

County of Riverside General Plan Eastern Coachella Valley Area Plan



COUNTY OF RIVERSIDE

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Vision Summary



County of Riverside General Plan Eastern Coachella Valley Area Plan

The County of Riverside General Plan and Area Plans have been shaped by the RCIP Vision. Following is a summary of the Vision Statement that includes many of the salient points brought forth by the residents of the unincorporated Eastern Coachella Valley as well as the rest of the County of Riverside. The RCIP Vision reflects the County of Riverside in the year 2020. So, “fast forward” yourself to 2020 and here is what it will be like.

“Riverside County is a family of special communities in a remarkable environmental setting.”

It is now the year 2020. This year (incidentally, also a common reference to clear vision), is an appropriate time to check our community vision. Twenty years have passed since we took an entirely new look at how the County of Riverside was evolving. Based on what we saw, we set bold new directions for the future. As we now look around and move through the County, the results are notable. They could happen only in response to universal values strongly held by the people. Some of those values are:

- Real dedication to a sense of community;
- Appreciation for the diversity of our people and places within this expansive landscape;
- Belief in the value of participation by our people in shaping their communities;
- Confidence in the future and faith that our long term commitments will pay off;
- Willingness to innovate and learn from our experience;
- Dedication to the preservation of the environmental features that frame our communities;
- Respect for our differences and willingness to work toward their resolution;
- Commitment to quality development in partnership with those who help build our communities; and
- The value of collaboration by our elected officials in conducting public business.

Those values and the plans they inspired have brought us a long way. True, much remains to be done. But our energies and resources are being invested in a unified direction, based on the common ground we have affirmed many times during the last 20 years. Perhaps our achievements will help you understand why we believe we are on the right path.

Population Growth

The almost doubling of our population in only 20 years has been a challenge, but we have met it by focusing that growth in areas that are well served by public facilities and services or where they can readily be

provided. Major transportation corridors serve our communities and nearby open space preserves help define them. Our growth focus is on quality, not quantity. That allows the numbers to work for us and not against us. We enjoy an unprecedented clarity regarding what areas must not be developed and which ones should be developed. The resulting pattern of growth concentrates development in key areas rather than spreading it uniformly throughout the County. Land is used more efficiently, communities operate at more of a human scale, and transit systems to supplement the automobile are more feasible. In fact, the customized “Oasis” transit system now operates quite successfully in several cities and communities.

Our Communities and Neighborhoods

Our choices in the kind of community and neighborhood we prefer is almost unlimited here. From sophisticated urban villages to quality suburban neighborhoods to spacious rural enclaves, we have them all. If you are like most of us, you appreciate the quality schools and their programs that are the centerpiece of many of our neighborhoods. Not only have our older communities matured gracefully, but we boast several new communities as well. They prove that quality of life comes in many different forms.

Housing

We challenge you to seek a form of housing or a range in price that does not exist here. Our housing choices, from rural retreat to suburban neighborhood to exclusive custom estate are as broad as the demand for housing requires. Choices include entry level housing for first time buyers, apartments serving those not now in the buying market, seniors’ housing, and world class golf communities. You will also find “smart” housing with the latest in built-in technology as well as refurbished historic units. The County of Riverside continues to draw people who are looking for a blend of quality and value.

It is no secret that the distances in this vast County can be a bit daunting. Yet, our transportation system has kept pace amazingly well with the growth in population, employment and tourism and their demands for mobility. We are perhaps proudest of the new and expanded transportation corridors that connect growth centers throughout the County. They do more than

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provide a way for people and goods to get where they need to be. Several major corridors have built-in expansion capability to accommodate varied forms of transit. These same corridors are designed with a high regard for the environment in mind, including providing for critical wildlife crossings so that our open spaces can sustain their habitat value.

Conservation and Open Space Resources

The often-impassioned conflicts regarding what lands to permanently preserve as open space are virtually resolved. The effort to consider our environmental resources, recreation needs, habitat systems, and visual heritage as one comprehensive, multi-purpose open space system has resulted in an unprecedented commitment to their preservation. In addition, these spaces help to form distinctive edges to many of our communities or clusters of communities. What is equally satisfying is that they were acquired in a variety of creative and equitable ways.

Air Quality

It may be hard to believe, but our air quality has actually improved slightly despite the phenomenal growth that has occurred in the region. Most of that growth, of course, has been in adjacent counties and we continue to import their pollutants. We are on the verge of a breakthrough in technical advances to reduce smog from cars and trucks. Not only that, but our expanded supply of jobs reduces the need for people here to commute as far as in the past.

Jobs and Economy

In proportion to population, our job growth is spectacular. Not only is our supply of jobs beyond any previously projected level, it has become quite diversified. Clusters of new industries have brought with them an array of jobs that attract skilled labor and executives alike. We are particularly enthusiastic about the linkages between our diversified business community and our educational system. Extensive vocational training programs, coordinated with businesses, are a constant source of opportunities for

youth and those in our labor force who seek further improvement.

Agricultural Lands

Long a major foundation of our economy and our culture, agriculture remains a thriving part of the County of Riverside. While we have lost some agriculture to other forms of development, other lands

have been brought into agricultural production. We are still a major agricultural force in California and compete successfully in the global agricultural market.

Educational System

Quality education, from pre-school through graduate programs, marks the County of Riverside as a place where educational priorities are firmly established. A myriad of partnerships involving private enterprise and cooperative programs between local governments and school districts are in place, making the educational system an integral part of our communities.

Plan Integration

The coordinated planning for multi-purpose open space systems, community based land use patterns, and a diversified transportation system has paid off handsomely. Integration of these major components of community building has resulted in a degree of certainty and clarity of direction not commonly achieved in the face of such dynamic change.

Financial Realities

From the very beginning, our vision included the practical consideration of how we would pay for the qualities our expectations demanded. Creative, yet practical financing programs provide the necessary leverage to achieve a high percentage of our aspirations expressed in the updated RCIP.

Intergovernmental Cooperation

As a result of the necessary coordination between the County, the cities and other governmental agencies brought about through the RCIP, a high degree of intergovernmental cooperation and even partnership is now commonplace. This way of doing public business has become a tradition and the County of Riverside is renowned for its many model intergovernmental programs.



Introduction

Throughout the Area Plan, special features have been included to enhance the readability and practicality of the information provided. Look for these elements:



Quotes — quotations from the RCIP Vision or individuals involved or concerned with Riverside County.



Factoids — interesting information about Riverside County that is related to the element



References — contacts and resources that can be consulted for additional information



Definitions — clarification of terms and vocabulary used in certain policies or text.



Unincorporated land is all land within the County that is not within an incorporated city or an Indian Nation. Generally, it is subject to policy direction and under the land use authority of the Board of Supervisors. However, it may also contain state and federal properties that lie outside of Board authority.

The Eastern Coachella Valley encompasses a variety of man-made and natural environments. It is a stronghold of agricultural production, features a developing County airport, is framed by spectacular mountain ranges, boasts numerous special communities, encompasses large reaches of the Colorado Desert, and is located at the northern end of the State of California's largest inland sea. The area plan that governs this diverse valley, therefore, must recognize, preserve and even enhance its most important features and components.

This area plan is not a stand-alone document, but rather an extension of the County of Riverside General Plan and Vision Statement. The County of Riverside Vision Statement details the physical, environmental, and economic characteristics that the County aspires to achieve by the year 2020. Using the Vision Statement as the primary foundation, the County of Riverside General Plan establishes policies to guide development and conservation within the entire unincorporated County territory, while the Area Plan details standards and policy direction specifically for Eastern Coachella Valley.

This plan doesn't just provide a description of the location, physical characteristics, and special features here. It contains a Land Use Plan, statistical summaries, policies, and accompanying exhibits that allow anyone interested in this distinctive region to understand where the future is headed. Background information also provides insights that help in understanding the issues that require special focus in this plan and the reasons for the more localized policy direction found in this document.

Each section of the area plan addresses critical issues facing the Eastern Coachella Valley. Perhaps a description of these sections will help in understanding the organization of the area plan as well as appreciating the comprehensive nature of the planning process that led to it. The Location section explains where the area plan fits with what is around it and how it relates to the cities that impact it. Physical features are described in a section that highlights the planning area's communities, surrounding environment and natural resources. This leads naturally to the Land Use Plan section, which describes the land use system guiding development at both the countywide and area plan levels.

While a number of these designations reflect the unique features found only in this plan, a number of special policies are still necessary to address unique situations. The Policy Areas section presents these policies. Land use related issues are addressed in the Land Use section. The area plan also describes relevant transportation issues, routes and modes of transportation in the Circulation section. The key to understanding the valued open space network is described in the Multipurpose Open Space section. There are both natural and man made hazards to consider, and they are spelled out in the Hazards section.



A Special Note on Implementing the Vision

The preface to this area plan is a summary version of the Riverside County Vision. That summary is, in turn, simply an overview of a much more extensive and detailed Vision of Riverside County two decades or more into the future. This area plan, as part of the Riverside County General Plan, is one of the major devices for making the Vision a reality.

No two area plans are the same. Each represents a unique portion of the incredibly diverse place known as Riverside County. While many share certain common features, each of the plans reflects the special characteristics that define its area's unique identity. These features include not only physical qualities, but also the particular boundaries used to define them, the stage of development they have reached, the dynamics of change expected to affect them, and the numerous decisions that shape development and conservation in each locale. That is why the Vision cannot and should not be reflected uniformly.

Policies at the General Plan and area plan levels implement the Riverside County Vision in a range of subject areas as diverse as the scope of the Vision itself. The land use pattern contained in this area plan is a further expression of the Vision as it is shaped to fit the terrain and the conditions in the Eastern Coachella Valley area.

To illustrate how the Vision has shaped this area plan, the following highlights reflect certain strategies that link the Vision to the land. This is not a comprehensive enumeration; rather, it emphasizes a few of the most powerful and physically tangible examples:

- Land use designations of severely constrained lands and lands subject to natural hazards reflect their limited development potential;
- Community development land uses are generally restricted to areas adjacent to the existing urban fabric, while rural, agriculture and open space uses are on the periphery;
- Additional lands with the potential to accommodate farmworker housing in the valley have been designated for residential uses;
- The majority of the Prime, Statewide, Local and Unique Importance agricultural lands are designated Agriculture; and
- A Community Center has been designated on a vacant parcel in the community of Mecca that could provide employment, services and housing for the local population in this area.

Data in this area plan is current as of October 7, 2003. Any General Plan amendments approved subsequent to that date are not reflected in this area plan and must be supported by their own environmental documentation. A process for incorporating any applicable portion of these amendments into this area plan is part of the General Plan Implementation Program.



Location

From this nearly 670-square mile area plan, one looks west to the Santa Rosa Mountains, REMAP and western Riverside County, and east to the Colorado Desert, as shown in Figure 1, Location. Imperial County lies to the south of this area, while the Western Coachella Valley Area Plan area (and the rest of the Coachella Valley) and the expanse of the Colorado Desert and Joshua Tree National Park are located to the north. Many other features and locales play an important part in understanding the character of this area. These components can be better visualized by reference to Figure 1, Location, which also depicts the unincorporated places that have a strong local identity.



