

CHAPTER 1 Introduction

INTRODUCTION

This is the first comprehensive update of the Simi Valley General Plan since 1988, and it is the result of many hours of research, analysis, and the collaborative efforts of the City’s elected and appointed decision-makers, City staff, individuals, and agencies. It also included ongoing feedback throughout the planning process from residents and members of the public.

Simi Valley is a distinct place that is geographically separated from the continuous sprawl of the San Fernando Valley (Los Angeles County) and from other communities of Ventura County by the surrounding hillsides. Its valley setting and rolling hills are framed by the ridgelines and hillsides that physically separate the City from neighboring jurisdictions, as shown in Figure 1 (Regional Location). The City’s physical form is largely defined by the natural hillsides and canyons on the City’s periphery that give shape to the built environment. The suburban development pattern on the valley floor generally follows the east/west alignment of the Ronald Reagan (118) Freeway, Los Angeles Avenue, and the Arroyo Simi. Existing



Simi Valley and the 118 Freeway

development is characterized by a diversity of stable, attractive neighborhoods with commercial services and job centers at various locations throughout the City.

Development of the City over the years has resulted in substantial buildout of properties on the valley floor with most new residential communities in the recent past being built in the hillside and canyon areas surrounding the City. In

spite of the predominant suburban development pattern, several large areas of Simi Valley continue to retain the semi-rural character reminiscent of the City’s past.

This General Plan continues the expansion of Simi Valley by redirecting new growth inward rather than continued outward expansion into the surrounding hillsides and natural open space areas. Simi Valley’s aspirations for future growth and development are grounded in a shared vision to protect the City’s existing natural environment and to maintain and enhance the character and quality of life in its diverse communities. The goals and policies of the updated General Plan are intended to guide this transformation through a comprehensive set of updated goals and policies that began with a review of the previous General Plan’s goals and policies, which were updated based on technical assessment and evaluation of land use, traffic, and fiscal data. This General Plan is based on a critical analysis of what types of land uses will be allowed, where development will occur and in what amounts, and what it will look like in order to achieve the community’s vision.

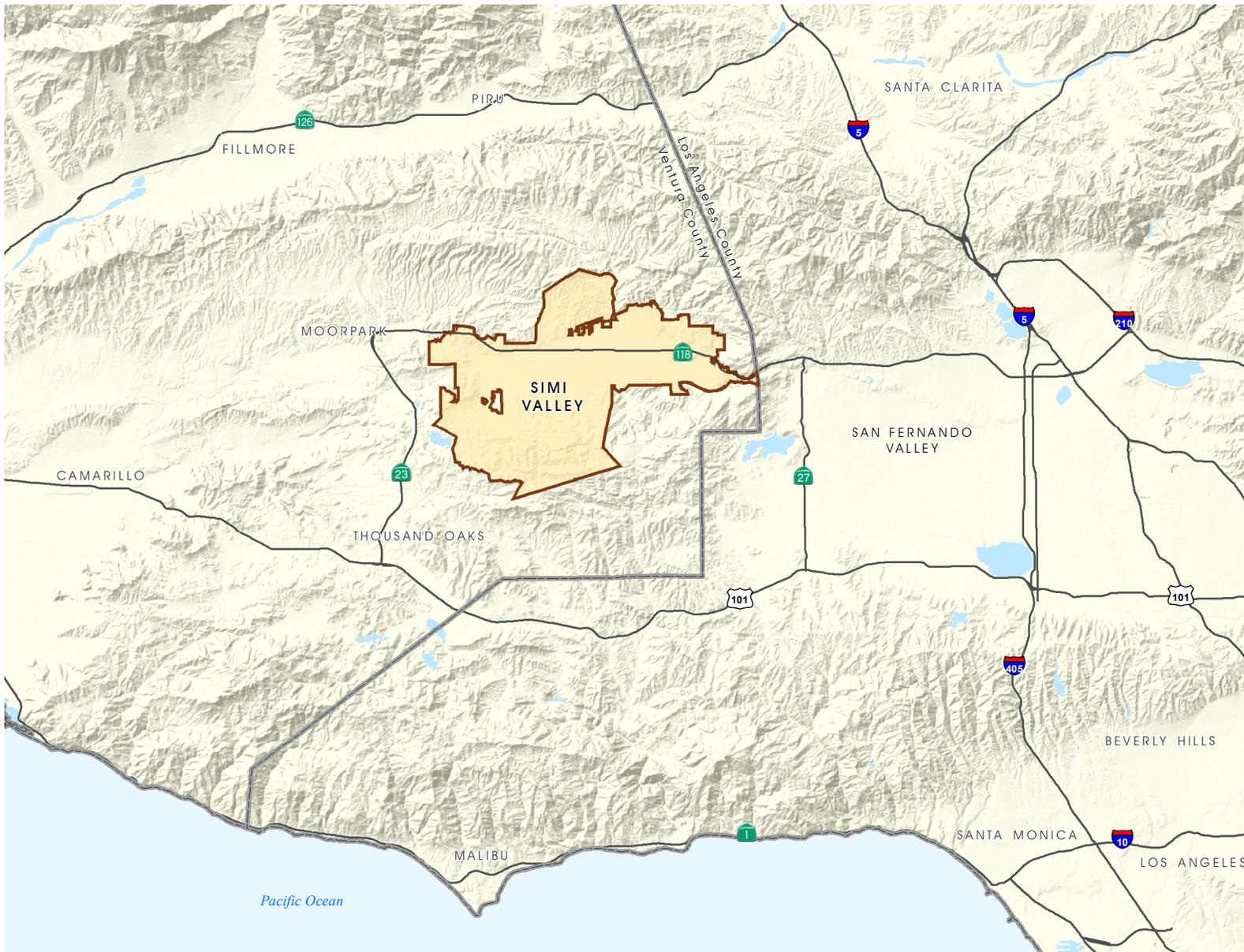
Through the many public meetings and workshops during development of the plan, the community expressed support for an environmentally sustainable approach to planning that balances the need for adequate infrastructure, housing, and economic vitality, while maintaining and preserving the natural areas surrounding the City. This vision is addressed in the Plan’s emphasis on reuse and infill development within the existing footprint of development in the City and focusing growth in areas around transit stations and along corridors where transit is available or is anticipated to be available in the future. This sustainable

