

SUBCHAPTER 3.6

LAND USE AND PLANNING

Introduction

Regulatory Setting

Environmental Setting

3.6 LAND USE AND PLANNING

3.6.1 Introduction

The environmental setting describes the land uses that may be affected by the proposed project. The environmental setting addresses residential, commercial, industrial, and institutional land uses across the district.

3.6.2 Regulatory Setting

3.6.2.1 Federal Agencies

3.6.2.1.1 United States Bureau of Land Management (BLM)

The BLM manages much of the undeveloped or unused land in the region, primarily in the eastern portion of the region. The California Desert Conservation Area Plan is used to manage BLM controlled areas. The BLM also implements biological resource management policies through its designation of Areas of Critical Environmental Concern.

3.6.2.1.2 National Park Service (NPS)

The NPS manages national parks and wilderness areas. One national park and one wilderness area are located in the district: Joshua Tree National Park and the Santa Monica Mountains National Recreation Area.

3.6.2.1.3 United States Fish and Wildlife Service (USFWS)

The USFWS administers the Federal Endangered Species Act (FESA) and designates critical habitat for endangered species. The USFWS manages the National Wildlife Refuges in the district such as the Seal Beach National Wildlife Refuge and the Coachella Valley National Wildlife Refuge.

3.6.2.1.4 United States Forest Service (USFS)

The USFS manages approximately 2.3 million acres of national forests in the district. The three national forests in the region are the Angeles National Forest, San Bernardino National Forest, and the Cleveland National Forest.

3.6.2.1.5 United States Army Corps of Engineers (USACOE)

Among its responsibilities, the USACOE administers §404 of the Clean Water Act (CWA), which governs specified activities in waters of the United States, including wetlands. In this role, the USACOE requires that a permit be obtained if a project would place structures, including dredged or filled materials, within navigable waters or wetlands, or result in alteration of such areas.

3.6.2.1.6 *U.S. Department of Agriculture, Natural Resources Conservation Service (NRCS)*

The NRCS maps soils and farmland uses to provide comprehensive information necessary for understanding, managing, conserving and sustaining the nation's limited soil resources. The NRCS manages the Farmland Protection Program, which provides funds to help purchase development rights to keep productive farmland in agricultural uses.

3.6.2.2 State Agencies

3.6.2.2.1 *California Department of Conservation*

In 1982, the State of California created the Farmland Mapping and Monitoring Program within the California Department of Conservation to carry on the mapping activity from the NRCS on a continuing basis. The California Department of Conservation administers the California Land Conservation Act of 1965, also known as the Williamson Act, for the conservation of farmland and other resource-oriented laws.

3.6.2.2.2 *California Coastal Commission*

The California Coastal Commission plans for and regulates development in the coastal zone consistent with the policies of the California Coastal Act. The Commission also administers the federal Coastal Zone Management Act in California. As part of the Coastal Act, cities and counties are required to prepare a local coastal program (LCP) for the portion of its jurisdiction within the coastal zone. With an approved LCP, cities and counties control coastal development that accords with the local coastal plan. If no local coastal plan has been approved, the Coastal Commission controls coastal development.

3.6.2.2.3 *California Department of Transportation (Caltrans)*

The Caltrans jurisdiction includes rights-of-way of state and interstate routes within California. Any work within the right-of-way of a federal or state transportation corridor is subject to Caltrans regulations governing allowable actions and modifications to the right-of-way. Caltrans includes the Division of Aeronautics, which is responsible for airport permitting and establishing a county Airport Land Use Commission (ALUC) for each county with one or more public airports. ALUCs are responsible for the preparation of land use plans for areas near aviation facilities.

3.6.2.2.4 *California Department of Forestry and Fire Protection (CDF)*

The CDF reviews and approves plans for timber harvesting on private lands. In addition, through its responsibility for fighting wildland fires, the CDF plays a role in planning development in forested areas.

3.6.2.2.5 *California Department of Parks and Recreation (CDPR)*

The CDPR manages and provides sites for a variety of recreational and outdoor activities. The CDPR is a trustee agency that owns and operates all state parks and participates in land use planning that affects state parkland.

