

**7.2**  
**GENERAL PLAN**  
**CONSERVATION ELEMENT UPDATE**

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# City of Laguna Woods Agenda Report

**TO:** Honorable Mayor and City Councilmembers  
**FROM:** Christopher Macon, City Manager  
**FOR:** July 29, 2015 Adjourned Regular Meeting  
**SUBJECT:** General Plan Conservation Element Update

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## **Recommendation**

1. Receive staff report.

AND

2. Open public hearing.

AND

3. Receive public testimony.

AND

4. Close public hearing.

AND

5. Approve a resolution entitled:

A RESOLUTION OF THE CITY COUNCIL OF THE CITY OF LAGUNA WOODS, CALIFORNIA, ADOPTING A NEGATIVE DECLARATION AND AN AMENDMENT TO THE LAGUNA WOODS GENERAL PLAN TO UPDATE THE CONSERVATION ELEMENT

## **Background**

A Conservation Element is a required part of the City of Laguna Woods General Plan. A General Plan is a State-required legal document that provides guidance to city decision-makers when allocating resources and determining the future physical form and character of development in California cities. Pursuant to California Government Code Section 65302(d), the General Plan must include a Conservation Element for the conservation, development, and utilization of natural resources including water and its hydraulic force, forests, soils, rivers and other waters, harbors, fisheries, wildlife, minerals, and other natural resources. The portion of the Conservation Element that addresses water must be developed in coordination with the local water agency, including discussion and evaluation of water supply and demand as described in California Government Code Section 65352.5.

The City's Conservation Element was last amended in 2003. In Fiscal Year 2014-15, the City Council authorized a project to update the Conservation Element in order to enhance long-term commitments to environmental sustainability; expand consideration of water and energy issues in the General Plan; incorporate the City's Climate Adaptation Plan; and, prepare technical reports that will also be used to inform the Comprehensive General Plan Update.

## **Discussion**

The City Council has discussed and provided input to staff regarding the General Plan Conservation Element Update at public meetings on April 15, 2015; April 29, 2015; and, May 20, 2015. Today's meeting is an opportunity for the City Council to further discuss the project, conduct a public hearing, receive public testimony, and consider adopting the proposed, updated Conservation Element (Attachment A) and Negative Declaration (Attachment B).

## **Update and Priority Issues**

The proposed, updated Conservation Element addresses solid waste, renewable energy, biological resources, and cultural resources, as well as topics not discussed in the current element such as energy resources and greenhouse gas emissions. Additionally, the updated Conservation Element places emphasis on water supply, quality, and management, and includes new analysis of the Laguna Laurel property, which was annexed following completion of the current element in 2003. Flood hazards were previously addressed in the Conservation Element, but were

moved to the Safety Element when last updated in 2014. The updated Conservation Element includes revised key issues, policy objectives, implementation actions, and exhibits. A supporting background report was also prepared.

The City’s General Plan elements are organized by priority issues. The following eight priority issues have been identified for the updated Conservation Element:

Air Resources	Biological Resources	Cultural Resources	Energy Resources
Land Resources	Water Resources	Greenhouse Gas Emissions	Waste and Recycling

Environmental Review

In compliance with Section 15072 of the California Environmental Quality Act (CEQA), an Initial Study and draft Negative Declaration have been prepared for this project. The Negative Declaration notes that the project could not have a significant impact on the environment. Adoption of the Negative Declaration will be considered in connection with the updated Conservation Element.

The noticed, public review period for the Negative Declaration was from June 22, 2015 to July 22, 2015 (Attachment C). During that time, related documents – including the proposed, updated Conservation Element, background report, Initial Study, and draft Negative Declaration – were available for public review at City Hall and on the City’s website. While several individuals contacted the City for information on the project, no written comments were received.

**Fiscal Impact**

Funds to support this project are included in the City’s budget.

- Attachments: A – Proposed Resolution  
                   Exhibit A – Proposed, Updated Conservation Element
- B – Initial Study and Draft Negative Declaration
- C – Notice of Intent to Adopt a Negative Declaration

**RESOLUTION NO. 15-XX**

A RESOLUTION OF THE CITY COUNCIL OF THE CITY OF LAGUNA WOODS, CALIFORNIA, ADOPTING A NEGATIVE DECLARATION AND AN AMENDMENT TO THE LAGUNA WOODS GENERAL PLAN TO UPDATE THE CONSERVATION ELEMENT

**WHEREAS**, Government Code Section 65302(d) requires that every city prepare and periodically update a General Plan Conservation Element; and

**WHEREAS**, if adopted, the proposed General Plan Conservation Element update will amend the Conservation Element of the City’s General Plan as set forth in Exhibit “A” attached hereto and incorporated herein; and

**WHEREAS**, public meetings were held on April 15, 2015; April 29, 2015; and, May 20, 2015 to receive input from community stakeholders and residents relative to the General Plan Conservation Element update; and

**WHEREAS**, the General Plan Conservation Element update is considered a project under California Environmental Quality Act (CEQA) regulations; and

**WHEREAS**, pursuant to Article 7 of the City’s Local CEQA Procedures, and after reviewing the entire project record, it has been determined that there is no substantial evidence that the General Plan Conservation Element update will have a significant effect on the environment; and

**WHEREAS**, a Negative Declaration has been prepared for the General Plan Conservation Element update in accordance with CEQA and was posted for public review from June 22, 2015 to July 22, 2015; and

**WHEREAS**, the Negative Declaration for the General Plan Conservation Element update was submitted by the City to the State Clearinghouse for review and no comments thereon were received from the State Clearinghouse; and

**WHEREAS**, the City Council of the City of Laguna Woods has considered information presented by City staff and interested parties at a public hearing held on July 29, 2015 and at previous meetings and in written documents and reports.

NOW, THEREFORE, THE CITY COUNCIL OF THE CITY OF LAGUNA WOODS, DOES HEREBY RESOLVE, DECLARE, DETERMINE AND ORDER AS FOLLOWS:

**SECTION 1.** In accordance with Article 7 of the City’s Local CEQA Procedures and Section 15704 of the CEQA Guidelines, the City Council makes the following findings with respect to the Negative Declaration:

1. The City Council finds on the basis of the evidence presented and the whole record before it, including the initial study and Negative Declaration, and comments received, that there is no substantial evidence that the General Plan Conservation Element update will have a significant effect on the environment.
2. The adoption of the Negative Declaration reflects the City Council’s independent judgment and analysis.
3. The Negative Declaration and other documents or materials which constitute the record of proceedings upon which this decision is based are located at Laguna Woods City Hall, 24264 El Toro Road, Laguna Woods, CA 92637, and the custodian of record of proceedings is the City Clerk.

**SECTION 2.** In accordance with Section 9 of the City’s Local CEQA Procedures, the City Council finds that the Negative Declaration has been completed in compliance with CEQA, the State CEQA Guidelines, and the City’s Local CEQA Procedures. The Negative Declaration adequately addresses the general environmental setting of the proposed project, its environmental impacts, alternatives, and mitigation measures (if applicable) related to each impact and is hereby adopted.

**SECTION 3.** The City Council makes the following findings:

1. In accordance with Government Code Section 65300.5, the proposed General Plan Conservation Element update is consistent with other elements of the City’s General Plan.

The proposed General Plan Amendment will update the Conservation Element, including new goals, policy objectives, implementation actions, figures, background information, and other content necessary to comply with State law, incorporate other local planning documents, and better reflect

existing conditions and future plans. Furthermore, the General Plan Amendment does not modify or alter the intent of any of the other General Plan elements. Therefore, pursuant to Government Code Section 65300.5, this General Plan Amendment is internally consistent with the other elements of the City's General Plan.

2. In accordance with Government Code Section 65300.9 (to the extent it is applicable), the proposed General Plan Conservation Element update responds to changes in state and/or federal law.

This General Plan Amendment responds to several changes in law since the Conservation Element was last amended in 2003, including legislation with respect to greenhouse gas emissions. Staff is authorized to complete all implementing actions as required by law.

3. The proposed General Plan Conservation Element update has been referred to the County of Orange and any adjacent cities abutting or affected by the proposed action.

Notification of a public hearing for the proposed General Plan Amendment was sent to the County of Orange and several surrounding cities that may be affected by the proposed action.

4. The proposed General Plan Conservation Element update will not be detrimental to the public health, safety, and welfare of the community.

The proposed General Plan Amendment will not result in any uses or activities that would impact the public health, safety, or welfare of the community. The General Plan Amendment will set forth long-range city policies and programs related to conservation and is consistent with applicable provisions of the Laguna Woods Municipal Code.

**SECTION 4.** Based on the findings herein, the City Council does hereby approve and adopt the General Plan Conservation Element update as set forth in Exhibit "A".

**SECTION 5.** The Deputy City Clerk shall certify to the adoption of this resolution.

PASSED, APPROVED AND ADOPTED on this XX day of XX 2015.

\_\_\_\_\_  
CYNTHIA S. CONNERS, Mayor

ATTEST:

\_\_\_\_\_  
YOLIE TRIPPY, Deputy City Clerk

STATE OF CALIFORNIA        )  
COUNTY OF ORANGE        ) ss.  
CITY OF LAGUNA WOODS    )

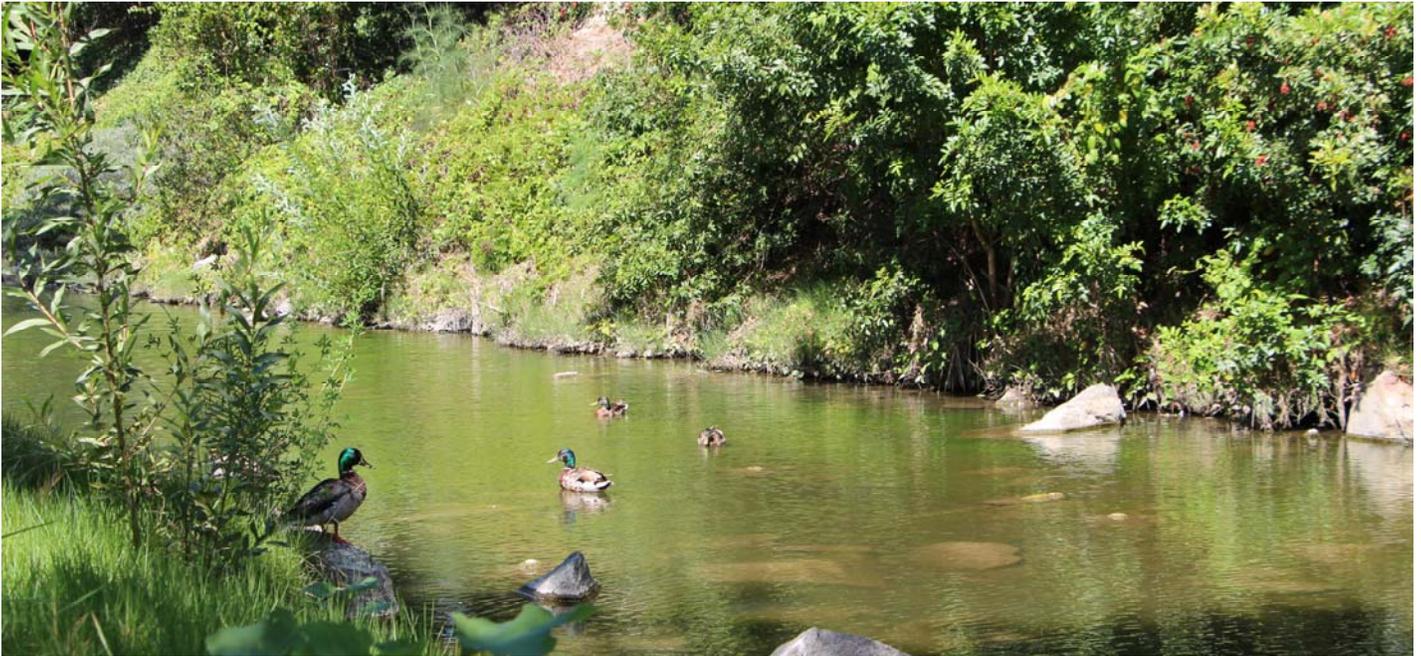
I, YOLIE TRIPPY, Deputy City Clerk of the City of Laguna Woods, do  
HEREBY CERTIFY that the foregoing **Resolution No. 15-XX** was duly adopted  
by the City Council of the City of Laguna Woods at an adjourned regular meeting  
thereof, held on the XX day of XX 2015, by the following vote:

AYES:        COUNCILMEMBERS:  
NOES:        COUNCILMEMBERS:  
ABSENT:     COUNCILMEMBERS:

\_\_\_\_\_  
YOLIE TRIPPY, Deputy City Clerk

# CONSERVATION ELEMENT

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## INTRODUCTION

The City of Laguna Woods is committed to the preservation and sustainable management of its many natural resources. California Government Code Section 65300 requires that each city adopt a General Plan to guide the long-term physical development of the city. The General Plan reflects the community's intentions about land use and its relationship to pedestrian and vehicular circulation, housing, conservation, open space, noise, and safety. This element identifies priority conservation issues in Laguna Woods and sets forth long-range city policies and programs to achieve balance between the needs of the community and environmental stewardship.

