



## **STATEMENT OF OVERRIDING CONSIDERATIONS FOR THE 2009 LOMA LINDA GENERAL PLAN UPDATE**

### **1.0 INTRODUCTION**

The General Plan Update incorporates several amendments into the City's 2006 General Plan. The proposed amendments, which are explained in detail in Chapter 2.0 of the Addendum to the Programmatic EIR for the 2006 General Plan, consist of an update to the General Plan's Housing Element, incorporation of voter-approved Measure V, and other amendments.

The 2006 General Plan was the product of a thorough planning and public comment process that involved issues identification, interagency coordination, plan formulation, and multiple public hearings providing for public input and comment. As set noted in the CEQA findings prepared for the Programmatic EIR prepared for the 2006 General Plan, it was determined that the City Council's approval of the 2006 General Plan would result in significant adverse environmental impacts that could not be avoided even with the adoption of all feasible mitigation measures. All feasible mitigation was proposed to reduce or avoid potentially significant impacts identified in the EIR for the 2006 General Plan, and no additional feasible mitigation was available to further reduce significant impacts without creating new significant adverse impacts. Despite the occurrence of these effects, however, the City Council chose to approve the 2006 General Plan because, in its view, the economic, social, and other benefits that the 2006 General Plan would produce rendered the significant effects acceptable. The City Council's decision to approve the 2006 General Plan despite these significant effects was memorialized in the Statement of Overriding Considerations adopted when the 2006 General Plan was approved.

As concluded in the Addendum to the 2006 General Plan EIR, the amended General Plan (the General Plan as modified by the General Plan Update) would not create any new significant environmental effects or increase the severity of the known environmental effects of the 2006 General Plan. The amended General Plan will, however, create the same unavoidable, significant effects that were identified in the 2006 General Plan EIR and the 2006 Statement of Overriding Considerations. The City has prepared this new Statement of Overriding Considerations to demonstrate why, in the Council's judgment, the benefits of the amended General Plan, as approved, outweigh these unavoidable significant effects. Any one of these reasons is sufficient to justify approval of the entire Project. The substantial evidence supporting the various benefits can be found in the CEQA findings for the 2006 Programmatic EIR, which are incorporated by reference into this section.

### **2.0 SOCIAL, ECONOMIC AND OTHER CONSIDERATIONS**

The Council finds that the amended General Plan would have the following economic, social, and environmental benefits:

#### **2.1 Improving the Jobs-Housing Balance in the Region**

The jobs-to-housing ratio measures the extent to which job opportunities in a given geographic area are sufficient to meet the employment needs of area residents. This ratio identifies the number of jobs available in a given region compared to the number of housing units in the same region, and



determines potential imbalances between housing and employment opportunities. In theory, if households have job opportunities closer to where they live, this can potentially reduce overall commuting. Longer commutes result in increased vehicle trip length, which creates environmental effects associated with transportation, air quality, and noise.

The City of Loma Linda is considered a “jobs rich” community as the number of jobs available in the City totaled 14,733 in 2000 (as determined by the 2001 RTP Growth Forecast) while the number of employed persons over the age of 16 living within the City totaled 8,679 (according to the 2000 Census). However, unlike many communities with substantial local employment, a large percentage of Loma Linda’s workforce is already employed locally. Loma Linda University and associated medical institutions along with the Veterans Hospital are the largest employers in the City providing employment in the fields of education, health, and social services. As shown in the 2000 Census, 54 percent of the residents of City of Loma Linda are employed in these fields.

The SCAG employment projections for 2025 exceed the projections of the amended General Plan by 46.5 percent. The amended General Plan does not project proposed land uses to produce as many jobs as anticipated by SCAG. While the number of jobs in the City is forecast to increase, the number will not be as great as expected regionally. On the other hand, the number of dwelling units expected in 2025 by the amended General Plan is much closer to the SCAG forecast number. While 13,702 housing units will be developed in the City by the General Plan build out, job opportunities in the City are expected to total about 38,992, which are more than 2.8 jobs for every household.

Even though the City of Loma Linda is expected to have many more jobs than households by 2025, the other cities within Loma Linda’s Regional Statistical Area are expected to have a large percentage more households than jobs. Within the region, SCAG projects the number of households and jobs to balance by 2025. The SCAG 2001 RTP projects that, as a whole, the Regional Statistical Area that Loma Linda is in will have more than 300,000 jobs and more than 300,000 households by 2025. Because Loma Linda’s numerous jobs will help to balance the numerous households in surrounding cities, a balance between the number of jobs and households will exist within the region by 2025, and the jobs within Loma Linda will have a beneficial effect on the region. Therefore, the implementation of the proposed General Plan will help to balance land uses regionally and no impact associated with this issue would occur.

The land use designations and policies of the proposed General Plan have been tailored to improve the balance between local employment and housing opportunities, thereby reducing commute times and distances between residential developments and employment centers, and associated environmental effects such as noise, air quality, and traffic.

