.a.. Accommodate sand and gravel mining along the Santa Clara River and Santa Paula Creek with a designation of "Mineral Overlay." (IM 36, 37)
- 8.b.b. Require the submittal and approval of a Mineral Reclamation Plan in accordance with the California Surface Mining and Reclamation Act for any mining operation. (IM 36, 37)
- 8.c.c. Ensure that mineral resource production activities are compatible with adjacent uses and do not create aesthetic, noise, odor or dust impacts. (IM 36, 37)
- 8.e.e. The protection, use and development of mineral deposits, including oil, gas and geothermal resources (as described in the Surface Mining and Reclamation Act) should be encouraged and supported. (IM 36, 37)
- 8.f.f. Only compatible development should be allowed adjacent to or near mineral deposits, mining sites, and oil, gas or geothermal development. (IM 36, 37)

## WATER RESOURCES

### Goals

- 9.1 Aquifer recharge areas should be protected and enhanced.
- 9.2 Existing risks from floods should be reduced.
- 9.3 Development should be compatible with existing flood hazards if such hazards cannot be reduced.

- 9.4 Waterways should be protected from pollutants, soil erosion and other environmental hazards.
- 9.5 A system for timely public warning of predicted flood events should be provided.
- 9.6 Provide adequate water to serve new development in the City and the expansion areas.

### **Objectives**

- 9(a) Santa Paula should support flood control projects on Santa Clara River, Santa Paula Creek, and other waterways to eliminate or reduce flood hazard zones.
- 9(b) New construction and substantial improvements to existing construction should comply with the City's floodplain management ordinance.
- 9(c) Santa Paula should continue to actively participate in the Ventura Countywide Stormwater Quality Management Program and to implement the measures recommended by that program.
- 9(d) Santa Paula should continue to participate in Ventura County Flood Control District's flood warning system.
- 9(e) New development projects and new and replacement flood control projects should be constructed in accordance with appropriate hydrologic and hydraulic design standards.
- 9(f) The City should review evacuation plans for Santa Paula.
- 9(g) The improvement of water quality for drinking, cleaning, and other uses, should be encouraged and supported.
- 9(h) The conservation of water supply should be encouraged and supported.
- 9(i) New water sources should be provided for in the Capital Improvement Program.

### **Policies**

- 9a.a. The public should be protected from unreasonable flood risks. (IM 38, 39)
- 9b.b. Flood protection measures should be incorporated into all new land development projects. (IM 38, 39)
- 9c.c. Flood protection in areas of urban expansion should be designed to reduce or eliminate existing flood threats in the community. (IM 38, 39)
- 9d.d. The flood threat from Santa Paula Creek, Fagan Barranca and Adams Barranca should be eliminated, if possible. (IM 38, 39)

- 9e.e. Development adjacent to the Santa Clara River should be compatible with the continued flood threat. (IM 38, 39)
- 9f.f. Improved warning and evacuation systems should be considered to deal with the risk of dam failure and other threats. (IM 38, 39)
- 9g.g. Standards should be set regarding the type and intensity of development in or adjacent to the river and creeks. (IM 38, 39)
- 9h.h. Local watersheds and aquifer recharge areas should be protected and enhanced and standards set for development in those areas. (IM 28, 29, 40c)
- 9i.i. The conservation of water supply should be encouraged and supported. (IM 40, 40d)
- 9j.j. Creation of a wetlands using the sanitary treatment plan effluent should be studied and implemented if feasible as a way to provide additional wildlife habitat, further filtration and local groundwater recharge. (IM 28)
- 9k.k. Until flood control is established, uses along the Santa Clara River should be passive rather than formalized so that flooding does not affect development. (IM 38, 39)
- 9l.l. Water shall be made available for all new development prior to approvals. (IM 40a, 40b)

## **SCENIC RESOURCES**

### **Goals**

- 10.1 Scenic views and vistas, tree-lined streets, open spaces, natural areas, ridgelines and land forms should be preserved.

### **Objectives**

- 10(a) Use a variety of land use planning tools to preserve scenic resources.

### **Policies**

- 10.a.a. The mountains surrounding Santa Paula are an important asset that should be protected for the views and open space.
- 10.b.b. Preserve viewing opportunities in canyon areas as development proceeds.

## PARKS AND RECREATIONAL RESOURCES

### Goals

- 11.1 Park and recreation areas and programs, open spaces, natural areas, civic and cultural resources should be provided to meet the needs of all age groups and members of the public.
- 11.2 All parks, recreational areas, open spaces, natural areas, civic and cultural resources should be accessible to the disabled.
- 11.3 Expand programs and activities for the youth/teen population.
- 11.4 The amenities needed to enrich the quality of life, including parks and cultural facilities, should be provided.
- 11.5 Limit land development south of the Santa Clara River to low intensity development requiring few public services or infrastructure such as open space and public/private recreational uses.