## PURPOSE AND SCOPE

State law requires that General Plans include a Conservation Element, as follows:

**Government Code Section 65302(d):** [The General Plan must include] a conservation element for the conservation, development, and utilization of natural resources including water and its hydraulic force, forests, soils, rivers and other waters, harbors, fisheries, wildlife, minerals, and other natural resources. That portion of the conservation element including waters shall be developed in coordination with any countywide water agency and with all district and city agencies, which have developed, served, controlled or conserved water for any purpose for the county or city for which the plan is prepared. Coordination shall include the discussion and evaluation of any water supply and demand information described in Section 65352.5, if that information has been submitted by the water agency to the city or county.

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In addition to state-mandated content, the Conservation Element addresses emergent issues and existing conditions in order to form a comprehensive approach to resource conservation.

This element presents existing conditions relative to natural resource conservation within Laguna Woods and is organized to address the following eight priority issues:

- Air resources
- Biological resources
- Cultural resources
- Energy resources
- Land resources
- Water resources
- Greenhouse gas emissions
- Waste and recycling

## Goals, Policy Objectives, and Implementation Actions

This element is organized to be consistent with the other elements of the Laguna Woods General Plan. Goals, policy objectives, and implementation actions are the essence of the element, providing declarative statements setting forth the City's approach to each priority issue.

**Goals:** General statements of desired community outcomes.

**Policy Objectives:** Specific commitments to support decisions and actions consistent with a stated goal. Policy objectives provide guidance to the City Council, City advisory committees, and City staff when reviewing development applications and making other decisions that affect future growth, conservation, and development.

**Implementation Actions:** Recommended actions to achieve goals and policy objectives.

Certain implementation actions included in this element are drawn from or generally based on the City's Climate Adaptation Plan, thereby furthering the City's commitment to prepare for a future with evolving and potentially varying climate conditions.

Goals, policy objectives, and implementation actions are presented following the definition of each priority issue in this element.

## Relationship to Other General Plan Elements

Accomplishing the goals and policy objectives of the Conservation Element requires coordination with other related elements of the General Plan. For example, implications of conservation policies and programs on the Land Use Element include identification of areas that contain natural and cultural resources. Recommended mobile source emission reduction actions in the Conservation Element impact the Circulation Element. In turn, the Circulation Element may provide support for air quality-related Conservation Element policies. Similarly, Open Space Element policies intended to maintain existing open space support Conservation Element policies that seek similar outcomes.

# CONSERVATION ELEMENT

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## EXISTING RELATED PLANS, POLICIES, AND ORDINANCES

### CLIMATE ADAPTATION PLAN

The City's Climate Adaptation Plan establishes an approach for the City to prepare for a future with evolving and potentially varying climate conditions. The Climate Adaptation Plan identifies local vulnerabilities to climate change impacts (e.g., increased temperatures, decreased precipitation, and strained water supplies) and outlines a strategy to increase resilience to climate change-related hazards, increase resource independence, and sustain and advance climate adaptation efforts. At the time of its initial adoption in late 2014, the Climate Adaptation Plan was the first non-coastal, stand-alone, municipal climate adaptation plan in California. Conservation Element goals, policy objectives, and implementation actions support and are consistent with the Climate Adaptation Plan, particularly with respect to the use and management of energy- and water-related resources.

### NATIONAL POLLUTANT DISCHARGE ELIMINATION SYSTEM LOCAL IMPLEMENTATION PLAN

The City's Local Implementation Plan is the principal policy and guidance document for the City's stormwater/water quality programs. The Local Implementation Plan is prepared and maintained in accordance with applicable National Pollutant Discharge Elimination System (NPDES) permits regulating stormwater and waste discharges to the municipal separate storm sewer system (MS4). Conservation Element goals, policy objectives, and implementation actions related to water resources support and are consistent with the Local Implementation Plan.

### SOURCE REDUCTION AND RECYCLING ELEMENT

The City's Source Reduction and Recycling Element demonstrates how the City will achieve and maintain compliance with waste diversion goals established by the State of California. The Source Reduction and Recycling Element fulfills requirements established by the California Integrated Waste Management Act (Assembly Bill 939, Sher, Chapter 1095, Statutes of 1989 as amended). Conservation Element goals, policy objectives, and implementation actions related to waste and recycling support and are consistent with the Source Reduction and Recycling Element.

### LAGUNA WOODS MUNICIPAL CODE

Numerous provisions of the Laguna Woods Municipal Code relate to conservation, including:

- **Water Quality (Chapter 4.14):** Reduces pollutants in stormwater and non-stormwater discharges flowing to receiving waters to the maximum extent practicable by 1) prohibiting illegal discharges and illicit connections, 2) requiring implementation of best management practices, and 3) establishing development and significant redevelopment standards.

# CONSERVATION ELEMENT

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- **Construction & Demolition Materials Management (Chapter 4.24):** Increases the amount of construction and demolition waste diverted from landfills by requiring minimum levels of reuse or recycling of waste generated by certain types of projects.
- **Tree Maintenance & Removal Standards (Chapter 4.26):** Promotes urban forestry and the appropriate care and maintenance of trees by 1) establishing standards to protect trees from damage, 2) requiring replacement of certain significant trees when removed, and 3) recognizing trees with historical, arboricultural, or other significance.
- **Water Efficient Landscapes (Chapter 4.28):** Encourages efficient and conservation-oriented use of water in new and rehabilitated landscapes by limiting the amount of water able to be applied and requiring compliance with El Toro Water District regulations.
- **California Building Code (Chapters 10.08 and 10.24):** Protects public health, safety, and welfare by ensuring that buildings and other structures are constructed in accordance with state standards and local best practices. Recent iterations of the California Building Code have increasingly emphasized energy and water conservation, particularly through the adoption of the California Green Building Standards Code (CALGreen Code), which contains both prescriptive and performance-based sustainability standards, as well as requirements related to the landfill diversion of certain construction and demolition waste.

## OTHER EXISTING CONDITIONS

### CONSERVATION AGENCIES AND ORGANIZATIONS

A variety of agencies and organizations—both public and private—assist the City in fulfilling its natural resource conservation responsibilities. In addition to the City’s organization, the Coastal Greenbelt Authority, El Toro Water District, and OC Watersheds are among the most involved with the priority issues identified in this element. Additionally, the City recognizes that numerous other agencies and organizations play vital and appreciable roles.

#### City Departments

Various City departments oversee building inspection, planning, stormwater/water quality, climate change, and waste and recycling operations, including the City’s contracts with solid and household hazardous waste disposal services. City departments also coordinate with the Coastal Greenbelt Authority, El Toro Water District, OC Watersheds, and other governmental and non-governmental agencies and organizations with natural resource-related responsibilities.

#### Coastal Greenbelt Authority

The Coastal Greenbelt Authority was initially established as an oversight body for the Laguna Coast Wilderness Park. Subsequently, its oversight was expanded to include the adjacent Aliso and Wood Canyons Wilderness Park. As the owner of Woods End Wilderness Preserve, which is leased to the County of Orange for management as a part of the Laguna Coast Wilderness Park, the City holds a

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voting seat on the Coastal Greenbelt Authority. The Coastal Greenbelt Authority’s responsibilities include oversight of governing documents that address park operations and development, habitat preservation, wildlife protection, and environmental stewardship.

## El Toro Water District

The El Toro Water District provides water and wastewater services in Laguna Woods and several surrounding communities, including portions of Aliso Viejo, Laguna Hills, Lake Forest, and Mission Viejo. Laguna Woods is the only community served exclusively by the El Toro Water District and constitutes approximately 35% of its overall service area. California Water Code sections 10610–10657 require the El Toro Water District and other water service providers reaching a minimum service threshold to publish an urban water management plan once every five years.

## OC Watersheds

OC Watersheds is a division of the County of Orange’s Public Works Department that acts as the “Principal Permittee” for purposes of implementation of National Pollutant Discharge Elimination System (NPDES) permits. As the Principal Permittee, OC Watersheds is responsible for a variety of regulatory compliance matters, as well as the development of model best management practices, coordination of countywide public education efforts, and sampling, laboratory analysis, and other water quality monitoring activities. The City also contracts with OC Watersheds to provide water pollution-related incident response, enforcement, and technical assistance.

## **PRIORITY ISSUES**

The City is committed to establishing a comprehensive, long-term vision for progressive public safety and environmental improvement programs within Laguna Woods. Climate change, including adaptation and greenhouse gas reduction, are core components of that vision. Many of the priority issues contained in this Conservation Element are interrelated in terms of climate change. The most significant interrelations are identified in each priority issue’s implementation actions.

## **AIR RESOURCES**

Laguna Woods is located in the South Coast Air Basin, which includes the non-desert portions of Los Angeles, Riverside, and San Bernardino counties and all of Orange County. Air quality in the South Coast Air Basin is affected by temperature, precipitation patterns, and other climatic factors, along with levels of pollutants emitted from stationary and mobile sources.

Air pollutants can have adverse health impacts and lead to the deterioration and harm of plants, wildlife, and personal property. Sensitive population groups include older adults, children, the acutely ill, and the chronically ill, especially those with cardiorespiratory diseases. Actual health impacts vary based on the toxicity and concentration of pollutants, as well as the level of exposure.

# CONSERVATION ELEMENT

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Residential areas are considered to be “sensitive receptors” to air pollution because individuals (including older adults) tend to be at home for extended periods of time, resulting in sustained exposure to any pollutants present. Golf courses and other recreational areas are considered to be moderately sensitive to air pollution. Although exposure periods are generally limited, exercise places a high demand on respiratory functions, which can be impaired by air pollution.

Criteria air pollutants are regulated by federal and state laws due to known adverse health effects such as asthma, lung disease, and cardiovascular disease. Ozone and coarse fine particulate matter (PM<sub>10</sub>/PM<sub>2.5</sub>) are the most pressing pollutants affecting Laguna Woods due to high concentrations in excess of state ozone, PM<sub>10</sub>, and PM<sub>2.5</sub> standards and federal ozone and PM<sub>2.5</sub> standards.

The urban heat island effect is a phenomenon in which temperatures in the local climate increase due to certain aspects of the built environment that retain or emit heat to a greater extent than would ordinarily exist in lesser developed areas (e.g., large areas of asphalt and impervious surfaces). As the demand for electricity to support personal cooling rises, power plant production often increases, resulting in greater air pollutant and greenhouse gas emissions. The urban heat island effect may also increase the formation and presence of ground-level ozone.

The General Plan Safety Element identifies air quality as a potential hazard to public health, and discusses the importance of individual emergency preparedness, beginning on page S-21.

## **Goal CO-1. Improve air quality.**

### *Policy Objectives and Implementation Actions*

CO-1.1. *Adopt and enforce regulations promoting air resource goals.*

A. Adopt, review, update, and enforce regulations including, but not limited to:

- Regulations pertaining to the protection of sensitive receptors, fugitive dust control near sensitive receptors, and the location of new sensitive receptors away from primary pollutant emission sources.
- Regulations pertaining to new and significant redevelopment project requirements for the accommodation and promotion of mobility alternatives to fossil fueled vehicles.
- Regulations pertaining to mitigation of the urban heat island effect.

CO-1.2. *Implement and support programs that reduce mobile source emissions.*

- A. Collaborate with the Orange County Transportation Authority and other demand-responsive mass transportation service providers to improve services and increase ridership.
- B. Construct and maintain a multi-modal trail system that facilitates movement throughout the city by pedestrians, cyclists, golf carts, and zero and low emission forms of transportation.
- C. Synchronize traffic signals, both locally and regionally, to improve the flow of vehicular traffic.

See also “Greenhouse Gas Emissions” priority issue for related considerations (page CO-18).

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## BIOLOGICAL RESOURCES

Though Laguna Woods is predominantly urbanized, several open space areas remain that provide habitat for wildlife and vegetative biological resources (see Figure CO-1). Certain urbanized areas, including landscaped common areas within private residential communities, also provide habitat.