## **2.2 Diversification and Expansion of the City’s Housing Stock**

The amended General Plan contains a number of policies which, when implemented, would serve to diversify and expand the City’s housing stock. For example, the updated Housing Element provides policies that encourage both housing affordable to lower income households, seniors, and other special needs groups who often have difficulty obtaining and keeping housing, and housing for moderate and above moderate-income households.

It is important that a variety of housing types and styles of residential development be provided, including rental and starter housing, as well as housing for young growing families, empty nesters, and the elderly. In 2000, almost one-quarter of Loma Linda’s population was under the age of 20, compared to 35.6 percent countywide, while 15.4 percent of the population was 65 years old or over. This indicates that Loma Linda is still within its “growth” stage, attracting young families. Population



growth projections for the City indicate that this trend toward attracting young families will continue for the next 20 years.

Loma Linda's population has a higher percentage of households earning more than 95 percent of the median income than that of San Bernardino County as a whole. However, the City has a much lower percentage of households with a moderate income (80-120% of median income) than the County as a whole. The differences in households that are very low and low-income are small, which indicates that the City provides housing for approximately the same percentage of very low and low-income households as do other communities in the County.

The updated Housing Element provides specific action programs to facilitate the provision of housing for all economic segments of the community, aimed at meeting Loma Linda's fair share of regional housing needs, as determined by the Southern California Association of Governments. By ensuring that the City meets its housing needs, the updated Housing Element will comply with State housing law. The amended General Plan also provides for large-scale planned communities in the Land Use Program which will provide high level amenities and move-up housing in close proximity to jobs in the City and the region. The planned communities will thus assist in reducing travel time which will lower vehicle emissions that cause air pollution.

### **2.3 Improvement to Roadways**

While the region as a whole is expected to grow significantly over the life of the planning period, improving the jobs-housing balance within the City will improve projected traffic within the City and along the region's roadway system, even as the number of vehicles on the road increases with population growth. Without the policies of the amended General Plan promoting these benefits, the condition of roadways within the Planning Area could be expected to become much worse as the inevitable population growth occurs. Circulation Program policies, for example, aim to reduce reliance on automobiles, thereby reducing the burden on area roadways, while Land Use policies seek to improve the area's jobs/housing balance. It should be noted that the traffic analyses prepared for the amended General Plan does not include construction of the proposed Bi-County Corridor. There were two traffic analyses prepared for the 2006 General Plan. The two studies included the Traffic Impact Analysis (TIA) January 2004 that was approved by the San Bernardino Associated Governments (SANBAG) on May 11, 2004 and a revised Trip Generation Analysis prepared in October 2005 for the Loma Linda General Plan as a result of changes to the General Plan land uses since the TIA was approved. In addition, a revised Traffic Impact Analysis was prepared for the amended General Plan. These three studies further support the amended General Plan policies.

The City facilitates pedestrian travel through the design of pedestrian-oriented neighborhoods with well-connected streets and sidewalks. The City also provides convenient and safe sidewalk routes to shopping, schools and recreation areas. One such route connects Hulda Crooks Park to Beaumont Avenue thus encouraging pedestrian travel. In addition, the City provides an off-road trail system designed for walking and hiking activities. The Conservation and Open Space Element includes the Trails Plan which covers the City and sphere of influence. One of these proposed pedestrian trails is the Edison Easement Trail, which is partially complete, and parallels Mountain Avenue between Redlands Boulevard and Beaumont Avenue. Other examples include the encouragement of rider-ship on public transit through use of City information sources (e.g., City web site, and mail-outs) to provide information on transit services and the possible creation of a multi-modal transportation center to serve the downtown area and nearby medical and educational facilities.



## **2.4 Protection of Significant Environmental Features**

The City of Loma Linda's hillside backdrop is highly prized by its residents. The residents passed the Hillside Preservation Initiative in 1993 to preserve the significant natural hillside amenities within the boundaries of the City. Additionally, the City's slogan is based upon the City's unique setting – "*A City with a View*". Conserving and protecting the hillsides along with the quality and quantity of clean air, native plant and wildlife species, water resources, and historic resources is a significant ingredient in the well being of the City and its residents. Also as the City becomes more built out, the pressure to develop the hillsides will increase. Conservation of the hillsides should remain a part of the long-range plan for the hillside areas.

The amended General Plan contains several policies that focus on preserving open space as a significant environmental feature. The amended General Plan identifies the permanent nature of the land use designation and further emphasizes that open space is not a temporary "holding zone." Ensuring these benefits now, before population pressures become even greater, and the political will to avoid developing these areas perhaps weakens, is especially important. The amended General Plan sets forth policies that will function as environmental performance standards to ensure the protection of significant environmental features, such as open space and biological resources. These policies also address certain specific environmental features such as the need to maintain a permanent open space in the South Hills. The amended General Plan also requires the development projects be directed away from lands with sensitive biological resources to the extent feasible.

## **2.5 Provision for Public Services and Facilities**

The amended General Plan ensures that the expansion of public facilities will occur in an equitable manner, and that new development provides the on- and off-site facilities needed to support the development in a manner that avoids increased costs for and reductions in the level of public services provided to existing residents and businesses.