### Objectives

- 11(a) Permit the continuation and enhancement of existing public parks.
- 11(b) Establish new recreational areas in the form of parks, sport fields, community centers and open space.
- 11(c) The City should develop a master plan of parks using State/National recommended standard of *5 acres* per 1,000 capita of parkland.
- 11(d) Public involvement should be encouraged in park planning and design to facilitate implementation of a program meeting community needs.
- 11(e) Nonprofit organizations should be encouraged and supported to provide recreation related activities in the City.
- 11(f) The City should develop facilities to meet specific recreational needs such as a gymnasium, bandstand, fairgrounds and more tennis courts.
- 11(g) The City should ensure adequate access for handicapped persons to parks and recreation facilities.
- 11(h) The City should maintain and expand a variety of programs and activities for all segments of the population, but particularly for the youth in Santa Paula.
- 11(i) Space should be provided for amenities to enrich the lives of citizens, such as parks and open space, cultural facilities and preservation of natural and historic places.

11(j) Parkland should be provided consistent with national standards based on population.

### **Policies**

- 11.a.a. Provide local parks at a ratio of 5 acres per 1,000 people in the City. (IM 47-64)
- 11.b.b. Require new development in the expansion areas to provide park land at a minimum ratio of 5 acres per 1,000 residents for new residents. (IM 66, 67)
- 11.c.c. Establish a plan for land development in the canyon lands north of the City, including Adams Canyon, Fagan Canyon, and the small canyons immediately north of the City. The land use designations and densities established for lands shall include, as a minimum, 110 acres of park and recreation land and golf course/major recreational facility. (IM 56-60)
- 11.d.d. Establish a plan for land development in the Santa Clara River Valley between Santa Paula Creek and Haun Creek. The land use designations and densities established for these lands shall include a minimum of 25 acres of park and recreation land and golf course/major recreational facility. (IM 48, 55)
- 11.e.e. Require developers of residential subdivisions to provide fee or land contributions for parkland acquisition/development. (IM 67)
- 11.f.f. Fund new parks from Quimby fees and consider the use of special taxes, sale of bonds or assessment districts for park development. (IM 66)
- 11.g.g. Neighborhood parks should be developed to serve all new residential development of significant size. (IM 67)
- 11.h.h. Establish joint use programs between schools and parks for use of school recreational facilities. (IM 62)
- 11.i.i. Continue offering the various youth, adult, and senior activities at the Community Center on a user-pay basis so as to keep the cost of these programs to a minimum. (IM 62)
- 11.j.j. Continue to offer the Recreation Departments youth and adult activities on a user-pay basis so as to keep the cost of these programs to a minimum. (IM 62)

## IV. IMPLEMENTATION MEASURES

This section of the Conservation and Open Space Element indicates the actions and programs that shall be carried out by the City of Santa Paula to implement the conservation and open space goals, objectives, and polices. These implementation measures, together with the polices, establish and guide the City's annual budget process and day-to-day decision-making so there is continuing process toward attainment of the goals. Some policies and implementing measures may need to be re-examined and revised during the plan's time frame (2020). The implementation measures presented below are categorized by the same topics as the goals, objectives, and polices in the preceding section. Implementation measures with a letter following the measure number (i.e., 29a) have been added during revision, update, or amendment processes. This number/letter system is intended so that the numbering system is not affected by any subsequent additions or revisions to implementation measures.

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### OPEN SPACE

The City of Santa Paula shall take the following actions to implement the open space-related conservation and open space goals:

1. Areas that are best suited to open space preservation should be identified and protected.
2. Standards should continue to be set regarding the type and intensity of development in or adjacent to the river, creeks and barrancas.
3. The existing open space designations in the General Plan should continue to be redefined and their boundaries expanded if necessary.
4. Continue to provide an "Institutional/Civic" or "Open Space" designation, as appropriate, for all public buildings and lands.
5. Continue to provide an "Open Space" designation for lands shown to be in the floodway on established flood map when FEMA maps and floodway maps are updated in 1998.
6. Acquire property for the establishment of open space resources as opportunities and funding sources permit.
7. Explore the use of open space easements, long-term leases, cooperative agreements, and other cost-effective means of acquiring open space.
8. Seek funding for the acquisition of open space within the City and the expansion areas.
9. Provide additional public gathering places in the City.

