

## 4.1 AESTHETICS

This section of the EIR describes existing aesthetic and visual resources in the Granada Hills–Knollwood and Sylmar Community Plan Areas (CPAs) and the surrounding areas and analyzes the potential for aesthetic and visual impacts associated with implementation of the proposed Granada Hills–Knollwood and implementing ordinances and the proposed Sylmar Community Plan and implementing ordinances (proposed plans). In particular, descriptions of existing visual characteristics, both within and in the vicinity of the two CPAs, are presented and potential plan-related impacts to aesthetic and visual resources, such as increased light and glare, or impacts to scenic views, are evaluated based on analysis of aerial photographs, site reconnaissance, and policies contained in the proposed plans. A regulatory framework is also provided in this section describing applicable agencies and regulations related to aesthetics.

Full reference-list entries for all cited materials are provided in Section 4.1.5 (References).

### 4.1.1 Environmental Setting

As set forth in CEQA Guidelines Section 15125(a), this section describes the physical environmental conditions in the CPAs at the time the environmental analysis commenced. It constitutes the baseline physical conditions by which the City of Los Angeles will determine whether an Aesthetic impact is significant. Special emphasis is placed on environmental resources that are rare or unique to the CPAs and that may be affected by the adoption and implementation of the proposed plans.

#### ■ Granada Hills–Knollwood CPA

##### *Topographic Features*

Granada Hills–Knollwood is located in the north central portion of the San Fernando Valley in the foothills of the Santa Susana Mountains within the City of Los Angeles. This community is generally flat with rugged steep canyons and ridges increasing from south to north. At the northern extent of the CPA the terrain is quite steep, with new subdivisions fronting undisturbed hillsides. The Granada Hills–Knollwood CPA is generally bounded by the County of Los Angeles on the north, Devonshire and Lassen Streets on the south, and the Golden State Freeway (I-5) and San Diego Freeway (I-405) on the east. The I-118 freeway traverses the CPA east/west; and Rinaldi Street serves as a defining border between the northern, less densely populated areas, and the southern, more developed sections.

##### *Existing Aesthetics/Visual Character*

##### **Urban Visual Character**

The Granada Hills–Knollwood CPA is predominantly a single-family residential community, nestled in the foothills, with remnants of its agricultural history evident in the remaining citrus trees and in the equine keeping residential areas. The area south of Rinaldi Street is the older area of the CPA, largely consisting of modest subdivisions developed in the 1950s, with relatively small houses on modest-sized lots, except to the west, in Old Granada Hills, where lots reach 20,000 square feet (sf) in size. This area

features older homes, typically single-story, ranch style, with large front yard setbacks, evidence of the agricultural community that existed in the Granada Hills–Knollwood CPA before the 1950s housing boom. There is relatively little commercial development within the CPA, and that which does exist is located along such major arterials as Balboa Boulevard and Devonshire and Chatsworth Streets, particularly where such major roadways intersect. The traditional “downtown” central business district along Chatsworth Street, within the existing and proposed Granada Hills Specific Plan area, features single-story buildings and small, locally owned businesses. The other commercial areas in the CPA offer a greater mix of uses and include both small and large businesses, with building heights ranging from single-story to multi-story. The multiple-family residential in the CPA is relatively small-scale, ranging in height from single-story duplexes to four-story apartment buildings.

North of Rinaldi Street, the Granada Hills–Knollwood CPA consists almost exclusively of single-family residential neighborhoods. Compared to areas south of Rinaldi Street, homes in this area tend to be larger and are frequently on larger lots that vary in size from 11,000 sf to over 100 acres. This area north of Rinaldi Street also includes an equine-keeping district, contributing to the CPA’s semi-rural character. The oldest subdivisions in this area tend to be located on the more gently sloping terrain, while the newer developments continue to push northward into steeper areas. O’Melveny Park (see below) lies north of this area and its location impedes further residential development in the steep terrain.

The most notable tract in this area is “Balboa Highlands,” a small tract of approximately 100 homes designed by architect Joseph Eichler between 1963 and 1964, located on four main streets: Darla Avenue, Lisette Street, Nanette Street, and Jimeno Avenue. The site planners and principle architects were A. Quincy Jones and Frederick Emmons. According to the Eichler Homes website, “the basic theme to an Eichler house is—private blank front facades, rear and sometimes side walls of floor-to-ceiling glass, fenced yards, kitchens opening to a multipurpose ‘family’ room, stained wood siding, post-and-beam ceilings, and heating and sometimes air conditioning imbedded in the concrete floors. Eichler tracts had many firsts in subdivision planning—streets in concentric circles, and community clubhouses and swimming pools. Site planning and overall tract layout was a distinguishing mark of Eichler tracts. Curved streets created varied views of the houses and more privacy.”

While the Eichler homes are the most famous examples of this mid-century architecture (now known as mid-century modern) in this part of the Valley, many areas of the Granada Hills–Knollwood CPA feature this aesthetic style that includes pitched roofs and beam ceilings including numerous homes surrounding the Knollwood Golf Course to the east of Balboa, Knollwood Grove to the west of Balboa (behind the Eichler tract) and scattered throughout the areas south of Rinaldi Street.<sup>1</sup>

Knollwood Golf Course is located between Balboa Boulevard on the east and Woodley Avenue, north of Rinaldi Street. The golf course creates a lush park-like setting where greens and fairways meander through established single-family neighborhoods.

### **Open Space Areas**

Parks and open spaces in Granada Hills–Knollwood include O’Melveny Park, Zelzah Park, Bee Canyon, Petit Park, Knollwood Golf Course, etc (refer to Figure 4.12-3a (Park and Recreation Center Facilities [

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<sup>1</sup> Site visit by Christopher A. Joseph & Associates staff during February 2009.

Granada Hills–Knollwood CPA]) and Figure 4.12-3b (Park and Recreation Center Facilities [Sylmar CPA]) for specific locations of these parks). Views from parks vary depending on the topography, elevation, and location.

### **O'Melveny Park**

O'Melveny Park, with 672 acres, is a regional park and the second largest park in the City of Los Angeles. It has a large undeveloped area and a much smaller developed section with an intermittent stream, grass and picnic areas, hiking trails and fire roads, and a grassy promontory with a panoramic vista of the northeastern portion of the San Fernando Valley. This area is also rich in wildlife.

Mission Point is one of the popular trails in O'Melveny Park for mountain biking and hiking, featuring a dramatic panoramic vista of most of the San Fernando Valley from the top of Mission Point, which is the highest point in the CPA. On clear days, the trail offers views of the Pacific Ocean and Downtown Los Angeles.

### **Bee Canyon Park**

Bee Canyon Park is a hillside park that features natural habitat, picnic tables, hiking trails, and a Neighborhood Council-funded playground;

### **Petit Park**

Petit Park, a community park located next to the Granada Hills Branch Library and the Recreation Center, which offers several amenities, including a public swimming pool, barbecue pits, baseball diamond, basketball courts, grass fields with shade, playground, picnic tables, and tennis courts;

### **Zelzah Park**

Zelzah Park, a small hillside neighborhood park with shaded grass areas, a playground, picnic tables, and an equestrian trail with a staging area.

### **Knollwood Golf Course**

This community's open space and recreational resources also include the Knollwood Golf Course and Country Club as county-owned and run recreational uses.

### **Aliso Canyon Park**

Aliso Canyon Park is partially located within Granada Hills–Knollwood, along the southwestern edge of the community, offering 69 acres of natural canyon land for hiking in a riparian habitat.

In addition, Granada Hills–Knollwood features a system of existing and proposed recreational trails used for hiking and equestrian activity. Some portions of the existing trails have been improved with fencing and resurfacing, while many are unimproved, or currently use the street; and since these are located in the hilly northern portion of the CPA, many offer views. The Rim of the Valley trails system offers opportunities for existing and proposed trails in Granada Hills–Knollwood to connect to Rim of the Valley, expanding the regional trail system as well as providing better access to it. Goals, policies,

programs, and design guidelines are included in the Proposed Plan for Granada Hills–Knollwood that support trail connections, access, and development.

### **Scenic Views or Vistas**

Scenic views or vistas are defined in the City’s General Plan Conservation Element as the panoramic public view access to natural features, including views of the ocean, striking or unusual natural terrain, or unique urban and historic features, also referred to as scenic resources. Public access to views of scenic resources is from parklands, privately and publicly owned sites, and public rights-of-way.

The major scenic features in the vicinity of the Granada Hills–Knollwood CPA are the Santa Susana Mountains to the north and northwest, the San Gabriel Mountains to the northeast and the San Fernando Valley, the Hollywood Hills and Santa Monica Mountains to the south. The best locations to see these features are along public roads and trails and from parks and open space areas at the higher elevations in the northern portion of the CPA. On clear days, the east facing slopes of these highlands have spectacular panoramic views reaching from the San Gabriel Mountains to the Hollywood Hills. From the south facing slopes, the full expanse of the San Fernando Valley can be seen below.

Due to flatness of the terrain and the intervention of urban structures and landscaping, most of these large-scale geographic features are not readily visible from the CPA south of Rinaldi Street. Nevertheless, there are some public views of these features are visible from view corridors created by wide streets with north-south orientations (such as Balboa Boulevard and White Oak Avenue), and to a lesser extent those with east-west orientations (such as Devonshire Street).

### **Scenic Roadways**

There are no state of California (Caltrans)–designated scenic highways within or adjacent to the CPA. The existing General Plan Land Use Map (as of March 20, 2007) for the Granada Hills–Knollwood Community Plan identifies the following roadways within and adjacent to the CPA as scenic roadways:

- **Balboa Boulevard** between Interstate 5 (I-5) and Sesnon Boulevard is designated as a Major Scenic Highway. Balboa Boulevard provides public views of hillside open spaces in the northern portion of the CPA as well as more distant vistas of the Santa Susana and San Gabriel Mountains.
- **Sesnon Boulevard** between Balboa Boulevard on the east and its terminus in the western portion of the CPA is designated as a Major Scenic Highway. Sesnon Boulevard provides public views of hillside open spaces in the northern portion of the CPA as well as more distant vistas of the mountains that ring the San Fernando Valley.
- **Rinaldi Street** (the entire length within the CPA) is designated as a Major Scenic Highway. Rinaldi Street provides an east-west oriented public view corridor at the base of the Santa Susana Mountains foothills.
- **White Oak Avenue** between Devonshire Street and Rinaldi Street is designated as a Scenic Collector. It is the site of the Deodar Trees Cultural Monument. These trees, native to the Himalayas, were planted in 1932 along White Oak Avenue between San Fernando Mission and San Jose Street.
- **State Route 118** (the entire length within the CPA) is designated as a Scenic Freeway. State Route 118 (SR-118) provides an east-west oriented public view corridor at the base of the Santa Susana Mountains foothills.

- **Interstate 5** (the entire length forming the eastern boundary of the CPA) is designated as a Scenic Freeway. I-5 provides a north-south oriented public view corridor through the Santa Susana Mountains and foothills.

As noted above, there are no state of California (Caltrans)–designated scenic highways within or adjacent to the CPA. I-210, which terminates at I-5 (forming the eastern boundary of the CPA) is an Eligible State Scenic Highway, but is not officially designated. The Los Angeles County portion of SR-118 between the Ventura County line and SR-27 (Topanga Canyon Boulevard) is also designated as an Eligible, but is not officially designated as a State Scenic Highway. However, the portion of SR-118 that crosses east to west through the CPA has no State Scenic Highway status.<sup>2</sup>

### **Scenic Resources**

The Granada Hills–Knollwood area is rich in scenic resources, ranging from the Santa Susana Mountains to the north and northwest to the Aliso Canyon Park in the southwest. Other scenic resources in the Granada Hills–Knollwood CPA include:

- **Taft House**—Located at 16745 San Fernando Mission Boulevard, a late nineteenth century Victorian home
- **Kramer House**—Built in 1966, this one-story, single family residence exhibits character-defining features of the Mid-Century Modern Ranch style
- **Balboa Highlands**—A subdivision featuring Eichler Homes that epitomize modernist architecture and indoor-outdoor living with extensive glass walls opening to a large rear yard
- **Deodar Trees on White Oak Avenue**—The 114 Deodar Cedars along White Oak Avenue between San Fernando Mission Boulevard and San Jose Street are a designated Cultural Historic landmark, planted in 1932

### **Recreational Trails**

Granada Hills–Knollwood is one of the few communities in the City that contain a network of local trails that connect neighborhoods to various points of interest, parks, as well as to areas of recreation and natural open spaces. The network consist of developed trails alongside the streets, trails in parks and through residential blocks, as well as undeveloped trails that share the street right-of-way with pedestrians, bicyclists, and motorists. Developed trails with dedicated easements and/or paths set-aside for equine and pedestrian use, with some sections in the roadway, are located on Zelzah Avenue, Mayerling Street, Cascade Canyon Drive, Louise Avenue, Highwater Road, Ridgeway Road, Rexbon Road, Lerdo Road, and near Hesperia Avenue alongside Aliso Canyon. Some of these trails have been constructed as part of subdivision requirements along roadways with some, such as those behind Tuscan Avenue and Mahoney Place, located mid-block behind residential buildings. Shorter trail connections cross residential blocks through this area, as well.

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<sup>2</sup> California Department of Transportation, California Scenic Highway Mapping System, [http://www.dot.ca.gov/hq/LandArch/scenic\\_highways/index.htm](http://www.dot.ca.gov/hq/LandArch/scenic_highways/index.htm).

## Light and Glare

The Granada Hills–Knollwood CPA is a suburban community and, as such, maintains a relatively low level of nighttime illumination. Street lighting is present along major thoroughfares, as well as window illumination, exterior security lighting, illuminated signage and advertising, and vehicle headlights. While there are a few illuminated commercial areas along major thoroughfares, these areas are relatively small and do not produce enough lighting to dominate the night sky. With undeveloped hillsides to the north and a low level of lighting throughout the CPA, there is less “night glow” or “light pollution” above Granada Hills–Knollwood than in many Los Angeles communities.

Light that falls beyond the intended area is referred to as light trespass. Types of light trespass include spill light and glare. Nighttime lighting is necessary to provide and maintain safe, secure, and attractive environments; however, these lights have the potential to produce spill light and glare, and if designed incorrectly, could be considered unattractive. Spill light can adversely affect light sensitive uses at nighttime, especially residences. Light dissipates with increased distance from the source. Ambient light levels or illumination is measured in foot-candles. Table 4.1-1 (Typical Illumination Levels in Foot-Candles) lists typical ambient illumination levels in foot-candles for exterior and interior lighting. “Horizontal” foot-candles measure light illumination on a horizontal surface, such as a sidewalk or parking lot; “Vertical” foot-candles measure light illumination on a vertical surface, such as a wall or building.

<i>Light Source</i>	<i>Foot-Candles</i>
Sunlight	10,000
Full Daylight	1,000
Overcast Day	100
Very Dark Day	10
Twilight	1
Deep Twilight	0.1
Full Moon	0.01
Quarter Moon	0.001
Starlight	0.0001
Overcast Night	0.00001
Office Lighting	70–150
Street Lighting	0.6–1.6

SOURCE: The Engineering ToolBox, Illuminance—Recommended Light Levels, [http://www.engineeringtoolbox.com/light-level-rooms-d\\_708.html](http://www.engineeringtoolbox.com/light-level-rooms-d_708.html) (accessed September 29, 2011).

## Shade and Shadow

Shadows are cast in a clockwise direction from west/northwest to east/northeast from approximately 7:00 AM to 4:00 PM or later depending on the time of the year: summer solstice (June 21), spring/fall

equinoxes (March 20 and September 22), and Winter Solstice (December 21). Generally, the shortest shadows are cast during the summer solstice and grow increasingly longer until the winter solstice. During the winter solstice, the sun appears to be lower in the sky and shadows are at their maximum coverage lengths. Although the Granada Hills–Knollwood CPA is relatively suburban with low-scale commercial and residential buildings, shadow effects on shadow-sensitive uses already exist in the project area. Shadow-sensitive uses generally include routinely useable outdoor spaces associated with residential, recreational, or institutional land uses; commercial uses, such as pedestrian-oriented outdoor spaces or restaurants with outdoor eating areas; nurseries; and existing solar collectors/panels.

## ■ Sylmar CPA

### *Topographic Features*

Sylmar is a foothill community located in the northern most part of the City of Los Angeles, in the northeast corner of the San Fernando Valley. Resting at an elevation of approximately 1,300 feet above sea level, the CPA has spectacular views of scenic mountains, including Kagel Mountain, the historic Los Angeles Aqueduct, Hansen Dam, and the entire San Fernando Valley. Major geographic features that shape the CPA's topography include the foothills of the San Gabriel Mountains and Angeles National Forest, which frame the community along the north and northeast boundary; the I-5 freeway which forms the western boundary and the I-210 which traverse the CPA; and the Pacoima Wash and Lopez Debris Basin, which forms the southeastern boundary of the CPA.

The topography of the CPA is varied, with level areas located mostly in the central portions located between San Fernando Road and Foothill Boulevard; with pockets of hilly streets and neighborhoods located at higher elevations near Laurel Canyon Boulevard between Hubbard Street and Polk Street (i.e., Carey Ranch), Yarnell Street north of Foothill Boulevard (i.e., Rancho Cascades and Sunset Farms Industrial Park), and neighborhoods north of Eldridge Avenue that gently slope, rising to the foothills of the San Gabriel Mountains (near Veteran's Memorial Regional Park and the Pacoima Wash open space area) to the east and southeast areas of the CPA.

### *Aesthetics/Visual Character*

#### **Urban Visual Character**

Sylmar is one of the older communities in the San Fernando Valley as indicated by its street pattern, which is set up on a diagonal grid. The earliest Spanish communities in Los Angeles aligned their streets to accommodate the prevailing winds which blow northeasterly during the day and southwesterly at night. The City of San Fernando, which is south of and adjacent to Sylmar, was the first community established in the Valley. It established the diagonal street grid system and as the population grew the adjacent Sylmar community aligned its streets with that existing pattern. Later communities in the Valley adopted a different street pattern based upon the north-south and east-west township and range grid system. These two street patterns have never been reconciled and still cause confusion where they meet south and west of City of San Fernando.

Remnants of Sylmar's rich agricultural history and rural past are highly visible, particularly in its older residential areas with heritage olive and citrus trees located in the northern and central portions of the

community. The north and central areas consist of primarily older homes that are relatively small and situated on larger lots, with mature trees and landscaping and large setbacks from the street. These areas are semi-rural in nature with a typical lot size of 17,500 sf, characterized by one-story ranch style homes that still maintain viable equine-keeping uses. It is not unusual to see residents riding their horses on local streets as a means of non-motorized transportation as well as for recreational uses. Additionally, many of the homes in these northern and central portions of the CPA still have fruit and olive trees in their yards, remnants of orchards that were planted in the early 1900s. Street design also gives evidence of Sylmar's rural past in that many older residential neighborhoods have rolled curbs and undeveloped sidewalks that are commonly used as (recreational) trails. Many of the neighborhoods in Sylmar that were developed prior to the 1950s do not contain street lighting along the public right-of-way, as the City did not require developers to install them as a condition of approval for any subdivision or development at that period of time.