CITY of SIMI VALLEY
General Plan Update

Regional
Location

Legend

-  City of Simi Valley
-  County Boundary



Source: ESRI, 2006
Date Revised: December 15, 2010
D21310_Simi_Valley_GP\Regional Location.mxd

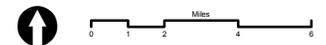


Figure 1

THE PURPOSE OF THE GENERAL PLAN

approach fosters stewardship of the community’s natural resources and results in a General Plan that respects the growth boundaries and limits established by the City’s Urban Restriction Boundary (CURB).

The updated General Plan is intended to provide a meaningful guide for the future growth and development of Simi Valley over the next twenty years and fulfills statutory requirements. It is a comprehensive framework for the City’s physical, economic, and social development that sustains natural environmental resources. It is also long range—looking ahead to 2030 and beyond—while at the same time presenting policies to guide day-to-day decisions.

THE PURPOSE OF THE GENERAL PLAN

The General Plan is a policy document that establishes a comprehensive and consistent framework for local land use decision-making. The California Government Code (Sections 65300 et seq.) requires each city and county in the state to prepare and adopt a comprehensive long-range general plan for its physical development. The general plan and its maps, diagrams, and development policies form the basis for the city’s zoning, subdivision, and public works actions. Under California law, no specific plan, area plan, community plan, zoning, subdivision map, or public works project may be approved unless the city finds that it is consistent with the adopted general plan. The State General Plan Guidelines recommend that general plans be updated regularly to ensure that they remain relevant and reflective of changes in a community and its vision for its future. This is important not only to reflect local physical and demographic changes, but also broader changes in culture, technology, legislation, and development practices.

Per California Government Code Section 65302, the General Plan must address seven topics referred to as “elements” consisting of land use, circulation, housing, open space, conservation, safety, and noise to the extent that these topics are locally relevant. The General Plan may also include other topics of interest or concern to the local jurisdiction (California Government Code Section 65303). This General Plan includes each of the state-mandated topics and the optional elements in Simi Valley’s prior General Plan including recreation, community services, economic development, and air quality. The goals and policies in each chapter of the General Plan, whether they cover mandated or optional topics, have equal legal validity, and the City’s obligations for their equal enforcement and implementation are required by statute and case law.

A local jurisdiction may adopt a general plan in the format that best fits its unique circumstances (California Government Code Section 65300.5). In doing so, the jurisdiction must ensure that the general plan and its component parts comprise an integrated, internally consistent, and compatible statement of development policies. In updating the General Plan, the City of Simi Valley consolidated some of the mandatory elements and re-organized the content by related topics. Important themes, such as community livability, sustainability, and global warming, are woven throughout the Plan rather than structured as independent



The General Plan serves as the “constitution” for all policies and regulations pertaining to Simi Valley’s physical development

topics. Correlation between the Simi Valley General Plan and the required general plan elements is shown in the following matrix:

Table 1 General Plan Topics								
Simi Valley General Plan Chapters	Legally Required General Plan Topics/Elements							Optional Elements
	Land Use	Circulation	Housing	Conservation	Open Space	Noise	Safety	
Community Development								
Land Use	●							
Economic Development								●
Historic and Cultural Resources								●
Housing								
			●					
Mobility and Infrastructure								
Mobility and Circulation		●						
Infrastructure and Utilities		●						
Natural Resources								
Open Space					●			
Biological Resources				●				
Visual Resources				●				
Water Resources				●				
Energy Resources				●				
Air Quality				●				
Community Services								
Parks and Recreation					●			●
Community Services								●
Arts and Culture								●
Community Education								●
Libraries								●
Safety and Noise								
Emergency Preparedness							●	
Police Services							●	
Geologic and Seismic Hazards							●	
Fire Services							●	
Urban and Wildland Fire Hazards							●	
Flood Hazards							●	
Hazardous Materials							●	
Noise						●		
Implementation Program	●	●	●	●	●	●	●	●

HOW TO USE THE GENERAL PLAN

The Simi Valley General Plan is intended for use by all members of the community, as indicated below for various groups, depending on their interests and objectives.