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Figure 1: Location



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Features

This section describes the setting, features and functions that are unique to the Eastern Coachella Valley Area Plan. These defining characteristics are shown on Figure 2, Physical Features.

SETTING

The Eastern Coachella Valley Area Plan is set within the southeast portion of the Coachella Valley, south and east of the City of Indio, and east of the City of La Quinta and the Santa Rosa Mountains, stretching to the Imperial County line on the south. The area plan boundary extends east of the All American Canal, north and south of Interstate 10, taking in Chiriaco Summit. The Metropolitan Water District of Southern California's Colorado River Aqueduct traverses from east to west along the majority of the Area Plan, paralleling Interstate 10 north and west of Chiriaco Summit. The southeastern edge of the Eastern Coachella Valley Area Plan is bounded by the Chocolate Mountain Naval Reservation Aerial Gunnery Range.

UNIQUE FEATURES

Physically, the Eastern Coachella Valley is bounded by the Santa Rosa Mountains to the west, and the Mecca Hills and the edge of Joshua Tree National Park to the northeast. The portion of the planning area east of the All American Canal is either desert or mountainous terrain.

Salton Trough & Salton Sea

The area west of the All American Canal is contained within the Salton Trough, a small section of the junction between the North American and Pacific tectonic plates. Roughly the northernmost quarter of the Salton Sea is located in the southern portion of the area and forms a good part of Eastern Coachella Valley's southern boundary, flowing into Imperial County to the south. The surface elevation of the sea is 227 feet below mean sea level, and the deepest area of the sea's bed is only 5 feet higher than the lowest point in Death Valley. The sea is home to large bird and fish populations, and is bordered by the Salton Sea State Recreation Area to the east, which provides camping, fishing, hiking and boating opportunities. The Whitewater River channel runs north to south through the plan area and empties into the sea.

Whitewater River Stormwater Evacuation Channel

The Whitewater River is the primary drainage course in the area, spanning the length of the Coachella Valley. The river has perennial flow in the north, becoming dry as water percolates the groundwater basin or is diverted for use. The river is fed by several tributaries, including the Box Canyon Wash. The channel also carries stormwater and agricultural runoff and supports some riparian vegetation and marsh habitat at the north end of the Salton Sea.



The Colorado River Aqueduct

The Colorado River Aqueduct was built from 1933-1941 and is owned and operated by the Metropolitan Water District of Southern California. Colorado River water imported via the Aqueduct provides supplemental water to nearly 17 million people in Riverside County and Southern California's coastal plain.

Santa Rosa and San Jacinto Mountains National Monument

The Santa Rosa and San Jacinto Mountains National Monument encompasses more than 272,000 acres and overlaps the boundary between the REMAP and the Eastern Coachella Valley Area Plan. The Federal Bureau of Land Management administers the monument cooperatively with the U.S. Forest Service, California Department of Fish and Game, Agua Caliente Band of Cahuilla Indians, California Department of Parks and Recreation, county-city regional agencies, private land owners, and the Coachella Valley Mountains Conservancy.

Peninsular Ranges

Composed mainly of the Santa Rosa Mountains and the San Jacinto Mountains, this system of bold, high mountains runs northwest from this portion of the Valley and includes the 8,716-foot-high Toro Peak in the Santa Rosa Mountains and 10,831-foot San Jacinto Peak in the San Jacinto Mountains. The Peninsular Ranges act as an effective barrier to the eastward moving storms and cooler air masses of the southern California coastal area.

Painted Canyon

The Painted Canyon, an important scenic resource in the plan area, is located within the 41,300 acres of the Mecca Hills and Orocopia Mountains Wilderness.

Dos Palmas Preserve

The Dos Palmas Preserve is located east of the Salton Sea Recreation Area and, together with the Salt Creek Area of Critical Environmental Concern, encompasses over 20,000 acres. The Preserve is managed by the Bureau of Land Management. Management and ownership of the Salt Creek Area of Critical Environmental Concern is shared with the Center for Natural Land Management, the California Department of Fish and Game, and the California Department of Parks and Recreation.

Joshua Tree National Park

Joshua Tree National Park encompasses 794,000 acres in north-central Riverside County. Joshua Tree, proclaimed a National Monument in 1936 and designated a National Park in 1994, spans the transition between the Mojave and Colorado deserts in southern California. The park has a rich human history and a pristine natural environment. Visitor activities within the park include hiking, rock climbing, picnicking, wildflower viewing, birding, interpretive walks and talks, and camping.



Agriculture

The majority of the planning area within the Salton Trough, surrounding the Salton Sea to the west and stretching north toward the City of Coachella, is devoted to agriculture and planted in such crops as date palms, grapes, citrus and seasonal row crops. The Eastern Coachella Valley is one of California's most important agricultural producing areas. In 1999, the annual value of Coachella Valley crops increased from \$398.2 million to \$427.6 million. Riverside County was the ninth largest agricultural producing county in the state in 1999, according to the County's Agricultural Commissioner. The residential uses within the area primarily provide housing for the agricultural workers in the valley.



*A **Community of Interest (COI)** is a study area designated by LAFCO within unincorporated territory that may be annexed to one or more cities or special districts, incorporated as a new city, or designated as an **Unincorporated Community (UC)** within two years of status obtainment. Designation of an area as a UC may require removal from a municipal sphere of influence since the two designations are mutually exclusive.*

UNIQUE COMMUNITIES

The Eastern Coachella Valley encompasses several small unincorporated communities:

Thermal

The community of Thermal is located west of State Route 111, south of the City of Coachella, and contains light industrial uses as well as some residential and commercial uses. The County owned Desert Resorts Regional Airport is located in the westerly part of Thermal.

Mecca

The small residential community of Mecca is located southeast of Thermal east of State Route 111, and predominantly houses permanent residents working in the Valley's agricultural sector. Areas are also set aside for light industrial and commercial uses.

North Shore

The North Shore resort community is located northeast of State Route 111 near the north shore of the Salton Sea. This area is largely undeveloped, with some pockets of residential and commercial tourist uses.

Vista Santa Rosa

The Vista Santa Rosa Community was recognized by the County's Board of Supervisors in 2001. The community's boundaries extend from Avenue 50 on the north, to Monroe Street on the west, to State Route 86 (Harrison Street) on the east, and south to Avenue 66. The area is an important producer of date crops. Rural residential uses are also prevalent, with an emphasis on equestrian activities including polo facilities.

Valerie Jean

The community of Valerie Jean is located at the junction of State Route 86 and 66th Avenue. The area incorporates mobile and single family detached homes. The Coachella Valley Fish Traps, an archaeological site listed on the National Register of Historic Places, is also located west of this area. The site includes the



scattered remains of prehistoric granite rock fish traps constructed by the Desert Cahuilla Indians.

Oasis

Oasis, another Valley agricultural community, is located along State Route 86 southeast of Valerie Jean. The community benefits from the realigned State Route 86 trade route to Mexico.

Chiriaco Summit

A community of approximately 70 residents, Chiriaco Summit is located off of Interstate 10, about 30 miles east of Indio. The summit is the location of the General George S. Patton Museum, which was built to honor General George S. Patton and his establishment of the Desert Training Center in 1942. The Chiriaco Summit Airport, located within walking distance of the museum, serves Chiriaco Summit and Riverside County and is owned by the County of Riverside Aviation Division.

Indian Lands

The Augustine Band of Mission Indians, the Torres Martinez Desert Cahuilla Indians, the 29 Palms Band of Mission Indians, and the Cabazon Band of Mission Indians maintain reservations (10,046 acres total) throughout the area. Land uses on Indian Lands in this agricultural and desert area are low intensity, with the exception of a power generation plant northeast of Mecca and a tire recycling facility. Further, given the success of Indian gaming in the Valley immediately to the north of this area along Interstate 10, other entertainment uses of this type on reservation lands within the plan would not be impossible to imagine in the future. The Torres Martinez reservation in particular includes a significant amount of land owned by persons who are not Tribal members; however, the individual tribes retain land use jurisdiction over land within reservation boundaries.

INCORPORATED CITIES



A "sphere of influence" is the area outside of and adjacent to a city's border that the city has identified as a future logical extension of its jurisdiction. While the County of Riverside has land use authority over city sphere areas, development in these areas directly affects circulation, service provision, and community character within the cities.

City of Coachella

The City of Coachella was incorporated in 1946 at the southernmost end of the urbanized Coachella Valley. As of 1996, the City limits encompassed 21 square miles, not including the City's Sphere of Influence. The City of Coachella is located in the northwest corner of the Eastern Coachella Valley, along its boundary with the Western Coachella Valley Area Plan. The City's Sphere of Influence incorporates territory southward to Avenue 62, to the western Area Plan boundary, and eastward beyond State Route 111.

The eastern boundaries of the incorporated Cities of La Quinta and Indio also abut the western boundary of this area plan.

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Figure 2: Physical Features



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Land Use Plan

The Land Use Plan focuses on preserving the unique features in the Eastern Coachella Valley area and, at the same time, guides the accommodation of future growth. To accomplish this, more detailed land use designations are applied than for the countywide General Plan.

The Eastern Coachella Valley Land Use Plan, Figure 3, depicts the geographic distribution of land uses within this area. The Plan is organized around 30 Area Plan land use designations and five overlays. These land uses derive from, and provide more detailed direction than, the five General Plan Foundation Component land uses: Open Space, Agriculture, Rural, Rural Community and Community Development. Table 1, Land Use Designations Summary, outlines the development intensity, density, typical allowable land uses, and general characteristics for each of the area plan land use designations within each Foundation Component. The general plan land use element contains more detailed descriptions and policies for the Foundation Components and each of the area plan land use designations.

Many factors led to the designation of land use patterns. Among the most influential were the Riverside County Vision and Planning Principles, both of which focused, in part, on preferred patterns of development within the County; ongoing habitat conservation planning through the Coachella Valley Association of Governments Multiple Species Habitat Conservation Plan (CVMSHCP) process; established patterns of existing uses and parcel configurations; current zoning, and the oral and written testimony of County residents, property owners, and representatives of cities, Indian tribes, and organizations at the many Planning Commission and Board of Supervisors hearings. Furthermore, the Plan recognizes the importance of preserving the Valley's agricultural resources in order to protect the area's largest industry. The result of these considerations is shown in Figure 3, Land Use Plan, which portrays the location and extent of proposed land uses. Table 2, Statistical Summary of the Eastern Coachella Valley Area Plan, provides a summary of the projected development capacity of the plan if all uses are built as proposed. This table includes dwelling unit, population, and employment capacities.

LAND USE CONCEPT

The land use plan is designed to maintain the predominantly rural, agricultural, and open space character of the Eastern Coachella Valley and to focus growth adjacent to where it currently exists and in areas where growth is desirable in order to bolster the economic base of the local communities. The majority of the area within the Salton Trough, surrounding the Salton Sea to the west and stretching north toward the City of Coachella, is designated Agriculture.