3.6.2.2.6 *California Department of Fish and Game (CDFG)*

The land use mandate of the CDFG is to protect rare, threatened, and endangered species by managing habitat in legally designated ecological reserves or wildlife areas. CDFG reserves located in the district include the Bolsa Chica Ecological Reserve (Orange County), among others.

3.6.2.3 Regional and Local

3.6.2.3.1 *Southern California Association of Governments (SCAG)*

Related to land use, SCAG is authorized to undertake intergovernmental review for federal assistance and direct federal development pursuant to Presidential Executive Order 12,372. Pursuant to CEQA (Public Resource Code §21083 and §21087 and CEQA Guidelines §15206 and §15125 (b), SCAG reviews projects of regional significance for consistency with regional plans. SCAG is also responsible for preparation of the Regional Housing Needs Assessment (RHNA), pursuant to California Government Code Section 65584 (a). SCAG's RHNA provides a tool for providing local affordable housing development strategies.

The 2012–2035 *Regional Transportation Plan/Sustainable Communities Strategy* (2012–2035 RTP/SCS) provides a blueprint for improving quality of life for the residents of SCAG's area of jurisdiction, which includes the district, by providing a variety of choices regarding where they will live, work, and play, and how they will move around. Further, safe, secure, and efficient transportation systems is expected to provide improved access to opportunities, such as jobs, education, and healthcare.

3.6.2.3.2 *Local Agency Formation Commissions*

The Local Agency Formation Commission (LAFCO) is the agency in each county that has the responsibility to create orderly local government boundaries, with the goal of encouraging “planned, well-ordered, efficient urban development patterns,” the preservation of open-space lands, and the discouragement of urban sprawl. While LAFCOs have no direct land use authority, their actions determine which local government will be responsible for planning new areas. LAFCOs address a wide range of boundary actions, including creation of spheres of influence for cities, adjustments to boundaries of special districts, annexations, incorporations, detachments of areas from cities, and dissolution of cities.

3.6.2.3.3 *General Plans*

The most comprehensive land use planning for the district is provided by city and county general plans, which local governments are required by state law to prepare as a guide for

future development. General plans contain goals and policies concerning topics that are mandated by state law or which the jurisdiction has chosen to include. Required topics are land use, circulation, housing, conservation, open space, noise, and safety. Other topics that local governments frequently choose to address include air quality, public facilities, parks and recreation, community design, sustainability and growth management, among others. These plans provide general definitions and implementation methods for each land use designation in the district. City and county general plans must be consistent with each other. County general plans must cover areas not included by city general plans (e.g., unincorporated areas).

3.6.2.3.4 Specific and Master Plans

A city or county may also provide land use planning by developing community or specific plans for smaller, more specific areas within their jurisdiction. These more localized plans provide for focused guidance for developing a specific area, with development standards tailored to the area, as well as systematic implementation of the general plan.

3.6.2.3.5 Zoning and Land Use Permits

City and county zoning codes are the set of detailed requirements that implement the general plan policies at the level of the individual parcel. The zoning code presents standards for different uses and identifies which uses are allowed in the various zoning districts of the jurisdiction. Since 1971, state law has required the city or county zoning code to be consistent with the jurisdiction's general plan. Cities and counties typically implement their zoning codes through highly individualized land use ordinances that differ from jurisdiction to jurisdiction.

3.6.3 Environmental Setting

The district is comprised of the non-desert portion of Los Angeles County, all of Orange County, a portion of southwestern San Bernardino County, and the Salton Sea Air Basin and Mojave Desert Air Basin portions of Riverside County amounting to a jurisdiction of approximately 10,473 square miles and a population of approximately 17 million. Bounded by the Pacific Ocean to the west; the San Gabriel, San Bernardino, and San Jacinto Mountains to the north and east; and San Diego and Imperial Counties to the south, the district contains a vast network of cities and towns, ranging from small rural developments of a few thousand residents to bustling metropolitan centers of several million residents, interspersed between large expanses of open space and undeveloped land.