If you are a Simi Valley resident, the General Plan identifies the long-range plans and land uses permitted in the area around your home, changes that may affect your neighborhood, and the policies the City will use to evaluate development applications that might affect you and your neighbors.

The Plan includes goals that indicate how the City will attract businesses that provide goods and services to meet your daily needs, while contributing revenue to help fund police, fire, recreation, street maintenance, and other services that sustain the quality and livability of your neighborhood. It defines how the City will attract new jobs and create housing opportunities for you to work near where you live.

The Plan also informs you how the City plans to improve mobility infrastructure; proposes to work with independent agencies to meet the needs for adequate parks and schools; and continues to provide police, fire, and other public services; protect valued open spaces and environmental resources; and protect you from the risks of excessive noise, earthquakes, fires, and other natural hazards. Cumulatively, the Plan identifies the actions the City will take to ensure that the City as a whole, as well as your neighborhood, retains its economic value and remains a great place to live.

Finally, the Plan specifies how the City plans to organize land uses, infrastructure, and community amenities to improve community livability and public health through the development of complete neighborhoods. These neighborhoods enhance walkability and promote enhanced air quality through reduced roadway congestion and fewer vehicle trips that result in less air pollution.

If you are a Simi Valley business owner, the Plan outlines the measures the City will take to protect your investment and support your future success. It addresses the areas of business retention and attraction; establishes the City's goals for enhancing the economic vitality of existing business districts; and accommodates the expansion of local employment opportunities in business parks, industrial areas, and new mixed-use developments. Expectations for the City's business districts are established, and policies are included that ensure business operations will be compatible with other businesses and nearby residential areas.

If you are interested in developing land within the City or moving your business to the City, the Plan will introduce you to the community through the City's Vision, as well as the goals and policies in each chapter that identify the community's key objectives. To familiarize yourself with the General Plan, the Land Use and Economic Development goals and policies are useful starting points. However, it is important to review maps and policies throughout this document and the Simi Valley Municipal Code to get a complete perspective on how and where development may take place.

The General Plan is also a tool to help City staff, and elected and appointed officials such as the City Council and the Planning Commission, make land use, public service, and capital investment decisions. It establishes the framework for the City's zoning and other implementing regulations. It identifies economic development, mobility and infrastructure improvements, community services, and environmental programs needed to

sustain the quality of life that residents of Simi Valley have come to expect. Future development decisions must be consistent with the Plan. Finally, the Plan is intended to help acquaint other public agencies, from Caltrans to the Simi Valley Unified School District, with the community’s Vision and expectations for its future, as they contemplate actions in Simi Valley.

While the Plan’s narrative text and maps frame the key proposals, the essence of the Plan lies in its goals, policies, and implementation measures. As manifestations of the community’s Vision, these statements set forth the City’s approach to various issues, and are defined as follows:

- **Goals** describe ideal future conditions for a particular topic, such as traffic congestion or sustainability. Goals are general expressions of community values and are broad and typically not quantifiable or time-dependent.
- **Policies** provide guidance to assist the City as it makes decisions relating to each goal. They indicate a City’s commitment to a particular course of action. Policies tend to be action-oriented, and they must be clear and unambiguous in order to be useful in judging whether local development decisions are consistent with the General Plan. Some policies address guidelines or standards against which development decisions can be evaluated, such as local noise standards or traffic level of service standards.
- **Implementation Programs** identify the specific steps to be taken by the City to implement the policies. They may include revisions of current codes and ordinances, updates to capital improvement plans and programs, and identification of new programs and actions the City will undertake. The programs identify the timeframe and the City department responsible for carrying them out after the General Plan is adopted.



City staff working at the planning counter

The diagram on the following page serves as a “reader’s guide” to the goals and policies of the General Plan. A simple numbering system facilitates use of the General Plan and enables the reader to distinguish each topic’s goals, policies, and implementation programs. Each Plan topic is assigned a letter(s). For example, Land Use is “LU,” Mobility is “M,” and so on. Goals are assigned a second order number, i.e., the first goal for Land Use is numbered as “LU-1” and the second is “LU-2.” Policies are assigned a third order number, with the first policy relating to the first Land Use goal being numbered as “LU-1.1” and the first policy relating to the second goal numbered as “LU-2.1.” Each goal and policy is given a title that synthesizes its focus. These titles are bolded so that the reader can easily scan the page in a particular section of the plan to search for goals or policies regarding a particular topic.

All General Plan policies are followed by a set of numbers in parentheses. These numbers reference applicable measures that will be undertaken by the City to implement the policy. The implementation program at the end of each chapter is organized as a table that contains all the measures, processes, or other activities to be used by the City to implement the policies for each topic included in the chapter.

MOBILITY (M)

M-7.3 Traffic Signal Operations. Improve traffic signal operations by optimizing signal timing, interconnecting signalized intersections along arterial streets, and installing computerized master traffic signal control systems in intensively utilized areas. *(Imp M-1)*

M-7.4 Real-Time Travel. Work with Caltrans and transit providers to provide real-time travel and parking availability information for transportation system conditions and make the information available to users and operators. *(Imp M-12, M-15)*

M-7.5 Coordination with Adjacent Jurisdictions. Coordinate operations with adjacent jurisdictions to enhance the efficiency of inter-jurisdictional roadway system operations and to encourage reciprocal bus passes for adjacent jurisdictions. *(Imp M-12)*



Traffic control device

SYSTEM ACCESS AND IMPROVEMENTS

Goals and policies in this section identify the need to balance providing access to development with the need to maintain the efficient safe flow of traffic along roadways in the system through ongoing improvements. Street improvements required of a development must be coordinated with other development activity.