The majority of the area east of the All-American Canal is designated Open Space–Conservation Habitat and Open Space–Rural to reflect the area's remoteness and lack of services.

Considerable acreage in the Thermal area has been designated Light Industrial and Heavy Industrial. Higher density residential designations are provided in Thermal and in an area east of the airport. Commercial Tourist designations are



provided in the vicinity of the new State Route 86/State Route 111 interchange. Areas of potential residential development have been expanded around Mecca.

Another Commercial Tourist designation is located adjacent to the Salton Sea, west of State Route 111, in the North Shore area, and is intended to capitalize on the scenic and recreational opportunities of both the Salton Sea and the surrounding desert area. Its location at North Shore allows for contiguous development in an effort to preserve the area's natural attributes and assets, and at the same time, avoids the areas of potential liquefaction north of the sea, which remain designated agriculture. Commercial Retail designations in this area are generally restricted to existing uses.

The Open Space–Rural land use designation in the southwest corner of the Eastern Coachella Valley area is a compatible land use designation with the surrounding Agriculture and Open Space–Conservation Habitat designations. This land use designation is appropriate in this arid area in the coves along the Santa Rosa Mountains, which is subject to blowsand and flash flood hazards.

Community Centers

A Community Center has been designated at the northwestern edge of the community development area in Mecca. This is intended to be of the Village Center type and could accommodate a mix of residential, commercial, public facility and recreation uses to serve the local community. Creation of this type of self-contained commercial/residential center could be especially useful in this community.

It is also anticipated that a Community Center would be appropriate for the Vista Santa Rosa community as land uses within that area transition from Agriculture to Community Development. While there is no mapped Community Center or Community Center Overlay here, a 460-acre area located both northerly and southerly of Airport Boulevard, between Jackson and Van Buren Streets, is envisioned as a future Village Center. This is the only area of Vista Santa Rosa that would be a possible location for residential densities in excess of three dwelling units per acre.



For more information on

Community Center types, please refer to the Land Use Policies within this area plan and the Land Use Designations section of the General Plan Land Use Element.

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Figure 3: Land Use Plan



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Table 1: Land Use Designations Summary

Foundation Component	Area Plan Land Use Designation	Building Intensity Range (du/ac or FAR) ^{1,2,3}	Notes
Agriculture	Agriculture (AG)	10 ac min.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Agricultural land including row crops, groves, nurseries, dairies, poultry farms, processing plants, and other related uses. One single-family residence allowed per 10 acres except as otherwise specified by a policy or an overlay.
Rural	Rural Residential (RR)	5 ac min.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Single-family residences with a minimum lot size of 5 acres. Allows limited animal keeping and agricultural uses, recreational uses, compatible resource development (not including the commercial extraction of mineral resources) and associated uses and governmental uses.
	Rural Mountainous (RM)	10 ac min.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Single-family residential uses with a minimum lot size of 10 acres. Areas of at least 10 acres where a minimum of 70% of the area has slopes of 25% or greater. Allows limited animal keeping, agriculture, recreational uses, compatible resource development (which may include the commercial extraction of mineral resources with approval of a SMP) and associated uses and governmental uses.
	Rural Desert (RD)	10 ac min.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Single-family residential uses with a minimum lot size of 10 acres. Allows limited animal keeping, agriculture, recreational, renewable energy uses including solar, geothermal and wind energy uses, as well as associated uses required to develop and operate these renewable energy sources, compatible resource development (which may include the commercial extraction of mineral resources with approval of SMP), and governmental and utility uses.
Rural Community	Estate Density Residential (RC-EDR)	2 ac min.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Single-family detached residences on large parcels of 2 to 5 acres. Limited agriculture, intensive equestrian and animal keeping uses are expected and encouraged.
	Very Low Density Residential (RC-VLDR)	1 ac min.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Single-family detached residences on large parcels of 1 to 2 acres. Limited agriculture, intensive equestrian and animal keeping uses are expected and encouraged.
	Low Density Residential (RC-LDR)	½ ac min.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Single-family detached residences on large parcels of ½ to 1 acre. Limited agriculture, intensive equestrian and animal keeping uses are expected and encouraged.
Open Space	Conservation (C)	N/A	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> The protection of open space for natural hazard protection, and natural and scenic resource preservation. Existing agriculture is permitted.
	Conservation Habitat (CH)	N/A	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Applies to public and private lands conserved and managed in accordance with adopted Multi Species Habitat and other Conservation Plans.
	Water (W)	N/A	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Includes bodies of water and natural or artificial drainage corridors. Extraction of mineral resources subject to SMP may be permissible provided that flooding hazards are addressed and long term habitat and riparian values are maintained.
	Recreation (R)	N/A	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Recreational uses including parks, trails, athletic fields, and golf courses. Neighborhood parks are permitted within residential land uses.
	Rural (RUR)	20 ac min.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> One single-family residence allowed per 20 acres. Extraction of mineral resources subject to SMP may be permissible provided that scenic resources and views are protected.
	Mineral Resources (MR)	N/A	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Mineral extraction and processing facilities. Areas held in reserve for future mineral extraction and processing.
Community Development	Estate Density Residential (EDR)	2 ac min.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Single-family detached residences on large parcels of 2 to 5 acres. Limited agriculture and animal keeping is permitted, however, intensive animal keeping is discouraged.
	Very Low Density Residential (VLDR)	1 ac min.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Single-family detached residences on large parcels of 1 to 2 acres. Limited agriculture and animal keeping is permitted, however, intensive animal keeping is discouraged.
	Low Density Residential (LDR)	½ ac min.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Single-family detached residences on large parcels of ½ to 1 acre. Limited agriculture and animal keeping is permitted, however, intensive animal keeping is discouraged.
	Medium Density Residential (MDR)	2 - 5 du/ac	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Single-family detached and attached residences with a density range of 2 to 5 dwelling units per acre. Limited agriculture and animal keeping is permitted, however, intensive animal keeping is discouraged. Lot sizes range from 5,500 to 20,000 sq. ft., typical 7,200 sq. ft. lots allowed.
	Medium High Density Residential (MHDR)	5 - 8 du/ac	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Single-family attached and detached residences with a density range of 5 to 8 dwelling units per acre. Lot sizes range from 4,000 to 6,500 sq. ft.
	High Density Residential (HDR)	8 - 14 du/ac	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Single-family attached and detached residences, including townhouses, stacked flats, courtyard homes, patio homes, townhouses, and zero lot line homes .
	Very High Density Residential (VHDR)	14 - 20 du/ac	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Single-family attached residences and multi-family dwellings.



County of Riverside General Plan

Eastern Coachella Valley Area Plan

Table 1: Land Use Designations Summary

Foundation Component	Area Plan Land Use Designation	Building Intensity Range (du/ac or FAR) ^{1, 2, 3}	Notes
Community Development	Highest Density Residential (HHDR)	20+ du/ac	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Multi-family dwellings, includes apartments and condominium. Multi-storied (3+) structures are allowed.
	Commercial Retail (CR)	0.20 - 0.35 FAR	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Local and regional serving retail and service uses. The amount of land designated for Commercial Retail exceeds that amount anticipated to be necessary to serve the County's population at build out. Once build out of Commercial Retail reaches the 40% level within any Area Plan, additional studies will be required before CR development beyond the 40 % will be permitted.
	Commercial Tourist (CT)	0.20 - 0.35 FAR	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Tourist related commercial including hotels, golf courses, and recreation/amusement activities.
	Commercial Office (CO)	0.35 - 1.0 FAR	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Variety of office related uses including financial, legal, insurance and other office services.
	Light Industrial (LI)	0.25 - 0.60 FAR	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Industrial and related uses including warehousing/distribution, assembly and light manufacturing, repair facilities, and supporting retail uses .
	Heavy Industrial (HI)	0.15 - 0.50 FAR	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> More intense industrial activities that generate significant impacts such as excessive noise, dust, and other nuisances.
	Business Park (BP)	0.25 - 0.60 FAR	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Employee intensive uses, including research & development, technology centers, corporate offices, "clean" industry and supporting retail uses.
	Public Facilities (PF)	≤ 0.60 FAR	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Civic uses such as County administrative buildings and schools.
	Community Center (CC)	5 - 40 du/ac 0.10 - 0.3 FAR	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Includes combination of small-lot single family residences, multi-family residences, commercial retail, office, business park uses, civic uses, transit facilities, and recreational open space within a unified planned development area. This also includes Community Centers in adopted specific plans.
Mixed Use Planning Area		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> This designation is applied to areas outside of Community Centers. The intent of the designation is not to identify a particular mixture or intensity of land uses, but to designate areas where a mixture of residential, commercial, office, entertainment, educational, and/or recreational uses, or other uses is planned. 	

Overlays and Policy Areas

Overlays and Policy Areas are not considered a Foundation Component. Overlays and Policy Areas address local conditions and can be applied in any Foundation Component. The specific details and development characteristics of each Policy Area and Overlay are contained in the appropriate Area Plan.

Community Development Overlay (CDO)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Allows Community Development land use designations to be applied through General Plan Amendments within specified areas within Rural, Rural Community, Agriculture, or Open Space Foundation Component areas. Specific policies related to each Community Development Overlay are contained in the appropriate Area Plan.
Community Center Overlay (CCO)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Allows for either a Community Center or the underlying designated land use to be developed.
Rural Village Overlay (RVO) and Rural Village Overlay Study Area (RVOSA)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> The Rural Village Overlay allows a concentration of residential and local-serving commercial uses within areas of rural character. The Rural Village Overlay allows the uses and maximum densities/intensities of the Medium Density Residential and Medium High Density Residential and Commercial Retail land use designations. In some rural village areas, identified as Rural Village Overlay Study Areas, the final boundaries will be determined at a later date during the consistency zoning program. (The consistency zoning program is the process of bringing current zoning into consistency with the adopted general plan.)
Watercourse Overlay (WCO)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> The Watercourse Overlay designates watercourses, including natural or controlled stream channels and flood control channels.
Specific Community Development Designation Overlay	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Permits flexibility in land uses designations to account for local conditions. Consult the applicable Area Plan text for details.
Policy Areas	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Policy Areas are specific geographic districts that contain unique characteristics that merit detailed attention and focused policies. These policies may impact the underlying land use designations. At the Area Plan level, Policy Areas accommodate several locally specific designations, such as the Limonite Policy Area (Jurupa Area Plan), or the Scott Road Policy Area (Sun City/Menifee Valley Area Plan). Consult the applicable Area Plan text for details.

NOTES:

¹ FAR = Floor Area Ratio, which is the measurement of the amount of non-residential building square footage in relation to the size of the lot. Du/ac = dwelling units per acre, which is the measurement of the amount of residential units in a given acre.

² The building intensity range noted is exclusive, that is the range noted provides a minimum and maximum building intensity.

