

# VENTURA COUNTY GENERAL PLAN

# OJAI VALLEY AREA PLAN



Last Amended 11-15-2005

Ventura County Planning Division

# VENTURA COUNTY GENERAL PLAN OJAI VALLEY AREA PLAN

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# VENTURA COUNTY GENERAL PLAN OJAI VALLEY AREA PLAN

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# Introduction

## History

The first Area Plan governing the Ojai Valley was part of the Land Use Element of the General Plan for Ventura County and was adopted in 1963.

In March, 1977, the Board of Supervisors adopted an Emergency Ordinance to restrict subdivisions in the Ojai Valley because questions were raised regarding the cumulative impacts on air quality, traffic and water supply. They established a technical task force to prepare a report on the status of services and the quality of the physical environment in the Valley. In conjunction with that effort, County staff began work on the Ojai Valley Area Plan, which was subsequently adopted by the Board of Supervisors on August 14, 1979.

In 1988, during discussions regarding the comprehensive update to the Countywide General Plan, the Board of Supervisors directed County staff to "revisit" the Ojai Valley Area Plan.

## Purpose

In general, the purpose of an Area Plan is to specify the distribution, location, types and intensity of land uses within a prescribed area, as well as provide specific policies concerning development in that area.

The specific purposes for updating the 1979 Ojai Valley Area Plan were to:

1. Update the Plan's technical information and goals, policies and programs in light of changing conditions;
2. Ensure that Area Plan policies are consistent with Countywide General Plan goals, policies and programs; and
3. Reformat the Area Plan to be consistent with other County Area Plans.

The planning area of the Ojai Valley Area Plan encompasses approximately 74,000 acres and is generally bound on the north by the Nordhoff Ridge, on the south by the Sulphur Mountain ridgeline, on the east by the mountain ridge between Bear Canyon and Santa Paula Canyon and on the west by the Lake Casitas/Ventura River watershed boundary. Parcel lines, which most closely match those identified geographic features, have been used as the actual boundaries in order to avoid the splitting of land use designations and zoning of parcels.

Due to staff vacancies, work on the update did not begin until July 3, 1990 when the Board of Supervisors adopted a Resolution of Intention directing staff to proceed with processing of a General Plan Amendment to update the Ojai Valley Area Plan.

## Process

County staff began work on updating the Ojai Valley Area Plan by preparing a Background Report (separate document) which was completed in June, 1991. In order to provide for input from the citizens of the Ojai Valley, an Area Plan Advisory Committee was formed consisting of six representatives from District 1, appointed by Supervisor Lacey, and three representatives and one alternate from District 3, appointed by Supervisor Kildee. From July, 1991 through February, 1993 the committee held public meetings at which time they formulated goals, policies, programs and land use maps of the draft Ojai Valley Area Plan.

On February 8, 1993, the Ojai Valley Area Plan Advisory Committee preliminarily approved the draft Ojai Valley Area Plan, and on December 12, 1994, made its final recommendation to the County Planning Commission and Board of Supervisors. The Ojai Valley Area Plan was subsequently adopted by the Board of Supervisors on July 18, 1995.

## Relationship To Other County General Plan Elements

The Ventura County General Plan is the plan by which the unincorporated portions of Ventura County will develop in the future. The County General Plan is divided into four chapters which

encompass the State-mandated General Plan elements. In addition to the general goals, policies and programs contained in these four chapters, portions of the unincorporated area of Ventura County are governed by more detailed land use plans (area plans) designed to reflect the needs and desires of those individual communities. The Ojai Valley Area Plan is the detailed land use plan of the Ventura County General Plan for the Ojai and Ventura River Valley areas. It should be noted that words in *italics* in the Area Plan are defined in its glossary or in the General Plan Goals, Policies and Programs volume.

State law also mandates that all elements of a general plan be consistent with one another. To achieve this consistency, the goals, policies and programs and maps of the Ventura County General Plan were reviewed and used in drafting this Area Plan. The goals, policies and programs of this Area Plan supplement those goals, policies and programs of the Countywide General Plan.

## **Overall Committee Goals For The Ojai Valley Area Plan Update**

This Area Plan was developed in public meetings over a period of two years by a 10-member citizen's advisory committee. The following overall goal statements were used by the committee in drafting the Ojai Valley Area Plan:

- A. The primary goals of the committee are to preserve and protect the character of the Ojai Valley and ensure and maintain the quality of life for its residents. These goals can only be met by ensuring that population densities, land uses, and development are consistent with the appropriate utilization of existing valley resources. The committee intends to protect and maintain a healthful and attractive environment for the inhabitants of the study area.
- B. The character of the Ojai Valley is defined by its rural, small town qualities containing many natural and cultural resources, and framed by its commercial agricultural and open space lands which provide for scenic views and vistas. The committee, in establishing this list of goals, expressly recognizes that with respect to its most important resources, particularly air quality, transportation and water, the study area is at, nearing, or exceeding the limits of its resources. The recommendations of the committee, both as to general and specific goals, must be viewed in that context.
- C. The committee recognizes that although the Ojai Valley comprises several distinct and diverse neighborhoods, it is one valleywide community, wherein everyone shares a common air basin, road system, sources of water supply, etc.

The specific recommendations made by the committee with respect to the Plan were governed by the following general goals:

- 1. Ensure that the type, rate, amount and location of both the population and economic growth do not compromise the public health and safety (e.g. air quality, water quality, geologic, fire and flood hazards), nor exceed the Valley's ability to provide adequate public facilities and services (e.g., roads, sewers, water supply, parks, trails and schools).
- 2. Ensure that any future development within the study area is of high quality, consistent with the character of the Ojai Valley and beneficial to the community as a whole.
- 3. Within the limitations of the resources found within the study area, it is important to ensure that land uses are planned and managed to foster a healthy commercial and economic base.
- 4. Promote adequate housing opportunities by ensuring, to the extent possible, that a diversity of housing types for all segments of the population are provided.
- 5. Protect and preserve the continued viability of commercial agriculture within the study area.
- 6. Ensure that adequate and efficient public facilities and services (e.g., roads, sewers, water supply, parks, trails, public transportation, police, fire and schools) are provided to serve the existing and future residents of the Valley and that these facilities be sized and located in a manner which does not, in and of itself, induce and promote growth.

7. Utilize a common unified approach to land use planning and provide and enhance mechanisms for decision-making by area residents. The fiscal and political feasibility of a single valleywide governmental entity should be explored.
8. Prevent the degradation of the Ojai Valley airshed from developments which are site specific sources of air pollution, specifically including a dump site in Weldon Canyon or elsewhere affecting the Ojai Valley airshed, whether privately or publicly owned and operated.

## Definitions

The goals, policies and programs contained in this Area Plan express the intent of the Board of Supervisors, with input from the community and those governmental agencies responsible for providing services to the area. Goals, policies and programs are defined below:

- Goal-** The ultimate purpose of the County's effort stated in a way that is general in nature. Example: "Discourage further land divisions of large parcels that are presently in agricultural production or those that are suitable for agriculture."
- Policy-** A specific statement guiding day-to-day actions and implying clear commitment to carry out the goals of the General Plan in a prescribed manner. Example: "Land outside the existing urban area which is primarily in agricultural use shall be designated Open Space."
- Program-** A coordinated set of actions to carry out the goals of the plan. Example: "Special economic programs that aid agriculture, (e.g. the Land Conservation Act), will be preserved and promoted."
- \*. An asterisk (\*) next to a program means that particular program will not be pursued until the budgetary constraints affecting the County are relieved and the Planning Division is given direction by the Board of Supervisors to proceed with the program.