GOAL M-8

System Improvements. Safe and efficient movement of people and goods is provided within the City through the timely improvement of streets and intersections and the restriction of access along streets according to the City's street standards.

Policies

M-8.1 Existing Streets. Improve existing roads within the City as discretionary development creates the need. Provide additional roads as needed to complement the General Plan network, and maintain all such roads so that they are safe and functioning at an acceptable LOS. *(Imp M-1, M-2, A-1)*

M-8.2 Resolving Impacts. Resolve project-related off-site traffic impacts generated by new development and require contributions for cumulative improvements or additions to the mobility system. *(Imp M-2, M-6)*

M-8.3 Cost of Improvements. Allocate costs associated with resolving cumulative off-site traffic impacts on the basis of trip generation. *(Imp M-2, M-6)*

M-8.4 Accommodate Alternative Modes. Condition discretionary development to minimize traffic impacts by incorporating sidewalks and bicycle pathways, bicycle racks and lockers, ridesharing programs, transit improvements (bus turnouts, shelters, benches), transportation demand measures, and/or transit subsidies for employees or residents of the proposed development. *(Imp M-2, M-9)*

M-8.5 Coordinate Improvements. Coordinate project phasing with the construction of on-site and off-site circulation improvements to maintain optimum levels of traffic movement. *(Imp M-2)*

GENERAL PLAN 5-13 CITY OF SIMI VALLEY

SECTION HEADER

The header identifies the chapter (if on an even-numbered page) or topic (if on an odd-numbered page).

PHOTOGRAPHS AND DIAGRAMS

Graphical illustration of an example of the intent of the goals and policies.

GOAL NUMBERING

Each goal number starts with the element acronym and is followed by the number of the goal (e.g., M-8 = Mobility Element, eighth goal).

GOALS

Each goal has one or more policies associated with the goal.

GOAL TITLE

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

POLICIES

Each policy is associated with a specific goal.

POLICY TITLE

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

IMPLEMENTATION PROGRAM TAG

Each policy is followed by a set of numbers in italics/parentheses that identifies the tool or action the City will use to implement the policy. These measures are detailed in Chapter 5.

POLICY NUMBERING

Continuing from the goal numbering, the policy number is shown as the last number, supporting the goal it follows (e.g., Policy M-8.5 = fifth policy under the Mobility Element, eighth goal).

PAGE NUMBER

Shows the chapter and page number (e.g., 5-13 = Chapter 5, page 13).

THE PLANNING PROCESS AND PUBLIC INVOLVEMENT

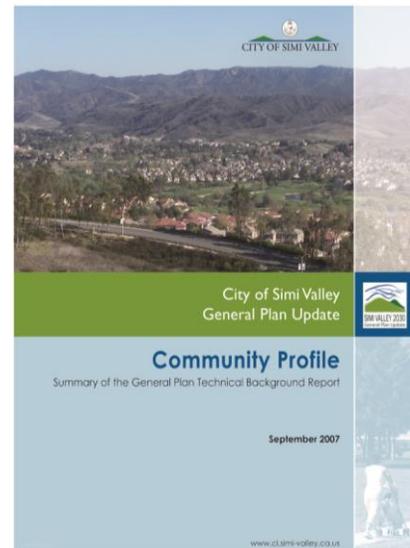
How the Updated General Plan Was Prepared

The preparation of the Simi Valley General Plan involved the following key steps.

1. **Existing Conditions.** Background data regarding the existing conditions, trends, and projected future conditions for the City’s physical, economic, social, and environmental resources were compiled and analyzed. This data has been compiled as a **Technical Background Report (TBR)**, and is summarized in a **Community Profile**. The TBR serves two purposes:
 - As the basis for articulation of the planning issues to be addressed by Plan policy, incorporating all studies required by state law
 - As the statutory “existing setting” section of the General Plan Environmental Impact Report (EIR)

While documenting existing conditions, “Issue Papers” were prepared for key topics of concern to be addressed in the updated General Plan. The issue papers included detailed discussion of the issues and possible policy approaches to address the issue and the implications of each. The issue papers were used to inform the preparation goals and policies and as part of the planning process. Issue papers were prepared on the following topics:

- Affordable Housing
- Infill Development
- Transportation
- Economic/Fiscal Trends



Community Profile

2. **Vision and Guiding Principles.** This step involved establishing a planning framework for the updated General Plan. The Vision is defined as the overarching framework for the formulation of updated goals and policies and addresses the role, character, and quality of the City’s built and natural environment. The Vision was crafted to reflect the collective input of Simi Valley residents, elected and appointed officials, and the General Plan Advisory Committee (GPAC) that was appointed by the City Council to guide the General Plan update process. The Guiding Principles define a framework of the expected outcomes of the updated goals and policies and articulate specific measures to attain Simi Valley’s Vision.
3. **Alternative Land Use/Growth Plans.** Areas of conservation and transition were first identified as a means to maintain and enhance the character and quality of life in the areas that would not be subject to change. As Simi Valley is approaching buildout with limited undeveloped land on the valley floor, the land use alternatives considered focused on infill development opportunities for reuse and improvement of economically obsolete and physically declining commercial and industrial districts, opportunities to intensify residential development on corridors with access to transit, and limited new development in key areas of vacant land. Importantly, existing single-family neighborhoods and the natural open space areas and hillsides surrounding the City were identified for conservation in

THE PLANNING PROCESS AND PUBLIC INVOLVEMENT

consideration of the environmental, economic, fiscal, and community service objectives consistent with residents' vision for long-term growth in Simi Valley.