³ Clustering is encouraged in all residential designations. The allowable density of a particular land use designation may be clustered in one portion of the site in smaller lots, as long as the ratio of dwelling units/area remains within the allowable density range associated with the designation. The rest of the site would then be preserved as open space or a use compatible with open space (e.g., agriculture, pasture or wildlife habitat). Within the Rural Foundation Component and Rural Designation of the Open Space Foundation Component, the allowable density may be clustered as long as no lot is smaller than ½ acre. This ½ acre minimum lot size also applies to the Rural Community Development Foundation Component. However, for sites adjacent to Community Development Foundation Component areas, 10,000 square foot minimum lots are allowed. The clustered areas would be a mix of 10,000 and ½ acre lots. In such cases, larger lots or open space would be required near the project boundary with Rural Community and Rural Foundation Component areas.

County of Riverside General Plan

Eastern Coachella Valley Area Plan



Table 2: Statistical Summary of the Eastern Coachella Valley Area Plan

Base Land-Use Designations ^{a-b}				
Land-Use Designation	Acreage	Dwelling Units	Population	Employment
Agriculture Foundation Component				
Agriculture (AG)	41,403	2,070	6,148	2,070
Agriculture Total	41,403	2,070	6,148	2,070
Rural Foundation Component				
Rural Residential (RR)	4,843	726	2,158	NA
Rural Mountainous (RM)	0	0	0	NA
Rural Desert (RD)	4,849	242	720	NA
Rural Total	9,692	968	2,878	0
Rural Community Foundation Component				
Estate Density Residential (RC-EDR)	266	93	276	NA
Very Low Density Residential (RC-VLDR)	8	4	12	NA
Low Density Residential (RC-LDR)	60	72	215	NA
Rural Community Total	334	169	503	0
Open Space Foundation Component				
Open Space Conservation (OS-C)	447	NA	NA	NA
Open Space Conservation Habitat (OS-CH)	200,678	NA	NA	NA
Open Space Water (OS-W)	50,726	NA	NA	NA
Open Space Recreation (OS-R)	2,333	NA	NA	350
Open Space Rural (OS-RUR)	94,524	2,363	7,018	NA
Open Space Mineral Resources (OS-MIN)	737	NA	NA	22
Open Space Total	349,445	2,363	7,018	372
Community Development Foundation Component				
Estate Density Residential (EDR)	288	101	299	NA
Very Low Density Residential (VLDR)	288	144	427	NA
Low Density Residential (LDR)	72	87	258	NA
Medium Density Residential (MDR)	6,438	22,534	66,927	NA
Medium High Density Residential (MHDR)	1,384	8,997	26,722	NA
High Density Residential (HDR)	669	7,359	21,856	NA
Very High Density Residential (VHDR)	322	5,467	16,238	NA
Highest Density Residential (HHDR)	0	0	0	NA
Commercial Retail (CR) ^e	1,260	2,647	7,861	7,577
Commercial Tourist (CT)	1,416	NA	NA	23,130
Commercial Office (CO)	57	NA	NA	2,176
Light Industrial (LI)	3,193	NA	NA	41,050
Heavy Industrial (HI)	433	NA	NA	3,776
Business Park (BP)	578	NA	NA	9,437
Public Facilities (PF)	2,415	NA	NA	652
Community Center (CC)	41	239	719	320
Community Development Total	18,854	47,575	141,307	88,118
Other Land Uses, Overlays and Policy Areas^d				
Rural Community Estate Density Residential 2	0	0	0	NA
Glen Eden Policy Area	0	0	0	NA
Medium Density Residential (2-4 du/acre)	0	0	0	NA
Vista Santa Rosa Policy Area	3,941	7,883	23,411	NA
Rural Village Overlay	674	71	211	60
Rural Village Overlay Study Area	0	0	0	0
Community Center Overlay	466	2,714	8,170	3,630
Community Retail Overlay	0	0	0	0
Other, Overlays and Policy Areas Total	5,081	10,668	31,792	3,690



County of Riverside General Plan

Eastern Coachella Valley Area Plan

Table 2: Statistical Summary of the Eastern Coachella Valley Area Plan

BUILDOUT PROJECTIONS TOTAL	424,135	63,813	189,646	94,250
Other				
City	13,443			
Indian Lands	14,538			
Freeways	1,465			
Other Total	29,446			
AREA PLAN TOTAL ACRES	453,581			

Overlays and Policy Areas

The following provides the acreages for each Overlay and/or Policy Area within the Area Plan. Overlays and Policy Areas are districts that contain unique standards tailored to a local geographic area. In some instances, these Overlays and Policy Areas alter the allowable uses and maximum densities/intensities within the particular district. In these cases, the buildout potential resulting from the application of the Overlays and Policy Areas has been accounted for in the Base Land Use Designations above. Please see the Area Plan for a description of the unique features contained within each Overlay or Policy Area.

	Acreage
Overlays	
Mixed Use Planning Area	0
Community Development Overlay	9,471
Specific Community Development Designation Overlays and Policy Areas	
Vista Santa Rosa	7,119
Total	16,590

NOTES:

- ^{a:} — Statistics reflect the midpoint for the theoretical range of build-out projections. Reference Appendix E of the General Plan for assumptions and methodology.
- ^{b:} — Overlay figures reflect the additional dwelling units, population and employment permissible under this category.
- ^{c:} — It is assumed that Commercial Retail designation will buildout at 40% Commercial Retail and 60% Medium Density Residential.
- ^{d:} — The acreage for the Overlays and Policy Areas have not been included in the acreage totals to avoid double-counting.

County of Riverside General Plan

Eastern Coachella Valley Area Plan



Table 2: Statistical Summary of the Eastern Coachella Valley Area Plan

LAND USE	AREA	STATISTICAL CALCULATIONS ¹		
	Acreage	Dwelling Units	Population	Employment
BASE LAND USE PLANNING AREAS				
BASE LAND USE DESIGNATIONS BY FOUNDATION COMPONENTS				
Agriculture Foundation Component				
Agriculture (AG)	53,438	2,672	7,936	2,672
Agriculture Foundation Component Sub-Total	53,438	2,672	7,936	2,672
Rural Foundation Component				
Rural Residential (RR)	894	134	398	NA
Rural Mountainous (RM)	0	0	0	NA
Rural Desert (RD)	4,772	239	709	NA
Rural Foundation Component Sub-Total	5,666	373	1,107	0
Rural Community Foundation Component				
Estate Density Residential (RC-EDR)	306	107	318	NA
Very Low Density Residential (RC-VLDR)	8	6	18	NA
Low Density Residential (RC-LDR)	163	245	726	NA
Rural Community Foundation Component Sub-Total	477	358	1,062	0
Open Space Foundation Component				
Open Space-Conservation (OS-C)	447	NA	NA	NA
Open Space-Conservation Habitat (OS-CH)	200,103	NA	NA	NA
Open Space-Water (OS-W)	50,580	NA	NA	NA
Open Space-Recreation (OS-R)	320	NA	NA	48
Open Space-Rural (OS-RUR)	93,928	2,348	6,974	NA
Open Space-Mineral Resources (OS-MIN)	737	NA	NA	22
Open Space Foundation Component Sub-Total	346,115	2,348	6,974	70
Community Development Foundation Component				
Estate Density Residential (EDR)	307	107	319	NA
Very Low Density Residential (VLDR)	368	276	820	NA
Low Density Residential (LDR)	92	138	410	NA
Medium Density Residential (MDR)	3,653	12,786	37,973	NA
Medium High Density Residential (MHDR)	1,059	6,884	20,444	NA
High Density Residential (HDR)	660	7,260	21,562	NA
Very High Density Residential (VHDR)	322	5,474	16,258	NA
Highest Density Residential (HHDR)	0	0	0	NA
Commercial Retail (CR) ²	1,908	NA	NA	28,674
Commercial Tourist (CT)	549	NA	NA	8,968
Commercial Office (CO)	57	NA	NA	2,173
Light Industrial (LI)	3,157	NA	NA	43,125
Heavy Industrial (HI)	433	NA	NA	3,772
Business Park (BP)	578	NA	NA	9,442
Public Facilities (PF)	2,469	NA	NA	652
Community Center (CC) ³	41	239	710	320
Mixed-Use Planning Area (MUPA)	0	0	0	0
Community Development Foundation Component Sub-Total	15,653	32,164	98,496	97,126
SUB-TOTAL FOR ALL FOUNDATION COMPONENT USES	421,349	38,915	115,575	99,868
NON-COUNTY LAND USES				
OTHER LANDS NOT UNDER PRIMARY COUNTY JURISDICTION				
Cities	16,384			
Indian Lands	14,501			
Freeways	1,344			
Other Lands Sub-Total	32,229			



County of Riverside General Plan

Eastern Coachella Valley Area Plan

Table 2: Statistical Summary of the Eastern Coachella Valley Area Plan

LAND USE	AREA	STATISTICAL CALCULATIONS ¹		
	Acreage	Dwelling Units	Population	Employment
TOTAL FOR ALL BASE LANDS	453,578			
SUPPLEMENTAL LAND USE PLANNING AREA				
<i>These SUPPLEMENTAL LAND USES are overlays, policy areas and other supplemental items that apply OVER and IN ADDITION to the base land use designations listed above.</i>				
<i>The acreage and statistical data below represent possible ALTERNATE land use or build-out scenarios.</i>				
OVERLAYS & POLICY AREAS				
OVERLAYS^{4,5}				
Community Development Overlay	9,471	---	---	---
Community Center Overlay	466	2,714	8,170	3,630
Rural Village Overlay	674	71	211	60
Rural Village Overlay Study Area	0	0	0	0
Specific Community Development Designation Overlays	0	0	0	0
Total Area Subject to Overlay^{4,5}	10,611	---	---	---
POLICY AREAS⁶				
Vista Santa Rosa	7,119	---	---	---
Desert Resorts Regional Airport Influence Area	23,086	---	---	---
Chiriaco Summit Airport Influence Area	2,950	---	---	---
Torres-Martinez Fee Land	40	---	---	---
Planned Communities (Non-mapped)		---	---	---
Total Area Within Policy Areas⁶	33,195	---	---	---
TOTAL AREA WITHIN SUPPLEMENTALS⁷	43,979			

FOOTNOTES:

- 1 Statistical calculations are based on the midpoint for the theoretical range of build-out projections. Reference Appendix E-1 of the General Plan for assumptions and methodology used.
- 2 For calculation purposes, it is assumed that CR designated lands will build out at 40% CR and 60% MDR.
- 3 Note that "Community Center" is used both to describe a land use designation and a type of overlay. These two terms are separate and distinct; are calculated separately; and, are *not* interchangeable terms.
- 4 Overlays provide alternate land uses that may be developed instead of the underlying base use designations.
- 5 Policy Areas indicate where additional policies or criteria apply, in addition to the underlying base use designations. As Policy Areas are supplemental, it is possible for a given parcel of land to fall within one or more Policy Areas. It is also possible for a given Policy Area to span more than one Area Plan.
- 6 Overlay data represent the additional dwelling units, population and employment permissible under the alternate land uses.
- 7 A given parcel of land can fall within more than one Policy Area or Overlay. Thus, this total is not additive.