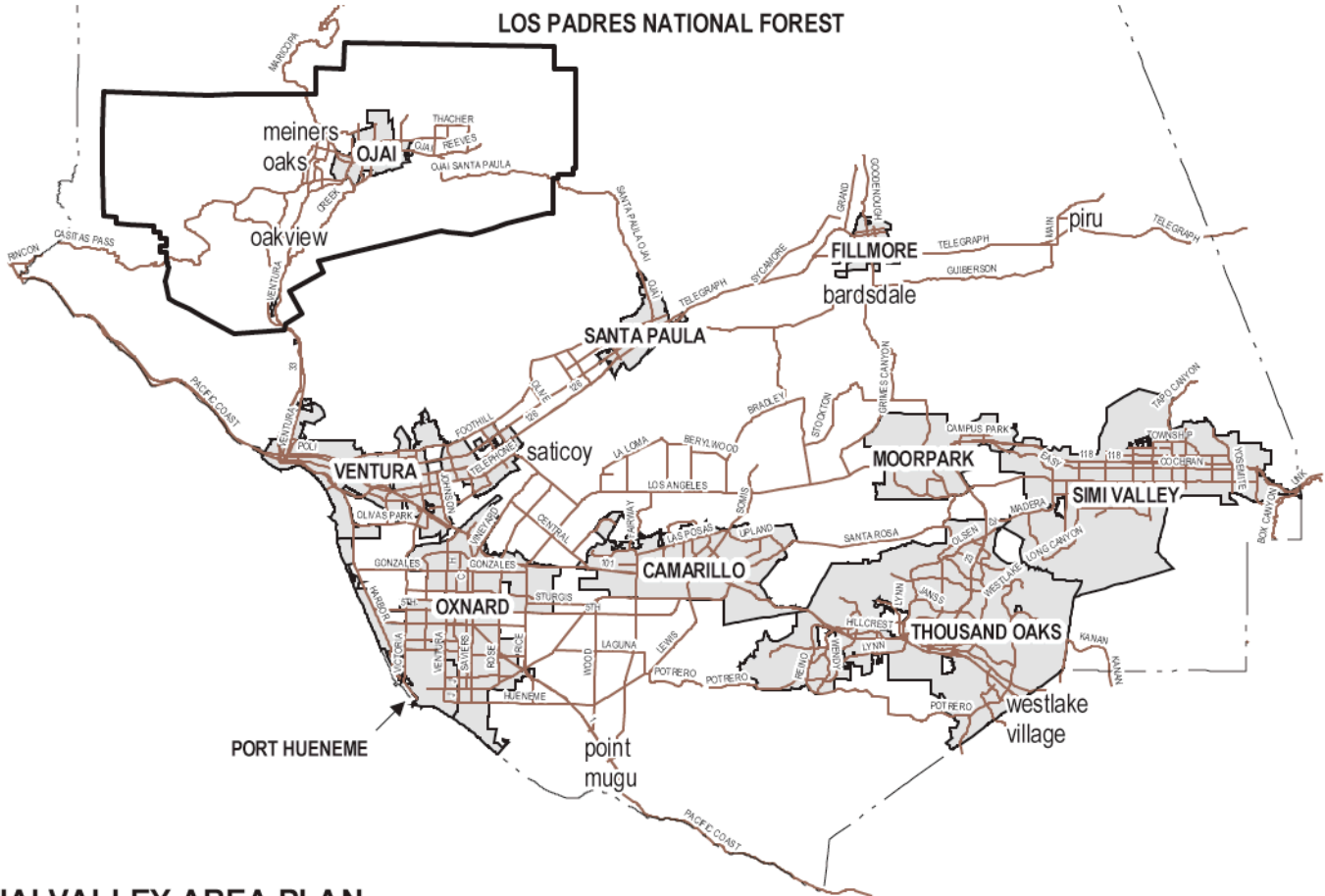
The goals, policies and programs are divided into four major sections as follows:

1. **Resources**
2. **Hazards**
3. **Land Use**
4. **Public Facilities And Services**

## Overall Goals For The Ojai Valley Area Plan

The following goals establish the overall framework for the Ojai Valley Area Plan:

- A. The primary goals of the Ojai Valley Area Plan are to preserve and protect the character of the Ojai Valley and ensure and maintain the quality of life for its residents. These goals can only be met by ensuring that population densities, land uses, and *development* are consistent with the appropriate utilization of existing valley resources. The Plan has been written to protect and maintain a healthful and attractive environment for the inhabitants of the study area.
- B. The character of the Ojai Valley is defined by its rural, small town qualities containing many natural and cultural resources, and framed by its commercial agricultural and open space lands which provide for scenic views and vistas. This Area Plan expressly recognizes that with respect to its most important resources, particularly air quality, transportation and water, the Ojai Valley is at, nearing or exceeding the limits of its resources. The recommendations of the Area Plan, both as to general and specific goals, must be viewed in that context.
- C. This Area Plan recognizes that although the Ojai Valley comprises several distinct and diverse neighborhoods, it is one valleywide community, wherein everyone shares a common air basin, road system, sources of water supply, etc.



**OJAI VALLEY AREA PLAN**  
**FIGURE 1**  
**VICINITY MAP**

 **BOUNDARY OF OJAI VALLEY AREA PLAN**



# 1. Resources

## 1.1 Air Quality

### 1.1.1 Goals

1. Promote a level of air quality which protects the public health, safety and welfare and seeks to meet or surpass State and Federal primary and secondary standards.
2. Control oil and gas exploration/development, landfills and other industrial development which are site specific sources of air pollution by imposing conditions in order to move toward achieving State and Federal mandated air quality standards.
3. Promote public transportation with the intent of improving air quality.
4. Promote the development of alternative energy sources, with the intent of improving air quality, which are not deemed to cause other significant environmental impacts.

### 1.1.2 Policies

1. *Discretionary development* in the *Ojai Valley* shall be found to have a significant adverse impact on the regional air quality if daily emissions would be greater than 5 pounds per day of Reactive Organic Compounds (ROC) and/or greater than 5 pounds per day of Nitrogen Oxides (NOx).

### 1.1.3 Programs

- \* 1. The Planning Division will prepare a program proposal for the Board of Supervisors' consideration to re-examine and lower the current pace of *development* in the *Ojai Valley* concurrent with the next update of the VCOG population, dwelling unit and employment forecasts.
- \*2. To the extent the methodology exists or can reasonably be determined, the Planning Division will prepare a program proposal for the Board of Supervisors' consideration to regulate the pace of commercial and industrial development.
3. South Coast Area Transit (SCAT) should provide public transit service both intra-valley and inter-city with particular emphasis on providing for senior and disabled persons and increasing service for commuters desiring to take public transit to and from work.
- \*4. The Planning Division will prepare a budgetary proposal for the preparation of a brochure to promote the use of alternative energy sources.
5. The Planning Division will amend the County Initial Study Guidelines so that the Ventura River Municipal Advisory Council and the City of Ojai will have review authority over all projects in the Ojai Valley Airshed that emit more than 5 lbs./day of NOx and/or ROC.

## 1.2 Water Resources

### 1.2.1 Goals

1. Ensure that water which currently meets State standards shall not be degraded and ensure that water quality which does not meet State standards is improved.

### 1.2.2 Policies

1. New *development* that generates sewage in *aquifer recharge areas* shall be required to comply with the County Sewer Policy.

\* See Page 4

2. Existing homes and businesses with private sewage disposal systems that function improperly shall be required to make necessary modifications or to convert to a sewer system in compliance with the County Sewer Policy.
3. New oil and gas exploration and production activity shall not significantly affect the quality or quantity of the water supply.
4. *Discretionary development* which has the potential to deposit a significant amount of sedimentation, oil residue or other urban pollutants into the surface water drainage system shall be conditioned as appropriate, to require retention basins and oily water separators so that at least the first inch of rainfall from any one storm is retained within the project, in order that contaminants from urban runoff do not significantly impact downstream surface water quality and biological resources. The control devices used in the oily separators shall be properly maintained for the life of the authorized use.

### **1.2.3 Programs**

1. The Casitas Municipal Water District, in coordination with the Ojai Groundwater Basin Management Agency, should investigate the *conjunctive use of water*, giving full consideration to all affected beneficial uses of water, including in-stream and out-of-stream beneficial uses.
- \* 2. The Ventura County Flood Control District, Public Works Agency-Water Resources Division and Planning Division, City of Ojai, City of Ventura, water and sewer districts within the *Ojai Valley*, and appropriate Federal and State agencies should explore the development of a comprehensive watershed management study to address the full spectrum of water quantity and quality issues of the Ventura River system.
3. The Agricultural Department will continue to encourage the use of alternatives to chemical methods of pest control and fertilization.

## **1.3 Mineral Resources**

### **1.3.1 Goals**

1. Ensure that mineral extraction is conducted in a manner which is least impacting to the environment and the public's health, safety and welfare.
2. Ensure compatibility between oil and gas exploration and production and neighboring land uses.

### **1.3.2 Policies**

1. Oil and gas exploration and production permits shall utilize "Best Available Control Technology" (BACT), as outlined by APCD Rules and Regulations.
2. Gases emitted from all oil and gas wells shall be collected and used or removed for sale or proper disposal, if feasible. Flaring or venting should only be allowed in cases of emergency or for testing purposes.
3. Electrically powered oil and gas exploration and production equipment shall be used where practical to alleviate pollution from internal combustion engines.
4. If it is determined there would be a significant visual impact created or if visible from a public road or publically owned land, oil and gas production sites shall be landscaped in accordance with an approved landscape plan.
5. Exploration activities for oil and gas shall be conditioned to require the restoration and revegetation of the site if the exploration does not result in oil and gas production facilities.

