



Introduction

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



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



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



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



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



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

As with several other area plans, the San Jacinto Valley Area Plan wraps around existing cities and establishes mapped land use designations for unincorporated territory. However, this Plan does more than that. It establishes policy direction for a highly significant set of resources. Nestled up against the foothills leading to the towering San Jacinto Mountains, the San Jacinto Valley offers an excellent example of what “a remarkable environmental setting” means in the Riverside County Vision. The dominant framework for the valley is composed partly of hills and mountains and partly of water. The San Jacinto River edges along the base of the mountains by the same name all along the northeasterly portion of the Valley. At the opposite corner of the Plan, Diamond Valley Lake lies in the forefront of the much lower but still scenic Dawson Mountains. This is a Valley, then, of land and water contrasts—a powerful combination in a semi-arid climate. These qualities set the foundation for development and conservation direction here.

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

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

While a number of these designations reflect the unique features found only in the San Jacinto Valley, a number of special policies are still necessary to address unique situations. The Policy Areas section presents these policies. Land use isn’t the only key factor in developing and conserving land here. The plan also describes relevant transportation issues, routes and modes of transportation in the Circulation section. The key to understanding the valued open space network is described in the Multipurpose Open Space section. There are, of course, both natural and man made hazards to consider and they are spelled out in the Hazards section.