Policy Areas

A Policy Area is a portion of an Area Plan that contains special or unique characteristics that merit detailed attention and focused policies. Policy Area locations and boundaries are shown on Figure 4, Policy Areas, and are described in detail below.

POLICY AREAS

Vista Santa Rosa Community



*ECVAP = Eastern Coachella Valley
Area Plan Policy*

The Vista Santa Rosa community was recognized by the County Board of Supervisors in 2001. The community's boundaries extend from Avenue 50 on the north, to Monroe Street on the west, to State Route 86 (Harrison Street) on the east, and south to Avenue 66. The community is adjacent to the Cities of Coachella, Indio, and La Quinta; Thermal Airport; and major polo facilities. It is also connected, via trails, to Lake Cahuilla, and Torres-Martinez Tribal lands. Vista Santa Rosa is a special community where country club and residential development interface with agricultural and rural, equestrian-oriented lifestyles. In order to ensure that the community develops in a harmonious manner that protects and enhances its value to area residents and landowners and the County, the County of Riverside has begun the preparation of a detailed Vista Santa Rosa community land use plan that will be incorporated into the Eastern Coachella Valley Area Plan. The area is an important producer of date crops. Rural Residential and Rural Community uses are also prevalent, with an emphasis on equestrian lifestyles.

Policies:

- ECVAP 1.1
- a. Prepare a detailed land use plan, with community development policies, for the Vista Santa Rosa Community that will: provide for a harmonious blend of country club, residential, commercial, rural, agricultural, and equestrian uses and community facilities in this area, and promote unifying community themes through signs, landscaping, scale of development, and trail and road facilities, etc. for the community.
 - b. Establish an Incentive Program to encourage development to occur that is consistent with the plan.
 - c. Within the Vista Santa Rosa Policy Area, the minimum lot size in the Agriculture designation is 5 acres, not 10 acres, and the allowable intensity of land use is 0.2 dwelling units per acre, not 0.1 dwelling units per acre.
 - d. Several portions of the Vista Santa Rosa community, including a large area generally between Avenue 55 and Avenue 62, and smaller areas located along Avenue 66, Harrison Street, and Van Buren Street, are designated as Agriculture, 5-acre minimum parcel size, with a Community Development Overlay. It is the intent of these designations to encourage agricultural uses to remain in the area as long as area landowners desire, while providing for a gradual, orderly transition to other land use types.



County of Riverside General Plan

Eastern Coachella Valley Area Plan

When conversion of farmland to other uses occurs, adequate buffering shall be incorporated into development proposals to ensure that there will be adequate land use compatibility protection for other nearby landowners who desire to continue farming indefinitely. The overall density range of the Community Development Overlay area shall be 1-3 dwelling units per acre. Continuous buffer areas of minimum one-acre, rural residential lifestyle parcels shall be provided within all residential development proposals located within the Community Development Overlay area, where such development proposals would be adjacent to areas located outside the Community Development Overlay area and designated Agriculture, Rural Residential, or Estate Density Residential, in the following locations: 1) the east side of Monroe Street, between Avenues 55 and 62, 2) Avenue 55 between Monroe Street and a point located one-quarterly mile west of Van Buren Street, and protrusions of the Community Development Overlay located to the north of this segment along the west side of Jackson Street and between Jackson and Calhoun Streets, and 3) Avenues 60 and 62, Calhoun Street between Avenues 60 and 61, and the north-south midsection line of Section 35, Township 6 South, Range 7 East, between Avenues 60 and 62, all of which are located between Monroe and Harrison Streets.

Except where significant environmental effects would occur due to road noise, and no other feasible mitigation measures are available, walls, earthen berms, and similar types of project elements that present barriers to a general open, rural-in-character view into a development when the development is viewed from the street, shall not be permitted along the following roads where they are classified by a Circulation Element designation: Airport Boulevard, Avenues 50, 52, 54, 58, 60, 62, and 66, and Monroe, Jackson, Van Buren, and Harrison Streets. Split-rail fences and other edge features that allow for an open view and evoke a rural character are encouraged.

- e. All development proposals within the Vista Santa Rosa Policy Area shall include multi-purpose recreational trails and shall provide for potential linkages of such trails to the County's planned trail system as shown in the Circulation Element.

ECVAP 1.2 Provision for a Community Center or Community Center Overlay may be made in the Vista Santa Rosa community. Residential densities in such a Community Center may exceed three dwelling units per acre.



Planned Communities

While the overall emphasis in this General Plan directs medium density residential and higher density residential housing and commercial, industrial, and civic uses to areas designated for Community Development, it is recognized that new towns and planned communities will also play a role in the future development of Riverside County, particularly in the eastern portion of Riverside County, including areas of the Eastern Coachella Valley Area Plan that are not adjacent to existing cities or developed areas. Such development proposals will require rigorous review to ensure that the development that occurs will be (a) provided with a full range of necessary public services, including the assurance of a long-term, reliable water supply; (b) designed to provide for a range of housing needs; and (c) designed to further the goals of the Coachella Valley Multi-Species Habitat Conservation Plan, or, if outside Plan boundaries, designed in a manner that will not obstruct the achievement of conservation goals of state and federal agencies or tribal authorities.

In the course of the public hearing process for this General Plan, concepts for three such communities were presented to the Planning Commission and Board of Supervisors. These communities would be located in areas that are presently characterized by very low levels of population density. It was decided that, given the proposed locations of these communities and the fact that the proposals were still in the conceptual or preliminary stage with no environmental review having been completed, it would be premature to assign these properties to the Community Development Foundation component or to apply a Community Development Overlay. However, it was also determined that the concepts had sufficient merit that further study was warranted, and that these proposals should be permitted to be considered for approval without being subject to the 5-year limit placed on Foundation Component amendments as described in the Administrative Element.

Policies:

- ECVAP 2.1 Notwithstanding the Agriculture and Open Space - Rural designations of properties in this area, any proposal to establish a planned community not less than 450 acres in size in the area bordered by Avenue 72 on the north, Avenue 80 on the south, Polk Street and its southerly extension on the east, and the Santa Rosa Mountains on the north shall be exempt from the 5-year limit placed on Foundation Component amendments as described in the Administrative Element, provided that:
- a. The project provides for preservation of open space and habitat values in Martinez Canyon, including provision for a Bighorn Sheep recovery area at a site determined appropriate by the Bighorn Sheep Institute.
 - b. The project is compatible with the achievement of the goals of the Coachella Valley Multi-Species Habitat Conservation Plan, as determined by the County in consultation with the Coachella Valley Association of Governments, the California Department of Fish and Game, and the United States Fish and Wildlife Service, if this habitat conservation plan has been adopted by the County.



County of Riverside General Plan

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- c. The project provides for riding and hiking trails along the base of the Santa Rosa Mountains or at other locations as determined to meet the needs of the equestrian community in the Eastern Coachella Valley.
- d. The project provides for a sufficient number of dwelling units affordable to persons who would be employed by business establishments within the project boundaries.
- e. The project is designed in such a manner as to minimize impacts on the viability of adjacent agricultural lands.
- f. The project provides off-site roadway improvements at a level sufficient to mitigate its impacts on traffic and contributes its fair share to funds for paving of roads to control PM₁₀ particulate levels in the surrounding area.
- g. The project provides for water and sewer service to the site in the event that lots smaller than one-half acre, multifamily housing, or mobile home parks are included therein.

ECVAP 2.2 Notwithstanding the Open Space - Rural designation of properties in the area, any proposal to establish, through a General Plan amendment and a specific plan or other application format comprehensively addressing the matters described herein, a planned community of approximately 720 acres located in Sections 9 and 10, Township 6 South, Range 12 East, SBB&M, and lying along both sides of I-10, in the immediate vicinity of the Chiriaco interchange, shall be exempt from the 5-year limit placed on Foundation Component General Plan amendments as described in the Administrative Element, provided that, at a minimum:

- a. The project is designed to be compatible with Joshua Tree National Park, and other adjacent and nearby scenic and wildlife resources.
- b. The project design and the types and locations of planned land uses are compatible with the adjacent Chiriaco Summit Airport.
- c. The project will provide for the range of housing needs generated by the project, and make provisions for the provision of the water, sewer, and other facilities and services needed to support the project in what is otherwise a relatively remote area.

ECVAP 2.3 The General Plan Vision and Principles recognize that the new towns and planned self-sustaining communities will play a role in the growth and development of Riverside County. These development proposals will require vigorous reviews to ensure compatibility with surroundings, consistency with environmental policies, a full range of public services, and fiscal stability.

Lands adjacent to Interstate 10, from the easterly edge of the Coachella Valley to the Chiriaco Summit, also known as the Shavers Valley, offer unique opportunities for self-sustaining development provided that such development is limited and can provide for a full complement of infrastructure and services. Clearly the availability and assurance of a long term and reliable water supply will be the pivotal issue for development in this



area. Proposed planned communities in this area are not subject to the 5-year limit placed on Foundation Component amendments as described in the Administrative Element.

- a. Planned community proposals may have urban characteristics with thematic elements (i.e., golf, equestrian opportunities, etc.), but also will have a rigid and permanent urban boundary.
- b. The plan must include a comprehensive water service program that addresses the long-term requirements of the project, conservation, and reliability.
- c. The proposed community must be located within a district that provides water and sewer services or a water and sewer district has agreed to annex and serve the project; and there is an agreement that such services will not be expanded beyond the limits of the proposed community.
- d. The proposed community must provide for all relevant public facilities and services, including public protection, road maintenance, library services, education facilities, and waste disposal; and, it must be demonstrated that such service can be efficiently delivered within the proposed community.
- e. The proposed community must provide a full range of parks and if necessary, parks large enough to accommodate organized sports activities.
- f. The proposed community must be consistent with, and advance the goals of, the County Housing Element and provide for a range of housing opportunities including low and moderate-income housing.
- g. At least 50% of the proposed community must be devoted to open space and recreation.
- h. The proposed community must be compatible with the achievement of the goals of the Coachella Valley Multi-Species Habitat Conservation Plan, as determined by the County in consultation with the Coachella Valley Association of Governments, the California Department of Fish and Game, and the United States Fish and Wildlife Service, if this habitat conservation plan has been adopted by the County.
- i. The plan must be based on "new urbanism" principles, and include elements that facilitate internal transit programs and encourage pedestrian mobility.
- j. The plan, to the extent feasible, must contain provisions for the use of innovative and state-of-the-art technology to reduce energy and resource consumption.