10. Expand the urban forest through a City-sponsored Street Tree Master Plan and “orchard” plantings in large new parking lots.
11. Establish an open space district modeled after the Conejo Open Space Conservation Agency that would be charged with holding title and managing open space lands including, but not limited to, steep and undevelopable hillside and canyon areas.
12. Develop an inventory of existing recreational facilities and parks in the City, as well as five- and twenty-year plans for the rehabilitation and improvement of park facilities.

## AGRICULTURE AND SOILS

The City of Santa Paula shall take the following actions to implement the agriculture/soils-related conservation and open space goals:

13. Review all development proposals adjacent to agriculture for impacts on agricultural land and crops.
14. Require all proposed development adjacent to agricultural uses to provide a buffer (setback, landscaping, recreational uses, street, etc.).
15. Require any new development on designated agricultural lands or designated prime agricultural soils to provide information on the viability of the agricultural soils and operations prior to requesting approval for urban land uses.
16. Adopt new formal greenbelt agreement for the Santa Clara River Valley to the east of town. Amend the greenbelt agreement with the City of Fillmore such that each acre removed from the existing greenbelt would be added to the greenbelt in other locations within the City’s Area of Interest.
17. Work with the City of Ventura to define northern and southern boundaries for Ventura-Santa Paula Greenbelt.
18. Utilize land use planning tools such as transfer of development rights, land trusts, and agricultural planned development to protect agricultural lands, prime agricultural soils, and viable agricultural operations. Land use planning tools and programs include:
  - *Adoption of an Urban Growth Boundary to achieve long-term conservation goals.*
  - *Adoption of Agriculture Cluster Development as a farmland preservation tool.*
  - *Implementation of a Purchase of Agricultural Conservation Easements Program (PACE) that facilitates the establishment and purchase of Agricultural Conservation Easements (ACE) within the expansion areas, or on County lands within the City’s Area of Interest.*
  - *Establishment of an Agricultural and Open Space District to acquire and manage open space and agricultural lands for public use or protection.*
19. Applicants for development of land in agricultural production that is within an existing

greenbelt (which includes Santa Paula Canyon, West Area 1, and the area west of Santa Paula Creek) shall provide funds to the Ventura County Agricultural Land Trust for the purchase of agricultural lands and/or easements within the Santa Paula Area of Interest.

- 19a. Adopt a Right-to-Farm Ordinance which would include specific requirements to preserve existing and encourage new agricultural land uses and would require disclosure to potential land buyers that agricultural operations are protected from nuisance lawsuits.

## AIR QUALITY

The City of Santa Paula shall take the following actions to implement the air quality-related conservation and open space goals:

20. Address air pollution from mining operations on Santa Paula Creek and the Santa Clara River.
21. Continue to implement the City's Growth Management Plan.
- 21a. In City purchasing, prioritize the purchasing of low-emission and alternative fuel vehicles and equipment.
- 21b. Encourage the implementation of programs and strategies which reduce air emissions. For example, emission reduction measures may include:
- *Provision of on-site employee services and preferential parking for carpools*
  - *Parking lot design to reduce vehicle cueing*
  - *Provision of transit services and pedestrian/bicycle access*
  - *Transportation Demand Measures (TDM)*
  - *Energy efficient building materials and lighting*
  - *Ozone precursor control measures*
  - *Dust control measures*

## BIOLOGICAL RESOURCES

The City of Santa Paula shall take the following actions to implement the biological resources-related conservation and open space goals:

22. The City should participate in and support the Santa Clara River Valley Enhancement and Management Plan and provide for its local implementation.
23. Develop a street tree program to provide a master plan for street tree placement and replacement to promote the urban forest.
24. Strengthen the City's tree preservation ordinance.