Twelve community subareas and districts were identified as areas of transition, and alternative land uses were identified for these areas based on technical analysis and GPAC input. An environmental scan was conducted to determine if there were critical effects associated with any of the alternatives considered. Cumulative effects on the fiscal balance of the City were assessed as well as traffic impact analyses for the land uses and development scenarios considered.

4. **Preferred Land Use Plan.** A preferred growth and land use plan was selected in consideration of the comparative traffic, fiscal, and environmental impacts, as well as consistency with the vision and guiding principles. A key consideration in the selection of the preferred plan was the City's desire to maintain an acceptable level of service on its roadway network.
5. **Plan Goals and Policies.** Existing goals and policies in the General Plan were updated based on their consistency with the established community vision, consideration of current issues and community needs, understandability, practicality and feasibility, embodiment of best planning practices, and consistency with current legislation including climate change, and their reflection of community values.
6. **Draft General Plan.** The Draft General Plan was published incorporating an overview of its content and the planning context in which it was prepared. The Draft General Plan was available for public review and comment at a public workshop and subsequent Planning Commission and City Council study sessions and public hearings.
7. **Draft EIR (DEIR).** The DEIR was prepared in accordance with the requirements of the California Environmental Quality Act (CEQA). From the date of publication, the DEIR was circulated for a 45-day period for public review and comment. Responses to all comments were prepared and incorporated into the Final EIR, which was reviewed and certified by the City Council.
8. **Public Review/Public Hearings.** The Planning Commission and City Council conducted a series of study sessions and public hearings on the Draft General Plan and EIR. In consideration of the public input, the Commission made recommendations to the City Council regarding the Plan's content and certification of the Final EIR. The City Council considered the Commission's input and conducted additional public hearings. Based on these, the City Council made its final recommendations and adopted the General Plan and certified the Final EIR.
9. **Updated General Plan.** The adopted Simi Valley General Plan was published and the goals, policies, and programs contained therein are now ready to be implemented.

Public Involvement in Updating the General Plan

The planning process to update the General Plan involved a broad spectrum of community input including elected and appointed officials, residents, and public agencies during key phases in the development of the document. The public and stakeholders were involved throughout the planning process from the initial documentation of the existing conditions and issue identification to selection of the alternative land use plans, and development of preliminary goals and policies for the updated General Plan. From the outset of the General Plan update, an outreach and engagement plan was established to continually involve members of the public and other interested parties in the planning process to obtain valuable community feedback.

A General Plan Advisory Committee (GPAC) was appointed by the City Council to assure the continuity of community involvement in the update process. The GPAC conducted 17 meetings throughout the process to provide feedback to City staff and the consultants, and was instrumental in the development of the updated General Plan. The 17-member GPAC was comprised of City Council appointees, a representative of each



General Plan Advisory Committee (GPAC)

Neighborhood Council, at large residents, and representatives of a broad range of public agencies and civic and community service organizations that have an interest in the future of Simi Valley.

The opportunities for public involvement and the methods used for outreach and information sharing over the course of the preparing the updated General Plan included 17 publicly noticed GPAC meetings. An additional 15 publicly noticed meetings, including public workshops, joint Planning Commission and City Council meetings, study

sessions, and public hearings, were conducted for the purpose of informing and engaging the public in the preparation of the updated General Plan.

The opportunities for public involvement are summarized below along with their dates of occurrence:

Public Involvement Opportunities: Meetings/Dates on the General Plan Update

- General Plan Advisory Committee appointed (June 2007)
- The GPAC conducted seventeen meetings to establish ongoing direction and feedback for the preparation of the updated General Plan. (July 2007–June 2009)
- Community Visioning Workshop for input on the Vision and Guiding Principles (November 2007)
- Joint Planning Commission/Council Meeting to confirm the Vision/Guiding Principles (November 2007)
- Community Workshop to review land use alternatives (May 2008)
- Joint Planning Commission/City Council meeting to review land use alternatives (July 2008)
- Community Workshop to allow public input on a preferred land use plan (July 2009)
- Joint Planning Commission/Council meeting to select a preferred land use plan (September 2009)
- Planning Commission review of the draft goals and policies (November/December 2009)
- Housing Forum to receive input from developers and service providers (December 2009)
- Scoping meeting for the Environmental Impact Report (December 2009)
- City Council/Planning Commission Review of the Draft Housing Element (August 2010)
- Planning Commission public hearing on the Draft General Plan and EIR (March–April 2012)
- City Council public hearing to adopt the General Plan (including Housing Element) and EIR (May–June 2012)

HOW THE GENERAL PLAN IS ORGANIZED

Public Outreach and Information Sharing

Methods used to furnish ongoing information on the General Plan update throughout the planning process included the following:

a. **General Plan Update Website:**

- Described a General Plan, its purpose and content, and the legal requirements for its preparation.
- Described the planning process used to update the General Plan.
- Provided dates and information for upcoming meetings and activities in the planning process.
- Included a downloadable version of all documents produced and meeting proceedings since inception of the planning process.
- Allowed direct email contact with City staff for additional information regarding the General Plan update process, upon request.