Desert Resorts Regional Airport and Chiriaco Summit Airport Influence Areas

Desert Resorts Regional Airport (formerly known as Thermal Airport) is operated by the County of Riverside. The airport is located near the community of Thermal, south of the City of Coachella. Additionally, the Chiriaco Summit Airport, which serves Chiriaco Summit and Riverside County, is owned by the County. The boundaries of the Desert Resorts Regional Airport and Chiriaco Summit Airport Influence Areas are shown in Figure 4, Policy Areas. There are a number of safety zones associated with the Airport Influence Area. These safety zones are shown in Figure 5, Desert Resorts Regional Airport Influence Policy Area, and in Figure 6, Chiriaco Summit Airport Influence Policy Area. Properties within these zones are subject to regulations governing such issues as development intensity, density, height of structures, and noise.

Within the Chiriaco Summit Airport Influence Area, dwelling units are prohibited within the Emergency Touchdown Zone, the Inner Safety Zone and the Outer Safety Zone. Structures are prohibited within the Inner Safety Zone and the Emergency Touchdown Zone, except where such structures now exist. Any expansion of existing development within the Inner Safety Zone or the Emergency Touchdown Zone beyond what currently exists would be inconsistent with the Airport Land Use Compatibility Plan for Chiriaco Summit Airport. These land use restrictions are fully set forth in Appendix L and are summarized in Table 4, Land Use Compatibility Guidelines for Airport Safety Zones for French Valley, Desert Center, Blythe, Corona, Chiriaco Summit, Banning, Desert Resorts Regional, and Riverside Airports. For more information on these zones and additional airport policies, refer to Appendix L and the Land Use, Circulation, Safety and Noise Elements of the Riverside County General Plan.

Policies:

- ECVAP 3.1 To provide for the orderly development of Desert Resorts Regional Airport and Chiriaco Summit Airport and the surrounding area, comply with the Airport Land Use Compatibility Plan for Desert Resorts Regional Airport and Chiriaco Summit Airport as fully set forth in Appendix L and as summarized in Table 4, as well as any applicable policies related to airports in the Land Use, Circulation, Safety and Noise Elements of the Riverside County General Plan.

Specific Plans

Specific plans are highly customized policy or regulatory tools that provide a bridge between the General Plan and individual projects in a more area-specific manner than is possible with community-wide zoning ordinances. The specific plan is a tool that provides land use and development standards that are tailored to respond to special conditions and aspirations unique to the area being proposed for development. These tools are a means of addressing detailed concerns that conventional zoning cannot do.

Specific Plans are identified in this section as Policy Areas because detailed study and development direction is provided in each plan. Policies related to any

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listed specific plan can be reviewed at the Riverside County Planning Department. The three specific plans located in the Eastern Coachella Valley planning area are listed in Table 3, Adopted Specific Plans in Eastern Coachella Valley Area Plan. Specific Plan No. 218 (Coral Mountain) and Specific Plan No. 303 (Kohl Ranch) are determined to be Community Development Specific Plans. Specific Plan No. 113 is determined to be a Rural Specific Plan. Specific Plan No. 113 was approved many years ago in conjunction with a "land project", but remains undeveloped.

Table 3: Adopted Specific Plans in Eastern Coachella Valley Area Plan¹

Specific Plan	Specific Plan #
Specific Plan No. 113	113
Coral Mountain *	218
Kohl Ranch	303

¹Source: County of Riverside Planning Department.

* Portions of this specific plan extend into a neighboring Area Plan.



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Table 4: Land Use Compatibility Guidelines for Airport Safety Zones for French Valley, Desert Center, Blythe, Corona, Chiriaco Summit, Banning, Desert Resorts Regional, and Riverside Airports

Safety Zone	Maximum Population Density	Maximum Coverage by Structures	Land Use
ETZ - Emergency Touchdown Zone	0 ¹	0 ¹	No significant obstructions ²
ISZ - Inner Safety Zone	0 ¹	0 ¹	No petroleum or explosive No above-grade powerlines
OSZ - Outer Safety Zone	Uses in structures ³ : 25 persons/ac. (see text in the source document for the Comprehensive Land Use Plan for explanation) Uses not in structures: 50 persons/ac.	25% of net area	No residential No hotels, motels No restaurants, bars No schools, hospitals, government services No concert halls, auditoriums No stadiums, arenas No public utility stations, plants No public communications facilities No uses involving, as the primary activity, manufacture, storage, or distribution of explosives or flammable materials.
ERC - Extended Runway Centerline Zone	3 du/net acre Uses in structures ³ : 100 persons/ac.(see text in the source document for the Comprehensive Land Use Plan for explanation)	50% of gross area or 65% of net area whichever is greater	No uses involving, as the primary activity, manufacture, storage, or distribution of explosives or flammable materials. ⁴
TPC - Traffic Pattern Zone	Not Applicable	50% of gross area or 65% of net area whichever is greater	Discourage schools, auditoriums, amphitheaters, stadiums ⁵ Discourage uses involving, as the primary activity, manufacture, storage, or distribution of explosives or flammable materials. ^{4,5}

NOTES:

- A. The following uses shall be prohibited in all airport safety zones:
- (1) Any use which would direct a steady light or flashing light or red, white, green, or amber colors associated with airport operations toward an aircraft engaged in an initial straight climb following takeoff or toward an aircraft engaged in a straight final approach toward a landing at an airport, other than an FAA approved navigational signal light or visual approach slope indicator.
 - (2) Any use which would cause sunlight to be reflected toward an aircraft engaged in an initial straight climb following takeoff or toward an aircraft engaged in a straight final approach toward a landing at an airport.
 - (3) Any use which would generate smoke or water vapor or which would attract large concentrations or birds, or which may otherwise affect safe air navigation within the area.
 - (4) Any use which would generate electrical interference that may be detrimental to the operation of aircraft and/or aircraft instrumentation.
- B. Avigation easements shall be secured through dedication for all land uses permitted in any safety zone.

¹ No structures permitted in ETZ or ISZ.

² Significant obstructions include, but are not limited to, large trees, heavy fences and walls, tall and steep berms and retaining walls, non-frangible street light and sign standards, billboards.

³ A "structure" includes fully enclosed buildings and other facilities involving fixed seating and enclosures limiting the mobility of people, such as sports stadiums, outdoor arenas, and amphitheaters.

⁴ This does not apply to service stations involving retail sale of motor vehicle fuel if fuel storage tanks are installed underground.

⁵ Within the TPZ safety zone, a variety of land uses are to be discouraged from being developed. When development of these uses is proposed, the Airport Land Use Commission shall require the applicant to show that alternative locations have been considered and are not feasible. The applicant shall then be directed to consider a development plan that will minimize the exposure to hazard as much as possible. This might involve reducing structure heights, reducing lot coverage, or reducing there overall scale of the project, considering satellite locations for some of the proposed functions of the facility. Land uses described as "uses to be discouraged" which were lawfully established prior to the adoption of the Comprehensive Land Use Plan shall be permitted to be modified or enlarged provided that avigation easements are granted to Riverside County.

Source: Extracted from Riverside County Airport Land Use Commission Comprehensive Land Use Plan

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Figure 4: Policy Areas



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Figure 5: Desert Resorts Regional Airport Influence Policy Area



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Figure 6: Chiriaco Summit Airport Influence Policy Area



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Land Use

While the General Plan Land Use Element and Area Plan Land Use Map guide future development patterns in the Eastern Coachella Valley, additional policy guidance is often necessary to address local land use issues that are unique to the area or that require special policies that go above and beyond those identified in the General Plan. These policies may reinforce County regulatory provisions, preserve special lands or historic structures, require or encourage particular design features or guidelines, or restrict certain activities, among others. The intent is to enhance and/or preserve the identity, character, and features of this unique area. The Local Land Use Policies section provides policies to address those land use issues relating specifically to the Eastern Coachella Valley area.

LOCAL LAND USE POLICIES

Light Pollution

The continued growth of urban activities throughout the Valley has many consequences. One of the attractions for residents is the brilliance of the nighttime sky on clear nights, unencumbered by lighting scattered over a large urban area. As development continues to encroach from established urban cores into both rural and open space areas, the effect of nighttime lighting on stargazing and open space areas will become more pronounced. Wildlife habitat areas can also be negatively impacted by artificial lighting. Further, the Mount Palomar Observatory, located in San Diego County, requires darkness so that the night sky can be viewed clearly. The presence of the observatory necessitates unique nighttime lighting standards in the area shown on Figure 7, Mt. Palomar Nighttime Lighting Policy. The following policies are intended to limit light leakage and spillage that may obstruct or hinder the view. This is an excellent example of a valuable public resource that requires special treatment far beyond its immediate locale.

Policies:

- ECVAP 4.1 Require the inclusion of outdoor lighting features that would minimize the effects on the nighttime sky and wildlife habitat areas.
- ECVAP 4.2 Adhere to the County's lighting requirements for standards that are intended to limit light leakage and spillage that may interfere with the operations of the Palomar Observatory.

Agricultural Lands

Agriculture is one of the five Foundation Components of the General Plan and also represents a significant component of this area plan. Much of the area here is devoted to agricultural uses. The RCIP Vision specifically seeks to protect agricultural lands not only because of their economic value but also because of their cultural and scenic values.



Policies:



ECVAP 5.1 Retain and protect agricultural lands through adherence to the policies contained in the Agriculture section of the General Plan Land Use Element.



ECVAP 5.2 Refer to the General Plan Certainty System in the General Plan Administrative Element. An exception is provided allowing limited changes from the Agriculture designation to be processed and approved.

Farm Worker Housing

Because of the predominantly agricultural nature of the Eastern Coachella Valley, safe, healthy and affordable housing needs to be available for farm workers. Because farm work tends to be seasonal in nature, the associated housing may need to provide for seasonal occupancy.

Policies:



ECVAP 6.1 Allow farmworker housing that meets basic safety standards in agriculturally designated areas per the land use designations section of the General Plan Land Use Element, and the Five-Year Action Plan and Special Housing Need sections of the Housing Element. Provided that adequate provisions for public services and compatibility with adjacent uses is achieved, farm worker housing projects of both 1-12 dwelling units and greater than 12 units are permitted in the Agriculture designation in the Eastern Coachella Valley Area Plan.

Recreational Vehicle Developments

The vast desert and mountainous terrain, along with a pleasant, moderate winter climate and an abundance of recreational opportunities, makes the Eastern Coachella Valley area a haven for recreational vehicle (RV) enthusiasts. As with any other type of land use, RV developments require guidelines for provision of service, land use compatibility, safety, and accessibility.

Recreational vehicle development in the Eastern Coachella Valley Area Plan is classified in two categories: Resort Recreational Vehicle and Remote Recreational Vehicle. Resort Recreational Vehicle developments are projects that offer improved facilities for recreational vehicles, including full hookups for sewage disposal and water. These parks may also provide recreational amenities such as golf courses, swimming pools, recreational lakes, and recreational buildings. Internal roads are paved and designed to control drainage. Resort recreational vehicle developments are appropriate primarily in urban areas, and require community water and sewer facilities in accordance with Community Development land use standards.