25. New golf courses that are proposed should be integrated into the natural environment.
26. Consistent with the National Pollution Discharge Elimination System (NPDES), require storm drain filtration units for surface water runoff in large parking lots.
27. Development adjacent to stream/barranca corridors shall minimize removal of vegetation; minimize erosion, sedimentation, and runoff; and provide for natural vegetation buffers.
28. Creation of a wetlands using the sanitary treatment plan effluent should be studied and implemented, if feasible, as a way to provide additional wildlife habitat, further filtration and local groundwater recharge.
28. For new development on or adjacent to native habitat areas, the following standards shall apply:
  - *Biological surveys/reports shall be required;*
  - *Buffer zones shall be maintained between urban development and sensitive native habitats;*
  - *Night lighting shall be shielded and no spill over shall occur;*
  - *Excessive night lighting shall not be allowed adjacent to sensitive habitats, natural areas, or wildlife corridors.*
- 29a. To minimize impacts to biological resources as a result of fire management practices, vegetation clearing shall be minimized by avoiding development in dense brush and woodlands. Additionally, fire-resistant plant shall be considered in fire clearance zones. Individual projects shall consider and assess cumulative impacts resulting from required fire clearance zones.
- 29b. To control the spread of invasive, non-native plants to natural areas, native plant landscaping shall be used in areas adjacent to open space/natural areas. Invasive plants shall not be used.
- 29c. Flood control projects within or adjacent to natural areas shall be reviewed for potential biological impacts.
- 29d. Efforts shall be made to reduce the amount of native habitat lost. Native wetland habitat lost shall be compensated for through the development of additional functional wetlands, preferably at the site or otherwise within the updated 1998 Sphere of Influence. Revegetation of temporarily disturbed areas shall utilize native plants. In general, for newly developed areas, a 100-foot buffer is recommended.
- 29e. Flood control channels shall incorporate natural earthen bottoms and embankments of natural earth stabilized with native vegetation. Biotechnical methods of bank stabilization are environmentally preferable. The use of concreted riprap or large rock is discouraged. Design of the flow channel should account for the natural morphology of the creek. The use of check dams to reduce flow velocities between channel segments may be applicable. The use of loose rock or gabions/rock blankets shall be discouraged.

- 29f. Culverts under roadways shall be sized to allow the passage of wildlife, and shall be designed such that daylight is visible at both ends (wildlife will not pass through a culvert unless daylight is visible).
- 29g. Project scheduling shall consider the sensitive reproductive periods of wildlife and avoid disturbance to natural habitats during critical breeding, nesting/denning or fledging periods.
- 29h. Recreation planning shall consider the location of sensitive biological resources and shall avoid direct and indirect disturbance of these areas.
- 29i. Trails shall follow existing paths, fencelines, and previously disturbed areas to the greatest extent feasible, and shall minimize grading and the removal of native vegetation.
- 29j. Horse hitchracks and bicycle racks shall be located away from sensitive resource areas. For example, horses should be excluded from entry into wetland and riparian areas.
- 29k. Natural migration corridors shall be protected and preserved, with planning for the safe passage of wildlife under busy roadways. Adams Barranca, which presently offers nearly unrestricted movement opportunities from the foothills to the Santa Clara River drainage, shall be maintained in a condition to promote wildlife movement.
- 29l. New passages intended for use as wildlife movement corridors (i.e., under roadways) must be designed to direct or 'funnel' large animals toward the passageway. This may be achieved through a combination of fencing and dense barrier plantings, as well as the placement of drinking water and vegetative screening for cover.
- 29m. Homebuyers of property in the Adams Canyon and Fagan Canyon shall be issued educational literature describing the types of wildlife habitat in which they live, and the appropriate methods of interacting with such animals, including coyotes, deer, mountain lions and various smaller mammals, birds, reptiles and amphibians. Appropriate methods of reducing disturbance to such animals, including lighting, landscaping and fencing methods, shall be addressed. Such literature shall be developed at the expense of the developers of these areas. This measure must be included in Specific Plans for expansion areas.

## **CULTURAL AND HISTORICAL RESOURCES**

The City of Santa Paula shall take the following actions to implement the cultural/historic-related conservation and open space goals:

- 30. Continue to implement a Historic Overlay Zone for portions of the downtown and surrounding historic neighborhoods.
- 31. Complete a comprehensive historic preservation study for Santa Paula.

32. Establish a program to increase the number of residences protected as historic structures.
33. Consider and evaluate cultural and archaeological resources in the CEQA process and provide full mitigation.
34. Pursue federal designations for all historic districts eligible under the National Trust for Historic Preservations.
- 34a. Formally recognize seven new historic districts including: Downtown Commercial District, Downtown Residential District, South 7<sup>th</sup> Street, McKevitt Heights, Park Street, The Oaks, and Richmond Tract.
- 34b. The City shall implement standards that guide new development and alterations to existing structures within historic districts. Such guidelines shall be developed by a qualified historian, and shall address architecture, landscaping, streets, and hardscape elements within these districts. Standards should be developed such that they address the particular character of individual districts.

### **ENERGY CONSERVATION**

The City of Santa Paula shall take the following actions to implement the energy conservation-related conservation and open space goals:

35. Provide design standards to promote energy efficiency.

### **MINERAL RESOURCES**

The City of Santa Paula shall take the following actions to implement the mineral resources-related conservation and open space goals:

36. Provide a “Mineral Overlay” land use designation on lands that are indicated to be of statewide interest by the Department of Conservation Division of Mines and Geology.
37. Mineral resource management policies should be developed which meet the requirements of SMARA.