The remaining area was primarily developed post World War II, with a wide mix of uses. Most of the area's residential neighborhoods were developed after the 1950s and consists of two-story homes built on smaller lots, with the more recent homes built on gently sloping terrain leading towards the foothills with views of the San Gabriel Mountains. Sylmar's multiple-family neighborhoods for the most part are concentrated in the eastern portion of the CPA, along Foothill Boulevard, and southwest area along San Fernando Road, consisting of relatively smaller-scale apartments and condominium units that are two to three stories in height. The commercial areas in Sylmar are located on major streets; the two major shopping centers are on Foothill Boulevard between Maclay Avenue and Astoria Street and San Fernando Road between Hubbard and Polk Streets near the Sylmar/San Fernando Metrolink Station. The commercial areas are characterized by low-scale buildings generally setback from the street with parking provided in the front, adjacent to the street, and in many cases, below grade.

Another important feature of Sylmar is the vast amount of industrial land. Sylmar has four major industrial districts, mostly located in the northwest and southeast portions of the CPA. Industrial businesses located on gently rolling terrain landscaped with street trees and front yards include the North Valley Business Center on Telfair Avenue and the Sunset Farms Industrial Park located on Balboa, north of Foothill Boulevard, while the older industrial businesses along Arroyo Street and in areas adjacent to the railroad tracks are located at lower elevations, relatively flat land, with narrow streets and sparse landscaping.

Institutional uses, such as churches, schools, and hospitals, are located throughout the community and provide services and amenities to the community. Of these, the single largest institutional use is the Los Angeles County Olive View-UCLA Medical Center, which is one of the tallest structures, located on Olive View Drive, adjacent to the foothills. Los Angeles Mission College is the second largest institutional use in the CPA, and is located in the vicinity of Hubbard Street and Eldridge Avenue, in the southeast portion of the community west of the Pacoima Wash.

### **Open Space Areas**

Probably one of the most noticeable features in Sylmar is its vast open space areas and parks, particularly along the foothills of the San Gabriel Mountains along the northern and eastern boundaries of the CPA. Approximately 676 acres of open space areas and parks exist in the CPA, including El Cariso Regional



Park and Golf Course, Veteran's Memorial Park, Sylmar Park and Recreation Center, Carey Ranch, Stetson Ranch Equestrian Park, Wilson Canyon Park, and Heritage Park. Parks and open space areas in Sylmar provide visual relief from the area's suburban ambiance and access to the surrounding features of the San Gabriel Mountains. The following discussion summarizes the major parks in the CPA.

### **El Cariso Community Regional Park and Golf Course**

El Cariso Community Regional Park is a 79-acre Los Angeles County owned and operated facility located near the eastern edge of the CPA. The Park includes baseball/softball fields, children's play area, multipurpose open playing fields, picnic tables, swimming pool, tennis courts, and Golf Course (adjacent to park). The Golf Course is an 18-hole course featuring scenic mountain views and small lakes.

### **Veteran's Memorial Park**

Veterans Memorial Park rests on the grounds of the original site of the Veterans Hospital built in the 1940s but severely damaged in the 1971 Sylmar Earthquake. Veterans Memorial Park is a County of Los Angeles Park, and is situated directly adjacent to the foothills of the San Gabriel Mountains in such a way that only a portion of the parkland is within the boundaries of the CPA while the majority lies within an un-incorporated area of Los Angeles County. The Park is a passive park featuring rolling hills, grassy picnic areas, camping grounds, and a variety of walking and riding trails leading north into the San Gabriel Mountains and Angeles National Forest.

### **Sylmar Park and Recreation Center**

Sylmar Park and Recreation Center provides outdoor facilities for field and court sports, as well as indoor gymnasiums, an auditorium, and a community room. Outdoor facilities include a swimming pool, children's play areas, baseball diamond, basketball courts, football field, soccer field, and tennis courts, all with nighttime lighting.

### **Carey Ranch**

Carey Ranch is an open area park, minimally developed with grass fields, parking area, and landscaped with sporadic trees around the perimeter of the park. The park is located at the top of a hill above the neighborhood, and provides a peaceful view overlooking Sylmar and other communities of the San Fernando Valley. This park is unstaffed and open from dawn to dusk.

### **Stetson Ranch Equestrian Park**

Stetson Ranch Equestrian Park is located just below the San Gabriel Mountains and adjacent to Angeles National Forest. It is one of few equestrian parks located in Los Angeles City. This rural park offers equestrian staging areas, a riding area, as well as hiking and equestrian trails leading north into the San Gabriel Mountains and Angeles National Forest. From Stetson Ranch Equestrian Park, the Saddle Tree Ranch Trailhead provides access to the interregional Marge Feinberg Rim of the Valley Trail, connecting to the Santa Monica Mountains Conservancy-owned Wilson Canyon Park to a trail at Cascades Golf Course. Saddletree Ranch Trailhead also provides shady picnic grounds, an interpretive display, and views into the San Fernando Valley and Angeles National Forest.

## **Wilson Canyon Park**

Located in the foothills of the San Gabriel Mountains above Olive View Medical Center, the 240-acre Wilson Canyon Park offers visitors a secluded wilderness setting, a network of easy to moderate trails, and a rich variety of flora and fauna with commanding vistas of the San Fernando Valley. Wilson Canyon Park also serves as a popular portal into the adjacent Angeles National Forest and its extensive network of trails. Similar to Veteran's Memorial Park, only a small portion of the parkland is included within the boundaries of the CPA while the majority lie within an un-incorporated area of the County of Los Angeles.

## **Heritage Park**

This park is located mostly within the City of San Fernando, but partially in Sylmar at the corner of Hubbard and Fourth Street. The park contains unique educational and cultural venues that reflect San Fernando's rich history. Among these features are a simulated Tataviam tribe village, a Japanese tea house, a Mission style plaza, a small amphitheatre and the restoration of a historic water tower. All are linked by a passive walking trail that winds through open spaces landscaped with drought tolerant plants and trees. The facility is open daily from dawn to dusk.

## ***Scenic Views or Vistas***

Scenic views or vistas are defined in the City's General Plan Conservation Element as the panoramic public view access to natural features, including views of the ocean, striking or unusual natural terrain, or unique urban and historic features, also referred to as scenic resources. Public access to views of scenic resources is from parklands, privately and publicly owned sites, and public rights-of-way.

The 1997 Sylmar Community Plan includes objectives and policies intended to protect and preserve existing scenic vistas of the mountains and foothills from designated scenic highways and trails. These policies would continue under the proposed Community Plan. There are numerous trails with substantial views identified in the Community Plan, including but not limited to, Olive View Drive and Pacoima Wash.

The major scenic features in the vicinity of the CPA are the Santa Susana Mountains to the northwest and west, the San Gabriel Mountains to the north and northeast, and the San Fernando Valley and Santa Monica Mountains to the south. Other than the aforementioned public parks, the best locations to see these features are along public roads and trails and at higher elevation points throughout the CPA. Most every location within the CPA has a view of the surrounding mountain ranges, but in particular, areas along Hubbard, Polk, and Roxford Streets provide spectacular views of the San Gabriel Mountains and of the surrounding Angeles National Forest to the north and east.

Olive View Drive provides close up views of the San Gabriel Mountains to the north and east as it is situated directly adjacent to the foothills. Wilson Canyon Park, located north of Olive View Drive, provides higher elevation for views of the San Fernando Valley as well as the San Gabriel Mountains, and contains trails leading into the Angeles National Forest that provide views at even higher vantage points.

The Carey Ranch neighborhood, located on the west side of the CPA near Laurel Canyon Boulevard, is at a higher elevation than the central areas of the CPA, and sits above the Lakeside Park. In addition, this

area has a neighborhood park that provides unobstructed panoramic views of the San Fernando Valley, the San Gabriel Mountains, the Santa Susana Mountains and the Santa Monica Mountains.

Areas along Maclay and Harding Streets, leading up toward Gavina Avenue on the east side of the CPA, also provide close up views of the San Gabriel Mountains, as well as views of the Pacoima Wash and Lopez Debris Basin open space area. This area of the Pacoima Wash has remained in a natural state, as the water drains from the Pacoima Reservoir downstream, recharging the groundwater table and eventually connecting to the channelized portions leading to the Los Angeles River. Behind the Pacoima Reservoir in the Angeles National Forest, just north of the CPA boundary, is the launch site for hanggliders and paragliders known as Kagel Mountain. Hanggliders and paragliders are commonly seen flying over this area and landing at the Sylmar Flight Park located directly adjacent to the Pacoima Wash, on the west.

### **Scenic Roadways**

There are no State of California (Caltrans) scenic highways officially designated within or adjacent to the CPA. The existing General Plan Land Use Map (as of February 6, 2008) for the Sylmar Community Plan identifies the entire length of the I-5 freeway, forming the western boundary of the CPA, as a Scenic Highway Class II as it provides a north-south oriented public view corridor through the Santa Susana Mountains and foothills. In addition, the Transportation Element of the General Plan (as of June 1998) identifies the entire stretch of the I-210 freeway and the portion of the I-5 freeway, north of the I-210, as Designated Scenic Highways, providing spectacular views of the San Gabriel Mountains and San Fernando Valley.

As noted above, there are no State of California (Caltrans) scenic highways officially designated within or adjacent to the CPA. However, the I-210 going west from SR-134 in Pasadena leading to the I-5 interchange, and the I-5 leading north to the SR-126 in Santa Clarita are both listed as eligible routes for designation in the Caltrans Landscape Architecture Program and Scenic Highway Program<sup>3</sup>.

### **Scenic Resources**

The Sylmar area is rich in scenic resources, ranging from the Pacoima Wash to the San Gabriel Mountains. In addition, Sylmar also boasts a number of man-made structures and other features that contribute to its rich aesthetic character. While not all of them are located within the Sylmar CPA, a few of these features are identified below:

#### **Los Angeles Aqueduct Cascades**

One of the most prominent and familiar visual features in the CPA is the Los Angeles Aqueduct Cascades System. Located in the northwest corner of Sylmar, on the east side of the Golden State Freeway (Interstate 5), this is the terminus point where the Los Angeles Aqueduct symbolically enters the City.

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<sup>3</sup> California Department of Transportation, California Scenic Highway Mapping System, [http://www.dot.ca.gov/hq/LandArch/scenic\\_highways/index.htm](http://www.dot.ca.gov/hq/LandArch/scenic_highways/index.htm).

The Los Angeles Aqueduct System consists of two parallel water courses, beginning in the Owens Valley in the Eastern Sierra and ending at the Upper Van Norman Dam/Los Angeles Reservoir in Granada Hills. The first Los Angeles Aqueduct was completed in 1913, and is located off to the west side and lower on the hillside than the second Los Angeles Aqueduct cascade.

The second Los Angeles Aqueduct was completed in 1970, which brought an additional water supply from the Eastern Sierra adding 50% more capacity to the water system. The cascades for the second Los Angeles Aqueduct were built 350 feet higher than the original, making gravity supply possible to areas of the north San Fernando Valley that previously required pumping. The Los Angeles Aqueduct System was declared a California State Historic Landmark #753 in 1958 and Los Angeles Historic-Cultural Monument #742 in 2003.

### **Kagel Mountain**

According to the Sylmar Hang Gliding Association, Sylmar is the World Capital of Hang Gliding as pilots have been flying hang gliders in these mountains since 1969, giving credit to the year round near-perfect flying conditions that make this launch area a favorite. Kagel Mountain, located northeast of the CPA boundary near the Pacoima Dam in the Angeles National Forest, is the launch site for hang gliders. Sylmar Flight Park is the official landing zone, is located on the southwest side of the Pacoima Wash, directly north of the Sylmar Independent Baseball League playing fields. The Flight Park is approximately 3,500 sf and includes an approach to the landing area, a plateau landing area for advanced pilots, a breakdown area for after flight activities, and a picnic area.

### **The Pacoima Wash**

The Pacoima Wash begins north of Gavina Avenue stemming from the undeveloped hillsides in the northeastern segment of the CPA, and runs south to Foothill Boulevard as it exits the CPA. For the purpose of this discussion, the Pacoima Wash can be separated into two distinct areas based on the physical characteristics. The upper area of the Pacoima Wash lies between Gavina Avenue Bridge and the Maclay/Harding Street Bridge and is adjacent to large expanses of the Angeles National Forest to the north and east. This segment acts as a transitional zone between the rugged slopes of the San Gabriel Mountains and the urban environment. Large portions of land adjacent to the streambed on the northeast remain undeveloped, while recreational and educational facilities such as the Sylmar Independent Baseball League, the Sylmar Flight Park, Los Angeles Mission College and El Cariso Park are located on the southwest side of the Wash. The upper portion of the Pacoima Wash is un-channelized and has a natural appearance and natural stream flow.

Below the Maclay/Harding Street Bridge, the lower portion of the Pacoima Wash assumes a much more engineered form than the upper portion. This is where water enters the Lopez Debris Basin, which traps sediments and regulates water at a constant volume, as it passes into a concrete-lined channel as it then moves out of the CPA.

### **San Fernando Mission Wells and Settling Basin**

Access to water was a deciding factor in locating many of the missions. A few miles north east of Mission San Fernando were cienegas, or swamp lands, with natural springs. This availability of water influenced the Franciscan Padres into locating Mission San Fernando Rey de España near these cienegas. The

Mission Wells are still supplying water to the Los Angeles Department of Water and Power and are on DWP property with limited access. The Mission Wells and Settling were declared Los Angeles Historic-Cultural Monument #50 in 1967.

### **D.W. Griffith Ranch**

Originally part of the San Fernando Mission lands, this ranch was purchased by David Wark Griffith, revered pioneer of silent motion pictures, in 1912. It provided the locale for many western thrillers and was the inspiration for the immortal production, *Birth of a Nation*. In 1948 it was acquired by Fritz B. Burns, who perpetuated the Griffith name in memory of the great film pioneer. The monument stands to salute the former site of D.W. Griffith Ranch, and was declared a California State Historical Landmark #716 in 1959.

### **San Fernando Pioneer Cemetery**

The Pioneer Memorial Cemetery is located at the corner of Foothill Boulevard and Bledsoe Street. This cemetery covers about 4 acres of what was once part of Senator Charles Maclay's ranch. It is the second oldest cemetery in the San Fernando Valley and hold the remains of early pioneers, Civil War Veterans, and Mission Indians. The cemetery was declared a California State Historic Landmark in 1961 and Los Angeles Historic-Cultural Monument #586 in 1993.

### **Recreational Trails**

Sylmar is one of the few communities in the City that contain a network of local trails that connect neighborhoods to various points of interest, parks, as well as to areas of recreation and natural open spaces. The networks consist primarily of undeveloped trails that share the street right-of-way with pedestrians, bicyclists, and motorists. Many of the developed trails with dedicated easements and/or paths set-aside for equine and pedestrian use are located on Foothill Boulevard, Olive View Drive, and along public right-of-way parallel to the I-210 on the north side of the freeway. Newer subdivisions within the equine-keeping district boundaries have also developed trails as a condition of approval along Herrick Avenue, Pala Avenue, and Dronfield Avenue.

### **Light and Glare**

The CPA is an older suburban community and, as such, maintains a relatively low level of nighttime illumination. Street lighting is present along major thoroughfares, as well as window illumination, exterior security lighting, illuminated signage and advertising, and vehicle headlights. While there are a few illuminated commercial areas along major thoroughfares, and several industrial districts, these areas are relatively small and do not produce enough lighting to dominate the night sky. With low density character of development and the undeveloped hillsides to the north and a low level of lighting throughout the CPA, there is less "night glow" or "light pollution" above Sylmar than in many Los Angeles communities.

Light that falls beyond the intended area is referred to as light trespass. Types of light trespass include spill light and glare. Nighttime lighting is necessary to provide and maintain safe, secure, and attractive environments; however, these lights have the potential to produce spill light and glare, and if designed incorrectly, could be considered unattractive. Spill light can adversely affect light sensitive uses at

nighttime, especially residences. Light dissipates with increased distance from the source. Ambient light levels or illumination is measured in foot-candles. Table 4.2-1 (Typical Illumination Levels in Foot-Candles) lists typical ambient illumination levels in foot-candles for exterior and interior lighting. “Horizontal” foot-candles measure light illumination on a horizontal surface, such as a sidewalk or parking lot; “Vertical” foot-candles measure light illumination on a vertical surface, such as a wall or building.

<i>Light Source</i>	<i>Foot-Candles</i>
Sunlight	10,000
Full Daylight	1,000
Overcast Day	100
Very Dark Day	10
Twilight	1
Deep Twilight	0.1
Full Moon	0.01
Quarter Moon	0.001
Starlight	0.0001
Overcast Night	0.00001
Office Lighting	70–150
Street Lighting	0.6–1.6

SOURCE: The Engineering ToolBox, Illuminance—Recommended Light Levels, [http://www.engineeringtoolbox.com/light-level-rooms-d\\_708.html](http://www.engineeringtoolbox.com/light-level-rooms-d_708.html) (accessed September 29, 2011).

### **Shade and Shadow**

Shadows are cast in a clockwise direction from west/northwest to east/northeast from approximately 7:00 a.m. to 4:00 p.m. or later depending on the time of the year: Summer Solstice (June 21st), Spring/Fall Equinoxes (March 20th and September 22nd), and Winter Solstice (December 21st). Generally, the shortest shadows are cast during the Summer Solstice and grow increasingly longer until the Winter Solstice. During the Winter Solstice, the sun appears to be lower in the sky and shadows are at their maximum coverage lengths. Although the Sylmar CPA is relatively suburban with low-scale commercial, industrial, and residential buildings, shadow effects on shadow-sensitive uses already exist in the project area. Shadow-sensitive uses generally include routinely useable outdoor spaces associated with residential, recreational, or institutional land uses; commercial uses, such as pedestrian-oriented outdoor spaces or restaurants with outdoor eating areas; nurseries; and existing solar collectors/panels.

## 4.1.2 Regulatory Framework

### ■ Federal

There are no federal policies related to aesthetics.

### ■ State

#### *Caltrans Scenic Highways*

The California Department of Transportation (Caltrans) defines a scenic highway as any freeway, highway, road, or other public right-of-way, that traverses an area of exceptional scenic quality. Suitability for designation as a State Scenic Highway is based on vividness, intactness, and unity, as defined by Federal Highway Administration guidelines.

California's Scenic Highway Program was created by the Legislature in 1963. Its purpose is to protect and enhance the natural scenic beauty of California highways and adjacent corridors, through special conservation treatment. The state laws governing the Scenic Highway Program are found in the Streets and Highways Code, Sections 260 through 263. A highway may be designated scenic depending upon how much of the natural landscape can be seen by travelers, the scenic quality of the landscape, and the extent to which development intrudes upon the traveler's enjoyment of the view.

The status of a proposed state scenic highway changes from eligible to officially designated when the local governing body applies to Caltrans for scenic highway approval, adopts a Corridor Protection Program, and receives notification that the highway has been officially designated a State Scenic Highway.<sup>4</sup>

There are no officially designated State Scenic Highways within the Granada Hills–Knollwood or Sylmar CPAs.

### ■ Regional

There are no regional policies related to aesthetics.