\* See Page 4

6. Drill sites that would be silhouetted on a prominent ridge as illustrated by the Scenic Resource Protection Overlay Zone on Figure 2 (Resource Map), shall not be permitted.
7. No refining facilities shall be permitted within the *Ojai Valley*.
8. All *discretionary development* permits for oil and gas exploration and production shall be kept to a minimum size and area.
9. As existing oil and gas exploration and production permits are modified or come up for renewal, they shall be conditioned so that drilling and production will be subject to current policies, standards and conditions.

### 1.3.3 Programs

1. Conditions applied to *conditional use permits* for oil and gas exploration and development will be enforced to the maximum extent feasible in order to protect the health and welfare of the citizens and the character of the *Ojai Valley*.

## 1.4 Biological Resources

### 1.4.1 Goals

1. Protect significant *biological resources* within the *Ojai Valley* in order to maintain natural ecosystems and also preserve the natural beauty of the area.
2. Balance the preservation of *wetland habitats* with the need to adequately protect public safety and property from flooding hazards.
3. Recognize the role of fire in local ecosystems by supporting controlled burns and other fire prevention measures.

### 1.4.2 Policies

1. A biological field reconnaissance report detailing the composition of species at the site, the presence of *rare, threatened, endangered* or candidate plant or animal species, significant *wetlands, locally important plant communities*, and suitable mitigation measures shall be prepared by the County's biological consultant as part of the environmental assessment of all *discretionary development* permits involving earth movement or construction on previously undeveloped land where the natural vegetation still exists.
2. The California Department of Fish and Game, the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service, the National Audubon Society, the California Native Plant Society and the Los Padres National Forest shall be contacted during the initial 30-day project review period for *discretionary development* proposals when proposals are submitted which may adversely affect the *biological resources* under their purview. This policy does not apply to *emergency permits*.
3. *Discretionary development* shall be located to avoid loss or damage to protected trees as defined in the County's Tree Protection Ordinance. Removal of protected trees shall only occur after review of the necessity of such removal, and in accordance with the provisions of the County's Tree Protection Ordinance.
4. Required revegetation or landscaping plans shall incorporate *indigenous plant species* where feasible in order to restore habitat in already disturbed areas.
5. Proposed *discretionary development* shall be coordinated with affected agencies that regulate water courses and wetland habitats early in the planning stages so as to ensure that appropriate mitigation measures and the concerns of these agencies are adequately addressed, including protection of anadromous fish habitat.
6. *Discretionary development* within *high fire hazard areas* shall be reviewed with attention to the environmental impact of required brush clearance to *biological resources*, particularly on *moderate to steep slopes*. Brush clearance that reduces fuel volumes while allowing the selective retention of native shrubs a minimum of 20 feet apart should be encouraged, as permitted by the Ventura County Fire Protection District.

7. *Discretionary development* which would result in a significant adverse impact to a *Locally Important Plant Community* shall be required to replace such *Locally Important Plant Community* proposed for removal on at least a 1:1 basis and will be required to monitor the success of such planting for a minimum of seven years. In lieu of replacement, developers may dedicate without compensation, acreage containing such *Locally Important Plant Community* to a government agency or non-profit organization (e.g., a homeowners' association, a land conservancy) provided such entity will provide assurances that the dedicated *Locally Important Plant Community* acreage will be retained in a permanent undeveloped state. Such dedicated lands shall be at least two times the acreage of the *Locally Important Plant Community* which is proposed for removal. The form of such dedication may be fee title, conservation easement or other instrument approved by the County.
8. *Discretionary development* within 300 feet of the Ventura River, Coyote Creek, San Antonio Creek/Reeves Creek and Lion Canyon Creek, or located within the Sensitive Biological Resources Area (as illustrated on Figure 2) shall be reviewed to determine the potential for interference with *wildlife migration* opportunities and potential for impact on "*Endangered*", "*Threatened*", "*Rare*" or "*Locally Important*" species and communities. Projects which would result in significant adverse impacts to such resources shall be denied unless they can be mitigated to a less-than-significant level or a statement of overriding considerations is adopted by the decision-making body per CEQA requirements.

### 1.4.3 Programs

1. The U.S. Forest Service is encouraged to monitor and protect sensitive species, including the Ojai Fritillary. Appropriate resource management efforts to protect the Ojai Fritillary might include realignment of the Gridley Springs hiking trail and/or the transplanting of specimens to minimize the risk of extirpation of this species.
2. For any proposed Highway 33 improvements between Sulphur Mountain Road and Canada Larga Road, CALTRANS is encouraged to incorporate appropriate *wildlife migration* mitigation measures, such as underpasses or other means that will allow safe movement of wildlife between the Ventura River corridor and the Sulphur Mountain area.

## 1.5 Farmland Resources

### 1.5.1 Goals

1. Preserve agricultural land as a resource and economic benefit to the Ojai Valley.
2. Discourage the expansion of Rural and Existing Community designations into the East Ojai and Upper Ojai Valleys.
3. Minimize land use incompatibilities between agricultural operations and other land uses.

### 1.5.2 Policies

1. *Discretionary*, non-agricultural land uses adjacent to agricultural operations shall be required to establish appropriate buffers.
2. Land outside the Existing Community and Rural designated areas which is primarily in agricultural use shall be designated Open Space.

### 1.5.3 Programs

- \*1. The Planning Division will prepare a budgetary proposal to develop a brochure on the County's Right to Farm Ordinance in order to increase public awareness of the ordinance.
2. Special economic programs that aid agriculture (e.g., *Land Conservation Act*) should be preserved and promoted.

\* See Page 4

## 1.6 Scenic Resources

### 1.6.1 Goals

1. Preserve and protect the significant visual quality and aesthetic beauty of the *Ojai Valley* which includes, but is not limited to, surrounding mountains, hills, and ridgelines, arroyos, barrancas and protected trees.
2. Preserve the scenic view of State, Federal and local park land in and around the *Ojai Valley*.
3. Ensure that *discretionary development* on or near ridgelines minimizes impacts from grading activities in order to preserve the natural beauty of the area.
4. Discourage the proliferation of antenna and satellite dish facilities from developing on ridgelines.

### 1.6.2 Policies

1. *Discretionary development/grading* which will significantly degrade or destroy a scenic view or vista from public roads or publicly-owned land shall be prohibited, unless the development/grading is a public project, or a private project for which there is a substantial public benefit, and overriding considerations are adopted by the decision-making body.
2. The area within 400 feet (horizontal) of prominent ridgelines as shown in Figure 2 shall be zoned "Scenic Resource Protection Overlay" in order to ensure that visual impacts of grading and attendant structures are minimized to the maximum extent feasible. *Discretionary development* shall be located and designed to minimize visibility and silhouetting against the skyline as viewed from nearby public roads, and shall incorporate as many of the following planning techniques as feasible:
  - a. Limit construction to single-story structures on or near ridgelines;
  - b. Utilize large building pad setbacks (50 feet or more) from the edge of a ridgeline;
  - c. Utilize berms and landscaping to soften the visual impact of homes and graded areas;
  - d. Utilize raised foundations, split-level designs, roof materials consisting of clay or concrete plate tile with a natural color, and other techniques to fit the home to the hillside terrain, and to minimize the amount of grading required.
3. *Discretionary development* for antenna and satellite dish facilities shall be prohibited unless public need has been adequately demonstrated. When it can be demonstrated that antenna and/or satellite dish facilities are necessary for public safety or to provide a substantial public benefit, they shall be conditioned to minimize visual impacts to the maximum extent feasible. The following standards shall apply:
  - a. Such facilities shall be colored to blend in with the background view and shall utilize landscaping which is consistent with the natural character of the area to screen or soften the visual impact of such facilities.
  - b. The height of such facilities, with the exception of monopole whiptype antennas, shall be limited to 40 feet where technically feasible. Several shorter facilities are preferable to one larger facility.
  - c. New facilities shall be avoided when feasible if there is available capacity on existing antenna facilities.
  - d. Visual impacts of ancillary facilities (e.g., power lines, cables, equipment buildings) shall be taken into consideration in the conditioning of antenna facilities.
  - e. *Discretionary development* permits for antenna facilities shall be reviewed by the Planning Division at least once every ten years. The purpose of such review is to ascertain whether there have been significant changes in antenna technology which

would allow replacement of existing apparatus with smaller or less visually intrusive equipment.