## **2.6 Fiscal and Economic Considerations**

The amended General Plan supports the retention and development of Loma Linda University Medical Center and J.L. Pettis Veterans Memorial Medical Center to assist in maintaining the long-term economic viability of the City. Additionally, the General Plan seeks to expand upon these economic assets while also diversifying the local economy. The General Plan recognizes that Long-term economic stability strengthens the stability and predictability of municipal costs and revenues. The General Plan also provides for economic growth through encouraging retail opportunities to create a downtown area or city center, which could provide a focal point for the community. A vibrant downtown area would confer a sense of place that would strengthen the community's image and encourage residents as well as visitors and workers to shop, dine, and pursue leisure activities locally. As the roots of the community are associated with Loma Linda University, the downtown could be located near the University at Anderson Street and Prospect Street. Creating a downtown would entail, among other actions, expanding the services and businesses presently in the area, providing public parking and improving access to the area for both students and the general community of Loma Linda.

The amended General Plan supports attracting and assisting the relocation and expansion of firms in high-tech, biotech, research and development, and retail trade and services. Capitalizing on Loma Linda's identity in the healing arts by working with the Loma Linda University Medical Center and the Veterans Hospital Administration to identify health services-related firms and trade organizations that could benefit from locating in Loma Linda. Such businesses might include those involved in medical



research and clinical trials, and research, development and testing of medical equipment, as well as vendors to these and other medical facilities.

The amended General Plan also supports actively seeking larger retail businesses the City lacks; such as Home Furnishing and Appliance Stores, Hardware and Building Materials, expanded Auto Dealerships, and Supermarkets to locate on Redlands Boulevard. The amended General Plan also supports working with private sector entities to identify and implement advanced infrastructure technologies that will facilitate the relocation of technology-related businesses to Loma Linda, as well as the expansion of existing businesses. And working with the private sector to maintain an adequate supply of skilled workers and the capital needed to attract and maintain business in Loma Linda. The amended General Plan also provides sufficient land to accommodate planned development, with office, business park, and commercial areas complementing residential and public development in location, access, mix of uses, attractiveness, and design quality.

As a means of financing infrastructure for future development, the amended General Plan requires new development to pay for its fair share of new infrastructure, public and community facilities, and the incremental operating costs it imposes on the City.

### 3.0 ADDITIONAL OVERRIDING CONSIDERATIONS

Following is a summary of the significant unavoidable impacts of the amended General Plan and a description of the overriding considerations for each of the unavoidable, significant impacts.

#### 3.1 Aesthetic and Visual Resources

**Significant Unavoidable Adverse Impact.** Conversion of open space to urban uses.

**Overriding Considerations.** The Planning Area currently contains 2,450.3 acres of open space and undeveloped parcels in the hillsides. Build out of the amended General Plan would result in an increase in urban uses throughout the General Plan area. The development of structures and facilities would occur on vacant properties and would be consistent with the policies outlined in the proposed General Plan. The conversion of open space to urban uses would result in a significant impact by causing the obstruction of existing open views as well as potentially obstructing distant panoramic views to the south from existing development; therefore, implementation of the proposed General Plan will contribute to the loss of visual character of the City as well as loss of open space. While it is not possible to mitigate this impact to a level of insignificance, the amended General Plan would assist in protecting and preserving a large portion of the open space land through maintaining a permanent open space, including a broad area of the South Hills. Other benefits of the amended General Plan related to protecting open space include the following:

- Development shall be clustered in the less sensitive and more developable portions of the site as a means of preserving the natural appearance of area hillsides, open space, and habitats. Under this concept, dwelling units and other forms of development are to be grouped in the more level and less environmentally sensitive portions of the site, while steeper and more environmentally sensitive areas are preserved in a natural state. The effect of permitted clustering is to preserve natural open space, enhance the protection of sensitive environmental resources within a development project, and facilitate the permanent protection of key natural features, such as steep slopes, biological habitats, ridgelines, and scenic areas. Clustering is not to be used to increase the overall density of an area beyond that which is otherwise permitted by the General Plan and applicable zoning regulations, but may result in urban density development within portions of a site that would otherwise have rural densities.