### ■ Local

#### *City of Los Angeles General Plan Elements*

The City of Los Angeles Citywide General Plan Framework (Framework) is a long range, citywide, comprehensive growth strategy and a special element of the General Plan that plans for the future. Therefore, the Framework looks at the City as a whole and provides a citywide context within which community planning takes place. The Framework element neither overrides nor supersedes the Community Plans; rather, it guides the City's long-range growth and development policy, establishing citywide standards, goals, policies, and objectives for citywide elements and community plans.

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<sup>4</sup> California Department of Transportation, Frequently Asked Questions, Caltrans Landscape Architecture Program, <http://www.dot.ca.gov/hq/LandArch/scenic/faq.htm>.

The State also requires that a Conservation Element be included in the City and County General Plans to address natural and other open space resources. The intent of the Conservation Element is the conservation and preservation of natural resources. The City of Los Angeles Conservation Element contains objectives, policies, and programs that address changes to land forms and scenic vistas in order to protect and reinforce natural and scenic vistas as irreplaceable resources and for the aesthetic enjoyment of present and future generations.

**Table 4.1-3 General Plan Policies Relevant to Aesthetics**

<i>Policy No.</i>	<i>Policy</i>
<b>GENERAL PLAN FRAMEWORK</b>	
<b>Urban Form and Neighborhood Design</b>	
Goal 5A	A livable City for existing and future residents and one that is attractive to future investment. A City of interconnected, diverse neighborhoods that builds on the strengths of those neighborhoods and functions at both the neighborhood and citywide scales.
Policy 5.1.1	Use the Community Plan Update process and related efforts to define the character of communities and neighborhoods at a finer grain than the Framework Element permits.
Policy 5.2.1	Designate centers and districts in locations where activity is already concentrated and/or where good transit service is, or will be provided.
Policy 5.2.2	Encourage the development of centers, districts, and selected corridor/boulevard nodes such that the land uses, scale, and built form allowed and/or encouraged within these areas allow them to function as centers and support transit use, both in daytime and nighttime (see Chapter 3: Land Use). Additionally, develop these areas so that they are compatible with surrounding neighborhoods, as defined generally by the following building characteristics. <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>a. Buildings in neighborhood districts generally should be low rise (one to two stories), compatible with adjacent housing, and incorporate the pedestrian-oriented design elements defined in Policy 5.8.1 and Policies 3.16.1–3.16.3. They should also be located along sidewalks with appropriate continuous storefronts.</li> <li>b. Buildings in community centers generally should be two to six stories in height, with the first several stories located along the sidewalk. They should also incorporate the pedestrian-oriented elements defined in Policy 5.8.1. Either housing or office space may be located above the ground floor storefronts.</li> <li>c. The built form of regional centers will vary by location. In areas such as Wilshire and Hollywood Boulevards, buildings will range from low- to mid-rise buildings, with storefronts situated along pedestrian-oriented streets. In areas such as Century City and Warner Center, freestanding high rises that are not pedestrian-oriented characterize portions of these centers. Nevertheless, regional centers should contain pedestrian-oriented areas, and incorporate the pedestrian-oriented design elements defined in Policy 5.8.1 and Policies 3.16.1–3.16.3.</li> <li>d. Buildings located at activity nodes along mixed-use boulevards generally shall have the same characteristics as either neighborhood districts or community centers, depending on permitted land use intensities. Housing over ground floor storefronts or in place of commercial development shall be encouraged along mixed-use boulevards. (P1, P18, P24, P25)</li> </ul>
Objective 5.5	Enhance the livability of all neighborhoods by upgrading the quality of development and improving the quality of the public realm.
Policy 5.5.7	Promote the undergrounding of utilities throughout the City's neighborhoods, districts, and centers.
Policy 5.5.3	Formulate and adopt building and site design standards and guidelines to raise the quality of design Citywide.
Objective 5.6	Conserve and reinforce the community character of neighborhoods and commercial districts not designated as growth areas.
Objective 5.7	Provide a transition between conservation neighborhoods and their centers.
Objective 5.8	Reinforce or encourage the establishment of a strong pedestrian orientation in designated neighborhood districts, community centers, and pedestrian-oriented subareas within regional centers, so that these districts and centers can serve as a focus of activity for the surrounding community and a focus for investment in the community.



<b>Table 4.1-3 General Plan Policies Relevant to Aesthetics</b>	
<i>Policy No.</i>	<i>Policy</i>
Policy 5.8.1	Buildings in pedestrian-oriented districts and centers should have the following general characteristics: <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>a. An exterior building wall high enough to define the street, create a sense of enclosure, and typically located along the sidewalk;</li> <li>b. A building wall more-or-less continuous along the street frontage;</li> <li>c. Ground floor building frontage designed to accommodate commercial uses, community facilities, or display cases;</li> <li>d. Shops with entrances directly accessible from the sidewalk and located at frequent intervals;</li> <li>e. Well lit exteriors fronting on the sidewalk that provide safety and comfort commensurate with the intended nighttime use, when appropriate;</li> <li>f. Ground floor building walls devoted to display windows or display cases;</li> <li>g. Parking located behind the commercial frontage and screened from view and driveways located on side streets where feasible;</li> <li>h. Inclusion of bicycle parking areas and facilities to reduce the need for vehicular use; and</li> <li>i. The area within 15 feet of the sidewalk may be an arcade that is substantially open to the sidewalk to accommodate outdoor dining or other activities.</li> </ol>
Policy 5.8.2	The primary commercial streets within pedestrian-oriented districts and centers should have the following characteristics: <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>a. Sidewalks: 15-17 feet wide (see illustrative street cross-sections).</li> <li>b. Mid-block medians (between intersections): landscaped where feasible.</li> <li>c. Shade trees, pruned above business signs, to provide a continuous canopy along the sidewalk and/or palm trees to provide visibility from a distance.</li> <li>d. Pedestrian amenities (e.g., benches, pedestrian-scale lighting, special paving, window boxes, and planters).</li> </ol>
Policy 5.8.4	Encourage that signage be designed to be integrated with the architectural character of the buildings and convey a visually attractive character.

**CONSERVATION ELEMENT**

<b>Land Form and Scenic Vistas</b>	
Objective	Protect and reinforce natural and scenic vistas as irreplaceable resources and for the aesthetic enjoyment of present and future generations.
Policy	Continue to encourage and/or require property owners to develop their properties in a manner that will, to the greatest extent practical, retain significant existing land forms (e.g., ridge lines, bluffs, unique geologic features) and unique scenic features (historic, ocean, mountains, unique natural features) and/or make possible public view or other access to unique features or scenic views.

SOURCE: Los Angeles Department of City Planning, *The Citywide General Plan Framework: An Element of the City of Los Angeles General Plan* (adopted August 8, 2001), CPC 94-0354 GPF CF 95-2259 CF 01-1162, <http://cityplanning.lacity.org>; Los Angeles Department of City Planning, *General Plan of the City of Los Angeles, Conservation Element* (adopted September 26, 2001).

**City of Los Angeles Municipal Code**

The primary purpose of zoning is to segregate uses that are thought to be incompatible; in practice, zoning is used as a permitting system to prevent new development from harming existing residents or businesses and to preserve the “character” of a community.

With respect to aesthetics, the City of Los Angeles uses zoning for a variety of purposes including, but not limited to, regulating: (1) lot size and density, to ensure that compatible development occurs within the context of the surrounding existing environment (2) building heights, to protect views and minimize adverse shadow; (3) setbacks, to prevent overcrowding and property line encroachments; (4) protected

tree species, to preserve scenic resources; and (5) retaining walls, to prevent overbuilding of hillsides. The City of Los Angeles also regulates the placement, construction, and modification of all exterior signs and sign support structures through Los Angeles Municipal Code (LAMC) Section 14.4.1.

Additionally, the LAMC contains specific regulations with respect to light and glare. LAMC Section 12.21 A.5(k) (Amended by Ordinance No. 171,858) states that all lights used to illuminate a parking area shall be designed, located, and arranged so as to reflect the light away from any street and adjacent premises with the following exceptions:

1. Lights in compliance with Section 91.6305 of the LAMC.
  - a. **91.6305.1 Light.** All parking garages serving dwelling units or guest rooms shall be provided with an incandescent light bulb (minimum of 60 watts) or other artificial light at a maximum height of 8 feet (2,438 mm) and shall provide a minimum average surface illumination of 0.2 foot-candle at floor level. Where, in any specific case, different sections of the LAMC specify different requirements, the most restrictive shall govern.
  - b. **91.6305.2 Exterior Illumination.** All parking garages serving dwelling units or guest rooms shall be provided with an incandescent light bulb (minimum of 60 watts) or other artificial light at a maximum height of 8 feet (2,438 mm) and shall provide have a minimum average surface illumination of 0.2 foot-candle; however, exterior lighting that is brighter than 2 foot-candles and affecting adjacent residential properties shall be activated by motion sensors for a period of not to exceed twenty minutes.
2. All parking areas and garages provided for three or more dwelling units or guest rooms shall have an average surface illumination of not less than 0.2 foot-candle.

LAMC Section 93.0117 pertains to outdoor lighting affecting residential property and provides that no person shall construct, establish, create, or maintain any stationary exterior light source that may cause the following locations to either be illuminated by more than 2 foot-candles of lighting intensity or receive direct glare from the light source:

1. Any exterior glazed window or sliding glass door on any other property containing a residential unit or units.
2. Any elevated habitable porch, deck, or balcony on any other property containing a residential unit or units.
3. Any ground surface intended for uses such as recreation, barbecue, or lawn areas on any other property containing a residential unit or units.

### ***Granada Hills Specific Plan***

The proposed amendments to the Granada Hills Specific Plan include adding new geographical areas to be covered by the specific plan regulations, as well as more landscaping, setback, and design criteria for all areas. Requirements for landscaping, design, and setbacks are proposed for more areas of the Granada Hills–Knollwood Specific Plan with the purpose of improving pedestrian friendliness in more areas of the community. The requirement for Spanish Colonial architecture is proposed to be revised to include complementary architectural styles and elements. The commercial area proposed to be added within the Granada Hills Specific Plan boundaries is located generally at Balboa Boulevard and Knollwood Drive, with the purpose of improving landscaping and design with new development. The multiple-family designated areas proposed to be added to the Granada Hills Specific Plan area include the areas adjacent

the commercial district on Chatsworth Street, which include Los Alimos Street and Kingsbury Street, both extending between Zelzah Avenue and Encino Avenue. The purpose of adding these multiple-family designated locations to the Granada Hills Specific Plan area is to provide design, landscaping, and open space requirements for these housing areas which are in close proximity to Chatsworth Street, the pedestrian-oriented commercial core.

***Sylmar Community Plan Implementation Overlay District (CPIO)***

A CPIO District is proposed for portions of the Sylmar CPA. The proposed CPIO contains land use restrictions and design standards that would be applicable to selected commercial, multiple-family residential, and industrial properties. The areas proposed to be added to the CPIO are generally located near the Sylmar/San Fernando Metrolink Station and at major intersections along Foothill Boulevard, Glenoaks Boulevard, Gladstone Avenue, Hubbard Street, and Maclay Street. The intent of the CPIO is to implement the proposed Sylmar Community Plan and ensure that new development complements existing character and scale of neighborhoods, provide transitions, and encourage more walkable, pedestrian-oriented areas.

***Old Granada Hills Residential Floor Area (RFA) District***

The location of the RFA includes the area within the boundaries of San Fernando Mission Boulevard on the north, San Jose Avenue on the south, Zelzah Avenue on the west, and Amestoy Avenue on the east. The purpose of the RFA is to limit the size of single-family homes to a base floor area ratio of .30, to be compatible with existing modestly sized homes.

***Equinekeeping “K” Supplemental Use Districts in Granada Hills–Knollwood and Sylmar CPAs***

Portions of the Granada Hills–Knollwood and Sylmar CPAs are located within an Equinekeeping “K” Supplemental Use District. The intent of a “K” District is to establish reasonable and uniform limitations, safeguards and controls for the keeping and maintenance of equines within the City of Los Angeles, as shown in Table 4.1-4. Proposed amendments to the existing “K” Districts in the Granada Hills–Knollwood and Sylmar CPAs include additional conditions tailored to each District which impose minimum lot sizes, pad area space requirements within lots, equine access paths into the interior of lots from the public right-of-way, restriction of structures within equine pad areas, and development and improvement of trails adjacent to subject lots.

<b>Table 4.1-4      Relevant “K” Equinekeeping District Conditions</b>
<b>Section C. Conditions</b>
1. If the equine enclosure is less than 75 feet from the habitable rooms of neighbor’s dwelling unit, the enclosure shall not be closer to the habitable rooms of a neighbor’s dwelling unit than to the habitable rooms of a dwelling unit on the equine keeping lot.
2. In no event shall the equine enclosure be located closer than 35 feet to the habitable rooms of any dwelling unit.
3. Any lot which was formed after January 12, 1975 may be used to keep no more than one equine for each 4,000 sf of lot area.

**Table 4.1-4 Relevant “K” Equinekeeping District Conditions**

4. An animal keeping structure may be located on any portion of a parcel except the required front yard and shall not be closer than 10 feet from the required side lot lines so long as the distance requirements of this Section are complied with. This subdivision shall not, however, authorize the location of an animal keeping structure in any side or rear yard areas as defined in Section 12.21-C,5(a), 25 foot required yards, which immediately abut a lot which is not itself in a “K” Equinekeeping District.
5. In the A and R zones, a maximum of two equines not owned by the resident of the involved property may be boarded or kept on that property as an accessory use without such boarding or keeping being regarded as a commercial equinekeeping operation; provided however that the total number of equines being boarded or kept on the property does not exceed one for each 4,000 sf of lot area. Said equines shall be issued current Equine License by the City Department of Animal Services.
6. Equine uses of the land shall be allowed to continue if, after the legal establishment of the equine use, the City issued a building permit to construct a residential building on an adjacent lot within the legal required distance between an equine use and the residential building on an adjacent lot. If, in accordance with the provisions of Section 12.24X5 the Zoning Administrator grants permission for a residential building on an adjacent lot to be constructed closer than 35 feet from a legally existing equine enclosure, the equine enclosure may be considered to be nonconforming if it is relocated not closer than 35 feet from the habitable rooms attached to any residential building. The nonconforming equine use shall be subject to the following limitations:
  - a. The equine enclosure shall not be closer than 35 feet from the habitable rooms of any residential building.
  - b. The subject lot has been designated by an Equine License to stable at least one licensed equine during the 12 months prior to the issuance of the building permit for the residential building on an adjacent lot.
  - c. The equine enclosure shall not be expanded, extended, or relocated so as to reduce the nonconforming distance between the enclosure and the habitable rooms of the residential building on an adjacent lot.
  - d. The nonconforming equine use shall be discontinued if, during a successive 3-year period, no equine is licensed by the Department of Animal Services to be stabled on the subject lot.
7. If an equine use was legally established before November 22, 1982, that use shall be allowed to continue even though the City issued a building permit between November 22, 1982 and July 1, 1986, to construct a residential building on an adjacent lot within 35-foot required distance between an equine use and the habitable rooms of a residential building on the adjacent lot. This provision shall not apply to building permits authorized by the Zoning Administrator pursuant to Section 12.24X5. This nonconforming equine use shall be subject to the following limitations:
  - a. The subject lot has been designated by an Equine License to stable at least one licensed equine during the 12 months prior to the issuance of the building permit for the residential building on an adjacent lot.
  - b. The equine enclosure shall not be expanded, extended, or relocated so as to reduce the nonconforming distance between the enclosure and the habitable rooms of the residential building on an adjacent lot.
  - c. The nonconforming equine use shall be discontinued if, during a successive 3-year period, no equine is licensed by the Department of Animal Services to be stabled on the subject lot.

SOURCE: LAMC (June 2012).

### Proposed Plan Policies

Table 4.1-5 (Proposed Granada Hills–Knollwood Community Plan Policies) lists the proposed policies applicable to Aesthetics.

**Table 4.1-5 Proposed Granada Hills–Knollwood Community Plan Policies**

<i>Policy No.</i>	<i>Policy</i>
Policy LU1.5	Multiple Family Housing. Direct multiple-family housing growth to neighborhoods designated as Medium and Low Medium Residential.
Policy LU2.1	High-Quality Development. Design projects to achieve a high level of quality in accordance with citywide and community-specific design guidelines. Projects are required to incorporate applicable design guidelines to the maximum extent feasible.

<b>Table 4.1-5 Proposed Granada Hills–Knollwood Community Plan Policies</b>	
<b>Policy No.</b>	<b>Policy</b>
Policy LU2.2	Neighborhood Compatibility. Require infill development, new structures and additions to be compatible with the suburban characteristics and qualities of existing residential neighborhoods and dwelling units with regard to scale, mass, building orientation, heights, setbacks, and entrances, topography, parking arrangement, landscaping, and parkways.
Policy LU2.3	Design Standards. Support design standards to achieve transition in scale when neighborhoods planned for multiple-family residential uses abut existing single-family residential uses and/or neighborhoods planned for single-family residential uses.
Policy LU2.4	Utility Design. Integrate service elements and infrastructure such as mechanical equipment, trash enclosures and utilities into the design of projects. Locate service elements and infrastructure away from street views and screen and/or enclose equipment in order to enhance the pedestrian experience and aesthetic appeal of the building and overall neighborhood. Underground utilities where possible.
Policy LU3.1	Character. Design residential development adjacent to equinekeeping lots to contribute to the equestrian lifestyle of the area by incorporating defining characteristics such as ranch-style and western architecture and open spaces.
Policy LU3.2	Historic Resources and Significant Features. Preserve existing historic resources, significant vegetation, trees, and other natural features which contribute to the overall character of the area. Encourage the rehabilitation and rebuilding of deteriorated housing as a means of preserving Granada Hills–Knollwood” character.
Policy LU3.3	Trails System and Connections. Reinforce the viability of equine uses and accessibility to open space and recreation opportunities by requiring new developments, parcel maps, subdivision tracts, small lot subdivisions, and infrastructure improvement projects that abut or connect with a trail to develop and/or improve the Trails System.
Policy LU4.1	Safe Hillside Development. Limit the intensity and density in hillside areas to that which can be reasonably accommodated by infrastructure and natural topography. Notwithstanding any land use designation maps to the contrary, all projects with average natural slopes in excess of 15 percent, including Tract Maps and Parcel Maps, shall be limited to the minimum density housing category for the purposes of enforcing the slope density formula of LAMC Section 17.05C and 17.50E.
Policy LU4.3	Topography Preservation. Use the natural topography as the primary criteria to determine the placement and/or alignment of houses, roads, drainage facilities, equestrian facilities, and other necessary structures. Design developments to be integrated with and visually subordinate to natural features and terrain. Condition new development in the hills to protect views from public roadways and parklands to the maximum extent feasible.
Policy LU4.4	Slope Preservation and Grading. Cluster houses on those portions of undeveloped hillside areas that have less than a 15 percent slope in order to retain the steeper slopes in their natural state or in a natural park-like setting, minimize the amount of grading and the alteration of the natural topography, and provide more open space opportunities for recreation and equestrian use. The density pattern indicated in the Plan may be adjusted to facilitate development on the more level portions of the terrain provided that the total number of dwelling units indicated in any development is not increased over that allowed by the Plan based on the net area of development.
Policy LU4.5	Mountain Viewshed Protection. Design development near ridgelines so as to avoid breaking the mountain silhouette of a significant ridgeline. Discourage building and grading on ridgelines to protect ridges and environmentally sensitive areas, and to prevent erosion associated with development and visual interruption of the ridge profile.
Policy LU4.7	Landscaping. Incorporate landscaping that supports slope stability and provides fire protection.
Policy LU5.3	Landscaping. Retain existing vegetation and trees and use native and drought-tolerant landscape and drip irrigation when developing the site in order to conserve water.
Policy LU6.1	Neighborhood Preservation. Preserve single-family zoned residential neighborhoods, while maintaining the existing character and scale.
Policy LU6.2	Housing Density. Maintain the existing density of single-family residential neighborhoods by directing more intensive residential development to areas identified in this Plan that have the capacity to accommodate such growth, specifically to neighborhoods designated as Medium and Low Medium I and II Residential.
Policy LU6.3	Character and Design. Require infill development and additions to buildings to be situated and designed to maintain the characteristics and qualities of the existing single-family neighborhoods and dwellings in regard to scale, mass, form, building heights and setbacks, topography, landscaping, parking arrangement, and parkways.