Urban development in the district tends to cluster around a well-defined network of state and federal highways which connect the regional populations of the district with other regions in California and across the nation. While most urban development has historically been based in the coastal regions of Los Angeles County and Orange County, there has been considerable urban growth eastward to the mountain and valley regions of Riverside County and San Bernardino County. Downtown Los Angeles is the largest urbanized center within the district. Other urbanized areas in Los Angeles County include Long Beach, Burbank, Glendale, Pasadena and Pomona. Office-based commercial centers have emerged in

Woodland Hills, Universal City, Westwood, around Los Angeles International Airport, and Century City. In the other three counties within the district, urban centers exist in the cities of Riverside, San Bernardino, Santa Ana, Anaheim, and Irvine. Much of the development in Riverside and San Bernardino Counties has taken place within unincorporated county land that both counties possess. Riverside County, in particular, has developed the Riverside County Integrated Project, which seeks to improve the quality of life for its citizens through a complementary array of development projects and programs aimed at creating a balanced and sustainable environment. As a result of Riverside County's efforts, the valley and mountain regions of the County have quickly developed over the past 20 years from small rural settlements to relatively large suburban commuter cities.

Within the older cities and communities in the district, development has taken more of a revitalization outlook. Without a vast surplus of open space, developers in Los Angeles County and Orange County have turned to different types of housing and commercial developments, including townhouses, condominiums, apartments, and mixed-use developments that combine commercial and office uses. Older buildings are often renovated or converted to accommodate new residential or commercial uses, and land use patterns in major developed cities have generally shifted from the traditional single-use pattern to more of a mixed use approach, where residential and commercial land uses are often found adjacent to one another, or within the same building.

Land uses across the district can typically be categorized into six general categories -- residential, commercial, industrial, institutional, open space and agricultural. Agricultural is discussed separately in Section 3.2.

3.6.3.1 Los Angeles County

3.6.3.1.1 *Residential*

Los Angeles County is the most populated and economically robust region in the district. As a result, high demand for housing is a consistent concern for the County. Residential land use patterns in the County, as well as the district, are dependent upon geography. Major concentrations of residential uses are found in the Los Angeles Basin, which is bounded on the north by the transverse mountain ranges of the Santa Monica Mountains and the San Gabriel Mountains. From the foothills of the transverse mountain ranges, large urban and sub-urban cities blanket the Los Angeles Basin southward to the Santa Ana Mountains and the Orange County Coast, and eastward to the San Bernardino Mountains. The County contains most of the high and medium density housing in the district, which is concentrated primarily in urban and sub-urban population centers, such as Downtown Los Angeles, East Los Angeles, Glendale, Burbank, and Long Beach. Surrounding these population centers are lower density suburbs located on the eastern and southern reaches of Los Angeles County and extending into Orange County and San Bernardino County. With the Los Angeles Basin almost completely built-out, the County is now in the process of directing residential land uses, population growth, and residential density to urbanized areas and promoting infill development to minimize sprawl and encourage sustainable growth (Los Angeles County Department of Regional Planning, 2012).

3.6.3.1.2 *Commercial*

In the same way that residential land use patterns are related to geography, commercial land use patterns tend to form around transportation facilities, such as highways, rail lines, and airports, particularly around major freeway intersections. Downtown Los Angeles, bounded in all directions by four different freeways, is the largest commercial and business center in the district, providing jobs to residents across the district. The County also projects tremendous employment growth in northern Los Angeles County as housing and transportation development continues northward.

3.6.3.1.3 *Industrial*

The largest concentration of industrial land uses and activities in the district is provided by the adjacent Ports of Los Angeles and Long Beach. Combined, the San Pedro Bay Ports anticipate cargo volumes to grow to 43 million twenty-foot equivalent unit containers by year 2035 – more than tripling from current levels (Los Angeles County Department of Regional Planning, 2012). Further, these adjacent ports handle approximately 40 percent of the volume imported into the country and approximately 24 percent of the nation’s exports (SCAG, 2012). From the ports, industrial activity can be traced along cargo rail lines and major interstate highways, such as Route 110¹ and Interstate 710 (I-710), north to downtown Los Angeles and east to the Cities of Industry and Commerce. Significant air cargo and associated industrial land uses also are located around Los Angeles International Airport. Oil extraction and refining industries are also found in northern Los Angeles County near the City of Santa Clarita and in southern Los Angeles County surrounding the City of Long Beach.