The following are general descriptions of the only areas where clustered housing is allowed:

- i. Cluster Area A, with 2½-acre minimum lot size: south of Beaumont Avenue and the southern boundary of the railroad, north of the Urban Slope Line, east of Bryn Mawr Avenue, and west of Nevada Street.
  - ii. Cluster Area B, with 1-acre minimum lot size: south of the eastern boundary of Loma Linda's Sphere of Influence, north of the Urban Slope Line, east of Nevada Street, and west of the eastern boundary of Loma Linda's Sphere of Influence.
  - iii. Cluster Area C, with ½-acre minimum lot size: with the exception of the Northerly Facing Slopes, south of the ridgelines of the northernmost Northerly Facing Slopes.
- Where clustering is allowed, the remaining open space shall be preserved and deeded to the City and dedicated as permanent open space and/or conservation area or subject to a permanent conservation easement and shall be open to the public for noncommercial recreational uses consistent with environmental values. The City is prohibited from permitting any development inconsistent with non-commercial recreational uses or open space on such dedicated land without a vote of the people.
  - Clustering is not be permitted on the northerly facing slopes which, prior to grading, are visible, or which would be visible but for man-made obstructions such as buildings or houses, from north of Barton Road, Interstate 10, or east of San Timoteo Canyon Road (the "Northerly Facing Slopes").
  - Site new development so as to maximize the permanent preservation of large blocks of unbroken open space and to minimize the loss of habitat, wildlife, and watershed resources;
  - The interface between new development and natural open space shall be designed to provide a gradual transition from manufactured areas into natural areas. By extending fingers of planting into existing enjoyed from existing dwellings;
  - Design new development so as to maximize the permanent preservation of open space and to minimize the loss of habitat, wildlife, and watershed resources;
  - Acquire, preserve and maintain open space and its natural resources for future generations;
  - Base open space preservation and acquisition on the evaluation of significant view sheds and ridgelines, wildlife habitats and fragile ecosystems, significant scientifically, historically, or ecologically unique natural areas, passive recreational areas, and stream or creek environs;
  - Encourage, through open space easements, development rights transfers or acquisition, or other incentives, the long-term maintenance of existing and future open space lands. Encourage acquisition and/or a land exchange program to place some of the Hillside Conservation Area in public ownership to be kept as open space;
  - To the extent legally possible, require other local, regional, State, or Federal agencies to maintain an adequate inventory of open space lands within Loma Linda;
  - Coordinate through development review, Loma Linda's open space system with adjacent cities, San Bernardino County, the State, and regional and private open space systems in order to connect the systems and share resources;
  - Utilize the resource of national, regional and local conservation organizations, corporations, non-profit associations and benevolent entities to acquire environmentally sensitive land or preservation areas;



- The San Jacinto Fault Zone area should be preserved as open space through easement dedication during the review process of applicable new developments;
- Limit culverts or the channeling of creeks to only those situations in which public health and safety are at risk so as to preserve creeks and their natural habitat for open space;
- Encourage access to open space areas in the design of development adjacent to open space, such as a trail; and
- Continue to require through development standards, the integration of open space and recreational uses and facilities in all multiple-family residential projects.

**Conclusion.** Based upon the previously described social, economic, and other benefits or considerations of the amended General Plan and the additional overriding considerations described above, the benefits of the amended General Plan outweigh the impact related to the loss of open space and any adverse environmental effects associated with this impact are considered to be acceptable.

### 3.2 Air Quality

**Significant Unavoidable Adverse Impact.** Implementation of the General Plan will exceed local and regional air quality standards for fugitive dust and mobile source emissions during construction and long-term mobile source emissions resulting in a worsening of air quality.

**Overriding Considerations.** The South Coast Air Basin is the largest basin in the State and has been designated by the Environmental Protection Agency as non-attainment for 8-hour ozone and PM<sub>2.5</sub>. Thus, a significant air quality problem exists now in the non-desert area of San Bernardino County which will persist for a number of years whether or not there is significant growth in the Loma Linda Planning Area. Also, urban growth will likely occur in communities surrounding the City of Loma Linda irrespective of the adoption of the amended General Plan. Air quality is a regional problem that does not respect jurisdictional or planning area boundaries. Continuing urban growth, whether it occurs in the Loma Linda Planning Area or in other areas, will contribute to the regional air quality problem in roughly the same manner.

The adoption of the amended General Plan, which includes policies that provide positive actions toward a comprehensive strategy dealing with air quality and are provided below, will be beneficial to the regional air quality program. These policies incorporate the majority of the goals, policies, and programs identified by the South Coast Air Quality Management District. The beneficial General Plan policies include the following:

- Encouraging developers of large residential and non-residential projects to participate in programs and to take measures to improve traffic flow and/or reduce vehicle trips resulting in decreased vehicular emissions;
- Supporting and facilitating employer-based trip reductions programs by recognizing such programs as mitigation for traffic and air quality impacts where their ongoing implementation can be ensured;
- Expand intersections to include additional turning and through lanes at intersections where needed to relieve congestion and improve intersection operation, so long as the intersection can continue to accommodate pedestrians and bicyclists. Avoid traffic system improvements that



facilitate vehicular turning and bus movements, but that also discourage pedestrian or bicycle movements;