**Table 4.1-5 Proposed Granada Hills–Knollwood Community Plan Policies**

<i>Policy No.</i>	<i>Policy</i>
Policy LU6.4	Flag Lots. Discourage flag lots as part of any subdivision tract, parcel map, or small lot subdivision. Allow flag lots only when property development is not otherwise practical due to adjacent topography and/or when street access cannot reasonably serve the lot and all other alternatives have been exhausted, and with application of design guidelines.
Policy LU6.5	Historic Character. Preserve the historic character of neighborhoods such as Old Granada Hills, Balboa Highlands, and other areas with historic character for education and enjoyment by existing residents and future generations.
Policy LU7.1	Lot Consistency. Transition new development with regards to lot size and width so that new lots are compatible with existing adjacent lots and surrounding neighbors. Lots may be increased in size so as to more closely conform to the size of existing contiguous lots or nearby parcels.
Policy LU7.2	Streetscape Patterns. Consider existing road widths and streetscape patterns to avoid unnecessary non-contiguous improvements of sidewalks, curbs, and streets.
Policy LU7.3	Fences and Gates. Restrict gated or walled communities that isolate the project from the neighborhood and surrounding community.
Policy LU7.4	Minimum Lot Size. For all lots south of Sesnon Boulevard and west of Shoshone Avenue and Highwater Road, maintain a Minimum designation with minimum lot size of 1 acre (43,560 sf.)
Policy LU8.1	Preservation of Equine Keeping Areas. Discourage discretionary actions including zone changes, zone variances, conditional use permits, or divisions of land that do not preserve equine-keeping and agricultural uses in the northwest portion of Granada Hills, bounded by Rinaldi to the south, Balboa to the east, Los Angeles County border to the north, and Aliso Canyon to the west.
Policy LU8.2	Agricultural Lot and Open Space Preservation. Maintain a minimum lot size of 2 acres (87,120 sf) in all designated minimum residential areas, especially adjacent to the Open Space areas north of Sesnon.
Policy LU9.2	Transition Neighborhoods. Provide additional setbacks and density fading on all higher density development, including all residential and non-residential development, adjacent to equinekeeping lots regardless of location within an Equine-keeping “K” Supplemental Use District.
Policy LU10.1	Corridor Development. Improve existing and support the development of new multiple-family housing in existing multiple-family residential areas along Balboa Boulevard south of Rinaldi Street, Chatsworth Street and adjacent streets, Devonshire Street, and Woodley Avenue, near transit and amenities.
Policy LU10.2	Neighborhood Transitions. Ensure that new development located in or adjacent to single-family neighborhoods maintains the visual and physical character of single-family housing. Develop small lot subdivisions on multiple-family lots adjacent to single-family lots to serve as transitional density and aesthetic buffers.
Policy LU11.1	Character and Design. Create well-designed multiple-family dwelling units and buildings that reflect a high level of architectural and landscape quality, both within interior courtyards and in exterior areas, to enhance the public realm and provide appropriate transitions and compatibility when adjacent to single-family neighborhoods.
Policy LU11.2	Transition. Require appropriate transitions in scale where new multiple-family developments abut single-family zones.
Policy LU11.3	Compatibility with Single-Family Design. Design buildings so that the fronts of dwellings face the public right-of-way to give the appearance of single-family neighborhood character, and to enhance the pedestrian experience.
Policy LU13.1	Architectural Style and Building Variation. Encourage building facades that are articulated with setbacks, offsets, and projections, using architectural materials and elements that establish an aesthetically pleasing pattern, with a variety of heights and shapes to create visual interest, while contributing to the Spanish Colonial architectural style and maintaining a generally consistent street front.
Policy LU13.2	Parking. Design parking lots and structures to be safe and comfortable for pedestrians and complementary to adjacent residential uses, by utilizing decorative wall and landscaped setbacks and shielding driveway and walkway lighting.
Policy LU13.3	Signage. Integrate commercial signs into the design of buildings as a means of enhancing the streetscape appearance.
Policy LU13.4	Mitigate with Design. Attractively landscape and design stand-alone drive-thru fast food establishments and auto-related uses to preserve the character of the commercial areas.
Policy LU14.1	Height Limits. Design new commercial structures to be compatible in height with surrounding residential neighborhoods.

<b>Table 4.1-5 Proposed Granada Hills–Knollwood Community Plan Policies</b>	
<i>Policy No.</i>	<i>Policy</i>
Policy LU14.2	Design and Screening. Set commercial buildings back from property lines, and utilize landscape buffers and decorative walls to minimize visual and operational impacts of commercial development on the surrounding residential neighborhoods.
Policy LU15.1	Visual Clutter. Underground the utility lines in order to remove the visual clutter from the streetscape.
Policy LU15.2	Landscape Design. Require new projects and encourage existing developments to install street trees and landscaping to create a more inviting commercial area that provides shade canopy, reduces ambient temperature, and softens the physical environment.
Policy LU16.3	Landscaping. Retain existing vegetation and trees and use native and drought-tolerant landscape and drip irrigation when developing the site in order to conserve water.
Policy LU16.4	Canopy Trees. In addition to street trees, provide canopy trees in planting areas for shade and energy efficiency, especially on south and southwest facing facades and in parking areas and walkways.
Policy LU18.2	Pedestrian-Friendly Buildings. Design new commercial and mixed use buildings and additions so that they enhance the public realm through well designed frontages that provide pedestrian-scaled features such as awnings, plazas, and courtyards and direct access from public sidewalks.
Policy LU19.1	Maintain Small-town Character. Retain the small-town character of Chatsworth Street by limiting building heights, maintaining the existing building line pattern, and providing entrances from the sidewalk.
Policy LU19.2	Streetscape Enhancement. Enhance the streetscape through the planting of additional street trees and creating bulb-outs and enhanced crosswalks.
Policy LU19.4	Enhanced Gateway. Maintain a prominent gateway to the Chatsworth Street Neighborhood District to support a strong street identity.
Policy LU20.1	Building Design. Design commercial developments tailored for a variety of business sizes and scales within a development.
Policy LU20.6	Pedestrian-Friendly Building Access. Design new buildings and additions that enhance the public realm through appropriate architectural frontages that provide direct access into commercial buildings from public sidewalks.
Policy LU20.7	Landscaped Setbacks. Maintain landscaped setbacks for aesthetic quality.
Policy LU21.1	High-Quality Development. Design projects to achieve a high level of quality, distinctive character, compatibility with existing uses, and in accordance with Citywide Design Guidelines.
Policy LU23.1	Historic Preservation. Preserve the character of single-family areas identified in Granada Hills as having historic or cultural value, such as Old Granada Hills and Balboa Highlands, through Historic Preservation Overlay Zones (HPOZs), where eligible.
Policy LU23.5	Historic Integration. Encourage the design of new buildings that respect and complement the character of adjacent historic resources.
Policy M2.1	Streetscapes. Encourage and support streetscape improvements in neighborhood areas that foster the appeal of the street as a gathering place including street furniture, well-maintained street trees, publicly accessible courtyards and plazas, wide sidewalks with landscaping, bicycle access, and appropriate traffic control measures to reduce travel speeds. Consider a Streetscape Plan for the downtown core along Chatsworth Street.
Policy M6.8	Character and Design. Develop trails and amenities according to the guidelines in Design Guidelines for Trails.
Policy M7.1	Scenic Highways. Continue to preserve existing scenic highways and byways and support programs to encourage the identification of additional scenic highways and/or byways within the community.
Policy M7.2	Viewshed Protection. Require development adjacent to a Scenic Highway to protect public views of scenic vistas to the maximum extent feasible; be adequately landscaped to soften the visual impact of the development; and, where appropriate, provide a turnout, vista points and other complementary facilities.

Table 4.1-6 (Proposed Sylmar Community Plan Policies) lists the proposed policies applicable to Aesthetics.

<b>Table 4.1-6 Proposed Sylmar Community Plan Policies</b>	
<i>Policy No.</i>	<i>Policy</i>
Policy LU1.6	Multiple Housing. Direct multi-family housing growth to neighborhoods designated as Low Medium and Medium Residential.
Policy LU2.1	High-Quality Development. Design projects to achieve a high level of quality in accordance with the Sylmar Community Plan Design Guidelines for Residential Areas, Residential Citywide Design Guidelines, and other applicable design guidelines. Projects are required to incorporate to the maximum extent feasible applicable design guidelines.
Policy LU2.2	Neighborhood Compatibility. Require infill development, new structures and additions to be compatible with the suburban characteristics and qualities of existing residential neighborhoods and dwelling units with regards to scale, mass, building orientation, heights, setbacks, and entrances, topography, parking arrangement, landscaping, and parkways.
Policy LU2.3	Design Standards. Support design standards to achieve transition in scale when neighborhoods planned for multifamily residential uses abut existing single family residential uses and/or neighborhoods planned for single family residential uses.
Policy LU2.4	Utility Design. Integrate service elements and infrastructure such as mechanical equipment, trash enclosures and utilities with the design of projects. Locate service elements and infrastructure away from street views and screen and/or enclose equipment in order to enhance the pedestrian experience and aesthetic appeal of the building and overall neighborhood. Underground utilities where possible.
Policy LU3.1	Historic Resources and Significant Features. Preserve existing historic resources, significant vegetation, trees, and other natural features which contribute to the overall charm and rural character of the area. Encourage the rehabilitation and rebuilding of deteriorated housing as a means of preserving Sylmar's character.
Policy LU3.2	Character. Design residential development, especially development adjacent to equine-keeping lots, to contribute to the equestrian and rural lifestyle of the area by incorporating defining characteristics such as ranch-style and western architecture and landscaped open spaces.
Policy LU3.3	Trail System and Connections. Reinforce the viability of equine uses and accessibility to open space and recreational opportunities by requiring new developments, subdivision tracts, parcel maps, small lot subdivisions, and infrastructure improvement projects that abut or connect with a trail to develop and/or improve the Trail System. A formal dedication for a public easement for trail purposes shall be required.
Policy LU4.1	Preservation of Equine-keeping Areas. Strongly discourage discretionary actions, including zone changes, zone variances, conditional use, or divisions of land, that do not preserve equinekeeping and agricultural uses within Sylmar's equine-keeping districts and neighborhoods.
Policy LU4.2	Equine-Keeping Lot and Use Preservation. Maintain a minimum lot size of 17,500 square-feet in designated residential areas that are within an Equine-keeping "K" Supplemental Use District.
Policy LU4.3	Agricultural Lot and Open Space Preservation. Maintain a minimum of 1 acre in all designated Minimum residential areas, especially adjacent to the foothills, the Pacoima Wash, and other open space areas and natural resources.
Policy LU5.2	Transitions. Provide additional setbacks and density fading on all higher density development, including all residential and non-residential development, adjacent to equine keeping lots regardless of location within an Equine-keeping "K" Supplemental Use District.
Policy LU5.3	Additional Structures. Second dwelling units are permitted only as permitted by LAMC and if they do not adversely affect any equine keeping uses on the subject lot or adjacent lots, or the ability to maintain equine keeping uses on the subject lot or any adjacent lot. Restrict permanent structures, including swimming pools and tennis courts, from being constructed or located within any portion of the required equine pad and stable areas. Additional Structures. Second dwelling units are permitted only as permitted by LAMC and if they do not adversely affect any equine keeping uses on the subject lot or adjacent lots, or the ability to maintain equine keeping uses on the subject lot or any adjacent lot. Restrict permanent structures, including swimming pools and tennis courts, from being constructed or located within any portion of the required equine pad and stable areas.



<b>Table 4.1-6 Proposed Sylmar Community Plan Policies</b>	
<i>Policy No.</i>	<i>Policy</i>
Policy LU6.1	Hillside Density. Limit the intensity and density in hillside areas to that which can be reasonably accommodated by infrastructure and natural topography. Notwithstanding any land use designation maps to the contrary, all projects with average natural slopes in excess of 15 percent, including Tract Maps and Parcel Maps, shall be limited to the minimum density housing category for the purposes of enforcing the slope density formula of LAMC Section 17.05C and 17.50E.
Policy LU6.3	Slope Preservation and Grading. Cluster homes on those portions of undeveloped hillside areas that have less than a 15 percent slope in order to retain the steeper slopes in their natural state or in a natural park-like setting, minimize the amount of grading and the alteration of the natural topography, and provide more open space opportunities for recreation and equestrian use. The density pattern indicated in the Community Plan may be adjusted to facilitate development on the more level portions of the terrain provided that the total number of dwelling units indicated in any development is not increased over that allowed by the Community Plan based on the net area of development.
Policy LU6.4	Topography Preservation. Use the natural topography as the primary criteria to determine the placement and/or alignment of houses, roads, drainage facilities, equestrian facilities, and other necessary structures. Design developments to be integrated with and visually subordinate to natural features and terrain. Condition new development in the hills to protect public views from public roadways and parklands to the maximum extent feasible.
Policy LU6.5	Mountain Viewshed Protection. Design development near ridgelines so that it does not break the mountain silhouette of a significant ridgeline. Discourage building and grading on ridgelines to protect ridges and environmentally sensitive areas, and to prevent erosion associated with development and visual interruption of the ridge profile.
Policy LU6.6	Development Limitations. Support hillside mansionization regulations to protect single-family neighborhoods from out-of-scale development throughout Sylmar. Enforce the City's Baseline Hillside Mansionization Ordinance.
Policy LU6.8	Landscaping. Incorporate landscaping that supports slope stability and provides fire protection.
Policy LU7.3	Landscaping. Retain existing vegetation and trees and use native and drought-tolerant landscape and drip irrigation when developing the site in order to conserve water.
Policy LU7.4	Canopy Trees. Provide canopy trees in planting areas for shade and energy efficiency, especially on south and southwest facing facades.
Policy LU8.1	Neighborhood Preservation. Preserve single-family zoned residential neighborhoods, while maintaining the existing character and scale.
Policy LU8.2	Housing Density. Maintain the existing density of single-family residential neighborhoods by directing intensive residential development to areas identified in this Community Plan that have the capacity to accommodate such growth, to neighborhoods designated as Low Medium and Medium Residential.
Policy LU8.3	Flag Lots. Discourage flag lots as part of any subdivision tract, parcel map, or small lot subdivision. Allow flag lots only when property development is not otherwise practical due to adjacent topography and/or when street access cannot reasonably serve the lot and all other alternatives have been exhausted, and with application of design guidelines.
Policy LU9.1	Lot Size and Width. Transition new development with regards to lot size and width so that new lots are compatible with existing adjacent lots and surrounding neighbors. Lots may be increased in size so as to more closely conform to the size of existing contiguous lots or nearby parcels.
Policy LU9.2	Setbacks. Where there is an existing average prevailing setback, apply the setback to provide continuity along the street edge. Apply additional setbacks in side and rear yards abutting equine-keeping lots.
Policy LU9.4	Building Orientation. Maintain the suburban character of the neighborhood by configuring buildings to front public streets, not driveways. Design corner buildings to be prominent by building to both the front and side property lines facing a street.
Policy LU9.5	Garage Location and Driveways. Consider prevailing garage location and driveway patterns by incorporating such patterns into the design scheme. Innovative designs are encouraged that minimize the visual impact of garages facing the street.
Policy LU9.6	Streetscape. Continue to provide open and inviting landscaped yard setbacks and parkways by restricting gated or walled communities that isolate the project from the neighborhood and surrounding community.

**Table 4.1-6 Proposed Sylmar Community Plan Policies**

<i>Policy No.</i>	<i>Policy</i>
Policy LU11.1	Character and Design. Create well-designed multiple-family dwelling units and buildings that reflect a high level of architectural and landscape quality, both within interior courtyards and in exterior areas, to enhance the public realm.
Policy LU11.4	Density Transitions. Develop small lot subdivisions on multi-family lots adjacent to single-family homes to serve as a transitional density and aesthetic buffer.
Policy LU11.5	Building Separations. When designing small lot subdivisions or projects built over to or more lots, provide sufficient space between buildings, articulation along the street frontage, and visual breaks to diminish the scale and massing. Locate required open space next to lower intensity uses in order to increase building separations and intensify landscaping between the development and adjacent uses.
Policy LU11.6	Transitions. Where multi-family projects are adjacent to single-family zones, provide a sensitive transition by maintaining a height compatible with adjacent buildings. Require appropriate transitions in scale where new multiple-family developments abut single-family neighborhoods.
Policy LU11.7	Parking and Driveways. Minimize the appearance of driveways and parking areas, maintain continuity of the sidewalk, and mitigate the impact of parking visible to the street. Parking and driveways should be located toward the rear or side of buildings and away from the public right-of-way. On corner lots, parking should be oriented as far away from the corner as possible.
Policy LU13.1	Neighborhood Compatibility. Ensure that new development adjacent to residential neighborhoods is designed in a manner that is sensitive to existing and adjacent buildings so that it blends in with the neighborhood context.
Policy LU13.2	Height Limits. Design new commercial structures to be compatible in height with surrounding residential neighborhoods.
Policy LU13.3	Transitions. Provide transitional setbacks and upper floor setbacks for new projects adjacent to residential uses in order to maintain access to light and air and minimize operational impacts.
Policy LU13.4	Parking Structures Adjacent to Residential Uses. Utilize a decorative wall and landscaped setbacks to buffer residential uses from parking areas and structures. Shield and direct on-site lighting onto driveways and walkways and away from adjacent residential uses.
Policy LU13.5	Rural Character. Reinforce the area's distinctive semi-rural character by incorporating rural features and equestrian-oriented elements, such as ranch-style architecture, hitching posts, and horse parking areas, in remodels and new development, especially commercial areas within or near an Equine-Keeping "K" Supplemental Use District and/or adjacent to a trail.
Policy LU14.1	High-Quality Development. Design projects to achieve a high level of quality and developed in accordance to the Commercial Citywide Design Guidelines and other applicable design guidelines. Projects are required to incorporate to the maximum extent feasible applicable design guidelines.
Policy LU14.2	Building Orientation. Improve neighborhood character and the pedestrian environment of commercial areas by siting buildings so they interact with the sidewalk and the street, contribute to a sense of human scale, and support ease of accessibility to buildings.
Policy LU14.5	On-site Landscaping. Provide landscaped areas with shade trees on-site that complement the character of the built environment, add beauty and visual interest, increase pedestrian comfort, and extend the sense of the public-right-of-way onto the site.
Policy LU14.6	Streetscape. Design developments to create inviting districts with landscaped sidewalks lined with shade trees, street furniture, and other pedestrian amenities (or streetscape features), open with visual and physical permeability, and pedestrian-oriented connections, where local residents will be attracted and encouraged to walk to nearby commercial establishments.
Policy LU14.8	Parking Lots and Structures. Treat parking lots and structures with wall textures, colors, and dimensional modules that are coordinated with the architecture of the main building.
Policy LU14.11	Utilities. Integrate service elements and infrastructure such as mechanical equipment, trash enclosures and utilities with the design of projects. Locate service elements and infrastructure away from crosswalks or sidewalks and screen and/or enclose equipment in order to enhance the pedestrian experience and aesthetic appeal of the building and overall neighborhood. Underground utilities whenever possible.