3.6.3.1.4 *Institutional*

Institutional land uses, which include large government and private operations, such as military bases, airports, and universities, encompass a considerable footprint in the district. In the Antelope Valley, a large portion of land is dedicated to airport uses at Palmdale Airport, while Los Angeles International Airport (LAX) is the largest airport land use. Bob Hope Airport and Long Beach Airport are the other commercial airports in Los Angeles County. In addition, the Los Angeles Air Force Base, located just south of LAX is the major military land use in the County. University and college campuses are located in every county of the district, the largest of which are part of the University of California system. In Los Angeles County, the University of California, Los Angeles (UCLA), California Polytechnic University at Pomona and the University of Southern California are some of the largest universities. There are also numerous California State Universities (Northridge and Los Angeles), as well as community colleges located throughout the County.

¹ Route 110, consists of two segments of State Route 110 (SR-110) joined by Interstate 110 (I-110). The entire length of I-110 (which ends at I-10), as well as SR-110 south of the Four Level Interchange with US Highway (US 101), is the Harbor Freeway, and SR-110 north from US 101 to Pasadena is the historic Arroyo Seco Parkway. The entire Route 110 connects San Pedro and the Port of Los Angeles with Downtown Los Angeles and Pasadena.

3.6.3.1.5 *Open Space*

Over half of the total geography of Los Angeles County is comprised of open space and rural land. Most rural land is located in the Palmdale – Lancaster desert region, which is just northeast of the district’s boundaries. Most of the open space in the County is composed of the Angeles National Forest, which covers the entire northern region of the district. This land is administered by the National Forest Service and provides mainly outdoor recreation and wilderness conservation functions. Other major open space areas can be found in the Santa Monica Mountains and the Whittier Narrows located in the Puente Hills.

3.6.3.2 *Orange County*

Orange County is comprised of 34 cities (County of Orange Resources and Development Management Department, 2005) and also contains unincorporated areas. Orange County has an estimated population of 3,055,792 residents as of January 1, 2012 (California Department of Finance, 2012). Each of the 34 cities has its own General Plan while the unincorporated areas are covered by the Orange County General Plan. The Orange County General Plan states as its first policy that urban land uses within the County must be planned with a balanced mix of residential, commercial, industrial and public land uses. ~~Orange County comprises 34 cities (County of Orange Resources and Development Management Department, 2005) and has an estimated population of 3,055,792 residents as of January 1, 2012 (California Department of Finance, 2012).~~

3.6.3.2.1 *Residential*

In Orange County, residential development follows the coastline and is limited from inland expansion by the Santa Ana Mountains and the Cleveland National Forest (SCAG, 2012). The major population centers in northern Orange County are the Cities of Huntington Beach, Garden Grove, and Fullerton, which tend to be extensions of housing and commercial development from southern Los Angeles County, catering to a large commuter population. From these border cities, high and medium density housing development continues south through the major commercial cities of Anaheim, Santa Ana, and Orange. To the south of these cities are the Cities of Costa Mesa, Newport Beach, Irvine, Lake Forest, and Laguna Niguel, which are less densely populated with primarily single-family medium to low density housing developments. As such, residential land uses in the County can be described as following a similar pattern to that of Los Angeles County, where the major urban and sub-urban population centers align themselves with transportation resources, particularly Interstate 5 (I-5), and natural features, such as the “South Coast” and the Santa Ana Mountains.