Significant biological resource areas include:

- The 178-acre Laguna Laurel property, which the City annexed from the County of Orange in 2008. Laguna Laurel is owned by the Irvine Company, and is subject to an irrevocable open space easement that was granted to The Nature Conservancy in 2001. As a result of past disturbances, including widespread cattle grazing and cultivation, Laguna Laurel primarily supports nonnative annual grassland; however, small patches of coastal sage scrub, native perennial grassland, seasonal wetlands, and riparian communities are also present. Wildlife movement between Laguna Laurel and the western portion of the Laguna Coast Wilderness Park is facilitated by a series of tunnels under Laguna Canyon Road (State Route 133).
- Woods End Wilderness Preserve, a 10.6 acre public park which the City acquired in 2002 from Rossmoor Partners. Woods End acts as a trailhead to the Laguna Coast Wilderness Park with a pedestrian and cycling trail winding through coastal sage scrub habitat.
- A Southern California Edison (SCE) right-of-way easement area which borders Woods End Wilderness Preserve and extends for more than mile along the southwestern edge of Laguna Woods. The SCE easement area is located generally east of Lagunas Lakes and the James Dilley Greenbelt Preserve, both a part of the Laguna Coast Wilderness Park. In addition to overhead transmission lines, SCE's easement area contains coastal sage scrub habitat.
- Aliso Creek and its riparian corridor and greenbelt area, 16-acres of which is located within the private community of Laguna Woods Village. Aliso Creek begins in the Santa Ana Mountains inside the Cleveland National Forest and traverses 19 miles to its confluence with the Pacific Ocean in Laguna Beach. Aliso Creek transects the southeastern portion of Laguna Woods for approximately one-half mile. The Golden Rain Foundation of Laguna Woods maintains the Aliso Creek biological resource area as passive use open space.

Biological resource areas support sensitive wildlife communities that are of concern to federal and state agencies. Several special-status wildlife species are known to exist, or potentially exist, within Laguna Woods, including the federally endangered Least Bell's Vireo (*Vireo bellii pusillus*).

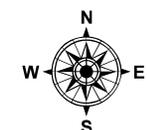
The predominant vegetative community types found in Laguna Woods include annual grassland, coastal sage scrub, and valley-foothill riparian corridors, as well as aquatic habitats provided by Aliso Creek and other open waters (see Figure CO-2).

**Figure CO-1**  
**Biological Resource Areas**

**LEGEND**

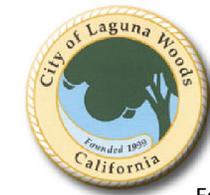
-  Laguna Woods Boundary
-  Local Roads
-  Municipal Boundaries
-  Resource Area
-  Laguna Coast
-  Wilderness Park

Sources:  
 Laguna Woods Boundary -  
 City of Laguna Woods GIS,  
 City\_Boundary.shp  
 Municipal Boundary -  
 Cal Atlas, Incorp12\_1.shp  
 Local Roads -  
 City of Laguna Woods GIS,  
 merge of centerline files  
 Imagery - ESRI Basemap, ArcGIS 10  
 Resource Areas - CA Dept of Fish &  
 Wildlife, Orange County, PMC, 2014

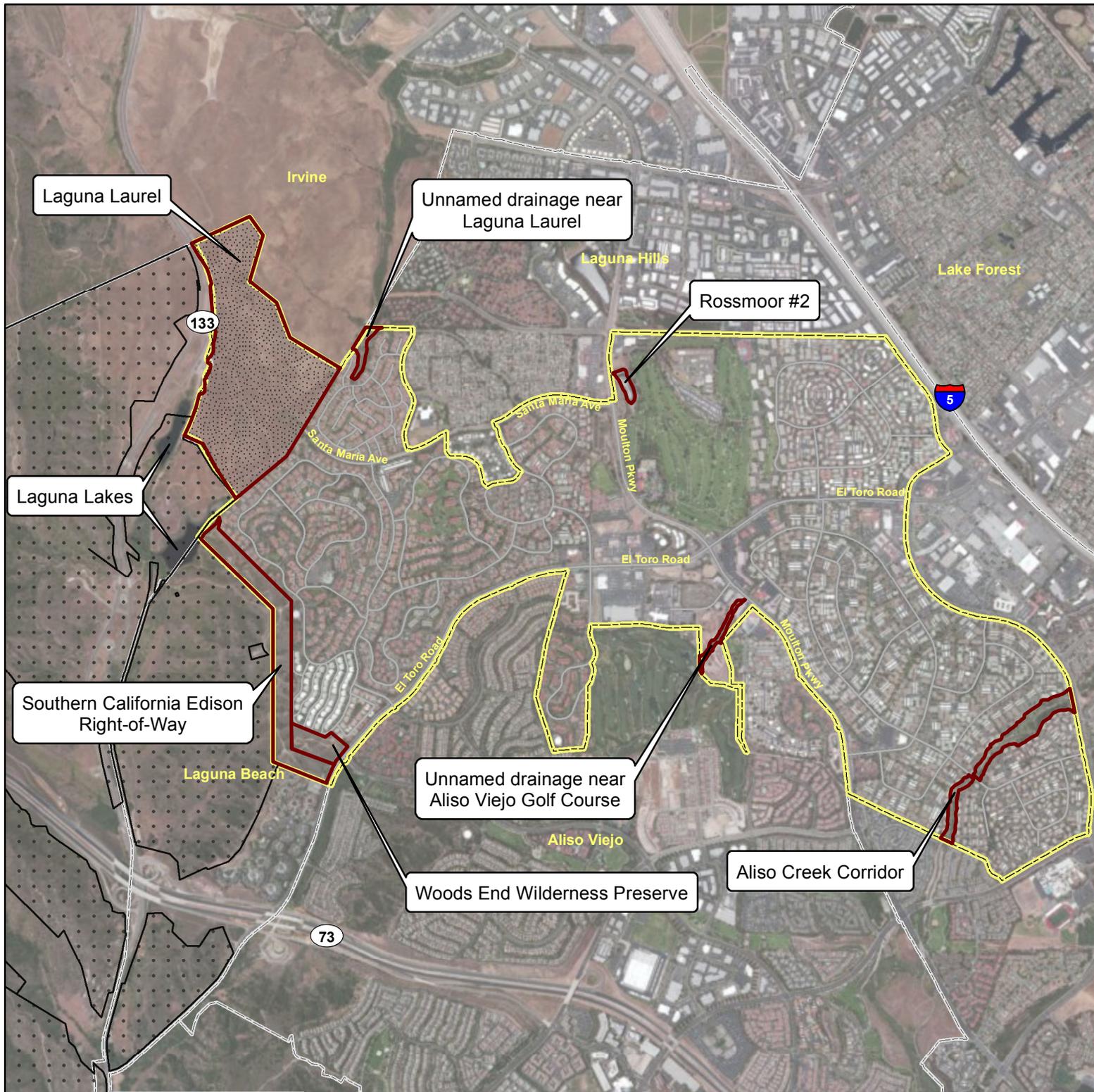


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**City of Laguna Woods**  
**Conservation**  
**Element**



February 2015



**Figure CO-2**  
**Vegetative Communities**

**LEGEND**

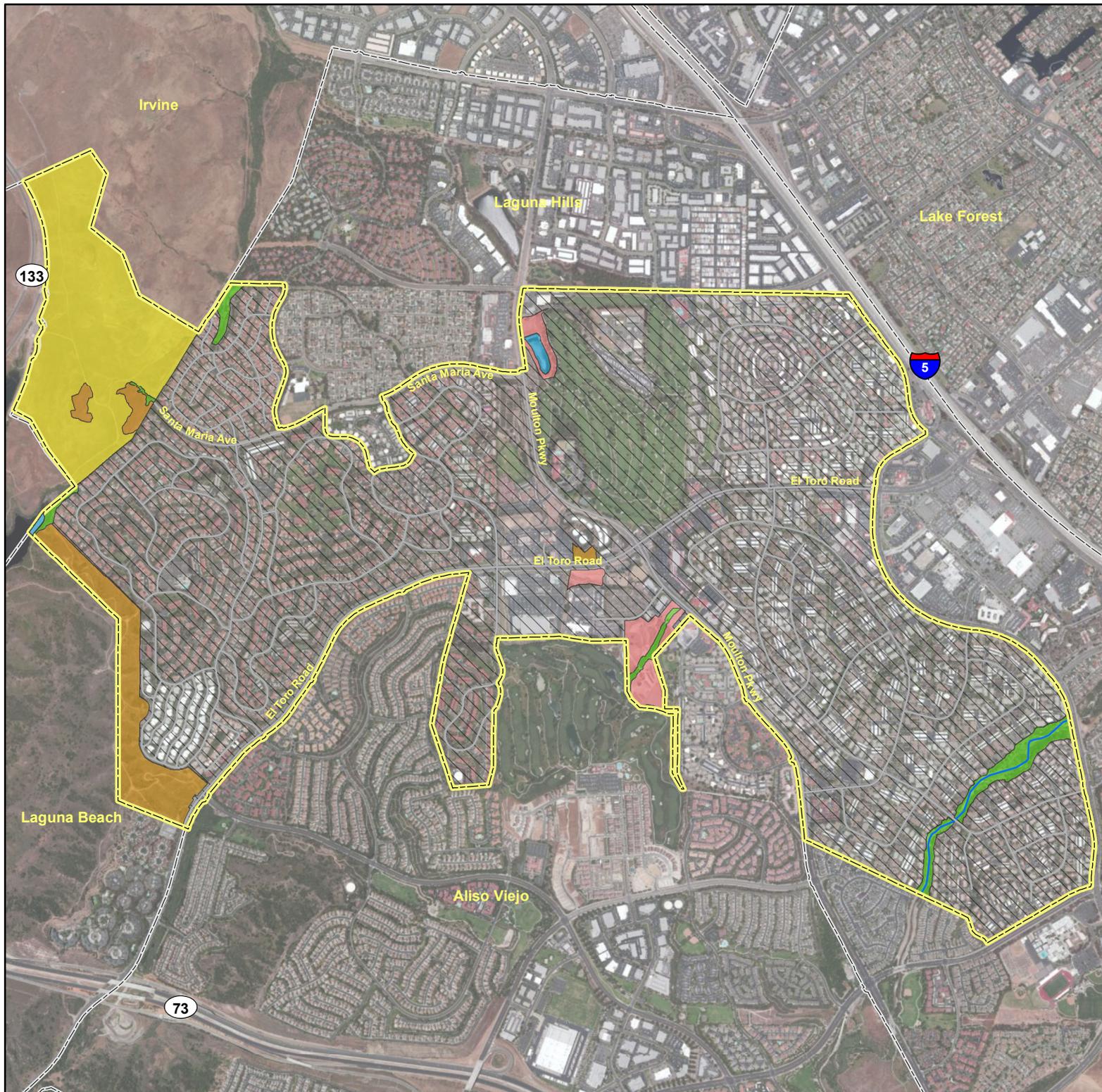
-  Laguna Woods Boundary
-  Local Roads
-  Municipal Boundaries
- Vegetative Communities**
-  Annual Grassland
-  Coastal Sage Scrub
-  Valley Foothill Riparian
-  Open Water
-  Ruderal
-  Urban

Sources:  
 Laguna Woods Boundary -  
 City of Laguna Woods GIS,  
 City\_Boundary.shp  
 Municipal Boundary -  
 Cal Atlas, Incorp12\_1.shp  
 Local Roads -  
 City of Laguna Woods GIS,  
 merge of centerline files  
 Imagery - ESRI Basemap, ArcGIS 10  
 Vegetative Communities - PMC, 2014



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**City of Laguna Woods**  
**Conservation**  
**Element**



# CONSERVATION ELEMENT

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Connectivity between open space areas is an important element of wildlife conservation. By joining sub-regional and regional biological resource areas that might otherwise be fragmented as a result of urbanization, wildlife corridors can help to maintain and re-establish wildlife populations, as well as to increase biodiversity within existing populations. In Laguna Woods, the Laguna Laurel and Aliso Creek biological resource areas act as wildlife corridors that help to facilitate movement between the Pacific Ocean, coastal wilderness parks, and Cleveland National Forest.

While not located within Laguna Woods, the City is a partner with the cities of Aliso Viejo, Laguna Hills, and Lake Forest in the regional Dairy Fork Constructed Wetlands Project located generally southwest of the intersection of Moulton Parkway and Aliso Creek Road in the city of Aliso Viejo. The Dairy Fork Constructed Wetland and its associated drainage (a portion of which originates in Laguna Woods) is tributary to Aliso Creek and, thereafter, the Pacific Ocean.