- Design new residential neighborhoods to provide safe pedestrian and bicycle access to schools, parks and neighborhood commercial facilities through explicit development requirements for such amenities;
- Maintain roadway designs that maintain mobility and accessibility for bicyclists and pedestrians through incorporation of sidewalks and bicycle lanes, where appropriate;
- Where shopping facilities are located adjacent to residential areas, provide direct access between residential and commercial uses without requiring pedestrians and bicyclists to travel completely around the commercial development through stipulations in the design review process;
- Ensure that the site design of new developments provides for pedestrian access to existing and future transit routes and transit centers through specific review during the development review process;
- Encourage rider-ship on public transit through use of City information sources (e.g., City web site, and mail-outs) to provide information on transit services;
- Encourage extension of Metrolink service to the Loma Linda area, including assistance in locating and developing a Metrolink station within Loma Linda should service be extended to the area
- Encourage associated health care facilities and services to locate within close proximity of each other and require pedestrian connections (and bicycle paths, where appropriate) between such uses in order to limit necessary vehicle trips for patients, visitors, health care workers, and health care students;
- Provide increased access by designing pedestrian linkages from the adjacent residential cul-de-sacs to the trail system;
- Site all residential uses to facilitate pedestrian access to the park from the residential areas;
- Provide the residential uses with easy access to the planned recreation trail running north and south through the city (located approximately one half mile east of Mountain View Avenue), such as by placing trail connections at the end of cul-de-sacs;
- Provide individual neighborhoods with pathways and open spaces that connect residences to school and recreational facilities, thereby facilitating pedestrian and bicycle access;
- Promote the establishment of workplace alternatives, including home occupations and telecommuting to reduce peak hour congestion. Continue to allow home occupations in all residential districts;
- Explore the creation of a multi-modal transportation center to serve the downtown area and nearby medical and educational facilities; and
- Look for participation opportunities with potential transit center development.
- Loma Linda will undertake preparation of a Climate Action Plan to reduce greenhouse gas emissions resulting from the City's discretionary land use actions and internal City operations. The plan will consist of:
  - An inventory of known and reasonably discoverable sources of greenhouse gas emissions that currently exist within the City;
  - A baseline inventory of the greenhouse gases currently being emitted in the City;
  - An estimate of 1990 greenhouse gas emissions within the City;



- A projected inventory of new greenhouse gases that can reasonably be expected to be emitted in 2020 as the result of the City discretionary land use decisions pursuant to its General Plan, as well as new greenhouse gas emissions that will be emitted from the City's internal operations;
- A target for reduction to 1990 levels of greenhouse gas emissions reasonably attributable to the City's discretionary land use decisions and its internal operations; and
- A plan for achieving that target by 2020.

**Conclusion.** Based upon the previously described social, economic, and other benefits or considerations of the amended General Plan and the additional overriding considerations described above, the benefits of the of the amended General Plan outweigh the impact related to air quality and any adverse environmental effects associated with this impact are considered to be acceptable.

### 3.3 Biological Resources

**Significant Unavoidable Adverse Impact.** Implementation of the amended General Plan would cause direct loss of sensitive critical habitat or cause habitat fragmentation resulting in isolation of sensitive habitat patches which are of limited biological value.

**Overriding Considerations.** Implementation of the amended General Plan may result in the direct loss of 1,437.5 acres of sensitive habitat. The CDFG, through its NDDB, tracks the occurrence of natural communities which it considers to be the most sensitive in the state. As conditions change over time, conservation efforts may lead to habitat types being added to or removed from the set of habitats considered sensitive. Construction of proposed General Plan land uses may result in the loss or fragmentation of sensitive habitat(s).

Determining the significance of site-specific impacts from projects that are proposed in accordance with the amended General Plan land uses will require analysis as part of the subsequent evaluation of such projects. The potential for such impacts to be considered significant will depend upon various factors including, but not limited to, the site conditions at the time of project evaluation, the extent of the area potentially affected, the quality of the habitat being affected, and the value of the affected habitat at local and regional scales. As land use proceeds under implementation of the amended General Plan, patches of habitat on undeveloped properties will initially be fragmented by the sporadic pattern of development. However, once the amended General Plan reaches build out, the only fragmented patches remaining would be those set aside within a project site as on-site mitigation or due to development constraints (e.g., steep slopes), or both. Thus, the initial fragmentation of undeveloped properties would be an interim condition with the long-term fragmentation occurring under total build out. Regional fragmentation will occur as existing biological reserves and other conservation lands (e.g., San Timoteo Canyon State Park) become surrounded and isolated by community and rural development. The amended General Plan will create habitat fragmentation resulting in isolation of sensitive habitat patches creating a "checkerboard" pattern of small habitat patches of limited biological value.

The amended General Plan policies focus primarily on avoidance and minimization of impacts to floodplain, riparian, and wetland habitats; maintaining and conserving superior examples of native vegetation. The policies provide for avoidance and minimization of impacts to some sensitive habitats. The adoption of the amended General Plan, which includes policies that provide positive actions toward a comprehensive strategy dealing with biological resources and are provided below,



will be beneficial to the critical habitat and cause habitat fragmentation. The beneficial General Plan policies include the following:

- Development shall be clustered in the less sensitive and more developable portions of the site as a means of preserving the natural appearance of area hillsides, open space, and habitats. Under this concept, dwelling units and other forms of development are to be grouped in the more level and less environmentally sensitive portions of the site, while steeper and more environmentally sensitive areas are preserved in a natural state. The effect of permitted clustering is to preserve natural open space, enhance the protection of sensitive environmental resources within a development project, and facilitate the permanent protection of key natural features, such as steep slopes, biological habitats, ridgelines, and scenic areas. Clustering is not to be used to increase the overall density of an area beyond that which is otherwise permitted by the General Plan and applicable zoning regulations, but may result in urban density development within portions of a site that would otherwise have rural densities;
- Site new development so as to maximize the permanent preservation of large blocks of unbroken open space and to minimize the loss of habitat, wildlife, and watershed resources;
- Acquire, preserve and maintain open space and its natural resources for future generations;
- Base open space preservation and acquisition on the evaluation of significant view sheds and ridgelines, wildlife habitat and fragile ecosystems, significant scientifically, historically, or ecologically unique natural areas, passive recreational areas, and stream or creek environs;
- Development projects are to be designed to protect habitat values and to preserve significant habitat areas and habitat connections in their natural condition:
  - i. Within habitat areas of rare, threatened or endangered species, disturbance of protected biotic resources is prohibited.
  - ii. Development shall avoid “canyon bottoms,” which are defined as the land occurring within 200 feet of either side of a line referred to as a “blue line stream” as designated on a U.S. Geological Survey (USGS) map. Within riparian and wetland areas, the vegetative resources that contribute to habitat carrying capacity (vegetative diversity, faunal resting areas, foraging areas, and food sources) shall be preserved in place or replaced so as to not result in a measurable reduction in the reproductive capacity of sensitive biotic resources. Development shall not result in a net loss of wetlands.
  - iii. Buffer zones adjacent to areas of preserved biological resources shall be provided. Such buffer zones shall be adequate in width so as to protect biological resources from grading and construction activities, as well as from the long-term use of adjacent lands. The landscape design adjacent to areas of preserved biological resources shall be designed so as to avoid invasive species that could negatively impact the value of the preserved resource.
- Comply with the Federal policy of no net loss of wetlands through avoidance and clustered development. Where preservation in place is found to be infeasible (such as an unavoidable a road crossing through habitats), require 1) on-site replacement of wetland areas, 2) off-site replacement, or 3) restoration of degraded wetland areas at a minimum ratio of one acre of replacement/restoration for each acre of impacted on-site habitat, such that the value of impacted habitat is replaced;
- Require appropriate setbacks adjacent to natural streams to provide adequate buffer areas ensuring the projection of biological resources;



- Through the project approval and design review processes, require new development projects to protect sensitive habitat areas, including, but not limited to, coastal sage scrub, and native grasslands. Ensure the preservation in place of habitat areas found to be occupied by state and federally protected species. Where preserved habitat areas occupy areas that would otherwise be graded as part of a development project, facilitate the transfer of allowable density to other, non-sensitive portions of the site;
- Through development review, retain, as feasible, wildlife corridors in the Planning Area in particular, the San Timoteo Wash area;
- Base open space preservation and acquisition on the evaluation of significant view sheds and ridgelines, wildlife habitats and fragile ecosystems, significant scientifically, historically, or ecologically unique natural areas, passive recreational areas, and stream or creek environs;
- Encourage, through open space easements, development rights transfers or acquisition, or other incentives, the long-term maintenance of existing and future open space lands. Encourage acquisition and/or a land exchange program to place some of the Hillside Conservation Area in public ownership to be kept as open space;
- To the extent legally possible, require other local, regional, State, or Federal agencies to maintain an adequate inventory of open space lands within Loma Linda;
- Coordinate through development review, Loma Linda's open space system with adjacent cities, San Bernardino County, the State, and regional and private open space systems in order to connect the systems and share resources; and
- Utilize the resource of national, regional and local conservation organizations, corporations, non-profit associations and benevolent entities to acquire environmentally sensitive land or preservation areas.

The following mitigation measures are also proposed to address impacts to critical habitat and habitat fragmentation.

- Require the preparation of biological reports in compliance with standards established by the City of Loma Linda for development related uses that require discretionary approval to assess the impacts of such development and provide mitigation for impacts to biological resources. The report must be prepared by a qualified biologist; the City Community Development Department must be notified in advance that a report will be prepared for a specific project; the report must include a signed certification attesting to the report contents, specific information as to the type of survey (e.g., General Biological Resources Assessment, Habitat Assessment, etc.), site location, property owner. In addition, the report must include the following:
  - a. Specified attachments (summary sheet, level of significance checklist, biological resources/project footprint map, and site photos);
  - b. Information on literature sources (e.g., California Natural Diversity Data Base, California Department of Fish and Game, U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service, and environmental documents for nearby projects);
  - c. A description of surveys, including timing, personnel, and weather conditions;
  - d. A description of site conditions including plant and wildlife habitat, disturbances, and sensitive elements;
  - e. An assessment of anticipated project impacts and a discussion of mitigation;
  - f. A list of all species observed or detected and a recommendation for any additional focused surveys that may be necessary.