Figure 7: Mt. Palomar Nighttime Lighting Policy



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Remote Recreational Vehicle developments differ from Resort Recreational Vehicle projects in several ways:

- Spaces are not fully improved;
- Spaces may accommodate tent camping;
- Sewers are not available;
- Fully developed recreational facilities are not provided, though open space areas may be provided;
- Internal roads may not be paved; and
- The development site is designed to provide a campground appearance.

Remote recreational vehicle developments are appropriate primarily in rural and outlying areas, and must be compatible with surrounding uses. The following policies shall apply to recreational vehicle development in the Eastern Coachella Valley Area Plan:

Policies:



- ECVAP 7.1 Ensure proper service provision, land use compatibility, design standards, safety, and accessibility for recreational vehicle development in the Eastern Coachella Valley area through adherence to General Plan policies found in the Land Use Element.
- ECVAP 7.2 Allow Resort Recreational Vehicle developments within the following land use designations: Low Density Residential, Medium Density Residential, Medium High Density Residential, High Density Residential, Very High Density Residential, Commercial Tourist, and Open Space-Recreation.
- ECVAP 7.3 Limit Resort Recreational Vehicle developments to a density of sixteen (16) spaces per acre.
- ECVAP 7.4 Allow Remote recreational vehicle developments within the following land use designations: Very Low Density Residential, Estate Density Residential, Rural Residential, Rural Mountainous, Rural Desert, Open Space-Recreation, and Open Space-Rural.
- ECVAP 7.5 Limit Remote recreational vehicle developments to a density of seven (7) spaces per acre.

Industrial Uses

Industrial uses, especially those associated with agriculture and existing light industrial uses related to aviation, are necessary for the economic viability of the Eastern Coachella Valley Area Plan. Heavy industry, when it would conflict with other existing uses, would adversely affect the environment and character of the region.



Policies:

- ECVAP 8.1 Encourage industrial uses related to agriculture to continue and expand within this area plan.
- ECVAP 8.2 Discourage industrial uses that may conflict with agricultural or residential land uses either directly or indirectly within the Eastern Coachella Valley Area Plan.
- ECVAP 8.3 Discourage industrial uses which use large quantities of water in manufacturing or cooling processes and result in subsequent effluent discharges.
- ECVAP 8.4 Discourage industrial uses which produce significant quantities of toxic emissions into the air.
- ECVAP 8.5 Encourage industrial uses that can best utilize the transportation facilities of the Desert Resorts Regional Airport.
- ECVAP 8.6 Encourage industrial uses related to aviation to locate in the vicinity of the Desert Resorts Regional Airport.

Watershed/Water Supply



There is an adequate supply and quality of critical water resource essential to support development, agriculture, wildlife, and open space.



- RCIP Vision



The west basin of the Colorado River, the watershed containing the Eastern Coachella Valley, drains primarily into the Salton Sea trough. The west basin is the driest watershed area in California. Groundwater resources cannot meet local demand in this area, so water is imported from the Colorado River to meet local community and agricultural demand.

Policies:

- ECVAP 9.1 Conserve and protect watersheds and water supply through adherence to policies contained in the Open Space, Habitat and Natural Resource Preservation and Land Use Designation Policies sections found in the General Plan Land Use Element, and the Water Resources section of the General Plan Multipurpose Open Space Element.

Signage

The scenic qualities of the Coachella Valley are widely cherished by residents and visitors alike. Effective regulation of outdoor advertising is one important component of preserving the Valley's visual character, particularly in the face of expanding urbanization.

Policies:



- ECVAP 10.1 Adhere to the Advertising Regulations of the County Land Use Ordinance, Section 19, regarding outdoor advertising for all development within the Eastern Coachella Valley.



- ECVAP 10.2 Prohibit the placement of billboards within the Eastern Coachella Valley.
- ECVAP 10.3 For premises adjacent to the right-of-way of scenic corridors, single support free-standing signs for on-site advertising shall be prohibited. A sign affixed to buildings, a free-standing monument sign, or a free-standing sheathed-support sign which has minimal impact on the scenic setting shall be utilized for on-site advertising purposes along the below-referenced scenic corridors.
- a. For purposes of this policy, scenic corridors include:
 - State Route 86; and
 - State Route 111.
 - b. For purposes of this area plan, the following definitions shall apply:
 - (1) **FREE-STANDING MONUMENT SIGN** means a sign whose height does not exceed 2/3 of its length, with a single base of the sign structure which is on the ground, or no more than 1 foot above adjacent grade if located in a raised mound or landscaped area.
 - (2) **FREE-STANDING SHEATHED-SUPPORT SIGN** means a sign supported by at least two uprights constructed in or decoratively covered in design, materials and colors which match those of the use advertised, which blends harmoniously with the surrounding environment, and which is located far enough from adjacent free-standing signs to reduce visual clutter.
 - (3) **SIGNS AFFIXED TO BUILDINGS** means any on-site advertising sign painted or otherwise reproduced on the outer face of a building, or attached to the outer face of a building.
 - (4) **HIGHWAY SCENIC CORRIDOR** means those arterial roadways designated within this area plan which have prominent scenic vistas open to public view.
 - (5) **FREEWAY SCENIC CORRIDOR** means those divided arterial highways or highway sections, with full control of access and with grade separations at intersections, designated within this community plan which have prominent scenic vistas open to public view.
 - c. On-site advertising signs for businesses located along freeway scenic corridors shall comply with the following:
 - (1) Businesses located within 660 feet of the terminus of a freeway exit ramp or the origination of a freeway entrance ramp may utilize either monument or sheathed-support signs in addition to signs affixed to buildings.
 - i. A free-standing monument sign for a single business or tenant may be approved with a



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maximum height of 10 feet and a maximum surface area of 150 square feet. A free-standing monument sign for multiple businesses or tenants may be approved with an overall height of 12 feet or less and a maximum surface area of 200 square feet.

- ii. A free-standing sheathed-support sign for a single business or tenant may be approved with a maximum height of 35 feet and a maximum surface area of 150 square feet. A free-standing sheathed-support sign for multiple businesses or tenants may be approved with a maximum height of 35 feet. The maximum surface area shall be the greater of either 150 square feet, or .25 percent (1/4 of 1 percent) of the total existing building floor area, except that in any event, no sign shall exceed 200 square feet in surface area.
 - iii. A sign affixed to a building, advertising the business contained therein, shall not exceed 10 percent of the surface area of the building wall facing the freeway. A single sign, or a total of all signs, affixed to a building and advertising multiple businesses contained therein shall not exceed 10 percent of the surface area of the building wall facing the freeway.
- (2) Businesses located within 330 feet of the nearest edge of a freeway right-of-way line, but farther than 660 feet from the terminus of a freeway exit ramp or the origination of a freeway entrance ramp, may utilize either monument or sheathed-support signs in addition to signs affixed to buildings.
- i. A free-standing monument sign for a single business or tenant may be approved with a maximum height of 10 feet and a maximum surface area of 150 square feet. A free-standing monument sign for multiple businesses or tenants may be approved with an overall height of 12 feet or less and a maximum surface area of 200 square feet.
 - ii. A free-standing sheathed-support sign for a single business or tenant may be approved with a maximum height of 25 feet, or the actual height of the primary building advertised, whichever is less, and a maximum surface area of 150 square feet. A free-standing sheathed-support sign for multiple businesses or tenants may be approved with an overall height of 25 feet, or the actual height of the primary building advertised, whichever is less. The maximum surface area shall be the greater of either 150 square feet, or .25 percent (1/4 of 1 percent) of the total existing building floor area,



except that in any event, no sign shall exceed 200 square feet in surface area.

- iii. A sign affixed to a building, advertising a single business contained therein, shall not exceed 10 percent of the surface area of the building wall facing the freeway. A single sign, or a total of all signs, affixed to a building and advertising multiple businesses contained therein shall not exceed 10 percent of the surface area of the building wall facing the freeway.

- d. On-site advertising signs for businesses located along highway scenic corridors shall comply with the following:
 - (1) Notwithstanding the other provisions of this policy, a single-business monument sign may be approved with a maximum height of 10 feet, and a maximum 150 square feet of sign surface area. A multiple-business monument sign may be approved with a maximum height of 12 feet or less, and a maximum 200 square feet of sign surface area.
 - (2) Notwithstanding the other provisions of this policy, a single-business sheathed-support sign or a multiple-business sheathed-support sign shall not be erected along a highway scenic corridor.
 - (3) A sign affixed to a building, advertising the business contained therein, shall not exceed 10 percent of the surface area of the building wall facing the highway. A single sign, or a total of all signs, affixed to a building and advertising multiple businesses contained therein shall not exceed 10 percent of the surface area of the building wall facing the highway.



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Circulation

The circulation system is vital to the prosperity of a community. It provides for the movement of goods and people within and outside of the community and includes motorized and non-motorized travel modes such as bicycles, trains, aircraft, automobiles and trucks. In Riverside County, the circulation system is also intended to accommodate a pattern of concentrated growth, providing both a regional and local linkage system between unique communities. This system is multi-modal, which means that it provides numerous alternatives to the automobile, such as transit, pedestrian and equestrian systems, and bicycle facilities so that Riverside County citizens and visitors can access the region by a number of transportation options.

As stated in the Vision and the Land Use Element, the County is moving away from a growth pattern of random sprawl toward a pattern of concentrated growth and increased job creation. The intent of the new growth patterns and the new mobility systems is to accommodate the transportation demands created by future growth and to provide mobility options that help reduce the need to utilize the automobile. The circulation system is designed to fit into the fabric of the land use patterns and accommodate the open space systems.

While the following section describes the circulation system as it relates to the Eastern Coachella Valley, it is important to note that the programs and policies are supplemental to, and coordinated with, the policies of the General Plan Circulation Element. In other words, the circulation system of the Valley is tied to the countywide system and its long range direction. As such, successful implementation of the policies in the Valley will help to create an interconnected and efficient circulation system for the entire County.

LOCAL CIRCULATION POLICIES

Vehicular Circulation System

The vehicular circulation system that supports the Land Use Plan for the Eastern Coachella Valley Area Plan is shown on Figure 8, Circulation. The circulation system within this portion of the Coachella Valley connects the region to urbanized areas of the western portion of the Coachella Valley, western Riverside County, Imperial County, and the eastern portion of the County via Interstate 10, as well as providing access to and between its communities. Interstate 10 is a key east-west corridor within the County, and indeed across the United States.

State Routes 111 and 86 are the main north-south connector routes within this area. State Route 86 is growing in importance as a trade route between the U.S. and Mexico. State Route 195 also serves the Valley west of Mecca.

A grid system of numbered avenues running east-west, together with north-south oriented streets serves the Eastern Coachella Valley areas west of the All-American Canal.



Policies:



ECVAP 11.1 Design and develop the vehicular roadway system per Figure 8, Circulation, and in accordance with the functional classifications and standards in the System Design, Construction and Maintenance section of the General Plan Circulation Element.



ECVAP 11.2 Maintain the County's roadway Level of Service standards as described in the Level of Service section of the General Plan Circulation Element.