## **Goal CO-2. Preserve and enhance the environment to support biological resources.**

### *Policy Objectives and Implementation Actions*

CO-2.1. *Adopt and enforce regulations promoting biological resource goals.*

A. Adopt, review, update, and enforce regulations including, but not limited to:

- Regulations pertaining to the long-term maintenance of biological resource areas as open space areas with limitations on activities with the potential to adversely impact ecologically valuable vegetative communities or sensitive wildlife communities.
- Regulations pertaining to the minimization of the removal of ecologically valuable vegetative communities for new and significant redevelopment projects.
- Regulations pertaining to the prohibition of invasive plant species.

CO-2.2. *Protect and improve sustainable vegetative and wildlife habitats.*

- A. Manage the City's urban forest and landscaping in a changing climate through development and implementation of an Urban Forestry Management and Landscape Master Plan.
- B. Ensure that new and significant redevelopment projects within urbanized areas minimize the presence of areas conducive to mammalian predator habitation as practical.
- C. Coordinate with the Orange County Flood Control District/OC Flood to manage Aliso Creek-related flood issues in a manner that maintains as natural a physical condition as practical.
- D. Support the maintenance and operation of the Dairy Fork Constructed Wetland.

See also "Water Resources" priority issue for related considerations (page CO-15).

CO-2.3. *Support ecologically-minded use of the Laguna Coast Wilderness Park.*

- A. Collaborate with the Coastal Greenbelt Authority and other agencies and organizations with responsibilities related to the Laguna Coast Wilderness Park to ensure that it is managed and operated in a manner that is sensitive to the presence of biological resources.

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CO-2.4. *Promote connectivity between regional and sub-regional open space areas.*

- A. Participate in and support efforts by federal, state, and local agencies and organizations to establish and maintain regional and sub-regional wildlife corridors.
- B. Collaborate with OC Watersheds, Laguna Woods Village, and other agencies and organizations with responsibilities related to Aliso Creek to ensure that open water and riparian areas are maintained as habitat suitable to facilitate regional and sub-regional wildlife movement.

## CULTURAL RESOURCES

Laguna Woods is a part of a region that was once populated by the Gabrielino and Luiseño Native American communities. It has a strong cultural heritage associated with Spanish missionaries and ranching activities dating back to the early Spanish land grants.

### Archaeological Resources

Archaeology is the study of prehistoric human activities and cultures. 12 known archeological sites once existed in or immediately adjacent to Laguna Woods; however, all have been destroyed by development, some prior to complete excavation and analysis. The archeological sites contained one isolated prehistoric artifact and a variety of other objects, including lithic scatter, rock shelters/caves, habitation debris, fire affected rocks, and bedrock milling features.

### Paleontological Resources

Paleontological resources include the fossilized remains of vertebrate and invertebrate organisms, fossil tracks and trackways, and plant fossils. Laguna Woods is underlain by Tertiary bedrock and covered by unconsolidated Quaternary sediments. Approximately 95% of Laguna Woods is mapped as paleontologically sensitive with numerous vertebrate fossil localities having been recorded.

### Historical Resources

Historical resources, as described in the California Environmental Quality Act, include buildings, sites, structures, objects, and districts, each of which may have historical, prehistoric, architectural, archaeological, cultural, or scientific importance and be listed or eligible for listing in the National Register of Historic Places, the California Register of Historical Resources, or a local register of historical resources. No historical resources have been designated in Laguna Woods.

## **Goal CO-3. Preserve cultural resources.**

### *Policy Objectives and Implementation Actions*

CO-3.1. *Identify and protect archeological, paleontological, and historical resources.*

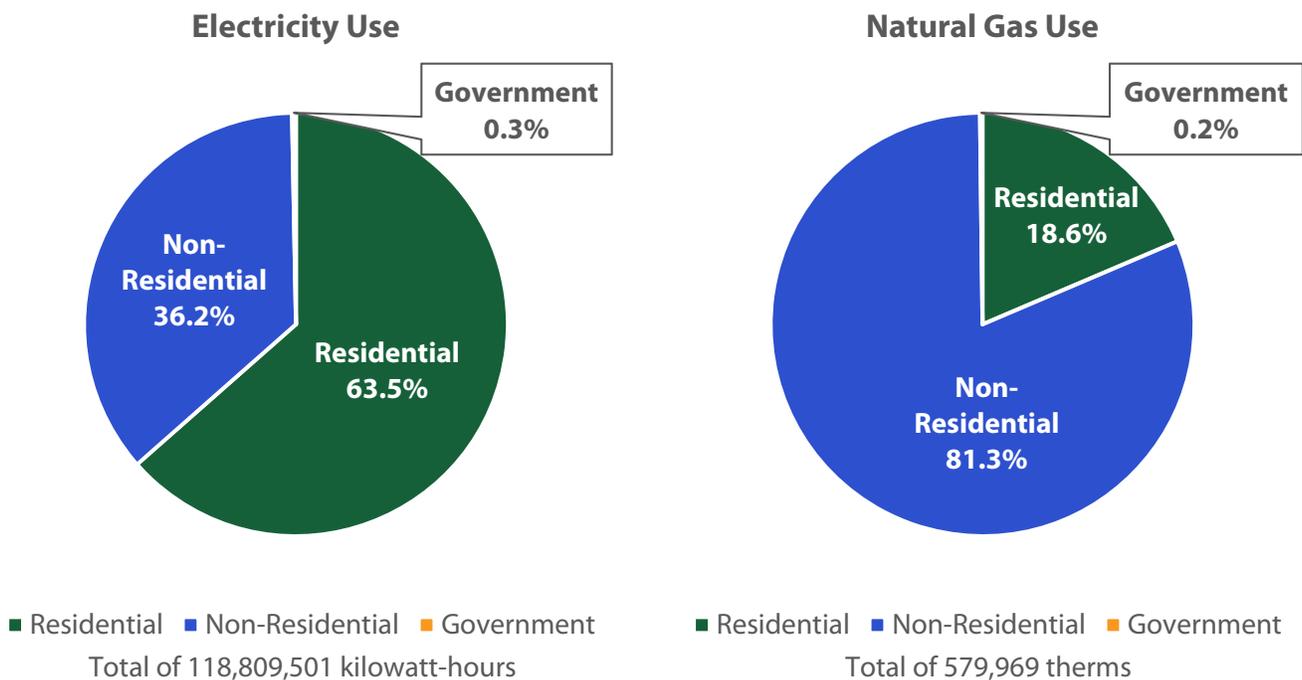
- A. Formalize local cultural resource preservation activities by implementing components of the National Park Service's Certified Local Government (CLG) program.

# CONSERVATION ELEMENT

## ENERGY RESOURCES

Electricity provided by Southern California Edison is the predominant source of energy in Laguna Woods with only a limited number of properties receiving natural gas service from the Southern California Gas Company. Residential uses account for the majority of local energy use, followed by commercial and other non-residential uses, and streetlights and other government uses.

**Figures CO-3 and CO-4: 2012 Laguna Woods Energy Use**



### **Goal CO-4. Increase energy resource independence.**

#### *Policy Objectives and Implementation Actions*

- CO-4.1. *Maintain energy reliability and affordability through conservation, efficiency, and independence.*
  - A. Develop a protocol for monitoring electricity use.
  - B. Streamline development and permitting standards and programs to encourage renewable energy technologies and energy efficiency improvements.
  - C. Join one or more Property Assessed Clean Energy (PACE) programs.
- CO-4.2. *Demonstrate sustainable energy resource leadership.*
  - A. Develop and implement municipal renewable energy technology and energy efficiency improvement projects.
  - B. Provide and facilitate energy-related public education opportunities.

# CONSERVATION ELEMENT

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## LAND RESOURCES

While dry farming and cattle grazing once dominated portions of South Orange County, much of Laguna Woods and the surrounding area is now urbanized.

### Forest Resources

Forest lands, as defined by the California Public Resources Code, include lands that can support 10% native tree cover of any species, including hardwoods, under natural conditions, and that allow for the management of one or more forest resources, including timber, aesthetics, fish and wildlife, biodiversity, water quality, recreation, and other public benefits. No forest lands or forest-related resources are located in Laguna Woods, nor is any land zoned for timberland production pursuant to the California Timberland Productivity Act of 1982.

### Soil Resources

Soil resources include soils with the potential for agricultural production based on Storie Index Soil Ratings, which assess crop suitability and associated hazards, such as wind erosion and expansive or collapsible properties. Approximately half of the soils in Laguna Woods are considered generally well-suited for agricultural purposes, although moderate to high soil erodability exists in certain areas, as well as deposits of soil with expansive and collapsible properties, which may imperil or effectively preclude agricultural potential. No commercial or large-scale agricultural uses exist in Laguna Woods. Additional soil analysis would be advisable prior to initiating agricultural uses.

### Mineral and Other Resources

Mineral resources include non-fuel (e.g., gold, silver, iron, and copper) and industrial minerals (e.g., boron compounds, rare-earth elements, clays, limestone, gypsum, salt, and dimension stone), as well as construction aggregate (e.g., sand and gravel) and crushed stone. While the California Department of Conservation has determined that much of Laguna Woods contains no significant mineral deposits or a minimal likelihood of the same, available geologic information is insufficient to determine the presence of significant mineral deposits in other areas (see Figure CO-5).

No known production-grade oil, natural gas, or other subsurface resources are located in Laguna Woods; however, changes in extraction and refinement technologies may alter future conditions.

### **Goal CO-5. Balance land resource utilization with environmental concerns.**

#### *Policy Objectives and Implementation Actions*

CO-5.1. *Adopt and enforce regulations promoting land resource goals.*

- A. Adopt, review, update, and enforce regulations including, but not limited to:
  - Regulations pertaining to mineral, oil, natural gas, and subsurface resource extraction operations with the potential to adversely impact the environment.

**Figure CO-5**  
**Mineral Resource Zones**

**LEGEND**

 Laguna Woods Boundary

 Local Roads

 Municipal Boundaries

**Mineral Land Classification**

 MRZ-1

 MRZ-3

*MRZ-1 are areas where no significant mineral deposits are present or little likelihood exists for their presence.*

*MRZ-3 are areas containing mineral deposits the significance of which cannot be evaluated from available data.*

**Sources:**

Laguna Woods Boundary -  
 City of Laguna Woods GIS,  
 City\_Boundary.shp

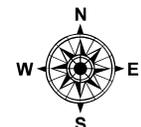
Municipal Boundary -  
 Cal Atlas, Incorp12\_1.shp

Local Roads -

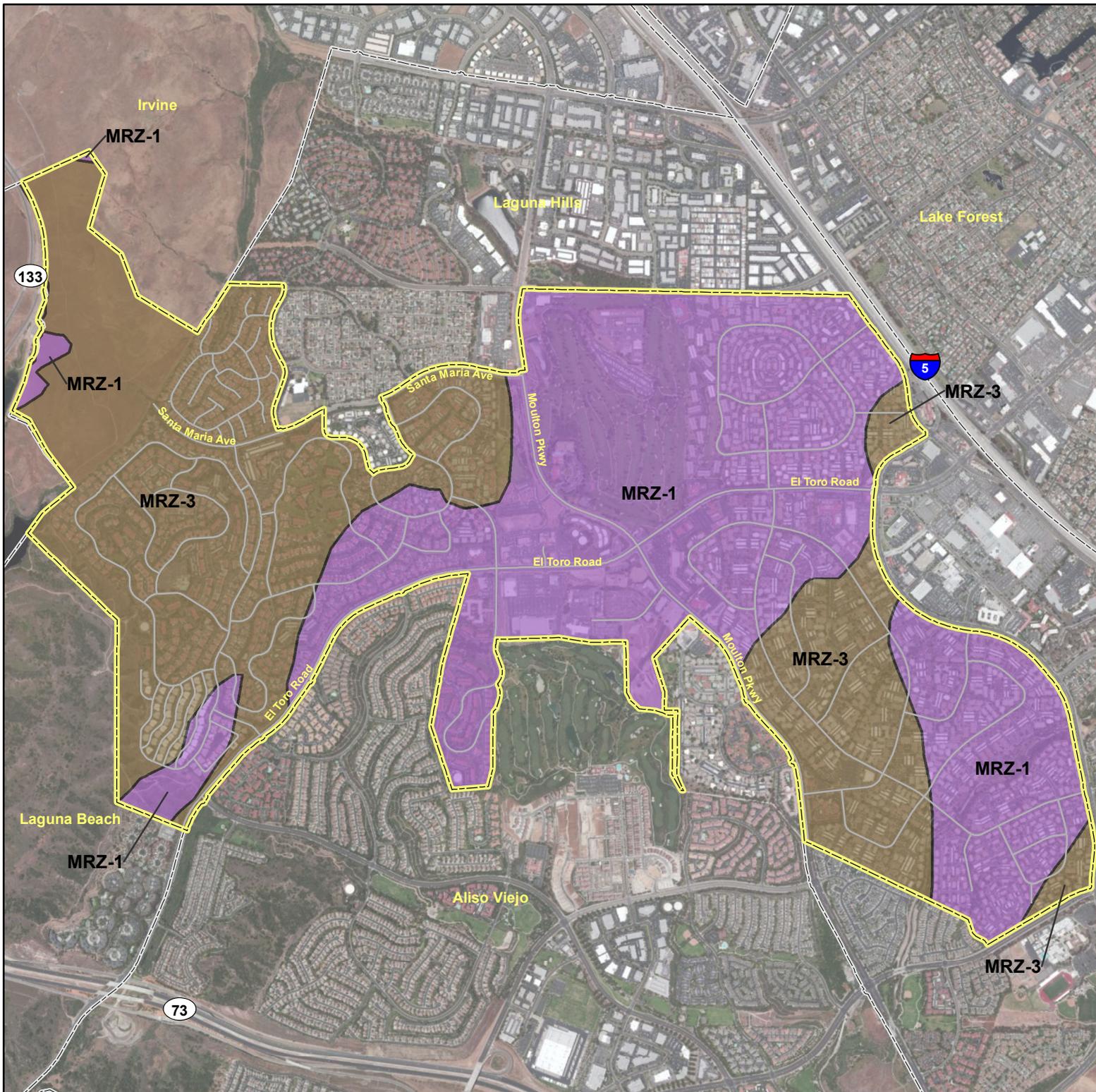
City of Laguna Woods GIS,  
 merge of centerline files