- f. Abandoned or unused antenna equipment shall be removed.
4. As a result of *any discretionary development*, the reshaping of the natural terrain to permit access and construction shall be kept to the absolute minimum. Where possible, improvements shall be designed to conform to the terrain rather than the reverse and shall comply with the following:
    - a. Transition Design: The angle of the graded slope shall be gradually adjusted to the angle of the natural terrain.
    - b. Angular Forms: Angular forms shall generally not be permitted. The graded form shall reflect the natural rounded terrain, unless exposed rock faces can be used as a desirable visual element.
    - c. Exposed Slopes: Graded slopes shall be concealed by landscaping, berms or other measures.
    - d. The toe and crest of all cut and fill slopes in excess of five feet vertical height shall be rounded with vertical curves.
    - e. Where cut or fill slopes exceed 100 feet in horizontal length, the horizontal contours of the slope shall be curved in a continuous, undulating fashion in conformance with natural slopes.
    - f. Where cut and fill slopes in excess of five feet in height are created, detailed landscape and irrigation plans shall be submitted to and approved by the Planning Division and Public Works Agency prior to the issuance of any grading permit, conditional use permit or building permit. The plan will be reviewed for type and density of ground cover, seed-mix, hydromulch mix, plant sizes and irrigation systems.
  5. *Discretionary development* on parcels containing protected trees as defined in the County's Tree Protection Ordinance, shall design necessary grading to ensure the survival and health of all such trees, except those which have been expressly authorized for removal or encroachment into the protected zone. These trees shall be protected from grading activities. If a permit has been issued for encroachment into the protected zone, the grading plan shall be accompanied by details for retaining walls and drainage devices prepared by a landscape architect.
  6. A sign program shall be submitted concurrently with a *discretionary development* permit for all commercial and industrial development. Freestanding off-site advertising signs shall be prohibited. All on-site freestanding signs shall be limited to five feet in height.
  7. Cut or fill slopes for *discretionary development* which exceed a vertical height of 25 feet shall be subject to a Planning Commission hearing.

### 1.6.3 Programs

- \* 1. The Planning Division will prepare a budgetary proposal, for the Board of Supervisors' consideration, to develop ministerial ridgeline development standards which will regulate the height, shape and color of structures built on or near prominent ridge lines. Once these standards are adopted, the requirement for a Conditional Use Permit will be removed from properties zoned Scenic Resource Protection Overlay Zone outside of the Lake Casitas Resource Protection area. After the Planning Division prepares the proposal and before action is taken by the Board of Supervisors, a citizen's committee will convene for the purpose of reviewing and commenting on the proposal.

\* See Page 4

## 1.7 Cultural Resources

### 1.7.1 Goals

1. Preserve and protect the unique *cultural resources* within the *Ojai Valley*.
2. Ensure the utilization of proper archaeological research and assistance to precede future development so as to prevent the loss or destruction of significant *archaeological* and *historic resources*.
3. Encourage the maintenance and use of facilities and organizations, (such as libraries, museums, historical societies and schools), which provides an understanding of the history and diversity of cultures in the *Ojai Valley* and surrounding areas.

### 1.7.2 Policies

1. All *discretionary development* permits involving construction or earth movement within the *Ojai Valley* shall be reviewed by the County's designated archaeological resource review organization.
  - a. Whenever such *discretionary development* requires a field reconnaissance study, such study shall be conducted by a County approved archaeologist to determine the potential for surface or subsurface cultural remains.
  - b. A *qualified archaeological monitor* shall be present to monitor significant trenching or earth movement at any such site if deemed to be needed by the study. If the archaeological monitor is not a Native American and Native American cultural resources are found at the site, then a Native American monitor shall be required.
  - c. In the event that artifacts of historical or archaeological significance are uncovered, the *qualified archaeological monitor* shall be empowered to halt construction in the immediate vicinity of such unearthed artifacts until disposition of the site has been determined by the County Planning Division.
2. All structures and/or sites designated, or being considered for designation as County Historical Landmarks within the *Ojai Valley* shall be preserved or appropriately salvaged, when deemed reasonable by the permitting authority, as a condition of *discretionary development*. All costs of preservation/salvage shall be borne by the developer. An appropriate marker shall be placed on the site to describe the historical significance of the structure, site or event.

### 1.7.3 Programs

1. The Planning Division will review the County's list of qualified archaeological monitors every five years.

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## 2. Hazards

### 2.1 Geotechnical Hazards

#### 2.1.1 Goals

1. Minimize the risk of loss of life, injury, damage to property, and economic and social dislocations resulting from seismic and geological hazards.

#### 2.1.2 Policies

1. Developers shall provide all necessary information relative to seismic and geologic hazards which may affect their project. The developer shall specify how they intend to alleviate any and all identified hazards.
2. *Discretionary development* shall be prohibited in seismic and geologic hazard areas (as identified during the environmental review process) where such hazards cannot be mitigated to less-than-significant levels.

### 2.2 Flood Hazards

#### 2.2.1 Goals

1. Minimize the risk of loss of life, injury, damage to property, and economic and social dislocations resulting from flood hazards.

#### 2.2.2 Policies

1. New *development* shall be protected from flood hazards and shall not adversely affect the flood carrying capacity of the area of Special Flood Hazard, as provided for in the Flood Plain Management Ordinance.
2. Subdivisions of land within the 100 year floodplain of the Ventura River shall be prohibited until flood control facilities to protect the area from the 100-year flood are constructed by the Ventura County Flood Control District (VCFCD) or others.

#### 2.2.3 Programs

1. The County Sheriff's Department Office of Emergency Services, in coordination with the Ventura County Flood Control District and the Casitas Municipal Water District, will maintain and update as necessary an emergency warning and evacuation plan to protect affected residents in the event of failure or spill-over of either the Matilija Dam or the Casitas Dam.

### 2.3 Fire Hazards

#### 2.3.1 Goals

1. Minimize the risk of loss of life, injury, damage to property, and economic and social dislocations resulting from fire hazards.
2. Ensure that development in "*high*" and "*very high*" fire hazard areas provides adequate protection of life and property.
3. Support controlled burn programs and other fire prevention measures.

#### 2.3.2 Policies

1. *Discretionary development* permits shall be conditioned to provide adequate water and access for fire fighting purposes as determined by the Fire Protection District. Adequate access and fire flow improvements shall be completed prior to combustible construction.
2. All roads shall meet or exceed the standards of the Fire Protection District.

3. *Discretionary development* in “*high*” and “*very high*” fire hazard areas, as determined by the Ventura County Fire Protection District shall be required to develop landscape plans utilizing fire retardant plant material, cleared areas, or other acceptable means of reducing fire hazards consistent with Fire Protection District standards.
4. A Fire Protection District approved *fuel modification zone* (fuel break) of at least 100 linear feet shall be provided around all combustible structures located in “*high*” or “*very high*” fire hazard areas.
5. Fire-retardant roofing materials shall be required for new construction in “*high*” and “*very high*” fire hazard areas.

### **2.3.3 Programs**

1. The Fire Protection District, in cooperation with the Los Padres National Forest Service, will continue control burn programs as necessary.
2. The Ventura County Fire Protection District should continue the fire hazard management (including enforcement of brush clearance requirements) program within the *Ojai Valley*.
- \* 3. The Ventura County Fire Protection District should prepare, for the Board of Supervisors’ consideration, a budgetary proposal to upgrade the Oak View Fire Station.

## **2.4 Noise Hazards**

### **2.4.1 Goals**

1. Provide for a quiet environment within the *Ojai Valley* through proper land use planning and permit conditioning.
2. Separate and/or buffer *noise sensitive uses* from noise generating uses.

### **2.4.2 Policies**

1. *Discretionary development* which would create significant noise impacts shall not be permitted to locate near residences and other *noise sensitive uses* (dwellings, schools, hospitals, nursing homes, churches and libraries) unless the impact is mitigated to an insignificant level, as defined in Section 2.16.2.1(4) of the Countywide General Plan.
2. *Noise sensitive uses* shall be buffered from excessive road noise by either the placement of walls or berms, the establishment of setbacks, greenbelts and appropriate speed limits, installation of double glazed windows, or other appropriate means.
3. Mufflers shall be used on all heavy construction equipment used in conjunction with *discretionary development* and equipment used in oil/gas exploration and production activities.

### **2.4.3 Programs**

1. The Ventura River Valley Municipal Advisory Council (or successor group) will continue to review all *discretionary* projects within its review boundaries that could generate significant noise impacts affecting the *Ojai Valley*.

\* See Page 4

## 3. Land Use

### 3.1 General Land Use

#### 3.1.1 Goals

1. Maintain the existing rural, small town character of the *Ojai Valley*.
2. Locate new *development* primarily within the existing urban communities and rural residential areas in order to avoid encroaching into established agricultural operations and undeveloped open space lands, and to minimize environmental degradation.
3. Ensure that future *discretionary development* within the study area is of high quality, consistent with the character of the *Ojai Valley*, and beneficial to the community as a whole.
4. Ensure that there are adequate public facilities and services available to serve the needs of the present and future residents of the *Ojai Valley* before additional growth is allowed to occur.
5. Promote the annexation of property located within the *Ojai Sphere of Influence* to the City of Ojai, in accordance with the County's *Guidelines for Orderly Development*.
6. Establish zoning and land use designations within the City of Ojai's *Sphere of Influence* to reflect existing parcel sizes and uses so that future *discretionary development* requests would be required to annex and develop under the auspices of the City.

