



CHAPTER 3.0 PLANS AND POLICIES

3.1 CITY OF CALABASAS GENERAL PLAN

The City of Calabasas incorporated in 1991 as a response by local residents to the overly intense development in the region by Los Angeles County. The City's General Plan was adopted in 1995 to define what makes Calabasas a special place, delineate a vision for its future, and formulate programs to achieve that future. The General Plan is reviewed annually and can be amended up to four times per year to ensure that current conditions and social values are reflected.

The three primary watershed drainages that lie within the City's limits are surrounded by a mosaic of residential, recreational, and commercial uses, which developed over time and have been formalized in the General Plan as the City's Land Use Districts. In addition, a parks, recreation, and open space system is envisioned within Calabasas that will provide parks for urban residential neighborhoods, establish a comprehensive trails system, and meet the open space and recreational needs of Calabasas residents.

The preservation of remaining open space lands and the protection of significant environmental features within Calabasas are, according to the General Plan, the highest priorities of the City. This includes protecting significant environmental resources, maintaining public health and safety, managing the production of resources, and providing open space for public recreation. Open space for public recreation includes setting aside public parks and recreational areas as well as maintaining a system of trails that can be used for hiking, equestrian riding, and mountain biking. In addition to preserving existing open space, the General Plan calls for environmental design and site planning that works with nature to minimize the loss of resources, reduce the off-site impacts of development, and restore environmental and landscape quality that may have been compromised by past actions.

With respect to biotic resources, the General plan states, "It is a high priority of the City to protect and, where feasible, facilitate restoration of the biological productivity and quality of vegetative and wildlife habitats throughout the remaining open spaces within the General Plan study area." To accomplish this, the City has undertaken to identify and preserve large self-sustaining habitat management areas through public acquisition of lands and open space easements within significant resource areas. In addition, the City has adopted an oak tree



preservation ordinance and has extended similar protection to other stands of significant natural vegetation through the General Plan's Environmental Management and Development Review Programs.

The General Plan also calls for a number of specific policies intended to maintain water quality within natural drainages so that resource-dependent recreation and the biological capacity of riparian areas will not be adversely affected. These measures include protecting natural watershed areas within the General Plan study area, controlling water consumption by existing and new development through an emphasis on drought-tolerant planting techniques, use of water-efficient plumbing and water reclamation, and promoting the reduction of pollutants and sedimentation from existing uses through public education, erosion control, and implementation of workable BMPs.

As called for in the Water Resources Section II E. of the General Plan, the City of Calabasas has maintained full compliance with the NPDES Permit requirements. The City has a dedicated Environmental Services Manager (ESM) and Environmental Services Assistant to oversee the complete implementation of the permit requirements. As outlined in the goals and policies set forth in the General Plan, the City has an overall commitment to the protection and enhancement of their receiving waters that goes beyond minimal Permit compliance.

3.2 DRAFT WATERSHED MANAGEMENT AREA PLAN FOR THE MALIBU CREEK WATERSHED (JANUARY 2001)

Using the Las Virgenes Malibu Conejo Council of Governments as fiduciary agent, the watershed cities (Calabasas, Westlake Village, Agoura Hills, and Malibu) and Los Angeles County pooled funding and resources and hired a consultant to write the Draft Watershed Management Area Plan for the Malibu Creek watershed. Although never formally adopted as a policy document, this study was used as a basis for preparation of the Malibu Creek Watershed Management Area Plan that Los Angeles County submitted to the RWQCB to meet requirements of the 2001 Report of Waste Discharge. At this time, the watershed Cities and L.A. County are working together to develop Plan Blue, an urban runoff reduction plan. Plan Blue incorporates the previously completed Draft Watershed Management Area Plan (WMAP) and focuses on regionally consistent and cost-effective NPDES Permit implementation with a view towards overall watershed stewardship. The action plan developed in Plan Blue will not only be implemented in the Malibu Creek Watershed, but across the entire North Santa Monica Bay area which includes Topanga Canyon and several smaller rural watersheds that drain directly into Santa Monica Bay.



3.3 LOS ANGELES RIVER MASTER PLAN (JUNE 1996)

The Los Angeles River Master Plan (LARMP) creates a vision of the Los Angeles River as a resource. The LARMP goals are to guarantee flood protection to surrounding communities, provide diverse recreational opportunities, enhance river appearance, and create sustainable local economies. Combined, these goals seek to enrich the quality of life adjacent to the Los Angeles River.

3.4 SANTA MONICA MOUNTAINS NORTH AREA PLAN (OCTOBER 2000)

The Santa Monica Mountains North Area Plan (SMMNAP) is an element of the Los Angeles County General Plan. The SMMNAP serves as a planning tool to regulate development within the unincorporated area of the Santa Monica Mountains. The SMMNAP consists of five elements, two of which, the Conservation and Open Space and the Land Use and Housing Elements, affect water quality. The Conservation and Open Space Element prioritizes resource protection over land development. This principle recognizes that irreplaceable resources must be managed to protect biological habitats and corridors, water quality, scenic resources, open space, and recreation. The Land Use and Housing Element aims to protect significant environmental resources and avoid developments that negatively impact environmental resources. Existing communities are expected to maintain their unique character and create distinct boundaries between suburban and rural areas. Furthermore, the plan promotes accessible outdoor recreation.

3.5 LAS VIRGENES GATEWAY MASTER PLAN (DECEMBER 1998)

The City of Calabasas in the Las Virgenes Gateway Master Plan (LVGMP) seeks to establish a balance between the community and nature along the Las Virgenes corridor through specific land use and development plans. The LVGMP goals aim to promote the rural character of Calabasas, increase aesthetics, preserve the natural environment, and prevent significant environmental degradation. This plan may be used as a tool to obtain grants for public improvements, including trail construction and creek restoration.

3.6 LAS VIRGENES CORRIDOR DESIGN PLAN (JANUARY 1998)

The Las Virgenes Corridor Design Plan (LVCDP) is a comprehensive plan that aims to improve Las Virgenes Road from Mulholland Highway to the Ventura County jurisdictional line. The plan recommends methods to beautify the road and better circulation and traffic. Beautification includes planwide landscaping to fit the natural environment, preserve views, and use native and noninvasive drought-tolerant plants. Circulation as well as recreational opportunities will be enhanced by a bikeway system running the length of the corridor.