Imagery - ESRI Basemap, ArcGIS 10

Mineral Resource Zones - CA Dept  
 of Conservation, 1995



**City of Laguna Woods**  
**Conservation**  
**Element**



# CONSERVATION ELEMENT

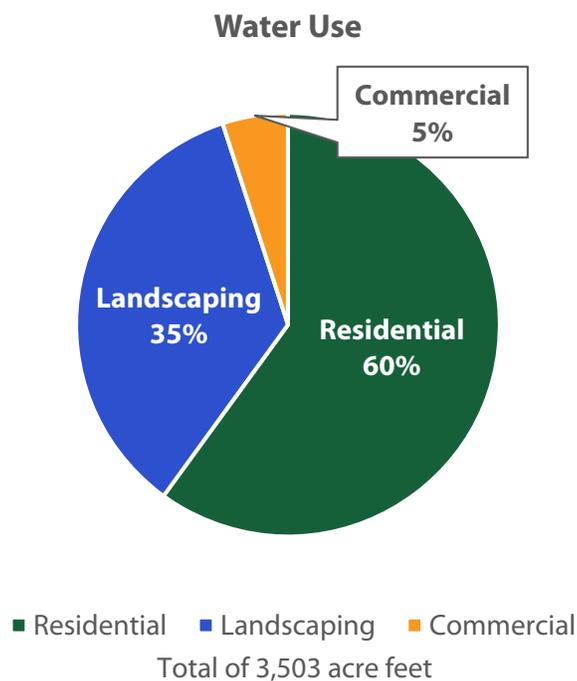
## WATER RESOURCES

Water is fundamental to life and crucial to the health and well-being of Laguna Woods' residents, businesses, visitors, biological communities, and downstream neighbors. Like other communities in California, water resources are threatened by drought, climate change, and other conditions.

### Water Supply

The El Toro Water District is responsible for providing water and wastewater services in Laguna Woods. Residential uses account for the majority of local water use, followed by landscaping and commercial uses. All potable water is imported by the El Toro Water District for local use.

**Figure CO-6: 2014 Laguna Woods Water Use**



Although the El Toro Water District is committed to developing local water resources, including the expansion of recycled water service, Laguna Woods will continue to be dependent on imported potable water from both the State Water Project and the Colorado River Basin for the foreseeable future. That dependence means that changes to precipitation levels, snowpack, or water demand in the Sierra Nevada or Colorado River Basin can have an effect on local water availability.

Laguna Woods is generally located at the southern terminus of the Orange County Groundwater Basin's coastal plain, which is a critical source of replenishable water for Orange County.

# CONSERVATION ELEMENT

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## **Goal CO-6. Increase water resource independence.**

### *Policy Objectives and Implementation Actions*

CO-6.1. *Adopt and enforce regulations promoting water resource goals.*

- A. Adopt, review, update, and enforce regulations including, but not limited to:
- Regulations pertaining to the minimization of water use in landscape improvements, as well as for new and significant redevelopment projects.

CO-6.2. *Maintain water reliability and affordability through conservation, efficiency, and independence.*

- A. Promote the retrofit of structures and irrigation systems with individual water meters through collaboration with other agencies and the pursuit of incentivizing measures.
- B. Join one or more Property Assessed Clean Energy (PACE) programs.

CO-6.3. *Demonstrate sustainable water resource leadership.*

- A. Manage the City's urban forest and landscaping in a changing climate through development and implementation of an Urban Forestry Management and Landscape Master Plan.
- B. Develop and implement municipal water efficiency improvement projects.
- C. Provide and facilitate water-related public education opportunities.

## Water Pollution

Laguna Woods is located in the San Juan Hydrologic Unit and lies within the boundaries of three watersheds: Aliso Creek, Newport Bay, and Laguna Coastal Streams Watershed (see Figure CO-7). In addition to Aliso Creek, which transects the southeastern portion of Laguna Woods for one-half mile, Laguna Woods is tributary to San Juan Creek, the Pacific Ocean, and other receiving waters.

The National Pollutant Discharge Elimination System (NPDES) is a federal program authorized by the Water Pollution Control Act of 1972 and implemented locally by the State Water Resources Control Board and its regional water quality control boards. NPDES regulations, and the associated permits that regulate local governments, seek to control the discharge of pollutants into waters of the United States (e.g., wetlands, rivers, streams, lakes, ponds, and territorial seas). Laguna Woods is subject to a variety of NPDES regulations and permits, including two phase II municipal separate storm sewer system permits. A relatively unique attribute of Laguna Woods is that it is one of few cities in California to experience split NPDES regulation and permitting, as a result of its location at the southern limit of the Santa Ana Regional Water Quality Control Board's jurisdiction and at the northern limit of the San Diego Regional Water Quality Control Board's jurisdiction.

Laguna Woods is subject to a California Water Code Section 13225 Directive concerning Aliso Creek. The directive, which was issued on March 2, 2001 by the San Diego Regional Water Quality Control Board seeks to reduce fecal indicator bacteria levels in Aliso Creek and its tributaries. The presence of fecal indicator bacteria suggests a likelihood of viruses and other harmful pathogens.

**Figure CO-7**  
**Watershed Boundaries**

**LEGEND**

-  Laguna Woods Boundary
-  Local Roads
-  Municipal Boundaries
-  Stream
-  303(d) Impaired Water Bodies
- Watersheds**
-  Aliso Creek
-  Laguna Coastal Streams
-  Newport Bay

Sources:  
 Laguna Woods Boundary - City of Laguna Woods GIS, City\_Boundary.shp  
 Municipal Boundary - Cal Atlas, Incorp12\_1.shp  
 Local Roads - City of Laguna Woods GIS, merge of centerline files  
 Imagery - ESRI Basemap, ArcGIS 10  
 Watershed Boundary - Orange County, 2014  
 Streams - CA Dept of Fish & Wildlife, 2014  
 Impaired Waters - EPA, 2014

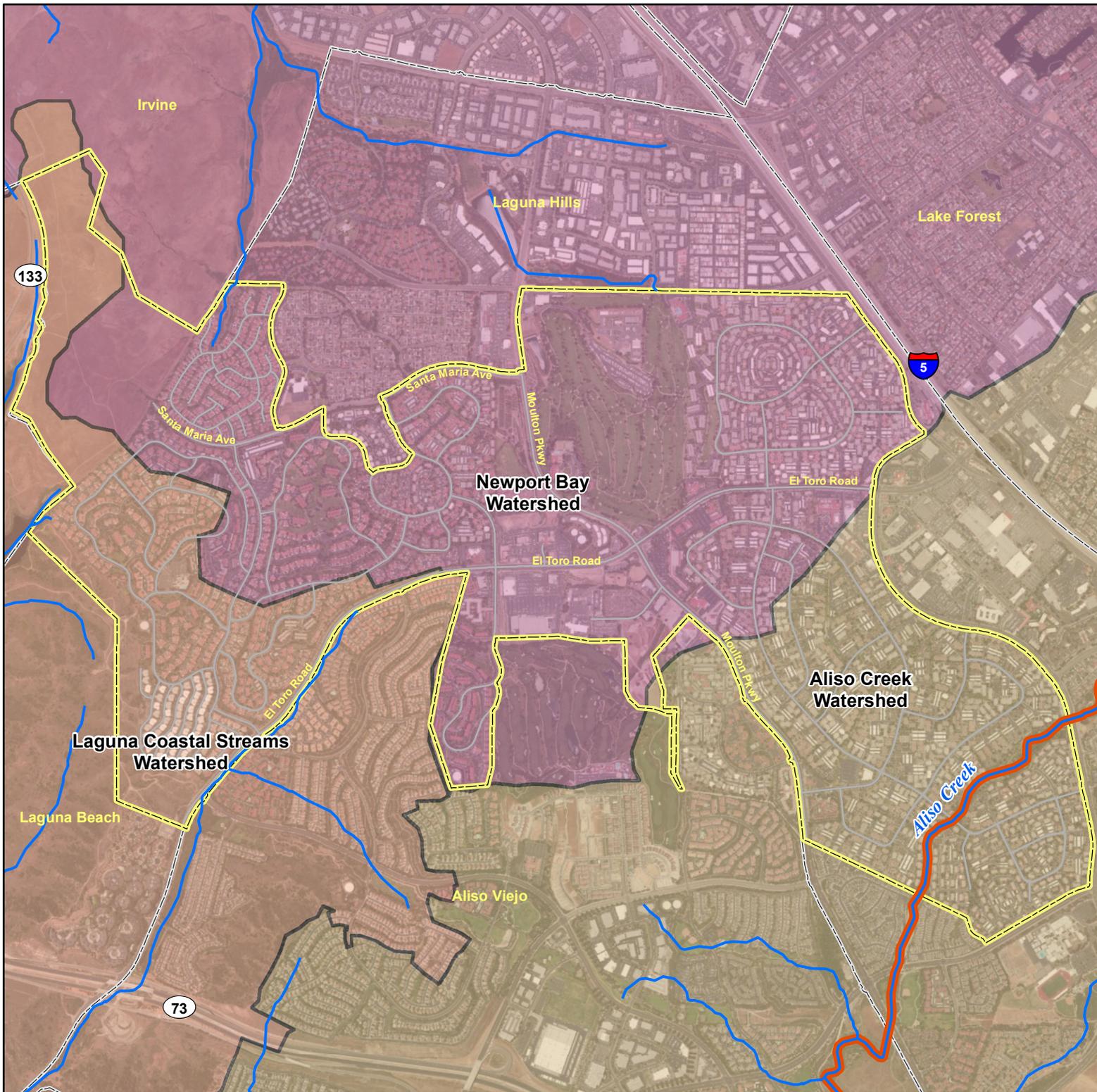


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**City of Laguna Woods**  
**Conservation**  
**Element**



February 2015



# CONSERVATION ELEMENT

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## **Goal CO-7. Improve receiving water quality.**

### *Policy Objectives and Implementation Actions*

CO-7.1. *Adopt and enforce regulations promoting water resource goals.*

- A. Adopt, review, update, and enforce regulations including, but not limited to:
  - Regulations pertaining to the attainment of goals, targets, and standards established by National Pollutant Discharge Elimination System (NPDES) permits.

CO-7.2. *Demonstrate sustainable water resource leadership.*

- A. Ensure that municipal landscaping operations employ weed and pest management practices that minimize the application of herbicides and pesticides.
- B. Expand the use of structural best management practices in municipal infrastructure projects, including permeable pavement and low impact development where feasible.
- C. Develop and implement municipal water quality improvement projects.
- D. Support the maintenance and operation of the Dairy Fork Constructed Wetland.
- E. Provide and facilitate water-related public education opportunities.