#### 3.1.2 Policies

1. All zoning shall be in conformance with the Land Use Maps (Figures 3, 4, 5 and 6) and Zoning Compatibility Matrix (Figure 7). A Summary Table (Figure 8) lists each land use designation and its total area, building intensity, population capacity, and population density.
2. Outward expansion of the boundaries of the Existing Community areas, as delineated on Figures 4, 5 and 6, shall be prohibited.
3. All *discretionary development* projects shall be reviewed and conditioned to ensure that they are compatible with their surroundings, are of high quality and good design, are consistent with the character of the *Ojai Valley*, and are beneficial to the community as a whole.
4. *Discretionary development* shall be required to demonstrate that there are adequate public facilities and services available to serve the needs of the proposed development.
5. Property owners requesting a *discretionary* permit in conjunction with existing *development* (e.g. a modification to an existing CUP or PD) within the City of Ojai's *Sphere of Influence* shall be encouraged to request annexation to the City of Ojai prior to consideration of their request by the County.
6. The following annexation policies shall apply to all requests for subdivisions of land and all requests for *discretionary development* permits which would result in new uses on land designated Existing Community or Rural within the *Ojai Sphere of Influence*:
  - a. Owners of property contiguous and legally annexable to the City of Ojai shall be required to request annexation to the City prior to consideration by the County of any subdivision of land or request for new *discretionary development*. Such subdivisions and *discretionary development* requests shall not be accepted by the County unless an application for annexation has been denied by the City or the *Local Agency Formation Commission (LAFCO)*.
  - b. Owners of property not contiguous and legally annexable to the City shall be required to record an *agreement to annex* when such property becomes legally annexable, as a

condition of any subdivision or new *discretionary development* approved by the County. This agreement to annex shall contain language that is binding on all future owners of the property.

### 3.1.3 Programs

1. The City of Ojai will be requested by the Planning Division to process *discretionary* permits concurrently with any request for annexation.
- \* 2. The Planning Division will prepare a budgetary proposal to develop, with suitable public input, a set of guidelines that will ensure that *discretionary development* projects are compatible with their surroundings, are of high quality and good design, are consistent with the character of the *Ojai Valley* and beneficial to the community as a whole. The general parameters of these guidelines have been included as [Appendix "A"](#) of the Ojai Valley Area Plan.
3. The Planning Division will prepare, on behalf of the Board of Supervisors, a request to LAFCO to amend the existing city Sphere of Influence line in the area north of El Roblar and west of Highway 33 in the Existing Community of Meiners Oaks.

## 3.2 Open Space

### 3.2.1 Goals

1. Preserve the undeveloped lands which surround and frame the urban and rural communities of the *Ojai Valley* as a means of retaining the existing natural, scenic resources of the area.
2. Preserve agricultural lands as a valuable resource in the *Ojai Valley*.
3. Prevent *development* from occurring in areas where it would exceed the ability to provide public facilities and services.

### 3.2.2 Policies

1. Open Space designated parcels shall be zoned in conformance with the Land Use Map (Figure 3) and Zoning Compatibility Matrix ([Figure 7](#)) which have been developed in accordance with the above goals. Within the Open Space designation, there are four subcategories, each with a different minimum parcel size. The minimum parcel size for the OS 10 subcategory is 10 acres, OS 20 is 20 acres, OS 40 is 40 acres and OS 80 is 80 acres.
2. The Open Space designation shall be used to define the boundaries of the Existing Community and Rural designated areas, in order to prevent urban sprawl and to promote the efficient use of public facilities and services by confining the areas of *development*.
3. All *discretionary development* that would have a significant unavoidable impact on agricultural operations in Open Space designated lands shall be prohibited unless a statement of overriding considerations is adopted by the decision-making body.

### 3.2.3 Programs

1. The County will continue to support the work of the Ojai Valley Land Conservancy, the Ventura County Agricultural Land Trust and Conservancy and other similar preservation organizations that might acquire and maintain "Public Open Space" lands within the *Ojai Valley*.

\* See Page 4

### **3.3 Rural Institutional**

#### **3.3.1 Goals**

1. Recognize the camps and educational uses in the *Ojai Valley* that require large acreage and are set in a rural environment.

#### **3.3.2 Policies**

1. Rural institutional development shall be zoned in conformance with the Land Use Maps (Figures 4, 5 and 6) and Zoning Compatibility Matrix (Figure 7) that have been developed in accordance with the above goal.
2. The principal uses allowed in the Rural Institutional designation shall be camps and educational facilities. Other permitted uses include those uses which are found to be necessary to maintain the principal use, or other accessory uses that are customarily incidental, but subordinate to the principal permitted use.
3. The minimum parcel size consistent with the Rural Institutional land use designation is 20 acres.

### **3.4 Rural Residential**

#### **3.4.1 Goals**

1. Recognize and plan for low density, large lot (2 to 10 acres in size) residential development and other compatible and ancillary land uses in a rural setting.
2. Provide a transitional land use designation to buffer agricultural and open space lands from the more densely developed urban areas.

#### **3.4.2 Policies**

1. Rural Residential designated parcels shall be zoned in conformance with the Land Use Maps (Figures 4, 5 and 6) and Zoning Compatibility Matrix (Figure 7) that have been developed in accordance with the above goals. Within the Rural Residential designation there are two subcategories, each with a different minimum parcel size. The minimum parcel size for the RR 2 subcategory is 2 acres and RR 5 is 5 acres.
2. Minimum parcel size consistent with the Rural Residential land use designation for residential parcels is 2 to 10 acres.

### **3.5 Urban Residential**

#### **3.5.1 Goals**

1. Ensure that existing and future Urban Residential land use patterns result in cohesive and consolidated neighborhoods.
2. Promote adequate housing opportunities by ensuring, to the extent possible, that a diversity of housing types for all segments of the population are provided.
3. Provide housing opportunities affordable to people of all income levels.
4. Encourage the use of the "R-P-D" zone on undeveloped parcels of five acres in size or larger which are designated Urban Residential, except in situations of in-fill development where it would not result in a cohesive, consolidated neighborhood.
5. Improve the condition of existing substandard housing and housing otherwise in need of rehabilitation.

#### **3.5.2 Policies**

1. Urban Residential designated parcels shall be zoned in conformance with the Land Use Maps (Figures 4, 5 and 6) and Zoning Compatibility Matrix (Figure 7) that have been

developed in accordance with the above goals. Within the Urban Residential designation there are five subcategories, each with a different density limitation. The density range permitted in the UR 1-2 subcategory is 1 to 2 DU/acre, UR 2-4 is 2 to 4 DU/acre, UR 4-6 is 4 to 6 DU/acre, UR 6-10 is 6 to 10 DU/acre and UR 10-20 is 10 to 20 DU/acre.

2. New residential *discretionary development* shall be conditioned so as to be compatible with its surroundings and to maintain the character of the *Ojai Valley*.

### **3.5.3 Programs**

1. The Area Housing Authority will continue to administer the HOME improvement program (funded by Community Development Block Grants) to provide low interest loans, deferred payment loans and grants to qualified low income home owners within the *Ojai Valley* for the purpose of rehabilitating substandard or deteriorated housing.
2. The Planning Division will investigate ways to provide preferential treatment to affordable housing projects on the Ojai Valley Clean Air Ordinance waiting lists.

## **3.6 Commercial**

### **3.6.1 Goals**

1. Provide commercially designated property to meet the convenience shopping and service needs of the residents of the *Ojai Valley*.
2. Locate and design commercial land uses so as to minimize land use incompatibility with urban and rural residential, open space and agricultural land uses.
3. Discourage the expansion of strip commercial development.

### **3.6.2 Policies**

1. Commercially designated parcels shall be zoned in conformance with the Land Use Map (Figures 4, 5 and 6) and Zoning Compatibility Matrix ([Figure 7](#)) which have been developed in accordance with the above goals.
2. *Discretionary development* in Commercial designated areas shall be subject to either a *Planned Development* or a *Conditional Use Permit* to assure compatibility with neighboring land uses. Such review shall give careful attention to landscaping, signage, access, site and building design and size, drainage, on-site parking and circulation, operating hours, fencing and mitigation of nuisance factors.

## **3.7 Industrial**

### **3.7.1 Goals**

1. Recognize the current industrial uses within the Ojai Valley.
2. Provide for industrial uses that are sensitive to the environment and to re-enforce the need to conserve local resources.
3. Locate and design industrial land uses so as to minimize land use incompatibilities with urban and rural residential, open space and agricultural uses, and to minimize aesthetic impacts.