- The City establishes baseline ratios for mitigating the impacts of development related uses to rare, threatened and endangered species and their associated habitats as the following:
  - Preserve habitat at minimum of 1:1 replacement ratio in locations that provide long-term conservation value for impacted resources. This could involve acquisition of habitat occupied by the affected species, acquiring a key parcel that fills in a missing link or gap in a reserve that provides conservation for the species, or acquisition of credits in a mitigation bank (endorsed by the USFWS and/or CDFG) that has been established to provide conservation value for the species. Implementation of the mitigation measure shall include provisions for the preservation of such areas in perpetuity.

**Conclusion.** Based upon the previously described social, economic, and other benefits or considerations of the amended General Plan and the additional overriding considerations described above, the benefits of the of the amended General Plan outweigh the impact related to the loss of critical habitat and habitat fragmentation in the Planning Area outside of the City limits and the sphere of influence and any adverse environmental effects associated with this impact are considered to be acceptable.

### 3.4 Water Resources

**Significant Unavoidable Adverse Impact.** Implementation of the amended General Plan would increase the existing demand for water thereby reducing water availability to, or interfering with, existing users of well water.

**Overriding Considerations.** With increased development in the Planning Area, anticipated with the implementation of the General Plan Update, water resources will continue to diminish not only for the City of Loma Linda but also for the rest of the communities in Southern California. Although the City of Loma Linda has ascertained that there is presently enough water supply in the Bunker Hills basin to serve its future needs, the City is not the only community using that basin for water supplies. As the rest of the region grows and as the native water supply decreases, the region's dependence on imported water grows and water conservation, including the use of reclaimed water and control of water runoff pollution becomes critical to not only Loma Linda but the entire region. The City has identified the provision and protection of water resources as one of prime importance in the implementation of the General Plan Update. While the proposed General Plan policies recognize the water supply issues and encourage the use of water conservation measures, they do not assure the provision of water supplies adequate to support development that may occur as a result of implementation of the proposed General Plan Update.

The adoption of the amended General Plan, which includes policies that provide positive actions toward a comprehensive strategy dealing with water supply and conservation efforts and are provided below, will be beneficial to the City's need for potable water. The beneficial General Plan policies include the following:

- Provide a water system that supplies high quality water to serve existing and future needs of the City during peak use conditions, with sufficient water in storage reservoirs for emergency and fire protection;
- Ensure that adequate water supply capacity and infrastructure is in place prior to occupancy of new development;



- Update the City's Water Master Plan as needed, with a review occurring at least every five years;
- Encourage water conservation as a means of preserving water resources. Require new development to be equipped with water conservation devices;
- Ensure that an adequate supply of water is available to serve existing and future needs of the City;
- Develop and encourage the implementation of water conservation programs by residents, employers, students, and service providers;
- Participate with State and regional agencies to monitor groundwater supplies and take steps to prevent overuse, depletion, and toxicity;
- Encourage sustainable landscapes or landscapes that require little irrigation through the use of drought-tolerant and native vegetation in new development;
- No development project shall be approved which would cause the quality of water delivered to Loma Linda households to fail to meet State and/or Federal water quality standards, or which would cause an increase in residential rates, or which would result in a restriction of water usage, except for those projects exempt under State and/or Federal law.
- Pursue the use of reclaimed water for the irrigation of all appropriate open space facilities and City projects, and encourage existing and new developments to tie to the reclaim water system when available and recommended by the San Bernardino Municipal Water Department; and
- Through the development review process, encourage water conservation in all new and rehabilitated development through the use of water conserving fixtures in residential and commercial development.

**Conclusion.** Based upon the previously described social, economic, and other benefits or considerations of the amended General Plan and the additional overriding considerations described above, the benefits of the of the amended General Plan outweigh the impact related to water resources and any adverse environmental effects associated with this impact are considered to be acceptable.

### 3.5 Traffic

**Significant Unavoidable Adverse Impact.** Implementation of the amended General Plan would result in an increase in traffic volumes which could result in congestion along area roadways and the I-10 freeway.

**Overriding Considerations.** The revised traffic impact analysis (TIA) undertaken for the amended General Plan sets forth a number of measures that, when implemented, will maintain service level standards along all roadways and highways that will be affected by the Loma Linda General Plan. However, the City of Loma Linda cannot ensure that the improvements needed to maintain level of service standards in surrounding communities or at freeway interchanges will actually be completed, even if developments in Loma Linda provide fair share contributions. In addition, there are no mechanisms in place, nor are any contemplated to be available in the foreseeable future, that would provide for developer contributions to improvements along freeway mainlines. The amended General Plan includes policies that will reduce the traffic impacts on area roadways as described in the 2006 General Plan EIR and Chapter 3 of the Addendum to the 2006 General Plan EIR. These policies are as follows:

- Maintain long-term traffic levels of service at LOS C.