## **GREENHOUSE GAS EMISSIONS**

Greenhouse gases reflect heat back toward the earth's surface rather than allowing it to escape into space, in much the same way as the glass walls and ceiling of a greenhouse help to trap heat inside. As concentrations of greenhouse gases in the atmosphere increase, more heat is trapped, triggering changes in the global climate with cascading effects on the local climate. Greenhouse gases include carbon dioxide (CO<sub>2</sub>), methane (CH<sub>4</sub>), nitrous oxide (N<sub>2</sub>O), and fluorinated gases.

Greenhouse gas emissions contribute to the phenomenon of climate change, which has both global and local climate implications. Extreme heat (heat waves) is believed to be the most likely climate change exposure facing Laguna Woods and among the climate change exposures with the highest degree of certainty regarding future change. Climate change may also affect annual precipitation, extreme storms and flooding, wind, wildfires, and water availability.

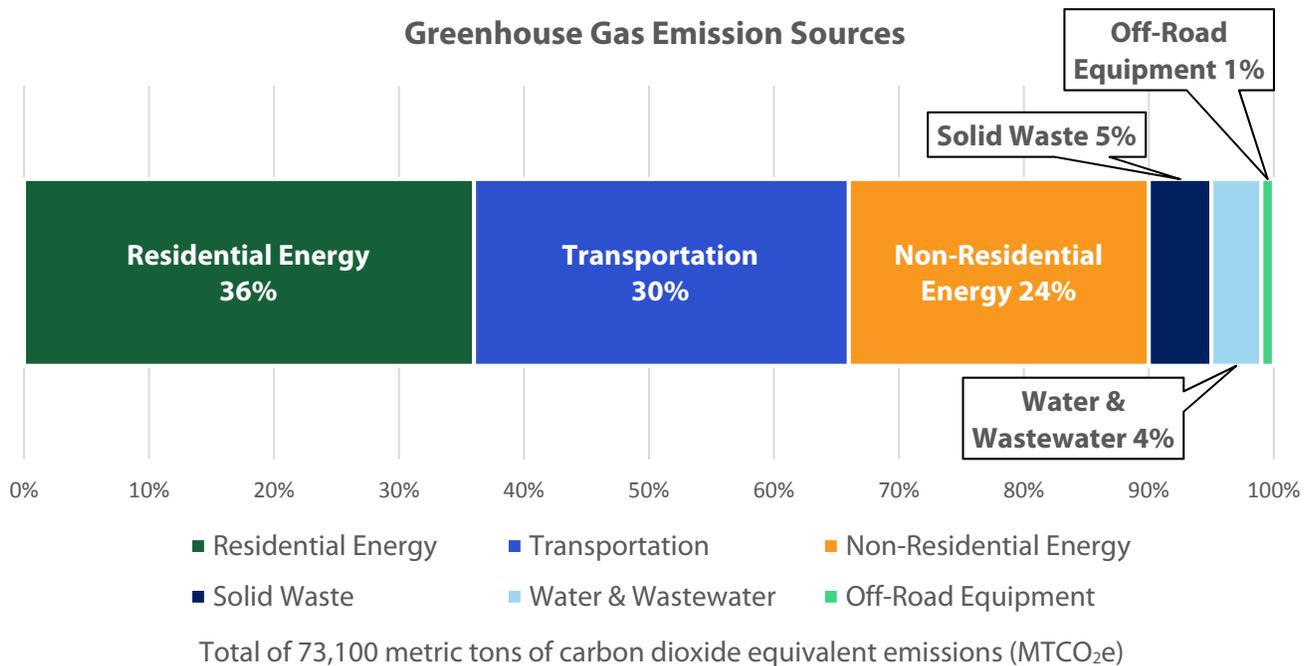
### Greenhouse Gas Emissions Inventory

In order to quantify the type and amount of greenhouse gases emitted by Laguna Woods, the City has developed a greenhouse gas emissions inventory based on activities in 2012. Six sectors were inventoried, including residential energy, non-residential energy, transportation, solid waste, water and wastewater, and off-road equipment (e.g., lawn mowers and leaf blowers). While a portion of the inventoried emissions were calculated based on emissions physically emanating from within Laguna Woods, the majority of inventoried emissions occurred outside of Laguna Woods, but as a direct effect of local demands (e.g., energy production and water conveyance activities).

# CONSERVATION ELEMENT

Energy and transportation account for the majority of local greenhouse gas emissions, followed by solid waste, water and wastewater, and off-road equipment.

**Figure CO-8: 2012 Laguna Woods Greenhouse Gas Emissions**



## **Goal CO-8. Reduce local greenhouse gas emissions.**

### *Policy Objectives and Implementation Actions*

#### *CO-8.1. Control sources of greenhouse gas emissions.*

- A. Develop and implement a Climate Action Plan that is aligned with federal and state standards and includes long-term strategies for reducing greenhouse gas emissions across all sectors.

#### *CO-8.2. Demonstrate climate change leadership.*

- A. Ensure that municipal solid waste handling services employ collection practices that minimize vehicle miles traveled and the consumption of fossil fuels.
- B. Incorporate climate adaptation into long-range planning documents.

See also the following priority issues for related considerations:

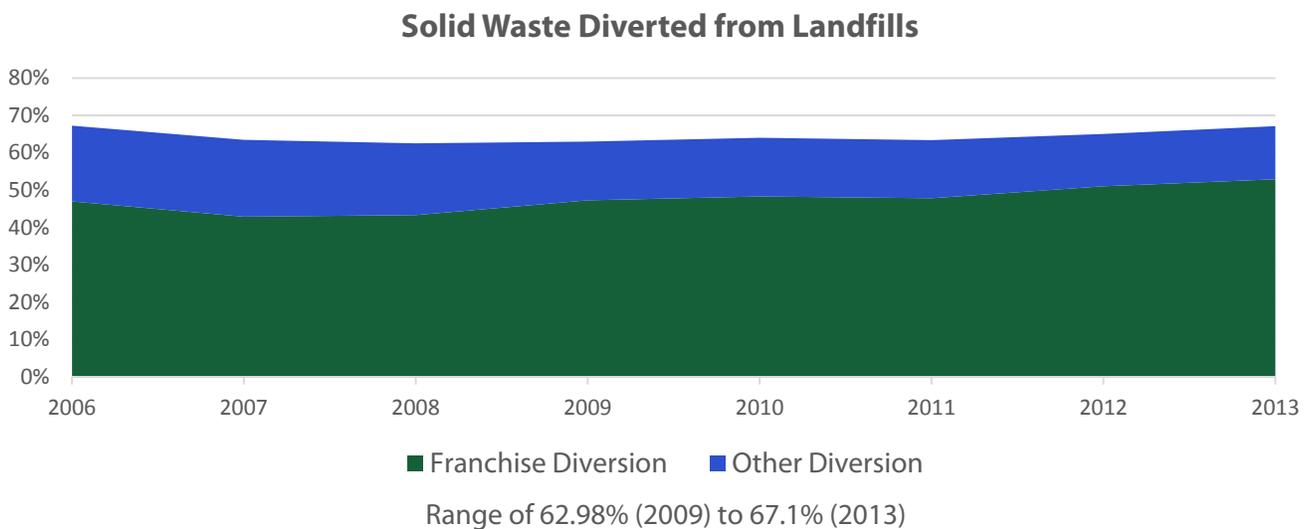
- Air Resources (page CO-5) – particularly, reduction of mobile source emissions
- Energy Resources (page CO-12) – particularly, increase of local energy generation
- Land Resources (page CO-13) – particularly, mitigation of adverse activity impacts
- Water Resources (page CO-15) – particularly, increase of local water production

# CONSERVATION ELEMENT

## WASTE AND RECYCLING

Waste and recycling services in Laguna Woods are primarily provided by franchise and other third-party contract service providers coordinated by the City. As of 2015, most of the waste that is not recycled or reused is transported to the 725-acre Frank R. Bowerman Landfill, located in the city of Irvine. The Frank R. Bowerman Landfill began operations in 1990 with 325 acres permitted for refuse disposal and is scheduled to reach capacity in approximately 2053.

**Figure CO-9: Laguna Woods Solid Waste Diversion**



### **Goal CO-9. Divert two-thirds of local waste from landfills.**

#### *Policy Objectives and Implementation Actions*

CO-9.1. *Adopt and enforce regulations promoting waste and recycling goals.*

A. Adopt, review, update, and enforce regulations including, but not limited to:

- Regulations pertaining to the landfill diversion of construction and demolition waste.
- Regulations pertaining to limitations on the use of products lacking biodegradability.

CO-9.2. *Expand opportunities for recycling and reuse of waste.*

A. Simplify recycling opportunities through public education, special collections, and equipment designed with the needs and demographics of local residents and businesses in mind.

B. Develop and implement municipal waste and recycling programs, including an organic waste diversion program and programs that convert solid waste to energy or other products.

CO-9.3. *Demonstrate waste and recycling leadership.*

A. Ensure that municipal purchasing considers recycled and recyclable products as practical.

**CITY OF LAGUNA WOODS  
INITIAL STUDY CHECKLIST**

**1. Project Title:** General Plan Conservation Element Update

**2. Lead Agency Name and Address:**

City of Laguna Woods  
24264 El Toro Road  
Laguna Woods, CA 92637

**3. Contact Person and Phone Number:**

Douglas C. Reilly, Assistant City Manager  
City of Laguna Woods  
24264 El Toro Road  
Laguna Woods, CA 92637  
949-639-0500

**4. Project Location:** City of Laguna Woods

**5. Project Sponsor's Name and Address:**

City of Laguna Woods  
24264 El Toro Road  
Laguna Woods, CA 92637

**6. General Plan Designation:** Not applicable

**7. Zoning:** Not applicable

**8. Description of Project:**

The Conservation Element is a required part of the City of Laguna Woods General Plan. A general plan is a State-required legal document that provides guidance to county and city decision-makers when allocating resources and determining the future physical form and character of development in California counties and cities. Pursuant to California Government Code Section 65302(d), the general plan must include a conservation element for the conservation, development, and utilization of natural resources including water and its hydraulic force, forests, soils, rivers and other waters, harbors, fisheries, wildlife, minerals, and other natural resources. The portion of the conservation element including waters must be developed in coordination with the El Toro Water District, including discussion and evaluation of water supply and demand information described in Section 65352.5 of the California Government Code.

The City of Laguna Woods Conservation Element was last amended in 2003. The Conservation Element update addresses solid waste, renewable energy, biological resources, and cultural resources. The Conservation Element update also includes topics not discussed in the current element such as energy resources and greenhouse gas emissions. Additionally, the Conservation Element update places emphasis on water supply, quality, and management, and includes new analysis of the Laguna Laurel property, which was annexed following completion of the existing Conservation Element in

2003. Flood hazards are now covered in the Safety Element (City of Laguna Woods 2014). The updated Conservation Element includes revised key issues, policy objectives, implementation actions, and exhibits. A supporting background report was also prepared (City of Laguna Woods 2015a).