### 3.7.2 Policies

1. Industrially designated parcels shall be zoned in conformance with the Land Use Maps (Figures 4, 5 and 6) and Zoning Compatibility Matrix (Figure 7) which have been developed in accordance with the above goals.
2. *Discretionary development* in Industrial designated areas shall be subject to either a *Planned Development* or *Conditional Use Permit* to assure compatibility with neighboring uses. Such review shall give careful attention to aesthetics, landscaping, signage, access, site and building design and size, drainage, on-site parking and circulation, operating hours, fencing and mitigation of nuisance factors.
3. Expansion of “M-2” and “M-3” zoning shall be prohibited.

## Figure 2 Resources Map

**Figure 3**  
**Land Use Map Open Space**







**Figure 4**  
**Land Use Map**  
**Oak View, Casitas Springs, Live Oak Acres and Vicinity**

**Figure 5  
Land Use Map  
Mira Monte, Meiners Oaks and Vicinity**

**Figure 6**  
**Land Use Map**  
**East Ojai Valley, Summit and Vicinity**

### Figure 7 Zoning Compatibility Matrix

AREA PLAN MAP LAND USE DESIGNATIONS		ZONES															
		O-S (10 AC. Min.)	A-E (40 AC. Min.)	R-A (1 AC. Min.)	R-E (10,000 S.F. Min.)	R-O (20,000 S.F. Min.)	R-1 (6,000 S.F. Min.)	R-2 (3,500 S.F./DU)	R-P-D	S-P	T-P	C-O	C-1	C-P-D	M-1	M-2	M-3
OS 80	(Open Space 80 Acre Min.)	80 AC	80 AC														
OS 40	(Open Space 40 Acre Min.)	40 AC															
OS 20	(Open Space 20 Acre Min.)	20 AC															
OS 10	(Open Space 10 Acre Min.)																
R 1	(Rural Institutional 20 Ac. Min.)			20 AC	20 AC												
RR 5	(Rural Residential 5-10 Ac. Min.)			5 AC	5 AC	5 AC											
RR 2	(Rural Residential 2-5 Ac. Min.)			2 AC	2 AC	2 AC											
UR 1-2	(Urban Residential 1-2 DU/Ac.)			*	20		20			2 U							
UR 2-4	(Urban Residential 2-4 DU/Ac.)							10		4 U							
UR 4-6	(Urban Residential 4-6 DU/Ac.)									6 U							
UR 6-10	(Urban Residential 6-10 DU/Ac.)									10 U							
UR 10-20	(Urban Residential 10-20 DU/Ac.)									20 U							
COM	(Commercial)																
IND	(Industrial)																**

-  Not compatible with Plan
-  Compatible with Plan
-  Compatible only with zone suffix equal to or more restrictive than that shown in circle.
-  = X acre minimum lot size
-  = X thousand square feet minimum lot size
-  = X units per acre maximum

\* Applies to those parcels zoned "R-A" as of 7/18/95  
 \*\* Only compatible within parcels zoned "M-2" and "M-3" as of 7/18/95

**Figure 8  
Building Intensity/Population Density Standards Table**

**Open Space/Residential**

Designation	Net Acres	Max. Bldg. Coverage (% Of Lot Area)	Maximum Intensity (DU/AC) <sup>1</sup>	Dwelling Units	Average Pop/DU <sup>2</sup>	Population	Average Population Density (Persons/Acre)
OS 80 (80 Ac. Min.)	42,198	5% <sup>3</sup>	0.013	143 <sup>5</sup>	2.51	359 <sup>5</sup>	0.03
OS 40 (40 Ac. Min.)	14,501	5% <sup>3</sup>	0.025	363	2.51	911	0.06
OS 20 (20 Ac. Min.)	6,690	5% <sup>3</sup>	0.05	335	2.51	841	0.12
OS 10 (10 Ac. Min.)	456	5% <sup>3</sup>	0.1	46	2.51	115	0.25
RI (20 Ac. Min.)	966	25%	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A
RR 5 (5-10 Ac. Min.)	2,039	25% <sup>4</sup>	0.2	408	2.51	1,024	0.50
RR 2 (2-5 Ac. Min.)	1,504	25% <sup>4</sup>	0.5	752	2.51	1,888	1.22
UR 1-2 (1-2 DU/Ac.)	1,223	28% <sup>4</sup>	2.0	2,446	2.43	5,943	4.86
UR 2-4 (2-4 DU/Ac.)	349	35% <sup>4</sup>	4.0	1,396	2.43	3,392	9.72
UR 4-6 (4-6 DU/Ac.)	137	45% <sup>4</sup>	6.0	822	2.43	1,997	14.47
UR 6-10 (6-10 DU/Ac.)	269	50% <sup>4</sup>	10.0	2,690	2.43	6,537	24.30
UR 10-20 (10-20 DU/Ac.)	94	60%	20.0	1,880	2.43	4,568	48.60
<b>TOTALS</b>	<b>70,426</b>			<b>11,281</b>		<b>27,575</b>	

**Commercial/Industrial**

Designation	Net Acres	Max. Bldg. Coverage (% Of Lot Area)	Projected Floor Area (X 1,000 SF)	Average Number Of Employees Per 1,000 SF	Employees	Average Number Of Employees/Acre
C-Commercial	99	60%	633	2.0	1,266	13.0
I-Industrial	25	50%	218	2.0	436	17.4
<b>TOTALS</b>	<b>124</b>		<b>851</b>		<b>1,702</b>	

Footnotes

<sup>1</sup> Excludes second dwelling units.

<sup>2</sup> Year 2010 Forecast for Ojai Growth and Nongrowth Areas.

<sup>3</sup> Excludes structures used for growing plants such as greenhouses, hothouses, and agricultural shade/mist structures, but includes structures used for preliminary packing, storage and preservation of produce and similar structures. For nonconforming lots of less than 10 acres in area, maximum *building coverage* shall be 2,500 square feet, plus 1 square foot for each 22.334 square feet of lot area over 5,000 square feet. Greater building coverage may be allowed under discretionary permits for Farmworker Housing Complexes and may be allowed on non-conforming lots by discretionary permits for existing uses listed in the zoning ordinance under the heading of "Crop and Orchard Production".

<sup>4</sup> For nonconforming lots of less than one acre in area, maximum *building coverage* shall be as specified, or 2,500 square feet, plus 1 square foot of building area for each 4.596 square feet of lot area over 5,000 square feet, whichever is greater.

<sup>5</sup> Projection adjusted to reflect 74% (31,249 acres) of OS-80 designation is owned by US government and thus will not be developed with housing.

N/A = Not Applicable

## 4. Public Facilities And Services

### 4.1 Transportation And Circulation

#### 4.1.1 Goals

1. Promote a safe road system throughout the *Ojai Valley* without encouraging population growth and development.
2. Encourage alternatives to single occupancy motor vehicle trips by promoting carpools, vanpools and expanded bus service.
3. Encourage the expansion of the Ojai Valley Trail.

#### 4.1.2 Policies

1. The County Road Standards and Five-Year Capital Improvement Programs shall be consistent with the goals, policies and programs of the Area Plan.
2. For the area covered by this plan, the minimum acceptable *Level of Service (LOS)* for road segments and intersections within the *Regional Road Network* and *Local Road Network* shall be as follows:
  - a. *LOS - 'D'* for all *County thoroughfares* and *State highways* within the unincorporated area of the County, except as otherwise provided in Subparagraph (b);
  - b. *LOS - 'E'* for Highway 33 between the end of the freeway and the City of Ojai;
  - c. *LOS - 'C'* for all *County maintained local roads*; and
  - d. The *LOS* prescribed by the City of Ojai's General Plan for all city thoroughfares and city-maintained local roads located within that city, if the city has formally adopted policies (similar to Policies 4.1.2-2 through 4) respecting *discretionary development* in the city that would affect the *LOS* of *County thoroughfares*, *County-maintained local roads*, and *State highways* within the unincorporated area of the County.

At any intersection between two roads, each of which has prescribed minimum acceptable *LOS*, the lower *LOS* of the two shall be the minimum acceptable *LOS* for that intersection.