3.6.3.2.2 *Commercial*

Commercial land use in the County is divided into two types of designations: community commercial and regional commercial land uses. Community commercial land uses include general commercial facilities providing convenience goods and retail trade to individual communities of 20,000 persons (County of Orange Resources and Development Management Department, 2005). Each city has its own community commercial

developments, mainly located along major arterial highways such as I-5, Interstate 405 (I-405), State Route 22 (SR-22), State Route 55 (SR-55), and Beach Boulevard, also known as State Route 39 (SR-39). Regional commercial land uses are of a higher intensity and serve a larger regional population usually in the form of malls, such as the South Coast Plaza in Costa Mesa and commercial office buildings. Orange County's commercial office activity is within close proximity to the intersection of I-5, SR-22, and State Route 57 (SR-57). ~~known as the "Orange Crush,"~~ [An additional commercial area in Orange County, the Irvine Business Complex \(IBC\), is the area surrounding John Wayne Airport; and the area surrounding the University of California, at Irvine \(UCI\), known as the Irvine Spectrum.](#) ~~Another major commercial office area centers in Orange County, the Irvine Spectrum, is include the area surrounding the "El Toro Y", which is the~~ intersection of I-5 and I-405 ~~freeways, known as the "El Toro Y"~~ (SCAG, 2012a).

3.6.3.2.3 *Industrial*

Relative to the district, Orange County has few industrial land uses. In fact, the [Orange County's General Plan, which only applies to unincorporated areas within Orange County,](#) does not distinguish industrial land uses from other employment providing land uses (SCAG, 2012a). Fifty years ago, Orange County was primarily agricultural and the major industries were based in supporting the rich farming resources of the County. Today, much of Orange County's industrial land uses are located along the coast and focused on oil extraction and refining, while most income in the County is provided by technical, aerospace, and information industries which are typically higher-paid white collar industries set in commercial office areas.

3.6.3.2.4 *Institutional*

The major military land uses in the County are the Seal Beach Naval Weapons Station and Los Alamitos Reserve Air Station. In addition, institutional land uses also include universities, such as UCI and California State University at Fullerton, John Wayne Airport, and three active regional landfills.

3.6.3.2.5 *Open Space*

The unincorporated territories of the County, consisting of approximately 321 square miles, are geographically diverse and spread throughout the County. The largest portion of unincorporated territory is mostly open space found in southeastern Orange County and includes the Cleveland National Forest, a number of planned communities, such as Coto de Caza, Las Flores, and Ladera Ranch, as well as large portions of undeveloped territory south of the Ortega Highway (SCAG, 2012a). [In addition, the Orange County Sustainable Communities Strategy identifies the preservation/open space programs located throughout all of Orange County, including the individual efforts of the County of Orange and the 34 local jurisdictions.](#)

3.6.3.3 Riverside County

3.6.3.3.1 *Residential*

In Riverside County, residential land uses are mainly located in the western valley portion of the county and makes up approximately 288 square miles of County land, of which 57 percent is located in unincorporated areas (Riverside County, 2003). Medium to high density residential developments can be found in northwestern Riverside County mainly in the two major Cities of Riverside and Corona. Farther inland, beginning in the Coachella Valley, the County is comprised almost entirely of low density or rural housing. Much of the development in Riverside County has been on unincorporated county land. Areas that were rural twenty years ago are quickly becoming suburban. Riverside County adopted the County General Plan that strives to create a high quality, balanced, and sustainable environment for the citizens of Riverside (SCAG, 2012a).

3.6.3.3.2 *Commercial*

Commercial land uses account for approximately 15,675 acres of county land, and commercial development is generally less vigorous and on a smaller scale than in Los Angeles County or Orange County (Riverside County, 2003). Commercial office developments would typically be found in the downtown areas of major cities, such as the City of Riverside. Other commercial developments in the County are typically large regional retail and convenience shopping centers typically located in major cities or along major highways such as Interstate 215 (I-215) and Interstate 10 (I-10).

3.6.3.3.3 *Industrial*

A total of over 24,000 acres of the County are devoted to industrial uses, which may include heavy industry, warehousing, and mineral extraction. With the exception of land devoted to mineral extraction (89 percent of which is within unincorporated territories), the majority of industrial land is located within the cities of Riverside County. The major industries within the County are agricultural and mineral extraction industries, most of which are located in eastern Riverside County in the Coachella Valley and Salton Sea Basin. Recently, manufacturing industries, distribution centers, and warehouses have established businesses in Riverside County making it a major distribution center for goods in the region, as well as the state. Riverside County also houses a major wind energy generation site in the San Gorgonio Pass and the County should be poised for further development of wind, solar, and other green energies in the eastern portion of the County.