Residents participating at General Plan Workshop

- b. **Mailing List.** Staff in the Simi Valley Environmental Services Department maintained a mailing list that was used to notify interested parties of meetings and document availability via email contact. Interested parties were included on this mailing list by contacting City staff via the web page contact link or by completing the sign-in sheet available at all General Plan meetings and workshops.
- c. **Community Profile.** A summary of existing conditions in the community was included on the General Plan website.

HOW THE GENERAL PLAN IS ORGANIZED

The General Plan is organized into nine chapters. The first chapter is the Introduction, which presents information about the Plan’s purpose, legislative requirements, organization, the process for its preparation, and the public involvement that was involved in its development. The second chapter presents the Vision and Guiding Principles that reflect the overarching themes that guide all goals, policies, and programs in the General Plan and the specific measures to attain the Vision. The next six chapters comprise the Plan’s “elements.” Each presents an overview of its scope and a brief discussion of a specific topic followed by goals and policies regarding that topic. Each of these six chapters includes an implementation program that identifies the measures the City will use to implement the goals and policies specified for each topic addressed in that chapter. The final chapter is a glossary of the technical terms used in the General Plan.

An overview of the Plan’s chapters is presented below.

1. **Introduction.** This chapter includes the purpose and legal basis for the General Plan. It describes the process for preparing the plan, and it identifies the community vision which is reflected in the broad themes, such as livability, sustainability, and climate change, that are woven throughout the document.

2. **Vision and Guiding Principles.** This chapter contains the Vision that is the foundation upon which the General Plan actions are measured, and the Guiding Principles that define the expected outcomes of the goals and policies.
3. **Community Development.** This chapter defines goals and policies regarding how existing neighborhoods, commercial districts, employment centers, and public spaces are to be maintained and enhanced, as well as where and how new development is to occur.
 - a. Land Use (LU) defines where lands are to be conserved and where growth will be targeted, and specifies the types, densities, and design characteristics of uses to be permitted.
 - b. Economic Development (ED) specifies strategies for business retention and attraction and fiscal balance.
 - c. Historic and Cultural Resources (HR) defines processes for the preservation of the City's historic and cultural buildings and sites as the identification and treatment of potential archeological and paleontological resources.
4. **Housing.** The Housing (H) Element contains strategies and programs to address the City's fair share of regional housing needs for all income groups and household types in the community as required by state law. *(Note: Because of the shorter update cycle and special requirements associated with the Housing Element, the Draft 2008–2014 Simi Valley Housing Element is bound separately from the Draft General Plan. Upon its adoption, Housing Element policies will be incorporated into this General Plan.)*
5. **Mobility and Infrastructure.** This chapter presents goals and policies for the provision of infrastructure and services that support residents and businesses.
 - a. Mobility (M) allows for the movement of people and goods, including autos, transit, bicycles, and other modes. It addresses key issues such as trip reduction, parking, traffic safety, and neighborhood traffic calming.
 - b. Infrastructure and Utilities (IU) addresses the provision of public infrastructure, including water, sewer, storm drainage, solid waste, electricity, natural gas, and telecommunications.
6. **Natural Resources (NR).** This chapter discusses the management and conservation of Simi Valley's open space and natural environment, including biological, mineral, water, energy, visual resources, and air quality.
7. **Community Services.** The Community Services (CS) chapter addresses a range of public services to meet the needs of residents, including parks and recreation facilities and programs, arts and cultural services, education, and library services.
8. **Safety and Noise.** This chapter prescribes strategies for the protection of the public health and safety and the control of excessive noise impacts to residents, businesses, and visitors to the City.
 - a. Safety (S) addresses police and fire protection; emergency preparedness for natural and man-made disasters such as flooding, geologic and seismic hazards; and hazardous materials.
 - b. Noise (N) presents policies to mitigate the potential impacts of excessive noise in the community.
9. **Glossary.** This final chapter defines the terminology used in the General Plan.