3. Area Plan land use designation changes, zone changes and *discretionary development* shall be evaluated for individual and cumulative impacts on existing and future roads, with special emphasis on the following:
  - a. Whether they would cause existing roads within the *Regional Road Network* or *Local Road Network* that are currently functioning at an acceptable *LOS* to function below an acceptable *LOS*;
  - b. Whether they would worsen traffic conditions on existing roads within the *Regional Road Network* that are currently functioning below an acceptable *LOS*; and
  - c. Whether they could cause future roads planned for addition to the *Regional Road Network* or the *Local Road Network* to function below an acceptable *LOS*.
4. Area Plan land use designation changes, zone changes and *discretionary development* that would individually or cumulatively cause any of the impacts identified in subparagraphs (a) through (c) of Policy 4.1.2-3 (above) shall be prohibited unless feasible mitigation measures are adopted that would ensure that the impact does not occur or unless a project completion schedule and full funding commitment for road improvements are adopted that ensure that the impact will be eliminated within a reasonable period of time. This policy does not apply to *city thoroughfares*, city-maintained *local roads*, or *Federal or State highways* located within the city unless the City of Ojai has formally adopted General Plan policies, ordinances, or a reciprocal agreement with the County (similar to Policies 4.1.2-2 through 4.2.2-4) respecting *development* in the city that would affect the *LOS* of the *County*

*thoroughfares*, County-maintained *local roads*, and *Federal and State highways* located within the unincorporated area of the County. Exceptions to the prohibitions of this policy include the following:

- a. Farmworker Housing Complexes, Affordable Housing development per Article 16 of the Non-Coastal Zoning Ordinance, and other housing exclusively for *lower-income* households, where such developments are served by roads that are currently operating at LOS"E" or better.
  - b. Additional dwellings and lots on Cultural Heritage Sites as permitted in the Non-Coastal Zoning Ordinance.
  - c. Agriculture and Agricultural Operations as permitted in the Coastal and Non-Coastal Zoning Ordinances, where such developments are served by roads that are currently operating at LOS"E" or better.
5. Highway 33 shall be limited to two lanes between Oak View and the City of Ojai. Highway 33 south of Oak View shall be limited to as few lanes as necessary to accommodate the traffic projected to occur under the City of Ojai General Plan and this Area Plan at the prescribed LOS in Policy 4.1.2-2 above. Highway 33 shall not be constructed to *freeway* standards.
6. All public roads within the *Ojai Valley* shall be maintained and improved in a manner which preserves their scenic qualities.

#### **4.1.3 Programs**

1. In order to improve circulation both within the City of Ojai and valleywide, increased cooperation and communication between CALTRANS, the City of Ojai and the County Public Works Agency should be established.
2. CALTRANS should install modifications such as traffic signals, turn lanes and pedestrian crossing facilities on Highway 33 from Foster Park to the city of Ojai as needed and where feasible, to achieve a safer highway for both motorists and pedestrians. To determine where the installation of such modifications should occur, a traffic study should be conducted by the County Public Works Agency. The study should include a travel time/intersection analysis and implementation strategies.
3. Without expanding the road beyond two lanes, CALTRANS should provide an acceptable and safe level of service on Highway 150 for motorists, pedestrians, bicyclists and equestrians through modifications such as lane widening, curve alterations and bridge improvements where necessary and feasible.
4. A modification to Highway 33 is needed in the vicinity of Casitas Springs to improve pedestrian and motor vehicle safety and to allow for an improved sense of community in Casitas Springs. Funding and construction of a Casitas Springs by-pass should only be undertaken after a thorough and complete consideration of all alternatives, including but not limited to, cuplets, pedestrian overcrossings and stoplights. Analysis of alternatives should include the following considerations:
  - a. there should be minimal intrusion upon adjoining property owners and residents,
  - b. safety and not traffic flow should be the primary concern, and
  - c. a thorough discussion of all issues related to the proposed project should be presented in a public forum to the citizens of Casitas Springs.
5. The Ojai Valley Trail will continue to be maintained and should be extended where possible.
6. The County Public Works Agency will meet with CALTRANS officials to discuss the establishment of a restriction on truck traffic on the Highway 33 corridor during peak traffic hours.

## 4.2 Water Supply And Distribution

### 4.2.1 Goals

1. Ensure that new *development* does not exceed water resources available to the *Ojai Valley*.
2. Ensure the employment of water conservation measures in new construction and encourage water conservation practices in agricultural, municipal, industrial and recreational uses and in existing *development*.
3. Encourage the safe use of *reclaimed water* for irrigation, agriculture, wetland enhancement and stream flow maintenance and such other uses as are applicable.

### 4.2.2 Policies

1. New *discretionary development* shall be required to *retrofit* existing plumbing fixtures or provide other means so as not to add any net increased demand on the existing water supply. This policy shall be applicable until such time as a groundwater basin study is completed and it is found that the available groundwater, or other sources of water, could adequately provide for cumulative demand without creating an overdraft situation.
2. *Discretionary development* shall be conditioned to utilize all feasible water conservation techniques.

### 4.2.3 Programs

1. The County Public Works Agency, in coordination with the Ojai Groundwater Basin Management Agency, City of Ventura and water purveyors within the *Ojai Valley*, should work to establish a data base on actual available groundwater supply, projected use factors for all types of *development* and threshold limits for *development* within available water resources.
2. The Casitas Municipal Water District, the other water purveyors within the *Ojai Valley* and the City of Ojai should adopt a policy similar to Policy 4.2.2-1 above.
3. The Agriculture Department will discourage inefficient irrigation methods in agriculture including *flood or furrow irrigation*. Conservation, such as the goal of 80% distribution uniformity and irrigation efficiency, as currently encouraged by the Casitas Municipal Water District, will be encouraged.
4. The Casitas Municipal Water District should continue to explore the concept of the importation of State water.
- \* 5. The Water Resources Division of the County Public Works Agency, in conjunction with the appropriate water agency, should investigate the groundwater availability of the Upper Ventura River Groundwater Basin and the Upper Ojai Groundwater Basin.
6. The Casitas Municipal Water District and other water purveyors should promote water conservation through the implementation of a tiered rate structure, and through participation and implementation of their own water conservation program.

## 4.3 Waste Treatment And Disposal Facilities

### 4.3.1 Goals

1. Ensure that sewage lines are constructed to serve all existing and future *development* in the unincorporated urban neighborhoods of the *Ojai Valley*, and are sized so as not to facilitate future *development* outside of the unincorporated urban neighborhoods.
2. Encourage practices that reduce the volume of waste disposed of in landfills.

\* See Page 4

### **4.3.2 Policies**

1. *Discretionary development* within the service boundaries of the Ojai Valley Sanitation District shall either connect directly to the existing sewer system or install necessary off-site pipelines to connect with the sewer system.
2. Private septic systems outside of the Ojai Valley Sanitation District boundaries shall be installed and regulated in accordance with the County Environmental Health Division regulations.
3. *Discretionary development* shall be encouraged to employ practices that reduce the quantities of wastes generated and shall be requested to engage in recycling activities.

## **4.4 Flood Control And Drainage Facilities**

### **4.4.1 Goals**

1. Provide and adequately maintain flood control and drainage facilities as necessary for the protection of life and property.

### **4.4.2 Policies**

(There are no supplemental policies regarding this issue.)

### **4.4.3 Programs**

1. The Ventura County Flood Control District (VCFCD) should continue to monitor, clean and adequately maintain the existing drainage channels and storm drain system within the *Ojai Valley*.
2. The VCFCD will actively investigate and pursue all available sources of funding for flood control improvements and maintenance such as bond issues, state grants and borrowed funds.

## **4.5 Public Safety**

### **4.5.1 Goals**

1. Provide for the protection of the public through effective law enforcement, fire protection and paramedic programs.
2. Prohibit *development* in areas where either emergency access or adequate water supplies for fire fighting purposes cannot be provided.

### **4.5.2 Policies**

1. *Discretionary development* shall comply with the requirements of the Fire Protection District and Sheriff's Department by providing adequate access for fire, law enforcement, emergency equipment and personnel, and evacuation.
2. Adequate water supplies and delivery system for fire fighting purposes shall be required to serve any *discretionary development* in accordance with the standards of the Fire Protection District.

### **4.5.3 Programs**

1. Crime prevention programs such as "Neighborhood Watch" and the "Senior Patrol" will continue to be encouraged by the County Sheriff's Department.
2. The County Sheriff's Department will work with the local schools, both public and private, in providing anti-drug, anti-gang and other anti-crime programs.
3. The hospitals and school districts should continue to provide CPR training programs to local residents.

## **4.6 Education**

### **4.6.1 Goals**

1. Ensure a quality education for the children of the Ojai Valley.
2. Promote the multiple use of school facilities.

### **4.6.2 Policies**

1. All *development* projects shall comply with the school districts' impact mitigation fee programs as prescribed by State law.
2. In order to ensure adequate school facilities, general plan amendments and/or zone changes for *development* which would increase the numbers of school aged children shall not be approved, unless the applicant enters into a binding agreement with the affected school district to fully mitigate the project's impact.

### **4.6.3 Programs**

1. The County Planning Division will coordinate an exchange of information with the Ojai Unified School District and the Ventura Unified School District regarding school needs and new residential *development*.
2. The Ojai Unified School District, the Ventura Unified School District and private schools throughout the valley, should make school facilities available during off-school hours for community meeting space, recreational programs and other compatible functions.