ECVAP 11.3 Separate vehicular traffic from pedestrian and equestrian traffic in order to avoid potential hazards and where traffic volumes justify the costs.

Rail

The Southern Pacific Railroad runs adjacent to State Route 111 and the Salton Sea, to the County's southern boundary. This line accommodates freight transport for the Valley's agricultural businesses.

Policies:



ECVAP 12.1 Coordinate with railroad companies to maintain and enhance railroad facilities south of the City of Coachella in accordance with the Rail System section of the General Plan Circulation Element.

ECVAP 12.2 Coordinate with railroad companies to encourage grade-separated crossings in and near Mecca.

Trails and Bikeways

The County of Riverside contains bicycle, pedestrian, and equestrian trails that traverse urban, rural, and natural areas and surround the Salton Sea. These multi-use trails accommodate hikers, bicyclists, equestrian users, and others as an integral part of the County's circulation system. These multi-use trails serve both as a means of connecting the unique communities and activity centers throughout the County and as an effective alternate mode of transportation. In addition to transportation, the trail system also serves as a community amenity by providing recreation and leisure opportunities.

As shown on Figure 9, Trails and Bikeway System, an extensive trails system is planned for the Eastern Coachella Valley.

Policies:



ECVAP 13.1 Implement the Trails and Bikeway System, Figure 9, as discussed in the Non-motorized Transportation section of the General Plan Circulation Element.



ECVAP 13.2 At signalized intersections, special equestrian push buttons (located at heights usable by persons riding on horseback) will be considered and installed where appropriate. Priority shall be given to those signalized intersections identified as trail crossings.

ECVAP 13.3 As resources permit, consideration should be given to the placement of signs along those public rights-of-way identified as regional or community trail alignments alerting motorists to the possible presence of equestrian, bicycle and pedestrian (i.e., non-motorized) traffic.

Scenic Highways

★
The purpose of the California Scenic Highways program, which was established in 1963, is to "Preserve and protect scenic highway corridors from change which would diminish the aesthetic value of lands adjacent to highways."

Scenic highways provide the motorist with a view of distinctive natural characteristics that are not typical of other areas in the County. The intent of these policies is to conserve significant scenic resources along scenic highways for future generations, and to manage development along scenic highways and corridors so that it will not detract from the area's natural characteristics.

As shown on Figure 10, Scenic Highways, State Route 111, from Bombay Beach on the Salton Sea to State Route 195 near Mecca, is a State-eligible Scenic Highway, providing views of the Salton Sea and the surrounding mountainous wilderness.

Policies:



ECVAP 14.1 Protect the scenic highways in the Eastern Coachella Valley from change that would diminish the aesthetic value of adjacent properties in accordance with the Scenic Corridors section of the General Plan Land Use, Multipurpose Open Space, and Circulation Elements.



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Figure 8: Circulation



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Figure 9: Trails and Bikeway System



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Figure 10: Scenic Highways



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Multipurpose Open Space

As described in earlier sections, the Eastern Coachella Valley contains a variety of open spaces that serve a multitude of functions. Open space areas within the Valley include the Joshua Tree National Park, the Santa Rosa Mountains, the Mecca Hills, the Dos Palmas Reserve, the Salt Creek Area of Critical Environmental Concern, the Painted Canyon, the Whitewater River, and the Salton Sea. These open spaces encompass a variety of habitats. There are also a number of recreation areas within the Eastern Coachella Valley. This Multipurpose Open Space section is a critical component in preserving the character of the County of Riverside and the Valley. In addition to providing a scenic background and preserving the natural character of the Eastern Coachella Valley, these open spaces help define the edges of, and separations between, communities.

LOCAL OPEN SPACE POLICIES

Habitat Conservation/CVMSHCP

With its rich and varied landscape, the Eastern Coachella Valley accommodates several ecological habitats that are home to numerous flora and fauna. Preserving habitat not only aids in sustaining species' survival, but also maintains the quality of life in the Valley.

The Coachella Valley Association of Governments is preparing, on behalf of its member agencies, a proposed Multiple Species Habitat Conservation Plan which is intended to cover 28 species of plants and animals in the Coachella Valley. Currently, this plan proposes to conserve between 200,000 and 250,000 acres of privately owned land through general plan land use designations, zoning/development standards, and an aggressive acquisition program for a total conservation area of between 700,000 and 750,000 acres. Please see Figure 11, Coachella Valley Association of Governments Multi-Species Habitat Conservation Plan for more information. This Plan is not yet adopted and is subject to change. This map is for informational purposes only.

Policies:



ECVAP 15.1 Protect visual and biological resources in the Eastern Coachella Valley Area Plan through adherence to General Plan policies found in the Fish and Wildlife Habitat section of the Multipurpose Open Space Element, as well as policies contained in the Coachella Valley Multiple Species Habitat Conservation Plan, upon its adoption.

Ridgelines

The ridgeline of the Santa Rosa Mountains along the western edge of the Eastern Coachella Valley, together with the ridges of the Mecca Hills and Orocopia Mountains in the east, constitute important natural resources within the Area Plan.



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Policies:



ECVAP 16.1

Refer to the Ridgeline policies in the Hillside Development and Slope section of the General Plan Land Use Element and the Scenic Resources policies in the General Plan Multipurpose Open Space Element.

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Figure 11: Coachella Valley Association of Governments Multi-Species Habitat Conservation Plan



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Hazards

Hazards are natural and man-made conditions that must be respected if life and property are to be protected as growth and development occur. Portions of the Eastern Coachella Valley are subject to hazards at varying degrees of risk and danger. These hazards include flooding, seismic occurrences, and wildland fire, and are depicted on the hazards maps, Figures 12 to 16.

LOCAL HAZARD POLICIES

Flooding

As shown on Figure 12, Flood Hazards, much of the western edge of the Eastern Coachella Valley from Indio and La Quinta to the Salton Sea is located within a 100-year floodplain. Another large 100-year floodplain extends southerly from Thermal to the Salton Sea. Additionally, fluctuation in the level of the Salton Sea, or a seismic event resulting in a seiche (earthquake induced wave action) could cause flooding of areas immediately adjacent to the sea.

Policies:



- ECVAP 17.1 Protect life and property from the hazards of flood events through adherence to the Flood and Inundation Hazards section of the General Plan Safety Element.

- ECVAP 17.2 Adhere to the flood proofing, flood protection requirements, and Flood Management Review requirements of the Riverside County Ordinance No. 458 Regulating Flood Hazard Areas.

- ECVAP 17.3 Require that proposed development projects that are subject to flood hazards, surface ponding, high erosion potential or sheet flow be submitted to the Coachella Valley Water District for review.

Wildland Fire Hazard

The desert and mountainous region in the northeastern area of the Eastern Coachella Valley has a high and very high wildfire susceptibility. The wildfire susceptibility is moderate to low in the valley and the desert regions on the western and eastern sides of the Salton Sea. Methods to address this hazard include techniques such as avoidance of building in high-risk areas, creating setbacks that buffer development from hazard areas, maintaining brush clearance to reduce potential fuel, use of low fuel landscaping, and use of fire resistant building techniques. In still other cases, safety-oriented organizations such as Fire Safe can provide assistance in educating the public and promoting practices that contribute to improved public safety. Refer to Figure 13, Wildfire Susceptibility, for the location of wildland fire hazard areas in Eastern Coachella Valley.



Policies:



ECVAP 18.1 Protect life and property from wildfire hazards through adherence to the Fire Hazards section of the General Plan Safety Element.

Seismic



Liquefaction occurs primarily in saturated, loose, fine to medium-grained soils in areas where the groundwater table is within about 50 feet of the surface. Shaking causes the soils to lose strength and behave as liquid. Excess water pressure is vented upward through fissures and soil cracks and a water-soil slurry bubbles onto the ground surface. The resulting features are known as "sand boils", "sand blows" or "sand volcanoes." Liquefaction-related effects include loss of bearing strength, ground oscillations, lateral spreading, and flow failures or slumping.

The Eastern Coachella Valley is traversed by the San Andreas fault, an active fault with a significant probability of earthquake activity. Threats from seismic events include ground shaking, fault rupture, liquefaction, and landslides. The use of building techniques, the enforcement of setbacks, and practical avoidance measures will help to mitigate the potentially dangerous circumstances. Refer to Figure 14, Seismic Hazards, for the location of faults within the Eastern Coachella Valley.

Policies:

ECVAP 19.1 Protect life and property from seismic-related incidents through adherence to the Seismic Hazards section of the General Plan Safety Elements.

Slope

Areas within the Eastern Coachella Valley contain steep slopes that require special development standards and care to prevent erosion and landslides, preserve significant views, and minimize grading and scaring. Figure 15 depicts steep slope areas within the County. Figure 16 maps areas of slope instability.

Policies:



ECVAP 20.1 Protect life and property through adherence to the Hillside Development and Slope section of the General Plan Land Use Element and the Slope and Soil Instability Hazards section of the General Plan Safety Element.



ECVAP 20.2 Refer to the Rural Mountainous and Open Space-Rural land use designations in the General Plan Land Use Element.

Wind Erosion & Blowsand

Wind erosion most commonly occurs when barren sand or sandy loam soils are exposed to high wind in the absence of moisture. Alluvial fans in the Eastern Coachella Valley are especially prone to wind erosion, although wind erosion is not limited to these areas. Human activity can increase wind erosion by disrupting soil formations and compaction, disturbing the stabilizing and wind-breaking effect of dunes, and most significantly, removing surface vegetation and its stabilizing effects.

Blowsand, the most severe form of wind erosion, occurs largely due to natural conditions. Blown sand can cause significant damage to property, and also results in the nuisance and expense of removing sand from roadways and other property, where it interferes with normal activity. Additionally, blowsand



introduces a high level of suspended particulates into the air, which can create respiratory problems.

Despite its ability to cause property damage, alter normal activity, and create health problems, blowsand is also an essential element to maintaining habitat areas within the Valley. Many species in the Coachella Valley are adapted to live on wind blown sand. Creating a safe environment for the residents of Eastern Coachella Valley and, at the same time, protecting a valuable habitat resource requires, therefore, a delicate balance.

Policies:



ECVAP 21.1 Minimize damage from and exposure to wind erosion and blowsand through adherence to the Slope and Soil Instability Hazards section of the General Plan Safety Element.

ECVAP 21.2 Require protection of soil in areas subject to wind erosion or blowsand. Mitigation measures that may be required include, but are not limited to, windbreaks, walls, fences, vegetative groundcover, rock, other stabilizing materials, and installation of an irrigation system or provision of other means of irrigation.



ECVAP 21.3 Control dust through the policies of the Particulate Matter section of the General Plan Air Quality Element.

ECVAP 21.4 Preserve the environmentally sensitive alluvial fan areas flowing out of the canyons of the Santa Rosa Mountains.



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Figure 12: Flood Hazards



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Figure 13: Wildfire Susceptibility



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Figure 14: Seismic Hazards



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Figure 15: Steep Slope



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Figure 16: Slope Instability



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