RELATED DOCUMENTS, PLANS, AND INITIATIVES

The General Plan has been prepared in consideration of research compiled in the Technical Background Report (TBR), which contains relevant data and analysis regarding existing conditions, trends, and development issues for the City of Simi Valley. Additionally, the TBR serves as the existing conditions section

RELATED DOCUMENTS, PLANS, AND INITIATIVES

for the Environmental Impact Report (EIR). Other documents related to the General Plan include local plans, such as the General Plan EIR and Climate Action Plan (CAP), and several regional plans that were utilized in the preparation of the General Plan, as follows:

- **Environmental Impact Report (EIR).** An EIR has been prepared for the General Plan in accordance with the substantive and procedural requirements of the California Environmental Quality Act (CEQA). The EIR is a separate document that describes environmental conditions in the City, assesses the possible effects of the General Plan, identifies actions that will be undertaken to reduce these impacts, and evaluates the comparative impacts of alternatives to the General Plan. Most of the EIR's mitigation measures have been incorporated as policies into the General Plan and, consequently, the Plan is generally considered to be "self-mitigating." The General Plan EIR is a program level EIR, meaning that it examines the general nature of impacts at a citywide scale. The findings of the EIR help determine the appropriate level of environmental review that should be performed when subsequent projects consistent with the Plan are proposed. Although the EIR will be certified by the City Council, it is not adopted as a policy document.
- **Climate Action Plan (CAP).** A CAP was prepared concurrently with preparation of the General Plan. The CAP identifies strategies and emission reduction targets and measures to achieve compliance with recent climate change regulations including AB 32 and SB 375. This legislation requires local and regional coordination in the reduction of greenhouse gas emissions through land use and transportation planning initiatives. The strategies in the CAP are supported by policies in the General Plan.
- **Sphere of Influence (SOI).** There are 48.7 square miles of land area within the Simi Valley SOI located in pockets around the City's perimeter and within its boundaries. State planning law states that the General Plan must cover the entire area within the City limits and any land outside its boundaries that "bears relation to its planning." This provides cities with an opportunity to indicate their concerns for adjacent unincorporated areas that may someday be annexed. The vast majority of the City's SOI is located in the northwest portion of the City in and around the Simi Valley Landfill. Other SOI locations include the Bard Reservoir area at the far southwest portion of the City and a number of "county islands" within City boundaries, the largest of which is in the vicinity of Sinaloa Lake. All areas within the SOI are candidates for annexation, though the timing of any specific annexation application will generally occur at the City's discretion.
- **Simi Valley City Urban Restriction Boundary (CURB).** The Simi Valley electorate adopted an initiative that established an urban growth boundary or CURB, in November 1988, which is effective until December 2020. The CURB is the result of a regional initiative, Save Open-Space and Agricultural Resources (SOAR), which has been adopted in eight of the ten cities in Ventura County and cannot be altered or amended except by a vote of the people. The targeted areas of growth in this General Plan are within the Simi Valley CURB.
- **Simi Valley Area of Interest (AOI).** The Simi Valley Area of Interest extends past the City's CURB and SOI into areas currently under the jurisdiction of the County of Ventura. The purpose of the Area of Interest is to allow the City to examine land uses under the jurisdiction of adjacent agencies that may have an impact on the City. The Ventura Local Agency Formation Commission (LAFCO) established these areas in Ventura County in the late 1960s.
- **Guidelines for Orderly Development.** The Guidelines for Orderly Development, originally adopted in 1969, are unique to Ventura County and state that urban development should occur within incorporated cities. Urban development is defined as the need for a new community sewer system or expansion of an existing sewer system, the creation of residential lots less than two acres in area, or the establishment of commercial or industrial uses, not related to agriculture or the production of

mineral resources. The result of the implementation of these guidelines has been that the County and the City do not compete for urban development, and the County does not allow urban development to occur in the City’s SOI unless it is annexed to the City.

- **Simi Valley Growth Management Plan.** The City adopted a Growth Management Plan to ensure that growth does not exceed the population limits in the Ventura County Air Quality Management Plan, which is intended to achieve federal mandates to improve air quality. In Simi Valley, the Growth Management Plan is specifically designed to reduce air pollution while providing for orderly development, protecting the City’s hillside areas, and promoting affordable housing.
- **Regional Transportation Improvement Program (RTIP).** The RTIP is the transportation improvement plan for the Southern California region that includes federal, state, and locally funded transportation projects, including the 2006 State Transportation Improvement Program (STIP) projects. RTIP projects Simi Valley may be funded from federal, state, local, or private sources.
- **Global Climate Change.** In recent years, the issue of global climate change has received much attention from governments around the world. Global climate change refers to the change in the average weather of the earth that may be measured by changes in wind patterns, storms, precipitation, and temperatures.

Human activities associated primarily with the use of carbon-based fossil fuels have led to changes in the composition of the atmosphere. The combustion of carbon-based fossil fuels creates greenhouse gas (GHG) emissions, such as carbon dioxide (CO₂), methane (CH₄), and nitrous oxide (N₂O), which have caused the earth’s atmosphere to absorb more heat from the sun. The concentration of GHGs in the



atmosphere has significantly increased as a result of the combustion of fossil fuels associated with automobile use and energy production. Scientists have already observed some of the negative effects of climate change, and expect more changes in the future. Governments, organizations, and private citizens all over the world are looking for ways to reduce GHG emissions.

In 2006, the California State Legislature took a proactive role in addressing the challenges of climate change with the adoption of the California *Global Warming Solutions Act of 2006*, Assembly Bill 32 (AB 32). AB 32 focuses on reducing GHG emissions in California. AB 32 requires the California Air Resources Board (CARB), the state agency charged with regulating statewide air quality, to adopt rules and regulations that would achieve GHG emissions equivalent to statewide levels in 1990 by 2020. Subsequently, the legislature adopted Senate Bill 375 (SB 375), which coordinates land use and transportation planning and allows for the development and adoption of a regional sustainable communities strategy designed to achieve regional goals for the reduction of GHG emissions.