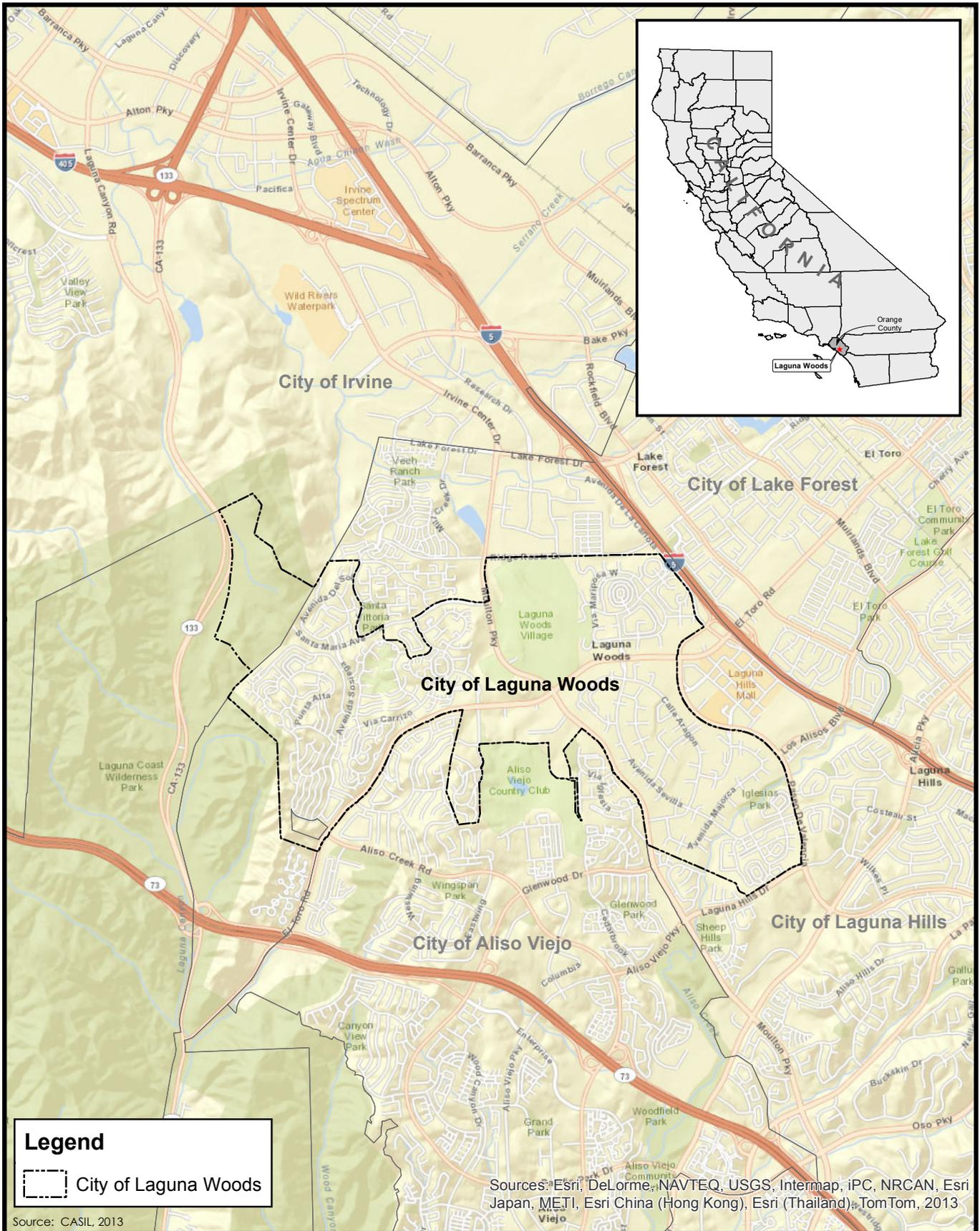
The update to the Conservation Element would not materially affect the physical environment nor result in any new environmental impacts not already contemplated in the City's General Plan EIR.

**9. Surrounding Land Uses and Setting:**

The City of Laguna Woods is located in south Orange County between the San Joaquin Foothills and the Santa Ana Mountains. Laguna Woods is bordered on the north, east, and southeast by the City of Laguna Hills, on the northwest by the City of Irvine, on the west by unincorporated Orange County and the City of Laguna Beach, and on the south by the City of Aliso Viejo (**Figure 1**). Interstate 5 provides access to the city via El Toro Road, which traverses Laguna Woods east to west. Moulton Parkway crosses the city north to south.

**10. Other public agencies whose approval is required:**

- None

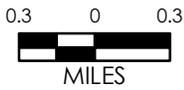


**Legend**

 City of Laguna Woods

Sources: Esri, DeLorme, NAVTEQ, USGS, Intermap, iPC, NRCAN, Esri Japan, METI, Esri China (Hong Kong), Esri (Thailand), TomTom, 2013

Source: CASIL, 2013



**Figure 1**  
Project Location



ENVIRONMENTAL FACTORS POTENTIALLY AFFECTED:

The environmental factors checked below would be potentially affected by this project, involving at least one impact that is a "Potentially Significant Impact" as indicated by the checklist on the following pages.

- |   |  |   |
|---|--|---|
| <input type="checkbox"/> Aesthetics             | <input type="checkbox"/> Greenhouse Gas Emissions    | <input type="checkbox"/> Population/Housing                 |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Agricultural Resources | <input type="checkbox"/> Hazards/Hazardous Materials | <input type="checkbox"/> Public Services                    |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Air Quality            | <input type="checkbox"/> Hydrology/Water Quality     | <input type="checkbox"/> Recreation                         |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Biological Resources   | <input type="checkbox"/> Land Use/Planning           | <input type="checkbox"/> Transportation/Traffic             |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Cultural Resources     | <input type="checkbox"/> Mineral Resources           | <input type="checkbox"/> Utilities/Service Systems          |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Geology and Soils      | <input type="checkbox"/> Noise                       | <input type="checkbox"/> Mandatory Findings of Significance |

DETERMINATION: (To be completed by the lead agency)

On the basis of this initial evaluation:

- I find that the proposed project COULD NOT have a significant effect on the environment, and a NEGATIVE DECLARATION will be prepared.
- I find that although the proposed project could have a significant effect on the environment there will not be a significant effect in this case because revisions in the project have been made by or agreed to by the project proponent. A MITIGATED NEGATIVE DECLARATION will be prepared.
- I find that the proposed project MAY have a significant effect on the environment, and an ENVIRONMENTAL IMPACT REPORT is required.
- I find that the proposed project MAY have a "potentially significant impact" or "potentially significant unless mitigated" impact on the environment, but at least one effect (1) has been adequately analyzed in an earlier document pursuant to applicable legal standards, and (2) has been addressed by mitigation measures based on the earlier analysis as described on attached sheets. An ENVIRONMENTAL IMPACT REPORT is required, but it must analyze only the effects that remain to be addressed.
- I find that although the proposed project could have a significant effect on the environment, because all potentially significant effects (a) have been analyzed adequately in an earlier EIR or NEGATIVE DECLARATION pursuant to applicable standards, and (b) have been avoided or mitigated pursuant to that earlier EIR or NEGATIVE DECLARATION, including revisions or mitigation measures that are imposed upon the proposed project, nothing further is required.

Signature: \_\_\_\_\_  
Douglas C. Reilly, Assistant City Manager

Date: \_\_\_\_\_

Signature:  \_\_\_\_\_  
Jeff Henderson, PMC

Date: May 27, 2015

**I. AESTHETICS**

Issues:	Potentially Significant Impact	Less Than Significant Impact With Mitigation Incorporated	Less Than Significant Impact	No Impact
Would the project:				
a) Have a substantial adverse effect on a scenic vista?				X
b) Substantially damage scenic resources, including, but not limited to, trees, rock outcroppings, and historic buildings within a state scenic highway?				X
c) Substantially degrade the existing visual character or quality of the site and its surroundings?				X
d) Create a new source of substantial light or glare which would adversely affect day or nighttime views in the area?				X

**Discussion:**

a–d) **No Impact.** This update to the General Plan Conservation Element does not propose any actions that would result in development of a specific site or change land use designations or development potential in any area of the city. The goals and policies in the Conservation Element are intended to protect, conserve, and manage natural resources including water, soils, wildlife, and historical, paleontological, and archaeological resources to the extent possible at the local level. As such, implementation of the Conservation Element is not anticipated to have a negative impact on aesthetics, as it does not propose any projects, programs, or actions that could reasonably be expected to adversely affect scenic vistas, damage scenic resources, degrade the visual character of any sites, or create substantial light or glare. No impacts to aesthetics would occur.

**II. AGRICULTURE RESOURCES**

<b>Issues:</b>	<b>Potentially Significant Impact</b>	<b>Less Than Significant Impact With Mitigation Incorporated</b>	<b>Less Than Significant Impact</b>	<b>No Impact</b>
In determining whether impacts to agricultural resources are significant environmental effects, lead agencies may refer to the California Agricultural Land Evaluation and Site Assessment Model (1997) prepared by the California Department of Conservation as an optional model to use in assessing impacts on agriculture and farmland. Would the project:				
a) Convert Prime Farmland, Unique Farmland, or Farmland of Statewide Importance (Farmland), as shown on the maps prepared pursuant to the Farmland Mapping and Monitoring Program of the California Resources Agency, to nonagricultural use?				<b>X</b>
b) Conflict with existing zoning for agricultural use, or a Williamson Act contract?				<b>X</b>
c) Conflict with existing zoning for, or cause rezoning of, forestland (as defined in Public Resources Code Section 12220(g)), timberland (as defined by Public Resources Code Section 4526), or timberland zoned Timberland Production (as defined by Government Code Section 51104 (g))?				<b>X</b>
d) Result in loss of forestland or conversion of forestland to non-forest use?				<b>X</b>
e) Involve other changes in the existing environment which, due to their location or nature, could result in conversion of Farmland to nonagricultural use or conversion of forestland to non-forest use?				<b>X</b>

**Discussion:**

a–b) **No Impact.** The entire City of Laguna Woods is designated as Urban and Built-Up Land on the latest Farmland Mapping and Monitoring Program (FMMP) map (DOC 2015). No impact to agricultural resources would occur.

c–d) **No Impact.** No trees will be removed as a result of the project, and no production-grade forest resources are located in the city. No impact to forest resources would occur.

e) **No Impact.** There are no agricultural or forest resources in Laguna Woods; therefore, no impacts related to the conversion of such resources would occur.

**III. AIR QUALITY**

Issues:	Potentially Significant Impact	Less Than Significant Impact With Mitigation Incorporated	Less Than Significant Impact	No Impact
Where available, the significance criteria established by the applicable air quality management or air pollution control district may be relied upon to make the following determinations. Would the project:				
a) Conflict with or obstruct implementation of the applicable air quality plan?			X	
b) Violate any air quality standard or contribute substantially to an existing or projected air quality violation?			X	
c) Result in a cumulatively considerable net increase of any criteria pollutant for which the project region is non-attainment under an applicable federal or state ambient air quality standard (including releasing emissions which exceed quantitative thresholds for ozone precursors)?			X	
d) Expose sensitive receptors to substantial pollutant concentrations?			X	
e) Create objectionable odors affecting a substantial number of people?				X

**Discussion:**

Laguna Woods is located in the South Coast Air Basin, which includes the non-desert portions of Los Angeles, Riverside, and San Bernardino counties and all of Orange County. The air basin lies on a coastal plain with connecting broad valleys and low hills and is bounded by the Pacific Ocean on the southwest, with high mountains forming the remainder of the perimeter (SCAQMD 1993). Air quality in the basin is affected by temperature, precipitation patterns, and other climatic factors, along with levels of pollutants emitted from stationary and mobile sources. Criteria air pollutants are regulated by federal and state laws due to known adverse health effects such as asthma, lung disease, and cardiovascular disease. Pollutants can also have negative impacts on plants and deterioration of property. Ozone and fine particulate matter (PM<sub>10</sub> and PM<sub>2.5</sub>) are the most important pollutants affecting this portion of the air basin due to high concentrations. Pollution in the air basin exceeds established state ozone, PM<sub>10</sub>, and PM<sub>2.5</sub> standards and federal ozone and PM<sub>2.5</sub> standards (City of Laguna Woods 2015a).

Toxic air contaminants are considered either carcinogenic or noncarcinogenic based on the nature of the health effects associated with exposure to the pollutant. There are many different types of toxic air contaminants with varying degrees of toxicity. The primary source of toxic air contaminants in the planning area is motor vehicle exhaust. In 1998, the California Air Resources Board identified particulate emissions from diesel-fueled engines (diesel particulate matter) as a toxic air contaminant. Diesel particulate matter is one of the most impactful compounds in Southern California. Because of their extremely small size (almost all diesel exhaust particle mass is 10 microns or less in diameter), these particles can be inhaled and eventually trapped in the bronchial and alveolar regions of the lung. Resulting health effects include cancer, birth defects, neurological damage, and death. In 2008, the South Coast Air Quality Management District updated the study on ambient concentrations of toxic air contaminants and estimated the potential health risks from air toxics. The results showed that the overall risk for excess cancer from a lifetime exposure to ambient levels of toxic air contaminants was about 1,200 in a million. The largest contributor to this risk was diesel particulate matter, accounting for 84 percent of the air toxics risk (SCAQMD 2008).