### **WATER RESOURCES**

The City of Santa Paula shall take the following actions to implement the water resources-related conservation and open space goals:

38. The City should participate in and support the Santa Clara River Enhancement and Management Plan and provide for its local implementation.
39. Flood inundation maps of Santa Paula should be updated whenever updated

- information is confirmed by FEMA.
40. Pursue the development of a grey-water ordinance for such projects as golf course developments, etc.
  - 40a. Acquire additional water supply to serve new development.
  - 40b. Adopt a water rights annexation ordinance that would require transfer of existing groundwater rights to the City as a condition of annexing lands for development.
  - 40c. Install a groundwater recharge basin near the Santa Paula Creek floodplain.
  - 40d. Adopt a water conservation fee for new connections and implement a toilet replacement program to provide financial incentives for replacement of high water consumption toilets with low consumption units.

### **SCENIC RESOURCES**

The City of Santa Paula shall take the following actions to implement the scenic resources-related conservation and open space goals:

41. Establish a scenic route in downtown Santa Paula with signage and brochures.
42. Develop standards for new development along the scenic routes designated in this element, including regulation of land uses and intensities, requiring detailed site planning, control of outdoor advertising, control of earth moving, landscaping requirements, architectural control and equipment/storage screening.
43. Review all development proposals in canyon areas with respect to viewshed preservation.
44. Establish the State designation for scenic highways along State Routes 126 and 150.
45. The City should work with Caltrans and the Federal Highway Administration to seek funding to enhance the scenic quality of State Routes 126 and 150.
46. Re-establish the scenic drive through the City of Santa Paula scenic and historic neighborhoods.

### **PARKS AND RECREATION**

The City of Santa Paula shall take the following actions to implement the parks and recreation-related conservation and open space goals:

47. Update the 1973 Master Plan of Parks.
48. Require the dedication and development of pedestrian/bicycle linkages to and along the

- Santa Clara River at the time of annexation.
49. Develop a plan to promote and enhance the Veterans Memorial Park as a gathering place.
  50. Develop an urban plaza and amphitheater in the downtown.
  51. Provide for a bike/hike trail along the railroad.
  52. Implement a landscaping and linear park program for the railroad right-of-way
  53. Work with the VCTC to implement their plans for the railroad corridor.
  54. Develop a plan to provide a soccer field, swimming pool, bandstand, equestrian arena, and tennis courts in the City and/or expansion areas to serve residents.
  - 54a. Develop a plan to provide for the establishment of 15 acres of active parks and 100 acres of regional park in the South Mountain expansion area. In addition, the City should explore the option of establishing passive recreational opportunities in Willard Canyon, located in the southernmost portion of the South Mountain expansion area.
  55. Develop a plan for a hiking trail along the Santa Clara River from Santa Paula Creek to 12<sup>th</sup> Street and then from Palm Street to Peck Road and ultimately to Adams Barranca.
  56. Develop a plan for a multi-purpose trail in Adams Canyon to be implemented upon annexation of the lands.
  57. Develop a plan for a multi-purpose trail in Fagan Canyon to be implemented upon annexation of the lands.
  58. Develop a plan for a multi-purpose trail in the small canyons to be implemented upon annexation of the lands.
  59. Develop a plan for a multi-purpose trail in the East Area 1 to be implemented upon annexation of the lands.
  60. Develop a plan for a multi-purpose trail from the northern-end of Adams Canyon out to the Santa Paula Creek Trail to be implemented upon annexation of the lands.
  61. Develop a plan for a festival grounds area.
  62. Continue to solicit funds and donations for the Community Center Endowment Fund.
  63. Designate bike routes along flood control channels, along Ojai Road, along Santa Paula Street and along Harvard Street.
  64. Designate hiking and equestrian trails along flood control channels and Edison right of ways from the mountains to the river.

65. Continue to protect trees through vigorous adherence to the City's Tree Protection Ordinance.
66. Develop a Quimby Ordinance to establish a mechanism to ensure park land development.
67. Prepare and adopt a five-year Capital Improvement Plan to provide for needed park and recreation supply.

## **VI. RELATIONSHIP TO OTHER ELEMENTS**

The Conservation and Open Space Element serves to complement and inform the Land Use Element of this General Plan. Land Uses have been planned to complement and respect natural resource areas. Policies presented herein will serve to inform Land Use policies. Also, the hazards discussed in this element are addressed in greater detail in the Safety Element.

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