3.6.3.3.4 *Institutional*

Approximately 106 square miles of land are devoted to various public facilities (utilities, schools, government offices, police and fire facilities, correctional facilities, military installations, museums, convention centers, libraries, theater facilities, rehabilitation facilities, short-and long-term custodial facilities, cemeteries, etc.) through the County. Major military uses include the Naval Warfare Assessment Station in Corona and the Chocolate Mountains Aerial Gunnery Range. Other major institutional land uses are Palm

Springs International Airport, March Inland Port, and the University of California at Riverside.

3.6.3.3.5 *Open Space*

A vast amount of land (1,313,073 acres or 28 percent of the county total) consists of open space use and provides for recreation, agriculture, scientific opportunity, and wild land preservation. The majority of open space in the County is located in eastern portion of the county in the Coachella Valley (part of the Salton Sea Air Basin and the Mojave Desert Air Basin, which house mostly agricultural and mineral extraction operations usually administered by the Bureau of Land Management and the California Department of Conservation. The largest major open space use in the County is the Joshua Tree National Park, which is administered by the National Parks Service and provides a variety of recreation and wild land preservation functions. Other major open space uses include Mount San Jacinto State Park, the Coachella Valley National Wildlife Refuge, the southern reaches of the San Bernardino National Forest, and numerous golf courses located throughout the Coachella Valley and southern Riverside County.

3.6.3.4 San Bernardino County

3.6.3.4.1 *Residential*

Similar to Riverside County, residential land use in San Bernardino County is mainly concentrated in the western valley and high-desert region; however, the unincorporated areas of the desert and mountain regions are populated with dispersed low-density rural residences. The portion of San Bernardino County located within the district, also known as the Valley Region, is perhaps the most densely populated portion of the County as the two largest cities in the County, San Bernardino and Ontario, are both located in this region. Almost half of the 51,766 acres of unincorporated County land in the Valley Region is existing single and multifamily residential uses, occupying 24,236 acres (County of San Bernardino, 2007). Most of the residential uses in the Valley Region are medium to low density uses mostly located in the major cities of the region.

3.6.3.4.2 *Commercial*

Commercial uses occupy almost 2,155 acres of the Valley Region (County of San Bernardino, 2007). The Valley Region can be characterized as the center for commerce in the County while the Desert Region assumes the role of industrial leader. Like other regions in the district, commercial land uses in San Bernardino County portion of the district tend to be retail and convenience shopping uses with some commercial office buildings located in downtown areas. Commercial uses follow similar land use patterns, usually located along major transportation corridors such as Interstate 15 (I-15), I-215, and State Route 60 (SR-60).

3.6.3.4.3 *Industrial*

The Valley Region has nearly 5,155 acres of industrial uses (County of San Bernardino, 2007). While most of San Bernardino County is geared toward agricultural and mineral

extraction industries, the Valley Region is geared toward supporting the Los Angeles County and Orange County economies. Like Riverside County, western San Bernardino County has become a major distribution point for the region with many manufacturing and warehouse facilities being built throughout the County. Adding to the goods coming by highway and rail through San Bernardino County are goods coming to the county by air through several airports that cater to air cargo, primarily Ontario International Airport.

3.6.3.4.4 Institutional

Institutional land uses in the Valley Region account for 2,875 acres of the region and are limited when compared to the rest of the County, which houses numerous military facilities in its Desert Region (County of San Bernardino, 2007). Accordingly, the Valley Region does include the San Bernardino International Airport and the Ontario International Airport, as well as California State University at San Bernardino.

3.6.3.4.5 Open Space

While San Bernardino County has the largest amount of open space and mineral resource conservation areas, the Valley Region contains very few of these land uses. The single major open space land use in the San Bernardino County portion of the district is the San Bernardino National Forest, which forms the northern and eastern boundaries of the Valley Region.