<b>Table 4.1-6 Proposed Sylmar Community Plan Policies</b>	
<i>Policy No.</i>	<i>Policy</i>
Policy LU14.12	Loading and Service Entrances. Locate loading and service entrances to the side or rear of the building, away from public view of the streets, and incorporate these facilities into the overall design of the building to minimize the visual impact.
Policy LU14.13	Signage. Encourage the removal of existing pole, pylon, and roof-top signs and replace them with more appropriate pedestrian-friendly signage such as monument signs, when renovating and developing commercial sites. Restrict new pole and pylon signs, billboards, and digital or electronic signage in all commercial areas, except designated Commercial Centers.
Policy LU15.1	Corridor Development. Design new infill development to be compatible with the traditional small-scale, pedestrian-oriented, commercial corridor development pattern that exists along both sides of Foothill Boulevard, by locating building frontages at the front property line and placing on-site parking to the side or rear of buildings so that parking does not dominate the streetscape.
Policy LU15.2	Historic Resources and Significant Features. Preserve historic structures and older buildings that add to the character of the existing traditional low-scale commercial corridor development along Foothill Boulevard.
Policy LU15.6	Foothill Streetscape. Enhance the appearance of Foothill Boulevard from Hubbard Street to Astoria Street by providing landscaped parkways that are lined with a variety of palm trees and deciduous trees.
Policy LU15.8	Utilities. Underground utilities or locate utilities at the rear of the site so as to maintain and enhance the streetscape on both sides of the street.
Policy LU17.3	Small-Scale Development. Design projects to be compatible in scale and character with surrounding neighborhoods so that they do not interrupt the community fabric or street grid. Limit buildings to two stories in height in designated neighborhood commercial districts.
Policy LU17.4	Streetscape. Locate building frontages at the front property line to create a strong street wall and place on-site parking to the side or rear of buildings so that parking does not dominate the streetscape. Design building facades, including storefronts, to be oriented to the street, limit fences facing a street to 42 inches in height, and provide direct pedestrian access into buildings from sidewalks so that they enhance the public realm and actively engage pedestrians.
Policy LU18.6	Pole and Pylon Signs. Limit height of pole and pylon signs to generally 42 feet in all Commercial Centers.
Policy LU20.3	Pedestrian-Oriented Architecture. Incorporate architectural features that encourage walking, such as storefront windows, awnings, and arcades and include architectural features that divide large buildings into smaller, human-scaled components.
Policy LU20.4	Architectural Design. Utilize architecture to create a sense of place and build upon Sylmar's agricultural history. Projects near the Metrolink Station are encouraged to utilize elements of Spanish-style architecture.
Policy LU20.5	Streetscape. Support efforts to continue to improve the appearance and safety along San Fernando Road and Maclay Street through distinctive streetscapes and unified landscape treatments that prioritize pedestrians. The revitalized streets should include large deciduous shade trees punctuated by palm trees and unique street lights to help distinguish these areas. Support the development of Streetscape Plans along San Fernando Road and Maclay Street.
Policy LU22.1	High-Quality Development. Design projects to achieve a high level of quality, and developed in accordance to the Industrial Citywide Design Guidelines and other applicable design guidelines. Projects are required to incorporate to the maximum extent feasible applicable design guidelines.
Policy LU22.2	Neighborhood Compatibility. Require design techniques, such as appropriate building orientation and scale, landscaping, buffering, noise insulation and increased setbacks, in the development of new industrial properties adjacent to non-industrial uses to improve land use compatibility and to enhance the physical environment.
Policy LU22.3	Transitional Uses. Require transitions for industrial uses, including scale, massing, and setbacks, in those areas in close proximity to residential neighborhoods.
Policy LU22.4	Landscaped Buffers. Incorporate landscaped buffers between the buildings and abutting residential properties. Methods to buffer projects should include a combination of increased setbacks, landscaping, berms and/or screening, and fencing.

<b>Table 4.1-6 Proposed Sylmar Community Plan Policies</b>	
<i>Policy No.</i>	<i>Policy</i>
Policy LU22.5	Street Beautification. Encourage streetscape improvements such as street trees, sidewalks, landscaping, lighting, and undergrounding of utilities. Projects within the two industrial parks, Telfair Avenue and Balboa Boulevard, should maintain the existing landscaped pattern.
Policy LU22.7	Integration of Utilities. Integrate service elements and infrastructure such as mechanical equipment, trash enclosures and utilities with the design of projects. Locate service elements and infrastructure away from crosswalks or sidewalks and screen and/ or enclose equipment in order to enhance the pedestrian experience and aesthetic appeal of the building and overall neighborhood. Underground utilities whenever possible.
Policy LU23.3	Eco-Friendly Design. Design new buildings to express the climate of Sylmar through their orientation, massing, and construction. Consider utilizing passive solar design strategies, such as overhangs and shade trees, orienting building volumes, windows, and second-stories to maximize solar access, constructing well-insulated wall systems, and providing useable covered outdoor areas to generate more comfortable and energy-efficient buildings.
Policy LU23.4	Landscaping. Include sustainable landscape strategies such as using deciduous trees to shade buildings in the summer and allow filtered light to penetrate during the winter, planting native and drought-tolerant shrubs, hedges, and vines to reduce water usage, utilizing permeable surfaces on walkways and outdoor spaces and vegetated swales to cleanse and infiltrate water directly onto the ground, and installing drip irrigation systems to conserve water.
Policy LU24.1	Historic Preservation. Protect, preserve, and enhance identified cultural and historical resources.
Policy M2.1	Streetscapes. Encourage and support streetscape improvements in neighborhood areas that foster the appeal of the street as a gathering place including street furniture, well-maintained street trees and landscaping, publicly accessible courtyards, wide sidewalks, bicycle access and appropriate traffic control measures to reduce travel speeds.
Policy M2.2	Streetscape Plans. Support the development of Streetscape Plans for the following streets: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>■ San Fernando Road between Polk Street and Hubbard Street</li> <li>■ Maclay Avenue between City Boundary and Foothill Boulevard</li> <li>■ Foothill Boulevard between Astoria Street and Hubbard Street</li> <li>■ Polk Street between De Garmo Avenue and Dronfield Avenue</li> </ul>
Policy M6.9	Character and Design. Develop trails and amenities according to the guidelines in the Design Guidelines for Trails.
Policy M7.1	Scenic Highways. Continue to preserve existing scenic highways and byways and support programs to encourage the identification of additional scenic highways and/or byways within the community.
Policy M7.2	Development. Require development, including signs, adjacent to a Scenic Highway to protect public views of scenic vistas to the maximum extent feasible; be adequately landscaped to soften the visual impact of the development, restrict height, and establish design controls in order to maintain the integrity of scenic highways within Sylmar. Refer to Chapter 3, Land Use and Urban Design, and Chapter 5, Community Facilities, Infrastructure, and Open Space for additional policies and design guidelines.
Policy M9.4	Street Enhancements for Buses. Support street improvements, particularly along Hubbard Street, which are needed to facilitate the movement of buses, such as jog eliminations, street widening, bus bays or turnouts, street signage, striping, and colored pavement.

### Consistency Analysis

The proposed plans would allocate land for the range of uses that the Granada Hills–Knollwood and Sylmar CPAs will need through 2030, including land for housing, jobs, and recreation, as well as improve the link between land use and transportation in a manner that is consistent with the City of Los Angeles Framework citywide growth strategy.

The proposed plans contain goals, policies, programs, and urban design guidelines that would promote and enhance the livability of all neighborhoods by: upgrading the quality of development and improving

neighborhood transitions and streetscapes; improving overall aesthetics; providing employment opportunities; restricting incompatible uses; increasing housing opportunities; and encouraging a pedestrian environment, in addition to achieving zone consistency. The proposed plans would be consistent with the policies set forth in the Urban Form and Neighborhood Design section of the City's Framework document and the City's Conservation Element of the General Plan, as well as the Citywide Design Guidelines. Similarly, the proposed amendments to the Granada Hills Specific Plan and existing Equinekeeping Supplemental Use Districts in both CPAs, as well as the proposed Old Granada Residential Floor Area (FAR) and Sylmar Community Plan Implementation Overlay (CPIO) districts would be consistent with the policies in the proposed plans pertaining to preservation of views and visual quality. Therefore, the proposed plans, including implementing ordinances, would be consistent with applicable guidelines and regulations.

### 4.1.3 Project Impacts and Mitigation

#### ■ Analytic Method

The following analysis takes into account two attributes of aesthetic values with respect to environmental impacts: (1) viewshed and (2) aesthetics or visual character. The former refers primarily to views of the CPAs from varying vantage points, as well as views from or adjacent to the CPAs of such visual features as open spaces, mountain ranges, etc. The latter pertains to aspects of the visual character of existing development and of the CPAs, such as architecture, color, design, décor, mass, and height.

Regarding viewshed, "significant impacts" for the purposes of the CEQA analysis typically consist of loss or obstruction of a valued public view (e.g., scenic vista or views of the horizon or iconic structure). These impacts also include changes in the character of the viewshed that detract from a valued public view, such as the elimination or obstruction of natural and/or manmade features that were formerly part of a valued public viewshed.

The inherent subjectivity of issues and values of visual character creates a challenge in arriving at a conclusive determination of what constitutes a "significant impact" for the purposes of CEQA. Impacts regarding visual character typically include changes to the style or ambiance of a community, the insertion of a prominent feature that changes the original visual character of an area, or the elimination of a significant natural feature (or open space).

The Los Angeles CEQA Thresholds Guide (2006) sets forth guidance for the determination of significance of aesthetic impacts. This guidance is based on CEQA Guidelines Appendix G and provides specific criteria to be considered when making a significance determination. In some cases, the Thresholds Guide includes quantitative thresholds. For purposes of this analysis, Thresholds Guide criteria are used, supplemented by the thresholds identified in Appendix G, where appropriate. The City's Thresholds Guide includes significance thresholds that are appropriate for analyzing impacts at a project level, where more detail is available than would otherwise be for a Community Plan. The Appendix G criteria are more appropriate for a plan level evaluation. Therefore, the analysis incorporated the appropriate City Thresholds, including an evaluation of view obstruction and the importance of natural view forms within the CPA.

The City's CEQA Thresholds Guide includes several significance thresholds related to aesthetics that would be primarily relevant at the project level, and applied on a case-by-case basis. These include:

- The amount or relative proportion of existing features or elements that substantially contribute to the valued visual character or image of a neighborhood, community, or localized area, which would be removed, altered, or demolished
- The amount of natural open space to be graded or developed
- The degree to which proposed structures in natural open space areas would be effectively integrated into the aesthetics of the site, through appropriate design, etc.
- The degree to which the project would contribute to the area's aesthetic value

## ■ Thresholds of Significance

Implementation of the proposed plans may have a significant adverse impact on aesthetics if it would:

- Have a substantial adverse effect on a scenic vista
- Substantially damage scenic resources, including, but not limited to, trees, rock outcroppings, and historic buildings within a state scenic highway
- Substantially degrade the existing visual character or quality of the site and its surroundings
- Create a new source of substantial light or glare that would adversely affect day or nighttime views in the area
- Shade shadow-sensitive uses for more than three hours between the hours of 9:00 AM and 3:00 PM Pacific Standard Time (between late October and early April), or for more than four hours between the hours of 9:00 AM and 5:00 PM Pacific Daylight Time (between early April and late October)

## ■ Effects Not Found to Be Significant

There were no effects identified that would not have any impact with respect to aesthetics.

## ■ Significant and Unavoidable

**Impact 4.1-1**      **Implementation of the proposed plans could have a substantial adverse effect on a scenic vista. Implementation of feasible mitigation measures would reduce this impact, but not to less than significant. Therefore, this impact is *significant and unavoidable*.**

### ***Granada Hills–Knollwood***

The major scenic features in the vicinity of the Granada Hills–Knollwood CPA are the Santa Susana Mountains to the north and northwest, the San Gabriel Mountains to the northeast, and the San Fernando Valley, the Hollywood Hills and Santa Monica Mountains to the south. These features are best viewed from along public roads, parks, and trails and paths in the open space areas at higher elevations in the northern portion of the CPA and are visible in the flatter, southern portion of the CPA, from roadways. In the northern portion of the CPA public views of distant features are enabled by the hilly terrain, which permits the viewer to look out over intervening landforms, homes, and landscaping. The

area's low-density housing and abundance of open space also work together with the hilly terrain to minimize view obstructions.

In general, the land use changes under the proposed plan would most likely not disrupt views of the Santa Susana and San Gabriel Mountains and other large-scale geographic features. Although, the land use changes would not substantially modify the character of the CPA, particularly residential and open space areas, there is some level of by-right development and the exact nature of development is unknown which could slightly impact scenic vistas. Hillside areas in the northern portion of the CPA that are more prominent visually from the southern portion of the CPA are located mostly in areas designated as Open Space, Public Facilities, Low Density Residential and although the proposed plan would not substantially change those areas, these areas could be developed with new structures.

The majority of the land use changes in the proposed plan consist of General Plan Amendments to create consistency with General Plan Framework Land Use designations, create consistency between existing land uses on parcels or with existing surrounding land uses, and correct minor errors. The proposed plan would create new housing and commercial opportunities, mostly south of Rinaldi Street, away from major scenic resources. Compared to existing conditions, implementation of the proposed plan would accommodate a forecasted increase of up to 4,114 dwelling units, 6,597 residents, and 5,019 jobs. The specific proposed land use and zoning changes are listed in detail in Chapter 3 (Project Description) and on Figure 3-6 (Granada Hills–Knollwood Community Plan Recommendations by Sub-area).

Land use and zoning changes under the proposed plan would not necessarily increase heights of buildings, structurally change land use patterns, or result in increased development of hillsides within the CPA to the extent that would lead to substantial adverse effects on scenic vistas, recognized/valued views, and/or result in view obstruction. The proposed plan would preserve existing character of single-family, equestrian, and low density neighborhoods by maintaining low density land use designations, particularly near the foothills and open space areas. Overall the proposed plan seeks to direct growth away from existing residential and equinekeeping neighborhoods, the hillsides, and towards corridors near commercial centers. However, areas could be developed with new structures under the proposed plan and implementing ordinances and the exact level of development is unknown.

Since proposed plan policies focuses on conserving hillsides and open space areas (Policies LU4.3 and LU4.4), limit grading and hillside development (Policy LU4.1), and direct growth away from existing residential neighborhoods toward areas with transit and services and commercial corridors (Policy LU6.2), potential adverse impacts on scenic vistas and views from build-out of the proposed plan would be limited. For example, on certain project sites, future new land uses may result in taller structures than currently exist. However, the overall scale of future structures within the CPA would be limited by zoning regulations and/or the Granada Hills Specific Plan. Furthermore, existing LAMC requirements and development standards, together with applicable goals and policies of the Conservation Element help to protect scenic vistas throughout the CPA. Compliance with these requirements, development standards, and goals and policies would reduce potential impacts to scenic vistas.

Existing Framework and Conservation Element policies would also help minimize potential impacts to scenic vistas. The Conservation Element includes an objective, policy, and program related to Land

Form and Scenic Vistas to protect and reinforce natural and scenic vistas through permit processing, enforcement, and environmental review of project designs to ensure that natural features and views are retained. Framework Policies 5.2.2, 5.5.6, 5.5.7, and 5.7.1 would help protect scenic vistas by encouraging the development of low-rise buildings, encouraging the use of step backs in heights for higher floors of buildings, promoting the undergrounding of utilities, and establishing standards for transitions in heights of buildings. Additionally, existing Granada Hills Specific Plan establishes design standards and limitations on building heights which help to protect and reinforce natural and scenic vistas.

While citywide design guidelines, general plan policies, and city regulations would help reduce potential impacts to scenic vistas, adoption and implementation of the proposed Granada Hills–Knollwood Community Plan and implementing ordinances could still have a substantial adverse effect on scenic vistas, recognized/valued views and/or result in view obstruction available from a length of a public roadway, bike path, or trail. Mitigation measure MM4.1-1 would further help to reduce this potential impact, as would regulations in the City’s Building and Zoning Code that govern setbacks, height, density, massing, and other development characteristics. However, while plan policies and guidelines, existing rules and regulations, such as Specific Plans, and the implementation of feasible mitigation measures would reduce this impact, in many cases to less than significant, a level of uncertainty remains with the introduction of additional urban development and, therefore, this impact would be considered *significant and unavoidable*.

## Sylmar

The major scenic features in the vicinity of the Sylmar CPA are the Santa Susana Mountains to the northwest and west, the San Gabriel Mountains to the north and northeast, and the San Fernando Valley and Santa Monica Mountains to the south. Other than the CPA’s parks and open space areas, the best locations to see these scenic features from the CPA are along public roads and trails. In particular, Hubbard Street provides spectacular views looking up into Pacoima Canyon and of the surrounding Angeles National Forest. Olive View Drive provides close up views of the San Gabriel Mountains to the north. On a clear day, Laurel Canyon Boulevard on the west side of the CPA provides spectacular panoramic views of the San Fernando Valley and the Santa Monica Mountains. Such views are visible in the flatter, central portion of the CPA from roadways that allow clear line of sight. In contrast, in the northern and eastern portions of the CPA public views of distant features are enabled by the hilly terrain, which permits the viewer to look out over intervening landforms, homes, and landscaping. The area’s low-density housing and abundance of open space also work together with the hilly terrain to minimize view obstructions.

Generally, the land use changes under the proposed plan would not disrupt views of the San Gabriel and Santa Susana Mountains. In this regard, the land use changes proposed would not substantially modify the character of the Sylmar CPA, particularly in the residential areas and open space areas which are predominantly conservation areas. Hillside areas in the northern and eastern portions of the CPA that are more prominent visually from the southern portion of the CPA and are located in areas primarily designated as Single-Family Residential, Public Facilities, and Open Space. The Sylmar proposed plan does not propose substantial changes in those areas. The proposed plan would overall preserve the existing character of single-family, equestrian, and low-density neighborhoods by maintaining low density



land use designations. However, these areas could be developed with new structures and exact nature of development is unknown.