With sustainability as a key theme of the Simi Valley General Plan, its goals and policies take steps to address the challenging issue of climate change by reducing GHG emissions, improving energy efficiency, reducing the urban heat island effect, recycling, and managing the use of water. The General Plan will reduce GHG emissions primarily through land use patterns that enhance and support the use of public transit, increased opportunities for pedestrians and bicycles, alternatives to single-occupant vehicle use, and requirements for “green building” practices and alternative energy systems. Policies also address adaptation to climate change, such as increased flood protection strategies. Concurrent with the General Plan update, the City prepared a Climate Action Plan (CAP), which further

IMPLEMENTING AND AMENDING THE GENERAL PLAN

details the strategies and initiatives to achieve GHG reduction targets consistent with state and regional requirements and the broader environmental sustainability objectives of this General Plan.

Since the sources and impacts of GHG emissions and solutions for climate change are complex and interrelated among the topics covered in the General Plan, climate change and GHG emissions reduction have been addressed through policies and programs in multiple chapters rather than in a single section. Appendix A (General Plan Policies Addressing Global Climate Change) includes a table that summarizes, by topic area, the policies that address climate change and adaptation to climate change.

IMPLEMENTING AND AMENDING THE GENERAL PLAN

After the General Plan is adopted, it will be implemented through a variety of measures, such as ordinances programs, and activities including ongoing measures, as well as new ones to be developed. These measures are described in the implementation program at the end of each chapter. Each policy references an implementation measure that will be undertaken by the City to ensure that action is taken to address the policy. Because local land use and development regulations are required by law to be consistent with the General Plan, it is important that they be reviewed by the City as part of the implementation process. As necessary, the Zoning Map, Development Code, and specific plans must be reviewed and updated to be



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consistent with the density/intensity established for the land use categories, and the development policies included in the General Plan.

The General Plan is designed to be a dynamic document, and it must be periodically updated to respond to changing community needs and concerns. The state's reporting requirements for General Plans assist in ensuring that the document remains relevant. An annual report, which must be submitted to local decision-makers

as well as the state, is required to include the status of the Plan and progress towards its implementation, specifically its share of meeting the regional housing need and the degree to which the plan complies with state planning law. Further, planning legislation states that any of the Plan's mandatory elements may be amended up to four times a year and any amendment may include more than one change to the Plan. Requests for amendments may be submitted by individuals or City-initiated to address policy, text, or map changes, though amendments to the land use map to facilitate a proposed development project are typically the most common. Any proposed amendment must be reviewed by the local legislative body who must find that the change is in the public interest, is not detrimental to the public health, safety, and welfare, is otherwise consistent with the General Plan, and that the appropriate environmental review has been completed, before acting on any request.

The measures to be undertaken by the City to implement the General Plan can be grouped into the twelve categories listed below, which correspond to the topics covered in each chapter as follows:

- General Plan Administration (A)
- Land Use and Community Design (LU)
- Economic Development (ED)
- Historic and Cultural Resources (HR)
- Housing (H)
- Mobility (M)
- Infrastructure and Utilities (IU)
- Natural Resources (NR)
- Parks and Recreation (PR)
- Community Services (CS)
- Community Safety (S)
- Noise (N)

The Implementation Program includes all measures and activities the City will undertake to achieve the goals and policies in the General Plan. The programs are presented in a table at the end of each topic covered. For each measure the table includes an individual program description, a reference to the policy or policies that it implements, and a timeframe for its completion.



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If the General Plan is to serve its purpose effectively, it must be reviewed, maintained, and implemented in a systematic and consistent manner. Thus, the measures listed below address how the General Plan is maintained and how development and other programmatic actions by the City are used to achieve the General Plan's goals and policies.

Implementation Program

Each General Plan policy is correlated with one or more implementation measure. The Administration Implementation Program, presented in Table 2 (Administration Implementation Program), describes the measures or actions to be taken by the City to ensure that development is consistent with a current and updated general plan.

Table 2 Administration Implementation Program		2011	2012-2015	2016-2035	Annual	Ongoing
A-1	Consistency with the General Plan. The City shall ensure that all development proposals and projects included in the City’s Capital Improvement Program (CIP) are consistent with the goals and policies of the General Plan.				●	
Implements Which Policy(ies)	All policies					
A-2	Periodic Review of the General Plan. The City shall periodically review the General Plan, including the Housing Element, and process amendments or comprehensive updates, as necessary, to reflect changing community conditions.					●
Implements Which Policy(ies)	All policies					
A-3	General Plan Annual Progress Report. The City shall prepare an annual status report to the City Council on the implementation of the General Plan for submittal to the state Office of Planning and Research (OPR) and the state Department of Housing and Community Development (HCD) relative to the progress in implementing the Housing Element.				●	
Implements Which Policy(ies)	LU-1.3~LU-1.8, LU-2.1~LU-2.5, LU-3.3, LU-4.1, LU-4.10, LU-6.1~LU-6.4, LU-8.1, LU-9.1, LU-9.4, LU-10.1, LU-10.4, LU-10.7, LU-17.2, LU-17.3, LU-24.2, ED-1.1~ED-1.3, ED-4.4, M-1.5, M-6.1					