- In those locations where maintaining LOS C is not feasible and Measure V permits a lower level of service, implement all feasible mitigation measures.
- Require all development projects to provide their fair share (in the form of physical improvements and/or fee payment) for all feasible improvements needed to implement Policy “a,” above.
- Where it is determined that it is not feasible to impose the mitigation measures necessary to meet City LOS standards on a project that is not exempt from the traffic level of service standards set forth in Measure V, development shall not be permitted to proceed unless and until the project is able to meet applicable level of service standards in Measure V.
- Where the payment of fees is accepted as mitigation in lieu of actual construction of physical improvements, such fee payment shall be considered to be adequate mitigation if, at the time of project approval, a public agency has programmed construction of the improvements needed to meet City LOS standards to commence at or prior to the time that the proposed project is anticipated to cause or contribute to the deterioration of traffic levels of service below City standards.<sup>1</sup>
- Alternatively, if the physical improvements are to be constructed by a private entity, construction of the needed improvements shall have begun prior to the time that the proposed project causes or contributes to the deterioration of traffic levels of service below City standards.
- Facilitate roadway capacity by implementing the Loma Linda Circulation Plan.
- Pursue the Evans Street interchange and roadway extension.
- Although included in regional funding for additional lanes, maintain a four-lane divided highway on Redlands Boulevard except at intersection of Anderson Street where additional through lanes will be necessary.
- Promote the design of roadways to optimize safe traffic flow within established roadway configurations by minimizing driveways and intersections, uncontrolled access to adjacent parcels, on-street parking, and frequent stops to the extent consistent with the character of adjacent land uses.
- As development occurs, provide adequate capacity at intersections to accommodate future traffic volumes by installing intersection traffic improvements and traffic control devices, as needed.
- Facilitate the synchronization of traffic signals along Redlands Boulevard, Barton Road, Anderson Street, and Mountain View Avenue;
- Require the provision of reciprocal access and parking agreements between adjacent land uses where appropriate to facilitate off-street vehicular movement between adjacent commercial and other non-residential uses, and to reduce the number of driveways along major roadways;
- Encourage regional goods movement to remain on area freeways and other appropriate routes;
- Require the design of new developments to focus through traffic onto arterial streets, and away from local neighborhoods;
- Require that existing driveways that are unnecessary or substandard be removed or upgraded, wherever feasible, in conjunction with any on-site development or any adjacent street construction;

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<sup>1</sup> Generally, this would be considered to be opening day of the project (first occupancy), unless a traffic study approved by the City identifies a later date.

<sup>2</sup> “Existing” levels of service and the level of service standard to be applied to the project is to be determined at the time an application is deemed complete and an initial study pursuant to the requirements of CEQA is prepared, and not at the time of project approval.



- Where single-family residences have no feasible alternative but to front on collector or arterial roadways, require, wherever possible, that circular driveways or on-site turnarounds be provided to eliminate the need for residents to back onto the street;
- Locate driveways on corner parcels as far away from the intersection as is possible;
- Avoid locating driveways within passenger waiting areas of bus stops or within bus bays. Locate driveways so that drivers will be able to see around bus stop improvements;
- Where a series of traffic signals is provided along a route, facilitate the coordination of traffic signals to optimize traffic progression on a given route. Traffic signalization should emphasize facilitating access from neighborhood areas onto the City's primary roadway network, and should work to discourage through traffic from using local streets;
- Expand intersections to include additional turning and through lanes at intersections where needed to relieve congestion and improve intersection operation, so long as the intersection can continue to accommodate pedestrians and bicyclists. Avoid traffic system improvements that facilitate vehicular turning and bus movements, but that also discourage pedestrian or bicycle movements;
- Maintain the first priority for public streets of providing safe and efficient travel for the public with on-street parking as a second priority;
- Pursue construction of parking structures within the downtown area to serve projected parking demand and facilitate mixed-use development without the need to meet off-street parking standards on each individual parcel;
- Work with the Loma Linda University/Medical Center to provide a direct connection of Van Leuven Street to Anderson Street, preferably at the existing intersection of Academy Street;
- Work with the Loma Linda Academy to modify its entry to provide stacking room for parents' vehicles waiting to drop off or pick up students; and
- As part of the development of the mixed-use area west of California Street, realign Mission Road to connect to Orange Street. West of California Street, design the realigned Mission Road to maximize access to lands north of Barton Road.

The following mitigation measure is also proposed to address identified traffic impacts.

- Individual development projects undertaken pursuant to the General Plan shall be required to provide roadway/intersection improvements or provide a fair share contribution toward such improvements as are needed to maintain applicable Level of Service standards on roadway links, intersections, and at freeway interchanges. For impacts on roadways and intersections outside of the City of Loma Linda, as well as for freeway interchanges, implementation of the requirement to provide improvements or fair share contributions shall be predicated on the commitment of the agency controlling the roadway, intersection, or interchange to commit to completing the improvement.

**Conclusion.** Based upon the previously described social, economic, and other benefits or considerations of the amended General Plan and the additional overriding considerations described above, the benefits of the of the amended General Plan outweigh the impact related to increase traffic and any adverse environmental effects associated with this impact are considered to be acceptable.