The majority of the land use changes in the proposed plan consist of General Plan Amendments to create consistency with Framework Land Use designations, create consistency between existing land uses on parcels or with existing surrounding land uses, restrict incompatible uses, and correct minor errors. The proposed changes would not change overall land use patterns as identified in the 1997 Sylmar Community Plan. The proposed plan would accommodate new housing and commercial opportunities, mostly south of the Foothill (I-210) freeway, away from major scenic resources. Compared to existing conditions, implementation of the proposed plan would accommodate a forecasted increase of up to 5,558 dwelling units, 14,199 residents, and 6,041 jobs. The specific proposed land use and zoning changes are listed in detail in Chapter 3 (Project Description) and on Figure 3-8 (Sylmar Community Plan Recommendations by Sub-area). The proposed plan would create new housing options, mostly along San Fernando Road and Foothill Boulevard, near the Sylmar/San Fernando Metrolink Station, and in areas identified for mixed-use, such as Maclay Street, in accordance with Framework guiding policy to focus growth in higher-intensity commercial centers close to transportation and services. The proposed Sylmar Community Plan Implementation Overlay District (CPIO) would be established to regulate development that is consistent with the Community Plan, enhance the unique character of the neighborhoods, and address growth within these areas. However, areas could be developed with new structures under the proposed plan and implementing ordinances since the exact level of development is unknown there may be significant and unavoidable impacts.

Land use changes are also proposed along San Fernando Road, Maclay Avenue, Foothill Boulevard, and Hubbard Street and at key intersections to foster continued commercial revitalization. Some of these changes include increases in Floor Area Ratio (FAR) from 1:5 to 3:1 for mixed use development, as well as changes to the height district from unlimited to 60 feet within the transit-oriented district, 45 feet along mixed-use corridors, and 30 feet in neighborhood commercial areas near residential neighborhoods. The proposed CPIO would additionally be established to regulate development that is consistent with the Community Plan. While these changes will be made primarily to create consistency and predictability in height, views of the San Gabriel and Santa Susana Mountains could be affected.

Although scenic vistas would be protected by the proposed plan and implementing ordinances by including new policies geared toward promoting the preservation of low-density, single-family residential areas, the conservation of open space, and the protection of hillsides, the proposed plan could result in infill development that may affect scenic vistas. The proposed plan includes policies: preserving and enhancing existing stable single-family and multiple-family residential neighborhoods; protecting and preserving existing and future horse keeping and agricultural lots; limiting the intensity and density in hillside areas; providing new housing opportunities along major corridors, transitional areas, and existing underutilized areas in order to protect stable residential neighborhoods; improving and increasing a network of public open space; and protecting existing natural resources. More specifically, proposed plan Policy LU2.1 states that urban design standards and guidelines would be developed to reflect the community's identity, character, and function while Policy LU4.3 would seek to preserve existing open space and protecting existing natural resources, such as the Pacoima Wash and the Department of Water

and Power Grapevine site, as open, passive spaces. These policies would serve to reduce development on hillsides and protect views of hillsides in the CPA.

Existing Framework and Conservation Element policies would also help minimize potential impacts to scenic vistas. The Conservation Element includes an objective, policy, and program related to Land Form and Scenic Vistas to protect and reinforce natural and scenic vistas through permit processing, enforcement, and environmental review of project designs to ensure that natural features and views are retained. Framework Policies 5.2.2, 5.5.6, 5.5.7, and 5.7.1 would protect scenic vistas by encouraging the development of low-rise buildings, encouraging the use of step backs in heights for higher floors of buildings, promoting the undergrounding of utilities, and establishing standards for transitions in heights of buildings.

Adoption of the proposed Sylmar Community Plan and implementing ordinances would not have a substantial adverse effect on any identified scenic vistas or recognized/valued views and/or result in view obstruction available from a length of a public roadway, bike path, or trail. The proposed plan and implementing ordinances are geared toward promoting the preservation of low-density, single-family residential areas, the conservation of open space and the protection of hillsides. The City reviews individual discretionary projects to address aesthetic concerns as appropriate to minimize site-specific aesthetic impacts.

In support of the Sylmar Community Plan's objectives and policies, the following are recommended:

- Establish new residential General Plan Land Use designations and corresponding Zones in order to help preserve neighborhood character throughout the CPA. Split the existing Low General Plan Land Use designation into three: Low I, II, and II in order to limit the number of corresponding Zones and lot sizes within each designation.
- Amend General Plan Land Use designations and/or Zones near the foothills and open space areas, generally north of Olive View Drive, in order to limit residential development, provide defensive buffers from fires, and help preserve these areas. Retain existing agricultural zones in these areas.
- Amend General Plan Land Use designations to match existing Zones primarily within the north-central portions of the CPA to help retain existing equine-keeping lots and prevent further subdivision of these lots in order to preserve the semi-rural character of the area.
- Amend the existing Equine-keeping "K" Supplemental Use District in the CPA and include development conditions to be imposed as part of discretionary actions including, but not limited to approvals for division of land. Add lot and trail conditions to ensure room for on-site horse facilities and site accessibility. Amend General Plan Land Use designations and/or Zones to add properties to the "K" District.
- Amend General Plan Land Use designations and/or Zones on selected properties near the Sylmar/San Fernando Metrolink Station, Foothill Boulevard, and other major streets to provide multiple-family housing opportunities near commercial areas and public transit.
- Housing opportunities would be increased in the general area bounded by Foothill Boulevard, Polk Street, Dronfield Avenue, and Hubbard Street (existing Footnote 12 area); from a residential density maximum of one unit per 1,200 sf of lot area to one unit per 800 sf of lot area (or what the R3 Zone would allow per the LAMC). The proposed Sylmar CPIO and design guidelines would improve aesthetics.

- A zone change would be implemented in the multiple-family residential area, northeast of the Sylmar/San Fernando Metrolink Station (subarea 1730), to provide housing opportunities near public transit. The proposed Sylmar CPIO and design guidelines would improve aesthetics and address transitions between new development and existing single-family units.
- Remove “footprint” and/or parking Zones on properties throughout the CPA to allow and encourage commercial development on designated Community Commercial designated land. Amend General Plan Land Use designations and/or Zones on selected properties near existing commercial areas to provide additional commercial opportunities.
- Require ground-floor commercial uses or prohibit stand-alone residential uses on selected properties designated Neighborhood or Community Commercial in order to provide commercial uses and services to the CPA. These areas may include the area near the Sylmar/San Fernando Metrolink Station, the intersection of Sayre Street and Eldridge Avenue, as well as intersections along Glenoaks Boulevard, Polk, Roxford, and Sayre Streets.
- Near the Sylmar/San Fernando Road Metrolink Station, on San Fernando Road, between Hubbard and Polk Streets the current unlimited allowable height would be set at 30 feet (subarea 2032), 45 feet (subareas 1890, 1891, and 1892), and 60 feet (subareas 2031, 2131, 2150, 2160, and 2170). Allowable FAR would increase from 1.5 to 3.0, for mixed-use projects. The proposed Sylmar CPIO would also limit commercial and residential uses.
- On San Fernando Road, between Polk and Roxford Streets, the current unlimited allowable height would be set at 45 feet (subareas 1360, 1361, 1410, 1551, 1723, 1760, 1770, 1771, 1890, 1891, and 1892, 1940). The proposed Sylmar CPIO would encourage mixed-use development in this area.
- On Maclay Street, between city boundary and I-210 freeway the current unlimited allowable height would be set at 45 feet (subarea 1940). The proposed Sylmar CPIO would encourage mixed-used development and design guidelines would improve aesthetics (subareas 1940 and 1990).
- FAR would be increased from 1 to 1.5 along Foothill Boulevard, from Hubbard to Gridley Streets (existing footnote 2), and a zone and height district change would be implemented to limit buildings to 45 feet and limit commercial and residential uses (subareas 1552 and 1570). An FAR would also be increased from 0.5 to 1.5 along Foothill Boulevard, from Gridley and Maclay Streets (existing footnote 3) and a zone change would be implemented to restrict residential (subarea 2230) in order to help preserve commercial land. A height district change would also be proposed to limit buildings to 45 feet (subareas 1931 and 1940), and limit commercial and residential uses (subarea 1931).
- In designated Neighborhood Commercial areas (subareas 600, 610, 611, 700, 701, 720, 1020, 1470, 1480, 1481, 1490, 1720, and 1740) a zone and/or height district change would be implemented to limit commercial uses and heights of buildings to 30 feet in order to transitions heights from residential uses. The proposed Sylmar CPIO would also limit residential uses, encourage pedestrian-oriented design, and overall the design guidelines would improve aesthetics.
- Establish new Community Plan Design Guidelines (i.e., residential and trail guidelines) that would improve the community’s identity and livability and to create unique, inviting, and safe public streets. The design guidelines help to ensure that new structures make a positive aesthetic contribution to the built environment, provide adequate public amenities, and increase overall neighborhood identity.
- Establish a Community Plan Implementation Overlay District (CPIO) or other zoning regulations with land use restrictions and/or design standards on selected properties throughout the CPA designated for multiple-family residential, commercial, and industrial uses in order to ensure that

new development complements existing character and scale of neighborhoods, provide transitions, and encourage more walkable, pedestrian-oriented areas.

- Correct inconsistencies in General Plan Land Use designations and Zones throughout the CPA. Provide clarification and certainty about development regulations by removing existing General Plan Land Use map footnotes and implementing them through land use and zone changes.
- Revise selected General Plan Land Use designations and corresponding Zones as part of the effort to create consistency with the Framework Element. Several designations would be replaced or eliminated (i.e., General and Limited Commercial are eliminated, Regional Center is replaced with Regional Commercial, Neighborhood Office Commercial is replaced with Neighborhood Commercial, and Light and Limited Manufacturing are renamed by Light and Limited Industrial).
- Modify selected streets to reflect current function and existing street dimensions and better accommodate bicycling and horse-back riding. Modified streets may include Bledsoe Street and Olive View Drive to accommodate trails and Roxford Street and Eldridge Avenue to increase bicycling in this area.
- The transportation chapter of this EIR includes analysis of limiting vehicular access on Truman Avenue to increase pedestrian connectivity between San Fernando Road and the Sylmar/San Fernando Metrolink Station via a transit plaza.

While citywide design guidelines, element policies, and city regulations would help reduce potential impacts to scenic vistas, adoption and implementation of the proposed Sylmar Community Plan and implementing ordinances could still have a substantial adverse effect on scenic vistas, recognized/valued views and/or result in view obstruction available from a length of a public roadway, bike path, or trail. Mitigation measure MM4.1-1 would further help to reduce this potential impact, as would regulations in the City's Building and Zoning Code that govern setbacks, height, density, massing, and other development characteristics. However, while plan policies and guidelines, existing rules and regulations, such as Specific Plans, and the implementation of feasible mitigation measures would reduce this impact, in many cases to less than significant, a level of uncertainty remains with the introduction of additional urban development and, therefore, this impact would be considered *significant and unavoidable*.

**Impact 4.1-2      Implementation of the proposed plans could substantially damage scenic resources, including, but not limited to, trees, rock outcroppings, and historic buildings within a state scenic highway. Implementation of feasible mitigation measures would reduce this impact, but not to less than significant. Therefore, this impact would be *significant and unavoidable*.**

### **Granada Hills–Knollwood**

There are no State of California (Caltrans)–designated scenic highways within or adjacent to the CPA. However, the existing General Plan Land Use Map (as of March 20, 2007) for the Granada Hills–Knollwood Community Plan and the Transportation Element of the General Plan identifies portions of the following roadways within and adjacent to the CPA as scenic roadways: Balboa Boulevard, Sesnon Boulevard, Rinaldi Street, White Oak Avenue as well as the SR-118 and I-5 freeways. Together, these roads provide public views of hillsides, open spaces in the northern portion of the CPA, as well as more distant vistas of the Santa Susana Mountains and the greater San Fernando Valley. Other scenic resources include: the mid-century modern architecture of the Balboa Highlands, Knollwood Golf Course and surrounding residential area, the designated Historical/Cultural Landmark Deodar trees between San

Fernando Mission on White Oak, and the lush landscaping and open spaces in the northern portion of the CPA.

The majority of land use changes in the proposed plan consist of General Plan Amendments to create consistency with Framework Land Use designations, create consistency between existing land uses on parcels or with existing surrounding uses, and correct minor edits. There are no proposed changes or intensification of land uses or development proposed that would affect the scenic resources identified in the CPA as it does not propose to structurally change the existing land use patterns. The proposed plan, which includes new policies and implementing ordinances, are geared toward promoting preservation of low-density, single-family residential areas, equestrian neighborhoods, conservation of open space, and protection of hillsides. For example, Policies LU4.1, LU4.3, and LU4.4 in the proposed plan aim to minimize grading and hillside development, particularly on slopes over 15 percent, which would preserve scenic resources such as the publicly available views of the hillsides in the northern portion of the CPA that are still available for development. These new policies and implementing ordinances will help to ensure that scenic resources, such as the publicly available views of the San Fernando Valley and its surrounding mountains, would be protected.

Furthermore, a recently adopted implementing ordinance will offer protections for the scenic resources within Balboa Highlands in the form of a Balboa Highlands Historic Preservation Overlay Zone (HPOZ). Together, this special overlay zone and the proposed Old Granada Hills Residential Floor Area (RFA) ordinance are intended to promote orderly, attractive, and harmonious development, preserve historic resources, and minimize negative environmental effects through the specific standards.

In addition, existing Framework and Conservation Element policies would help minimize potential impacts from land form alteration. The Conservation Element includes an objective, policy, and program related to Land Form and Scenic Vistas to encourage development that would retain significant existing land forms or unique scenic features through permit processing, enforcement, and environmental review of project designs to ensure that natural features and views are retained.

Framework Policies 5.1.1, 5.2.2, 5.5.3, 5.5.6, 5.5.7, 5.7.1, and 5.8.4 would help protect scenic resources and vistas by encouraging development that defines the character of the Granada Hills–Knollwood CPA, promoting the development of low-rise buildings and the use of step backs in heights for higher floors of buildings, encouraging the formulation and adoption of building design and site design standards, promoting the undergrounding of utilities, establishing standards for transitions in heights of buildings, and encouraging visually attractive signage. Although mitigation measure MM4.1-1 would be implemented to further protect scenic resources, because of specific development projects are unknown, the adoption and implementation of the proposed plan and implementing ordinances could affect scenic resources, including locally recognized desirable aesthetic features. Therefore, this would be a *significant and unavoidable* impact.

## **Sylmar**

There are no State of California (Caltrans) scenic highways officially designated within or adjacent to the Sylmar CPA. However, the I-210 going west from SR-134 in Pasadena leading north to the I-5 interchange, and the I-5 north leading to the SR-126 in Santa Clarita are both listed as eligible routes for

designation in the Caltrans Landscape Architecture Program and Scenic Highway Program<sup>5</sup>. Both the I-5 and I-210 freeways, and many of the local roads in Sylmar, provide an overview of the CPA's major scenic features, such as the San Gabriel Mountains, Santa Susana Mountains, the Los Angeles Aqueduct, the Pacoima Wash, and the San Fernando Valley. Other scenic resources include Sylmar's equestrian neighborhoods, the remnant orchards and lush landscaping in the northern and eastern portions of the CPA.

The current General Plan Land Use Map (as of February 6, 2008) for the Sylmar Community Plan does identify the entire length of the I-5, forming the western boundary of the CPA, as a Scenic Highway Class II as it provides a north-south oriented public view corridor through the Santa Susana Mountains and San Gabriel Mountains. In addition, the Transportation Element of the General Plan designates the I-5, north of the I-210, as a Scenic Highway, as well as designates the entire length of I-210 in the CPA as a Scenic Highway. Both freeways afford views of the San Gabriel Mountains, the Santa Susana Mountains, and the greater San Fernando Valley.

The majority of land use changes in the proposed plan consist of General Plan Amendments to create consistency with Framework Land Use designations, create consistency between existing land uses on parcels or with existing surrounding uses, restrict incompatible uses, and correct minor errors. There are no proposed changes or intensification of land uses or development that would affect the scenic resources identified in the CPA as it does not propose to structurally change the existing land use patterns. The proposed plan, which includes new policies and implementing ordinances, is geared towards promoting the preservation of low-density, single-family residential areas, equestrian neighborhoods, and the conservation of open space and the protection of hillsides by limiting the intensity and density of development allowed in hillside areas. In addition, proposed plan Policy LU3.2 states that urban design standards and guidelines would be developed to reflect the community's identity, character, and function while Policies LU4.1, LU4.2, and LU4.3 would seek to preserve existing open space and protecting existing natural resources, such as the Pacoima Wash and the Department of Water and Power Lakeside site, as open, active and passive recreational spaces. Furthermore, the I-210 will be designated and the I-5 re-designated as Scenic Freeways and the proposed Sylmar CPIO would additionally regulate development and enhance neighborhood character. Overall, the proposed plan contains policies and implementing ordinances to conserve residential neighborhoods, hillsides and open space resources and direct development away from these areas towards public transit and services and would not impact scenic views.

In addition, existing Framework and Conservation Element policies would help minimize potential impacts from land form alteration. The Conservation Element includes an objective, policy, and program related to Land Form and Scenic Vistas to encourage development that would retain significant existing land forms or unique scenic features through permit processing, enforcement, and environmental review of project designs to ensure that natural features and views are retained.

Framework Policies 5.1.1, 5.2.2, 5.5.3, 5.5.6, 5.5.7, 5.7.1, and 5.8.4 would help protect scenic resources and vistas by encouraging development that defines the character of the CPA, promoting the

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<sup>5</sup> California Department of Transportation, California Scenic Highway Mapping System, [http://www.dot.ca.gov/hq/LandArch/scenic\\_highways/index.htm](http://www.dot.ca.gov/hq/LandArch/scenic_highways/index.htm).

development of low-rise buildings and the use of step backs in heights for higher floors of buildings, encouraging the formulation and adoption of building design and site design standards, promoting the undergrounding of utilities, establishing standards for transitions in heights of buildings, and encouraging visually attractive signage. Therefore, the adoption and implementation of the proposed plan would not substantially damage scenic resources, including, but not limited to, trees, rock outcroppings, and historic buildings, or other locally recognized desirable aesthetic natural feature within a city-designated scenic highway. Although mitigation measure MM4.1-1 would be implemented to further protect scenic resources, because of specific development projects are unknown, the adoption and implementation of the proposed plan and implementing ordinances could affect scenic resources, including locally recognized desirable aesthetic features. Therefore, this would be a *significant and unavoidable* impact.

**Impact 4.1-3      Implementation of the proposed plans could substantially degrade the existing visual character or quality of the site and its surroundings. Implementation of feasible mitigation measures would reduce this impact but not to less than significant. Therefore, this impact is *significant and unavoidable*.**

### ***Granada Hills–Knollwood***

The Granada Hills–Knollwood CPA is a bedroom community and largely consists of quiet, single family neighborhoods. The visual character is predominantly suburban in character. The existing features or elements that substantially contribute to the valued visual character of the CPA are its single-family neighborhoods, open spaces, and scenic vistas of the surrounding mountains and the expansive San Fernando Valley. Because the majority of the CPA is built-out, the proposed plan would encourage infill development and redevelopment as opportunities occur. Additionally, the majority of the land use changes in the proposed plan consist of General Plan Amendments to create consistency with Framework Land Use designations, create consistency between existing land uses and parcels or with existing surrounding uses, and correct minor edits. Therefore, it is anticipated that for most of the CPA, the proposed plan would not structurally change land use patterns nor result in drastic change in the existing visual character.