## **4.7 Parks And Recreation**

### **4.7.1 Goals**

1. Ensure that the recreational needs of existing and future residents throughout the *Ojai Valley* are adequately provided for.
2. Fully utilize existing county, city and school district park and recreational facilities and encourage the acquisition and development of new park and recreation facilities.
3. Protect existing trails and encourage the development of new bicycle and hiking/equestrian trails.
4. Ensure that recreational uses in sensitive Open Space areas preserve natural resources in balance with the provision of opportunities for the use and enjoyment of those resources.

### **4.7.2 Policies**

1. *Discretionary development* near existing trails shall be conditioned to mitigate or avoid adverse impacts to the existing trail system.
2. *Discretionary development* permits which may be expected to benefit from or contribute to the need for the trails system shall be conditioned to dedicate and improve, or pay a fee for, planned trails and public trail access points and install appropriate signs to the standards of the County of Ventura and the National Forest Service.
3. Limited expansion of recreational facilities at Lake Casitas and other recreational areas within the *Ojai Valley* shall be encouraged, consistent with the open space character of the area.

### **4.7.3 Programs**

1. Service clubs, civic groups and individuals who wish to coordinate or provide recreational programs in the *Ojai Valley* will be encouraged to do so.
2. The County General Services Agency will work with the City of Ojai, local civic groups and public and private schools throughout the *Ojai Valley* in order to establish cooperative

agreements for use of each other's facilities to provide the best possible service for all residents of the *Ojai Valley*.

3. The County Trails Advisory Committee, in cooperation with the General Services Agency, City of Ojai and National Forest Service will develop a master plan of proposed bicycle and hiking/equestrian trails.
4. The County General Services Agency and the City of Ojai should plan for at least 180 acres of additional local park facilities. Funding for this park acquisition should come from Quimby Fees, development dedications and other sources which may be available to the City and the County.
5. The County General Services Agency and the City of Ojai should jointly investigate the potential for formation of a new park district for the *Ojai Valley* in order to more equitably spread the cost of providing recreational services to the entire Ojai Valley.
6. To fund an expanded local parks program, the County and the City of Ojai should consider a Special Tax or other means to permanently support local and regional park and recreational services within the *Ojai Valley*.

## **4.8 Governmental Organization**

### **4.8.1 Goals**

1. Provide opportunities for the citizens of the *Ojai Valley* to take an active role in determining community affairs.
2. Maintain the governmental mechanisms used to communicate the residents' needs and desires to their elected representatives.
3. Encourage the study of local governmental options available to the citizens of the *Ojai Valley*.

### **4.8.2 Policies**

1. The Ventura River Valley Municipal Advisory Council (VRVMAC) or successor group shall continue to be the Board of Supervisors' recognized public review group for all projects which fall within its review boundaries. All applications for *discretionary development* and all environmental documents for projects which would affect the *Ojai Valley* shall be reviewed by the VRVMAC or successor group.
2. All County departments shall make an effort to notify the VRVMAC (or successor group), concerning issues and programs of importance to the *Ojai Valley* area prior to decisions being made regarding these matters.

### **4.8.3 Programs**

1. The County Planning Division will continue to coordinate an information exchange with the City of Ojai to ensure that each is informed of proposed projects that could affect the other jurisdiction.
2. The County will work with the Ojai Valley Unified Local Government Options Study Committee in order to provide adequate information for the residents of the *Ojai Valley* to make a knowledgeable decision regarding future incorporation options.
3. The members of the Board of Supervisors representing the *Ojai Valley* should explore reconstituting the VRVMAC to cover the entire planning area.

# Glossary

Unless the context requires otherwise, the definitions of words and terms provided in this section as well as the Goals, Policies and Programs volume of the County General Plan, shall be used in interpreting this Plan.

**Agreement to Annex:** A binding agreement, officially recorded with the deed of a property, in which the owners of a property, and all heirs and successors, give their permission to allow their property to be annexed to the City of Ojai at such time as the City wishes to carry out annexation.

**Aquifer Recharge Area:** Streambeds, spreading grounds, aquifer outcrops which are areas where the aquifer is exposed at the ground surface, or the area above a groundwater basin that does not have a clay cap.

**Area of Interest:** Major geographic areas reflective of community and planning identity established by the Ventura County *Local Agency Formation Commission (LAFCO)*. (c.f., *Sphere of Influence*)

**Conditional Use Permit (CUP):** See County Zoning Ordinance.

**Conjunctive Use of Water:** The operation of a groundwater basin in combination with a surface water storage and conveyance system. Water is stored in the groundwater basin for later use by intentionally recharging the basin during years of above-average water supply.

**Emergency Use Authorization:** See County Zoning Ordinance.

**Flood and Furrow Irrigation:** An agricultural irrigation technique in which the ground is graded with a very gentle, uniform slope and water is distributed down furrows. Most commonly used in orchards and row crops.

**Indigenous Plant Species:** Vegetation native to the region.

**Land Conservation Act (LCA):** A California statute which allows local government to enter into long-term contracts with agricultural landowners by lowering property taxes as an incentive to continue agricultural use of the land. Also known as the Williamson Act.

**Locally Important Plant Communities:** Southern Sycamore-Alder, Riparian Woodland, California Walnut Woodland, Southern Coast Live Oak Riparian Forest, Oak Woodlands, and Coastal Sage-Scrub Community.

**Ojai Valley:** Approximately 74,000 acres governed by the Area Plan that is generally bound on the north by the Nordhoff Ridge, on the south by the Sulphur Mountain ridgeline, on the east by the mountain ridge between Bear Canyon and Santa Paula Canyon and on the west by the Lake Casitas/Ventura River watershed boundary. (see [Figure 1](#)).

**Planned Development Permit (PD):** See County Zoning Ordinance.

**Qualified Archaeological Monitor:** A County-recognized Archaeologist or Native American who is trained to monitor trenching or earthmoving activities at a potentially or confirmed archaeologically sensitive area.

**Retrofit:** Replacement of less efficient plumbing fixtures in existing structures with new ultra-low volume (ULV) devices.

**Slope, moderate:** Any slope on a property, or portion of a property, which exceeds ten percent (10%) average slope, but is below twenty-five percent (25%) average slope.

**Slope, steep:** Any slope on a property, or portion of a property, which exceeds twenty-five percent (25%) average slope.

**Sphere of Influence:** An area designated by the *Local Agency Formation Commission (LAFCO)* for each city or special district representing the probable, ultimate boundary of the city or special district. (c.f., *Area of Interest*)

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## **Appendix "A" - Urban And Rural Design Concept**

The indigenous settlement pattern of the Ojai Valley consists of small towns and villages connected by country roads through intervening rural land. The scale, forms, materials and detailing of the roads, streets and buildings typical of the Valley prior to the 1950's define the unique design character which this Plan seeks to preserve and promote. In the near future, the essential characteristics of these design elements will be codified as Special Development Standards and Design Guidelines for all development within the Plan area requiring discretionary review, and for major public improvements. For clarity, existing prototypical examples of roads, streets and buildings are identified. These are intended to illustrate principles of scale, massing, materials, construction methods, and detailing which are appropriate to the Valley, but are not intended to require a particular "style".

### **General**

Simple, rustic street, road and building types, designed in the local vernacular, are appropriate. Streets and public and private roads are narrow and often irregular, deflecting around natural features of terrain and vegetation, and closely following the natural contours of the land. Frontages are typically defined by low walls, fences and native plants. Building walls are typically made of or clad in wood siding, smooth stucco, or native stone. Doors and windows have vertical or square proportions. Roofs are gabled, with overhanging eaves, and are clad in wood shingles, clay tile, or dimensional composition shingles. Parking is to the side or rear of the lot except for single rows of parking spaces directly off the street at retail frontages.

Suburban street and building types - including standard arterial - and collector-type streets, strip-type retail buildings, chain-type architectural design and signage, parking lots fronting the street, and tract-type houses with garage doors visible from the public way - are specifically identified as destructive of the Valley's unique character and are strongly discouraged.

### **Towns and Villages**

Communities are close-knit, each residence within walking distance of a store, a park or other public open space, and a bus stop. Buildings are scaled to the pedestrian, and enfront the public way with porches, colonnades or forecourts. The prototypical town center is Ojai Avenue from Ventura Street to Montgomery Street; the village center is Ventura Avenue in Casitas Springs; prototypical neighborhood streets are Canada Street and Grand Avenue in Ojai.

### **Countryside**

Country roads are two-lane with a pavement of 16-20 feet, flanked by 4-8 foot gravel shoulders, ditches or earth banks. Frontage improvements include native stone walls, wood board or wire fences, and native shrubs and trees. Prototypical roads are Thatcher Road, Carne Road and Ojai-Santa Paula Road. Houses are typically obscured from public views by frontage elements or are well set back in groves of trees. Grading is strictly minimized. Local-serving general merchandise stores and restaurants are located at selected crossroads -Boccali's at Ojai-Santa Paula and Reeves Roads is the prototype.