The proposed plan does encourage multiple-family development along Chatsworth and near commercial centers. However, the Granada Hills Specific Plan amendments will directly implement the goals, policies, and programs of the Granada Hills–Knollwood Community Plan. New areas will be added to the Specific Plan and will be used to regulate development and ensure that new multiple-family developments complement the existing character and scale of neighborhoods. In general, the overall intent of the proposed Specific Plan amendments is not only to ensure that new development complements existing neighborhood character but to foster commercial revitalization and improve pedestrian orientation.

In addition to the Specific Plan amendments, there is a proposed Residential Floor Area (RFA) District for the Old Granada Hills neighborhood that would reduce the allowable buildable area in order to address issues of mansionization. There is also the proposed Equine-keeping Supplemental Use District amendments that would further protect large lots for equine keeping and preserve the character of the area. Furthermore, HPOZs, such as the Balboa Highlands in the CPA, and any future HPOZs, are protected by the City's Historic Preservation Overlay Zone Ordinance and require a historic board to

review projects within HPOZs. Since none of the proposed changes are located within an HPOZ, there will be no impact to the historic character of any HPOZ.

Existing Framework Policies 5.1.1, 5.2.2, 5.5.3, 5.5.6, 5.5.7, 5.7.1, and 5.8.4 would continue to help protect visual character by encouraging development that defines the character of the CPA, promoting the development of low-rise buildings and the use of step backs in heights for higher floors of buildings, encouraging the formulation and adoption of building design and site design standards, promoting the undergrounding of utilities, establishing standards for transitions in heights of buildings, and encouraging visually attractive signage. Existing Framework and Conservation Element policies would help minimize potential impacts from land form alteration of any development in hilly areas. Hillside areas would also be protected by the LAMC Hillside Ordinance, which contains standards to ensure development conforms to the land by establishing, among other guidelines, setback requirements, maximum FAR, lot coverage, and height limits. The Conservation Element includes an objective, policy, and program related to land forms or unique scenic vistas to encourage development that would retain significant existing land forms or unique scenic features or vistas through permitting processing, enforcement, and environmental review of project designs to ensure that natural features and views are retained.

As discussed above, the adoption and implementation of the Granada Hills–Knollwood Community Plan and implementing ordinances would result in very minor changes to land use designation categories. The proposed plan would help to protect the visual character of the CPA by preserving and enhancing existing single-family and multiple-family residential neighborhoods; protecting and preserving existing and future equine keeping and agricultural lots; limiting the intensity and density in hillside areas; providing new housing opportunities along major corridors, transitional areas, and existing underutilized areas in order to protect stable residential neighborhoods; improving and increasing a network of public open space; and protecting existing natural resources, as open, passive spaces. The proposed policies and implementing ordinances would serve to reduce development on hillsides, help protect views of hillsides in the CPA, protect the existing visual quality and character of the CPA, and help protect scenic resources.

In addition, the City's existing policies and regulations would continue to protect the existing visual character. Existing policies described above and mitigation measure MM4.1-1 would be implemented to further protect the existing visual character. However, the adoption and implementation of the proposed plan and implementing ordinances could still affect existing visual character, aesthetic value, and quality of the community, since specific details of development projects are not known. Therefore, this would be a *significant and unavoidable* impact.

## **Sylmar**

The visual character of Sylmar is dominated by four elements: the San Gabriel Mountains, the Los Angeles Aqueduct, the Pacoima Wash and the two freeways that traverse the CPA. Within this setting, the CPA is visually defined by the spectacular scenic mountain views, lush landscaping, open spaces and recreational amenities, its single-family residential and equestrian-oriented neighborhoods, suburban commercial centers, industrial park-like districts, and the Sylmar/San Fernando Metrolink and freight rail line. Elements contributing to the visual character and quality of the CPA include: low-scale buildings,



rustic and ranch style development, and scenic vistas of the surrounding mountain ranges and of the expansive San Fernando Valley.

The majority of land use changes in the proposed Sylmar Community Plan and implementing ordinances consist of General Plan Amendments to create consistency with Framework Land Use designations, create consistency between existing land uses on parcels or with existing surrounding uses, restrict incompatible uses, and correct minor errors. The proposed plan would not structurally change the land use patterns in the CPA, but rather seeks to protect existing stable single and multiple-family residential neighborhoods by redirecting growth near the Sylmar/San Metrolink Station and along San Fernando Road and Maclay Street, and other specific major streets supported by public transit. Because the majority of the CPA is built-out, the proposed plan would encourage infill development and redevelopment as opportunities occur. Many of Sylmar's residential neighborhoods are well established and not expected to change significantly as the area matures. Transitional areas, such as the area along Ralston and Bradley Avenue between Astoria and Sayre Street and Roxford Street would support and encourage an increase in residential development activity, as well as areas near existing commercial centers that support multiple-family residential land uses.

As stated above, the proposed plan does encourage multiple-family developments along major corridors, in particular near the Sylmar/San Fernando Metrolink Station. However, the proposed Community Plan Implementation Overlay District (CPIO) will directly implement the goals, policies, and programs of the Sylmar Community Plan. The CPIO will be used to regulate development in specific locations and help ensure that new multiple-family developments complement the existing character and scale of neighborhoods and improve pedestrian orientation. In addition, the proposed CPIO would include regulations for commercial and mixed-use projects and establish basic design standards in order to ensure that new infill development responds to desirable prevailing neighborhood character and is not dominated by excessive automobile orientation. The proposed CPIO would also feature land use limitations for new construction along most corridors and near the Metrolink Station. This CPIO will be used in combination with proposed underlying zone and height district regulations to further tailor land use and development standards.

In addition to the CPIO, the proposed amendments to the Equine-keeping supplemental Use District in Sylmar would further protect large lots for equine keeping and preserve the character of the area, particularly the north central portion of the CPA which features most of the equestrian-oriented neighborhoods.

This strategic approach would protect residential neighborhood character and views of Sylmar's natural resources, which contribute to the existing visual context of the Sylmar CPA. The majority of Sylmar's commercial centers and corridors would be protected, while other areas near the Sylmar/San Fernando Metrolink Station and Maclay Street would be encouraged to develop as commercial and residential mixed-use corridors, providing much needed neighborhood amenities and open spaces. Sylmar also contains four industrial districts, Arroyo, Balboa, San Fernando, and Telfair. The majority of the industrial districts would not change and this specific character would be preserved.

Existing Framework Policies 5.1.1, 5.2.2, 5.5.3, 5.5.6, 5.5.7, 5.7.1, and 5.8.4 would protect visual character by encouraging development that defines the character of the CPA, promoting the development of low-

rise buildings and the use of step backs in heights for higher floors of buildings, encouraging the formulation and adoption of building design and site design standards, promoting the undergrounding of utilities, establishing standards for transitions in heights of buildings, and encouraging visually attractive signage. In addition, existing Framework and Conservation Element policies would help minimize potential impacts from land form alteration. The Conservation Element includes an objective, policy, and program related to Land Form and Scenic Vistas to encourage development that would retain significant existing land forms or unique scenic features or vistas through permit processing, enforcement, and environmental review of project designs to ensure that natural features and views are retained.

The adoption and implementation of the proposed Sylmar Community Plan and implementing ordinances, including the CPIO and K District, would result in very minor changes to land use designation categories. The proposed plan would protect the visual character of the CPA by preserving and enhancing existing stable single-family and multiple-family residential neighborhoods; protecting and preserving existing and future equine-keeping and agricultural lots; limiting the intensity and density in hillside areas; providing new housing opportunities along major corridors, transitional areas, and existing underutilized areas in order to protect stable residential neighborhoods; establishing height limits to create a more pedestrian friendly environment; improving and increasing a network of public open space; and protecting existing natural resources, as open, passive spaces.

In addition, the City's existing policies and regulations would continue to protect the existing visual character. Existing policies described above and mitigation measure MM4.1-1 would be implemented to further protect the existing visual character. However, the adoption and implementation of the proposed plan and implementing ordinances could still affect existing visual character, aesthetic value, and quality of the community, since specific details of development projects are not known. Therefore, this would be a *significant and unavoidable* impact.

**Impact 4.1-4**            **Implementation of the proposed plans could create a new source of substantial light or glare that could adversely affect day- or nighttime views in the CPAs. Compliance with existing codes and regulations and implementation of feasible mitigation measures would reduce this impact but not to less than significant. Therefore, this impact is *significant and unavoidable*.**

### ***Granada Hills–Knollwood***

The Granada Hills–Knollwood CPA consists predominantly of relatively low density single-family residential development, with a small amount of commercial and multiple-family developments and a significant amount of land designated for open space, as well as undeveloped residentially zoned land. These existing uses yield a relatively small amount of ambient illumination. Street lighting is omnipresent and, particularly along major thoroughfares, there are many additional sources of lighting, including window illumination, exterior security lighting, illuminated signage and advertising, and vehicle headlights. Residential streets tend to have lower levels of night lighting than the downtown and commercial centers. The northern portion of the CPA contains substantial open space, and the ambient lighting there is relatively low compared to other areas of the CPA.

The proposed Granada Hills–Knollwood Community Plan does not include large scale changes or developments that would substantially increase lighting in any part of the CPA. However, implementation of the proposed plan would result in a relatively small increase in population and buildings, primarily along commercial corridors. As a result, the creation of new lighting sources associated with additional dwelling units, businesses, street lighting, and vehicle headlights would be anticipated. While the proposed Equine-keeping and RFA Districts and amendments to the Specific Plan do not contain ordinance standards regarding light and glare, the proposed Community Plan includes policies geared toward promoting the preservation of low-density, single-family residential areas, the conservation of open space, and the protection of hillsides, as well as streetscape improvements, urban design guidelines that would regulate the amount of nighttime illumination. Granada Hills–Knollwood Community Plan Policies LU7.1 encourages the use of conservation/energy efficient materials and appliances and for the development of architectural and design criteria for new developments that could include criteria for lighting.

In addition, Framework Policies 5.5.3, 5.5.4, and 5.8.1 call for the formulation of building and site design standards, determination of appropriate urban design elements, and lighting commensurate with intended nighttime use. These new policies would help to ensure that such amenities as the community's dark night skies and low ambient lighting would be protected. The LAMC also contains specific regulations with respect to light and glare. LAMC Section 12.21 A.5 (k) (Amended by Ordinance No. 171,858) states that all lights used to illuminate a parking area shall be designed, located and arranged so as to reflect the light away from any street and any adjacent premises. Additionally, any new lighting would be designed to conform to with applicable standards including LAMC Sections 93.0117 and 12.21 A.5 (k), which pertain to outdoor lighting affecting residential property. All new development would be required to be consistent with the LAMC, which would ensure that such amenities as the community's low ambient lighting would be protected, and that light sensitive areas adjacent to new developments will be protected from spillover or excess lighting. Therefore, the adoption and implementation of the proposed plan would not significantly change ambient illumination levels. The Granada Hills–Knollwood CPA is a suburban area predominantly developed with single-family residential uses and low-rise commercial areas. The commercial buildings in the CPA are generally one to two stories tall and are primarily constructed of non-reflective materials. Although there are some commercial buildings that may contain reflective materials, such as glass, there is no concentration of glass buildings. Therefore, the adoption and implementation of the Granada Hills–Knollwood Proposed Plan would not result in substantial changes in ambient illumination, light, glare, or spillover lighting. The City reviews individual discretionary projects to address aesthetic concerns as appropriate to minimize site-specific aesthetic impacts.

Conformance to LAMC regulations and implementation of mitigation measure MM4.1-1 would help reduce this impact. However, the introduction of new development as part of the proposed plan and implementing ordinances could result in changes in ambient illumination, light, glare, or spillover lighting. Therefore, this would be a *significant and unavoidable* impact.

## **Sylmar**

The Sylmar CPA consists predominantly of relatively low density, single-family residential development framed by open space, with several moderate-sized industrial buildings located in districts, and a relatively small amount of small-scale commercial and multiple-family development. These existing uses yield a

relatively small amount of ambient illumination. Street lighting is omnipresent and, particularly along major thoroughfares, there are many additional sources of lighting, including window illumination, exterior security lighting, illuminated signage and advertising, and vehicle headlights. Residential streets tend to have lower levels of night lighting than the downtown and commercial centers. The northern portion of the CPA contains substantial open space, and the ambient lighting there is relatively low compared to other areas of the CPA.

The proposed Sylmar Community does not include large scale changes or developments that would substantially increase lighting in any part of the CPA. However, implementation of the proposed plan would result in an increase in population and buildings near the Sylmar/San Fernando Metrolink Station and commercial corridors, and along Foothill Boulevard, San Fernando Road, and Maclay Street. As a result, the creation of new lighting sources associated with additional dwelling units, businesses, street lighting and vehicle headlights would be anticipated in these areas. While the proposed amendments to the Equinekeeping District and CPIO do not contain ordinance standards regarding lighting and glare, the proposed Community Plan includes policies geared toward promoting the preservation of low-density, single-family residential areas, the conservation of open space and natural resources, and the protection of hillsides, as well as streetscape improvements and urban design standards that would regulate the amount of nighttime illumination.

In addition, Framework Policies 5.5.3, 5.5.4, and 5.8.1 call for the formulation of building and site design standards, determination of appropriate urban design elements, and lighting commensurate with intended nighttime use. These policies and implementing ordinances would help to ensure that such amenities as the community's dark night skies and low ambient lighting would be protected. The LAMC also contains specific regulations with respect to light and glare. LAMC Section 12.21 A.5 (k) (Amended by Ordinance No. 171,858) states that all lights used to illuminate a parking area shall be designed, located and arranged so as to reflect the light away from any street and any adjacent premises. Additionally, any new lighting would be designed to conform to applicable standards including LAMC Sections 93.0117 and 12.21 A.5 (k), which pertains to outdoor lighting affecting residential property. All new development would be required to be consistent with the LAMC, which would ensure that such amenities as the community's low ambient lighting would be protected, and that light sensitive areas adjacent to new developments will be protected from spillover lighting. Therefore, the adoption and implementation of the proposed plan would not significantly change ambient illumination levels, light, glare, or spillover lighting. The Sylmar CPA is a semi-rural suburban community predominantly developed with residential neighborhoods and clusters of industrial and commercial areas near the periphery. The commercial and industrial buildings are generally one to two stories tall and are primarily constructed of non-reflective materials. Although there are some commercial and industrial buildings that may contain reflective materials, such as glass, there is no over-concentration of glass buildings.

Conformance to LAMC regulations and implementation of mitigation measure MM4.1-1 would help reduce this impact. However, the introduction of new development as part of the proposed plan and implementing ordinances could result in changes in ambient illumination, light, glare, or spillover lighting. Therefore, this would be a *significant and unavoidable* impact.

**Impact 4.1-5**            **Implementation of the proposed plan could result in development of structures that would shade shadow-sensitive uses for more than three hours between the hours of 9:00 AM and 3:00 PM Pacific Standard Time (between late October and early April), or for more than four hours between the hours of 9:00 AM and 5:00 PM Pacific Daylight Time (between early April and late October). Compliance with design guidelines and policies and implementation of feasible mitigation measures would reduce this impact, but not to less than significant. Therefore, this impact is *significant and unavoidable*.**

### ***Granada Hills–Knollwood***

For purposes of this analysis, shading refers to placing existing land uses in shade, preventing direct access to sunlight by off-site shadows cast by project-related buildings or structures (in this case, projects implemented under the proposed plan. The consequences of shadows on land uses may be positive, including cooling effects during warm weather, or negative, such as the loss of natural light necessary for solar energy purposes or the loss of warming influences during cool weather. Shadow effects are dependent upon several factors, including the local topography, the height and bulk of a project's structural elements, the shade sensitivity of adjacent land uses, the season and consequent length of shadows, and the duration of shadow projection. Facilities and operations sensitive to the effects of shading include, but are not necessarily limited to, residential, recreational, institutional (e.g., schools, nursing homes), some public outdoor spaces or restaurants with outdoor eating areas, plant nurseries, and existing solar collectors. These uses are considered sensitive because sunlight is important to function, physical comfort, or commerce. A project's potential for shading adjacent land uses is determined by identifying the height and bulk of proposed plan components; mapping the "footprint" (location, shape, and size) of the project site; and calculating and diagramming the shadows that would be cast by those components during the most extreme, or conservative, conditions: Winter Solstice (December 21), when the sun is at its lowest point in the sky and shadows are the longest, and Summer Solstice (June 21), when the sun is at its highest point and shadows are the shortest.

Shadow length and bearing (the direction in which they are cast) is dependent on the location (latitude and longitude) of the project site, which dictates the angle of the sun relative to the project site; in the Los Angeles area, the maximum shadow a building can cast is usually equivalent to three times its height during the Winter Solstice. The potential for off-site effects is dependent on the distance between the project site and the nearest shade-sensitive land uses. Shade/shadow analyses are generally undertaken when there is potential for shade-sensitive uses to be placed in shadow by a proposed plan for three or more hours, at which point shading may be considered to interfere with the activities on that off-site property. For purposes of this analysis, land uses in proximity to a proposed development for which sunlight is important to function, physical comfort, or commerce are considered shade-sensitive.

In general, the proposed Granada Hills–Knollwood Community Plan does not structurally change land use patterns within the CPA and would, instead, focus growth on commercial corridors and within existing multiple-family neighborhoods. Most of the existing open space areas are located away from the targeted change areas. Existing single-family neighborhoods would be protected, and new residential development near commercial centers would be relatively low medium-density development. The

Specific Plan Amendments would limit impacts from shade and shadow for new construction or redevelopment.

It is possible, although unlikely, that existing and potential public open spaces could be affected by shadow from future structures. Current requirements and development standards provided in the LAMC, City design guidelines, as well as goals and policies of the Conservation Element, Granada Hills Specific Plan, help ensure that new development is of a height that is similar to surrounding structures. Similarly, the goals and policies provided in the proposed plan provide for transition buffers and encourage and require the preservation and enhancement of the distinct visual character present in the CPA's individual neighborhoods and districts. Specifically, Policies LU1.6, LU2.1, LU2.2, LU2.3, LU2.4, LU5.2, and LU8.1 provide for protection of neighborhood character and appropriate height and neighborhood transitions. Policies LU8.2 and LU12.2 provide for strategic location of new large projects in appropriate locations that do not interrupt community fabric and require the scale and massing of new development to provide appropriate transitions in building height and bulk. Discretionary approvals consider height transitions and visual impacts. Additionally, future major projects would be reviewed by the City's Planning Commission, which provides a method by which the City ensures that new buildings are compatible with their surroundings, and therefore, result in new buildings that are similar in height, scale, and massing to surrounding development. Proposed land use changes for the Granada Hills–Knollwood Community Plan would enhance and protect the existing character of the City overall, but it is still possible that surrounding uses could be impacted with regard to shade and shadow from future development. Therefore, impacts associated with the casting of shade/shadows on adjacent sensitive land uses (for projects implemented under the proposed plan and implementing ordinances) would be considered *significant and unavoidable*.

## Sylmar

For purposes of this analysis, shading refers to placing existing land uses in shade, preventing direct access to sunlight by off-site shadows cast by project-related buildings or structures (in this case, projects implemented under the proposed plan and implementing ordinances). The consequences of shadows on land uses may be positive, including cooling effects during warm weather, or negative, such as the loss of natural light necessary for solar energy purposes or the loss of warming influences during cool weather. Shadow effects are dependent upon several factors, including the local topography, the height and bulk of a project's structural elements, the shade sensitivity of adjacent land uses, the season and consequent length of shadows, and the duration of shadow projection. Facilities and operations sensitive to the effects of shading include, but are not necessarily limited to, residential, recreational, institutional (e.g., schools, nursing homes), some public outdoor spaces or restaurants with outdoor eating areas, plant nurseries, and existing solar collectors. These uses are considered sensitive because sunlight is important to function, physical comfort, or commerce. A project's potential for shading adjacent land uses is determined by identifying the height and bulk of proposed plan components; mapping the "footprint" (location, shape, and size) of the project site; and calculating and diagramming the shadows that would be cast by those components during the most extreme, or conservative, conditions: Winter Solstice (December 21), when the sun is at its lowest point in the sky and shadows are the longest, and Summer Solstice (June 21), when the sun is at its highest point and shadows are the shortest.

Shadow length and bearing (the direction in which they are cast) is dependent on the location (latitude and longitude) of the project site, which dictates the angle of the sun relative to the project site; in the Los Angeles area, the maximum shadow a building can cast is usually equivalent to three times its height during the Winter Solstice. The potential for off-site effects is dependent on the distance between the project site and the nearest shade-sensitive land uses. Shade/shadow analyses are generally undertaken when there is potential for shade-sensitive uses to be placed in shadow by a proposed plan for three or more hours, at which point shading may be considered to interfere with the activities on that off-site property. For purposes of this analysis, land uses in proximity to a proposed development for which sunlight is important to function, physical comfort, or commerce are considered shade-sensitive.

Generally, the proposed Sylmar Community Plan would not structurally change land use patterns within the CPA and would, instead focus growth near the Sylmar/San Fernando Metrolink Station and commercial centers. New residential development would be relatively low to low-medium density development and buildings generally two to three stories tall. Overall, existing residential neighborhoods, particularly equestrian-oriented neighborhoods, and open space areas would be protected.

Land use changes are also proposed along San Fernando Road, Maclay Avenue, Foothill Boulevard, and Hubbard Street and at key intersections to foster continued commercial revitalization. Some of these changes include increases in Floor Area Ratio (FAR) from 1:5 to 3:1 for mixed use development, as well as changes to the height district from unlimited to 60 feet within the transit-oriented district, 45 feet along mixed-use corridors, and 30 feet in neighborhood commercial areas near residential neighborhoods. Although the proposed CPIO would regulate development and create consistent heights in the CPA, it is possible, although unlikely, that existing and potential public open spaces could be affected by shadow from future structures.

Current requirements and development standards provided in the LAMC, City design guidelines, as well as goals and policies of the Conservation Element, and the proposed CPIO, help ensure that new development is of a height that is similar to surrounding structures. Similarly, the goals and policies provided in the proposed plan provide for transition buffers and encourage and require the preservation and enhancement of the distinct visual character present in the CPA's individual neighborhoods and districts. Specifically, Policies LU2.1, LU2.2, LU2.3, and LU3.2 provide for protection of neighborhood character and appropriate height and neighborhood transitions. Policies LU8.2 and LU12.2 provide for strategic location of new large projects in appropriate locations that do not interrupt community fabric and require the scale and massing of new development to provide appropriate transitions in building height and bulk.

Discretionary approvals consider height transitions and visual impacts. Additionally, future major projects would be reviewed by the City's Planning Commission, which provides a method by which the City ensures that new buildings are compatible with their surroundings, and therefore, result in new buildings that are similar in height, scale, and massing to surrounding development. Proposed land use changes for the Sylmar Community Plan would enhance and protect the existing character of the community overall, but it is still possible that surrounding uses could be impacted with regard to shade and shadow from future development. Therefore, impacts associated with the casting of shade/shadows on adjacent sensitive land uses (for projects implemented under the proposed plan and implementing ordinances) would be considered *significant and unavoidable*.

## ■ Mitigation Measures

The proposed plans incorporate programs and policies that are intended to minimize, to the extent practicable, adverse impacts to aesthetics. All projects will be subject to specific regulations of the zoning and building code addressing construction type, setbacks, height, parking, open space, density, intensity, etc. Individual discretionary projects will be required to complete project-specific environmental review. In addition, the following mitigation measure, consistent with the objectives of the proposed plans, shall also be implemented:

*MM4.1-1            The City shall ensure that review of projects by the City for compliance with LAMC and individual discretionary projects addresses aesthetic concerns as appropriate to minimize site-specific aesthetic impacts, including impacts to views, scenic resources, lighting, and shading.*

## ■ Level of Significance After Mitigation

The mitigation measure for discretionary projects outlined above and conformance to LAMC regulations would reduce impacts relative to aesthetics as a result of implementation of the proposed plan and implementing ordinances. However, specific development projects are not known, and while future development projects are considered on a case-by-case basis, impacts would remain ***significant and unavoidable***.

### 4.1.4 Cumulative Impacts

The geographic context for the analysis of cumulative aesthetic impacts is generally localized. For purposes of this analysis, the context for views in both CPAs includes the geographic area within and outside the CPAs that would have views of and across the CPAs to the Santa Susana, Santa Monica, and San Gabriel Mountain ranges. Cumulative impacts with regard to lighting, shadow, and visual quality and character would be within the geographic context of the CPAs and the development in the nearby communities of Chatsworth-Porter Ranch, Northridge, Mission Hills–North Hills, and Sylmar for the Granada Hills–Knollwood Community Plan Area and Granada Hills–Knollwood, Pacoima, Lakeview Terrace, Sun Valley, Shadow Hills, Sunland, Tujunga, and La Tuna Canyon, as well as the incorporated City of San Fernando for the Sylmar Community Plan Area. The analysis accounts for all anticipated cumulative growth within this geographic area. Cumulative impacts are only addressed for those thresholds that have a project-related impact, whether it is less than significant, significant, or significant and unavoidable. If “no impact” occurs, no cumulative analysis is provided for that threshold.

## ■ Granada Hills–Knollwood

Views of the Santa Susana, Santa Monica, and San Gabriel Mountain ranges, the Hollywood Hills, and the San Fernando Valley are obtained from many vantage points in the CPA, particularly from I-118 (Ronald Reagan Freeway), I-405 (San Diego Freeway), and northern residential areas of the CPA, which are at slightly higher elevations than development to the south. In addition, some residents of Knollwood, generally north of Rinaldi Street, have more extensive views of these features due to their higher elevation. Scenic views of the foothills and open space areas may be obtained as one travels north or south on Balboa Boulevard north of Knollwood Drive. Residents of the Bee Canyon development, set



in the Santa Susana foothills, have similar views, although these views are not as expansive due to the fact that most of this development is set in small canyons. Residents on the extreme western edge of the Sylmar CPA have some views to the west of the Santa Susana Mountains. The communities adjacent to the Granada Hills–Knollwood CPA are primarily built out, particularly those communities to the south of the CPA. The community plans for the communities adjacent to the Granada Hills–Knollwood CPA include numerous policies intended to protect views, and future development in these areas would be subject to stringent design guidelines, height restrictions, and other regulations to avoid impacts on views. In fact, all development in the City of Los Angeles is subject to design guidelines and development restrictions aimed at preserving views. The proposed plan includes its own community-specific design guidelines, policies, and implementing ordinances to protect views and the proposed land use changes would enhance and protect existing character of the City overall. However, as set forth above, it is still possible that surrounding uses could be impacted with regard to scenic vistas. Therefore, the proposed plan's cumulative impact on scenic vistas would be ***significant and unavoidable***.

Scenic resources are numerous in the defined geographic area, and include the rolling hillsides and panoramas of the Santa Susana, San Gabriel, and Santa Monica Mountains, the Hollywood Hills, and the San Fernando Valley. There are large areas of open space in the northern portion of this geographic area that substantially contributes to the visual character of the area, consisting of both open space designated land and undeveloped, vacant residentially designated and zoned land. No designated open space would be developed or graded as a result of implementation of the proposed plan. The proposed plan includes policy and the implementing ordinances include standards to maintain low density in the undeveloped hillside areas, which would preserve the overall character and minimize impacts on scenic resources. The communities adjacent to the CPA have in place a number of policies to protect scenic resources and contributing visual features. Development in the City of Los Angeles is subject to design guidelines and development restrictions that protect scenic resources. However, since the details of future development projects are not known, it is still possible that surrounding uses could be impacted with regard to scenic vistas. Therefore, the proposed plan's cumulative impact on scenic resources would be ***significant and unavoidable***.

The existing visual character of the geographic area includes rolling hills and large expanses of open space north of the CPA. East, south, and west of the CPA are developed urban areas of the San Fernando Valley. The rolling foothills of the Santa Susana Mountains are visually prominent all along the northern San Fernando Valley and substantially contribute to the visual character of the area. The large, developed plain of the San Fernando Valley also makes a substantial contribution to visual character. All development in the City of Los Angeles is subject to design guidelines and development restrictions that protect visual quality and character and there would be no significant cumulative impact as a result of cumulative development. The proposed plan includes community-specific design guidelines, policies, and implementing ordinances to protect visual quality and, as a result, would not degrade the visual quality and character of the community. Instead, the Granada Hills–Knollwood Community Plan and implementing policies would protect the visual character of the Granada Hills–Knollwood CPA by preserving existing residential neighborhoods, limiting the intensity and density of residential development in areas of the CPA; preserving the low density agricultural zones in the northern hilly portions of the CPA; and implementing other design standards and guidelines. Several planning subareas in the Granada Hills–Knollwood CPA would be zoned to reduce the allowed Floor Area Ratio (FAR) in

those areas. Additionally, the Granada Hills Specific Plan would be amended to include more commercial and multiple-family areas, which would be subject to design standards and guidelines, thereby introducing discretionary review for improving the visual character of areas not previously in the Specific Plan area. Beyond these changes, the Granada Hills–Knollwood Community Plan does not introduce major changes to land use in the CPA. The changes that are proposed would strengthen the existing visual character of the CPA and enhance visual quality. However, since specific development projects are not known, it is still possible that surrounding uses could be impacted. Therefore, the proposed plan’s potential cumulative impact on visual character would be *significant and unavoidable*.

Development of cumulative projects in the Granada Hills–Knollwood CPA and adjacent communities could incrementally increase ambient nighttime lighting. A relatively low-level of ambient lighting currently exists in the southern portion of the CPA and surrounding communities, which is expected in a developed suburban area. The Los Angeles Municipal Code (LAMC) contains specific regulations with respect to light and glare. LAMC Section 12.21 A.5 (k) (Amended by Ordinance No. 171,858) states that all lights used to illuminate a parking area shall be designed, located and arranged so as to reflect the light away from any street and any adjacent premises. Additionally, any new lighting would be designed to conform to applicable standards in LAMC Sections 93.0117 and 12.21 A.5 (k), which pertain to outdoor lighting affecting residential property. Discretionary projects would be required to be consistent with the LAMC and would implement mitigation measure MM4.1-1, which would ensure that light-sensitive areas adjacent to or within new development would be protected from spillover or excessive lighting. While the adoption and implementation of the proposed plan would not significantly change ambient illumination levels, the details of individual future development projects are not known. Therefore, the proposed plan’s cumulative impact on illumination on levels is *significant and unavoidable*.

As noted above, shadow length and bearing (the direction in which they are cast) is dependent on the location (latitude and longitude) of the project site, which dictates the angle of the sun relative to the project site; in the Los Angeles area, the maximum shadow a building can cast is usually equivalent to three times its height during the Winter Solstice. It should also be noted that shadows in the Granada Hills–Knollwood area are generally cast in a northwesterly to northeasterly direction over the course of a given day. Cumulative development in the communities adjacent to the CPA could result in shadow impacts, but these would be localized and not additive. The amendments to the existing Specific Plan and other implementing ordinances would reduce shade/shadow impacts in those areas, however shade and shadow effects during the months of December and January could still result in a significant impact. Additionally, the City of Los Angeles requires an evaluation of potential shade/shadow impacts as part of discretionary development review and mitigation to reduce any significant impacts. Further, the design review process for development projects and Framework and localized policies help ensure that sensitive uses are not adversely affected by new development with regard to visual character, quality, views, etc. However, the proposed plan could intensify development, although moderately, in existing commercial corridors and could result in some significant shadow impacts, as noted above. Therefore, the proposed plan’s cumulative impact on shade/shadow would be *significant and unavoidable*.

## ■ Sylmar

Sweeping views of the San Gabriel Mountains, and intermittent views of the Santa Susana Mountains, Santa Monica Mountains, San Fernando Valley, and the Hollywood Hills, are obtained from many vantage points in the community, particularly from higher elevations. Residents of these communities may also have views of the open spaces of the Hansen Dam Recreation Area, a large recreational facility including a golf course and riding stables, and a 40-acre water recreation facility. Views are also available from the length of I-210 (Foothill Freeway) that traverses the northern portion of the San Fernando Valley east to west. The communities adjacent to the Sylmar CPA, primarily to the east, contain substantial amounts of open spaces, and cumulative development in these areas could result in significant impacts on scenic vistas. The community plans for the communities within the City of Los Angeles that are adjacent to the Sylmar CPA include policies intended to protect public views, and future discretionary development in these areas would be subject to project level regulations and conditions to minimize impacts on views. The proposed plan would focus more intense development along Foothill Boulevard and near the Sylmar/San Fernando Metrolink station, and would not result in land use changes or intensification of development in existing single-family neighborhoods. The proposed plan includes community-specific design guidelines, policies, and implementing ordinances to protect views and that would result in a less-than-significant impact on scenic vistas or resources. The proposed plan includes its own community-specific design guidelines, policies, and implementing ordinances to protect views and the proposed land use changes would enhance and protect existing character of the City overall. However, as set forth above, it is still possible that surrounding uses could be impacted with regard to scenic vistas. Therefore, the proposed plan's cumulative impact on scenic vistas would be *significant and unavoidable*.

Similar to the Granada Hills–Knollwood CPA, the Sylmar CPA and adjacent communities contain numerous scenic resources and panoramas, as well as large areas of open space to the north and east that substantially contribute to the visual character of the area. The communities adjacent to the CPA have in place a number of policies to protect scenic resources and contributing visual features. Development in the City of Los Angeles is subject to design guidelines and development restrictions that protect scenic resources, thus there would be no significant cumulative impact as a result of cumulative development. The proposed plan includes community-specific design guidelines, policies, and implementing ordinances to protect scenic resources and as a result, would have a less-than-significant impact on scenic resources or contributing visual features. There are large areas of open space in the northern portion of this geographic area that substantially contributes to the visual character of the area, consisting of both open space designated land and undeveloped, vacant residentially designated and zoned land. No designated open space would be developed or graded as a result of implementation of the proposed plan. The proposed plan includes policy and the implementing ordinances include standards to maintain low density in the undeveloped hillside areas, which would preserve the overall character and minimize impacts on scenic resources. Intensification of development would focus along Foothill Boulevard in the existing commercial district and around the Sylmar/San Fernando Metrolink station. However, since the details of future development projects are not known, it is still possible that surrounding uses could be impacted with regard to scenic vistas. Therefore, the proposed plan's cumulative impact on scenic resources would be *significant and unavoidable*.

The existing visual character of Sylmar and surrounding communities includes rolling hills and large areas of open space, particularly to the north and east that contribute to the visual character of the Sylmar CPA as a primarily suburban community. Development is subject to citywide design guidelines and restrictions that protect visual quality and character. As such, there would be no significant cumulative impact on visual character and quality as a result of cumulative development. The proposed plan includes community-specific design guidelines, policies, and implementing ordinances to protect visual quality. The focus of development in Sylmar will be to enhance those elements and features of the community that contribute to its overall sense of character and function, while directing growth strategically so that new development is compatible with existing land uses and scale and preserves the natural environment. Established residential neighborhoods will be protected and are not expected to change significantly as growth occurs in other parts of Sylmar and targeted areas in the City. New housing will be directed towards the Sylmar/San Fernando Metrolink Station and other major corridors. The community's local economy will be protected by preserving existing industrial and commercial land and by providing new opportunities to expand where appropriate and feasible. This strategic and balanced approach will not only protect residential neighborhoods and natural features, but will provide new housing and commercial and industrial opportunities in areas that best are suited to accommodate growth. The changes that are proposed would strengthen the existing visual character of the CPA and enhance visual quality. Consequently, the proposed plan would not adversely affect the existing visual character, value, and quality of the community. However, since specific development projects are not known, it is still possible that surrounding uses could be impacted. Therefore, the proposed plan's potential cumulative impact on visual character would be ***significant and unavoidable***.

The Sylmar CPA and surrounding communities as identified are subject to relatively moderate levels of ambient lighting, greater in the commercial and transit corridors, and less intense in residential areas and on the periphery near open spaces or the San Gabriel Mountains. It is not anticipated that development of cumulative projects or build-out of the General Plan for the City or County of Los Angeles would increase nighttime lighting in the CPA. The Los Angeles Municipal Code (LAMC) contains specific regulations with respect to light and glare. LAMC Section 12.21 A.5 (k) (Amended by Ordinance No. 171,858) states that all lights used to illuminate a parking area shall be designed, located and arranged so as to reflect the light away from any street and any adjacent premises. Additionally, any new lighting would be designed to conform to applicable standards in LAMC Sections 93.0117 and 12.21 A.5 (k), which pertain to outdoor lighting affecting residential property. Discretionary projects would be required to be consistent with the LAMC and would implement mitigation measure MM4.1-1, which would ensure that light-sensitive areas adjacent to or within new development would be protected from spillover or excessive lighting. While the adoption and implementation of the proposed plan would not significantly change ambient illumination levels, the details of individual future development projects are not known. Therefore, the proposed plan's cumulative impact on illumination on levels is ***significant and unavoidable***.

Shadows in the Sylmar CPA are generally cast in a northwesterly to northeasterly direction over the course of a given day. Shadow and bearing is dependent on the location of the project site, which dictates the angle of the sun relative to the project sites; in the Los Angeles area, the maximum shadow of a building can cast is usually equivalent to three times its height during the Winter Solstice. Cumulative development in the communities adjacent to the Sylmar CPA could result in shadow impacts, but these

would be localized and not additive. The City of Los Angeles requires an evaluation of potential shade/shadow impacts as part of discretionary development review and mitigation to reduce any significant impacts. Further, the design review process for development projects and Framework and localized policies help ensure that sensitive uses are not adversely affected by new development with regard to visual character, quality, views, etc. The establishment of the CPIO would reduce shade/shadow impacts in those areas, however shade and shadow effects during the months of December and January could still result in a significant impact. The proposed plan could intensify development in existing industrial and commercial corridors and could result in some significant shadow impacts, as noted above. Therefore, the proposed plan's cumulative impact on shade/shadow would be *significant and unavoidable*.

### 4.1.5 References

- California Department of Transportation. California Scenic Highway Mapping System, [http://www.dot.ca.gov/hq/LandArch/scenic\\_highways/index.htm](http://www.dot.ca.gov/hq/LandArch/scenic_highways/index.htm).
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