Some land uses are considered more sensitive to air pollution than others due to the types of population groups or activities involved. Sensitive population groups include the elderly, children, the acutely ill, and the chronically ill, especially those with cardiorespiratory diseases. Residential areas are considered to be sensitive receptors to air pollution because residents (including children and the elderly) tend to be at

home for extended periods of time, resulting in sustained exposure to any pollutants present. Recreational land uses, such as golf courses, are considered moderately sensitive to air pollution. Although exposure periods are generally short, exercise places a high demand on respiratory functions, which can be impaired by air pollution. In addition, noticeable air pollution can detract from the enjoyment of recreation.

a–d) **Less than Significant Impact.** The updated Conservation Element does not propose any actions that would result in development of a specific site, fundamentally change an area in the city, or require any revisions to zoned density or land use designation for any parcel. The updated Conservation Element does not propose any actions that would result in the obstruction of the applicable air quality plan, violate any air quality standard, result in a cumulatively considerable net increase of any criteria pollutant, expose sensitive receptors, or create objectionable odors. Rather, adopting and implementing Conservation Element policy objectives and actions would reduce criteria air pollutant emissions and improve community health. For example, Policy Objective CO-1.1 requires the adoption and enforcement of regulations promoting air resource goals, including regulations pertaining to new and significant redevelopment project requirements for the accommodation and promotion of mobility alternatives to fossil-fueled vehicles. This would be accomplished by complying with the 2012 Air Quality Management Plan, and ensuring development of stationary sources of pollution in the planning area is evaluated, reviewed, and permitted by the South Coast Air Quality Management District. Action CO-1.1A seeks to protect sensitive receptors and improve indoor air quality by ensuring that future facilities serving sensitive populations are located away from primary pollutant emission sources. Implementation of the policy objectives found in the Conservation Element update would be beneficial to reducing air quality impacts. As a result, impacts to air quality resulting from adoption and implementation of the Conservation Element would be less than significant.

e) **No Impact.** According to the South Coast Air Quality Management District’s (1993) *CEQA Air Quality Handbook*, land uses associated with odor complaints include agricultural operations, wastewater treatment plants, landfills, and certain industrial operations (e.g., manufacturing uses that produce chemicals). Odors are typically associated with industrial projects involving the use of chemicals, solvents, petroleum products, and other strong-smelling elements used in manufacturing processes, as well as sewage treatment facilities and landfills. The update to the Conservation Element does not include any of the above-noted uses or process; no impact would occur.

**IV. BIOLOGICAL RESOURCES**

Issues:	Potentially Significant Impact	Less Than Significant Impact With Mitigation Incorporated	Less Than Significant Impact	No Impact
Would the project:				
a) Have a substantial adverse effect, either directly or through habitat modifications, on any species identified as a candidate, sensitive, or special-status species in local or regional plans, policies, or regulations, or by the California Department of Fish and Wildlife or US Fish and Wildlife Service?			X	
b) Have a substantial adverse effect on any riparian habitat or other sensitive natural community identified in local or regional plans, policies, or regulations, or by the California Department of Fish and Wildlife or US Fish and Wildlife Service?			X	
c) Have a substantial adverse effect on federally protected wetlands as defined by Section 404 of the Clean Water Act (including, but not limited to, marsh, vernal pool, coastal, etc.) through direct removal, filling, hydrological interruption, or other means?			X	
d) Interfere substantially with the movement of any native resident or migratory fish or wildlife species or with established native resident or migratory wildlife corridors, or impede the use of native wildlife nursery sites?			X	
e) Conflict with any local policies or ordinances protecting biological resources, such as a tree preservation policy or ordinances?				X
f) Conflict with the provisions of an adopted habitat conservation plan, natural community conservation plan, or other approved local, regional, or state habitat conservation plan?				X

**Discussion:**

Though most of Laguna Woods is fully urbanized, several open space areas remain that support biological resources. In some cases, urbanized areas also provide valuable habitat to support biological resources. The natural community types in Laguna Woods include annual grassland, coastal scrub, and valley-foothill riparian, as well as aquatic habitats such as lacustrine, riverine, and other open waters. Urban land uses include residential and commercial development, as well as landscaped parks and ruderal vacant lots. Specific essential biological resource areas include:

- The 178-acre Laguna Laurel property, which the City annexed in 2008;
- The Woods End Wilderness Preserve, which consists of several trails winding through coastal sage scrub habitat; and
- The Aliso Creek drainage and associated riparian corridor.

These areas support sensitive natural communities that are of special concern to resource agencies.

The largest of these resource areas is the 178-acre Laguna Laurel property, which makes up the northwestern corner of the planning area. The property is owned by the Irvine Company, which granted it as an easement to the Nature Conservancy in 2001. Historically, the Laguna Laurel property was subject to cultivation and intense cattle grazing; cattle grazing ended in 2002. As a result of past disturbances, the property supports primarily nonnative annual grassland; however, patches of coastal sage scrub, native perennial grassland, seasonal wetlands, and riparian communities also occur on-site. This property is part of Laguna Coast Wilderness Park and is managed by Orange County Parks. The northwestern portion of the property is bounded by Laguna Canyon Road. Species movement between Laguna Laurel and the western Laguna Coast Wilderness Park is facilitated by several wildlife tunnels that were installed during a road realignment project (City of Laguna Woods 2015a).

The Woods End Wilderness Preserve is another large open space area in the city. It consists of several trails winding through coastal sage scrub habitat. This preserve lies adjacent to the James Dilley Greenbelt Preserve, which is part of Laguna Coast Wilderness Park. A small portion of Barbara's Lake overlaps with the planning area. This lake and another lake just north and outside of the planning area are known collectively as Lagunas Lakes and are the only natural lakes in Orange County. Southern California Edison maintains a right-of-way that extends more than a mile along the southwesterly edge of the planning area and is within the boundaries of the preserve (City of Laguna Woods 2015a).

Other resource areas in the planning area include several drainages and associated riparian corridors. The primary drainage feature in the planning area is Aliso Creek. Other unnamed drainages in the planning area include a tributary to San Diego Creek and a feature near the Aliso Golf Course. Finally, a man-made lake/retention basin known as Rossmoor 1799 Dam is located west of the Laguna Woods Golf Course (City of Laguna Woods 2015a).

a–d) **Less Than Significant Impact.** The updated Conservation Element does not propose any actions that would result in development of a specific site or have any effect on areas designated for the protection of biological or natural resources. Rather, Conservation Element policy objectives are designed to preserve and enhance the environment to support biological health. Policy Objective CO-2.4, for example, promotes connectivity between regional and subregional open spaces, while Action CO-2.1A directs the City to adopt, review, update, and enforce regulations including but not limited to those pertaining to the long-term maintenance of biological resource areas as open space areas, with limitations on activities with the potential to adversely impact ecologically valuable vegetative communities or sensitive wildlife communities. This can be accomplished in numerous ways that include maintaining the riparian area around Aliso Creek and connecting drainages as habitat suitable to facilitate regional wildlife movement (Action CO-2.4B). Compliance with these policy objectives and actions adopted to reduce environmental effects would result in a less than significant impact to candidate, sensitive, or special-status species, jurisdictional areas, or wildlife corridors.

e) **No Impact.** The updated Conservation Element does not propose any action that would directly or indirectly result in development of a specific site that would remove trees. Therefore, no impact would occur.

f) **No Impact.** The Orange County Natural Community Conservation Plan (NCCP) for the Central and Coastal Subarea is a 208,000-acre area (about 325 square miles) with a 37,380-acre reserve system that includes the central portion of Orange County, incorporating the area from the coastline inland to Riverside County. Existing natural habitat, including 13 major vegetation types, covers about one-half of the overall Central and Coastal Subarea. The remainder of the subarea is already urbanized or committed to agricultural uses. Laguna Woods is in proximity and adjacent to the habitat reserve system created by the NCCP. However, no development associated with the Conservation Element update is proposed. Therefore, there is no conflict with the NCCP, and no impacts would occur.

**V. CULTURAL RESOURCES**

Issues:	Potentially Significant Impact	Less Than Significant Impact With Mitigation Incorporated	Less Than Significant Impact	No Impact
Would the project:				
a) Cause a substantial adverse change in the significance of a historical resource as defined in Section 15064.5?			X	
b) Cause a substantial adverse change in the significance of an archaeological resource pursuant to Section 15064.5?			X	
c) Directly or indirectly destroy a unique paleontological resource or site or unique geologic feature?				X
d) Disturb any human remains, including those interred outside of formal cemeteries?			X	

**Discussion:**

Laguna Woods is part of a region that was populated by the Gabrielino and Luiseño Native American communities. It has a strong historical tradition associated with Spanish missionaries and ranching activities dating back to the early Spanish land grants. Cultural resources consist of prehistoric and historic sites, structures, and districts or any other physical evidence associated with human activity considered important to a culture, a subculture, or a community for scientific, traditional, or religious reasons. Twelve known archeological sites exist in or immediately adjacent to the planning area, including one isolated prehistoric artifact. Three of the sites appear to be in areas that have been developed; the rest of the sites appear to be in undeveloped areas or are specifically protected from development. Laguna Woods is a relatively new community. The first modern dwelling units were constructed during the early 1960s and are therefore entering the second half-decade of existence. No buildings or resources in the planning area are currently listed on the National Register of Historic Places or the California Register of Historic Resources (City of Laguna Woods 2015a).

Paleontological resources include fossil remains, as well as fossil localities and formations that have produced fossil material. Resources are broken down into multiple categories for regulation and treatment: archeological resources, cultural resources, historic properties, historical resources, and paleontological resources. The City maintains a record of identified sites in each of these categories. The majority of the planning area is mapped as being paleontologically sensitive due to underlying geologic units, including terrestrial vertebrate fossils and marine fauna (City of Laguna Woods 2015a).

a–b, d) **Less than Significant Impact.** Identifying a particular building as a historic resource is a formal process, regulated primarily by the state and federal governments. Once identified, historical resources are afforded broad protection under the California Environmental Quality Act, based on eligibility for the National Register of Historic Places and the California Register of Historic Resources. Generally, to be identified as a historical resource, a structure must be over 50 years old and possess integrity of location, design, setting, materials, workmanship, feeling, and association. In addition, the structure must meet at least one of the following conditions:

- Is associated with events that have made a significant contribution to the broad patterns of United States or California history and cultural heritage.
- Is associated with the lives of persons important in our past.
- Embodies the distinctive characteristics of a type, period, region, or method of construction, or represents the work of an important creative individual, or possesses high artistic values.
- Has yielded, or may be likely to yield, information important in prehistory or history.

No site specific development would result from the implementation of the Conservation Element. Instead, the Conservation Element proposes policies to protect cultural and archaeological resources. For example, Policy Objective CO-3.1 aims to protect archaeological, paleontological, and historical sites of value in the city from the impacts of new development. The City would implement this policy objective by formalizing local cultural resource preservation activities by implementing components of the National Park Service's Certified Local Government program (Action CO-3.1A). The City's goal is to continue to protect cultural and paleontological resources through environmental review of development projects and by continuing to preserve open spaces in the planning area. With adoption and implementation of these and related policy objectives and actions, impacts to historic and cultural resources and human remains would be less than significant.

c) **No Impact.** No site specific development would result from the implementation of the Conservation Element. Instead, the Conservation Element proposes policies to protect paleontological resources. As discussed above, Policy Objective CO-3.1 aims to protect paleontological resources of value in the city from the impacts of new development. The City would implement this policy objective by formalizing local cultural resource preservation activities by implementing components of the National Park Service's Certified Local Government program (Action CO-3.1A).. No additional impacts to cultural resources would occur.

**VI. GEOLOGY AND SOILS**

Issues:	Potentially Significant Impact	Less Than Significant Impact With Mitigation Incorporated	Less Than Significant Impact	No Impact
Would the project?				
a) Expose people or structures to potential substantial adverse effects, including the risk of loss, injury, or death involving:				
i) Rupture of a known earthquake fault, as delineated on the most recent Alquist-Priolo Earthquake Fault Zoning Map issued by the State Geologist for the area or based on other substantial evidence of a known fault? Refer to Division of Mines and Geology Special Publication 42.				X
ii) Strong seismic ground shaking?				X
iii) Seismic-related ground failure, including liquefaction?			X	
iv) Landslides?			X	
b) Result in substantial soil erosion or the loss of topsoil?			X	
c) Be located on a geologic unit or soil that is unstable, or that would become unstable as a result of the project, and potentially result in on- or off-site landslide, lateral spreading, subsidence, liquefaction, or collapse?			X	
d) Be located on expansive soil, as defined in Table 18-1-B of the Uniform Building Code (1994), creating substantial risks to life or property?			X	
e) Have soils incapable of adequately supporting the use of septic tanks or alternative waste water disposal systems where sewers are not available for the disposal of waste water?				X

**Discussion:**

Thousands of earthquakes occur in Southern California each year; however, most are not felt by humans. The most recent significant earthquake to affect the city occurred in 2008 in Chino Hills, California and registered a magnitude of 5.4. According to research by the United States Geological Survey and California Geological Survey<sup>1</sup>, the probability of an earthquake with a magnitude of 6.7 or greater occurring in Southern California by 2038 is 97% (City of Laguna Woods 2014). Earthquakes with magnitudes of 7.0, 7.5, and 8.0 over the same period have estimated probabilities of 82%, 37%, and 3%, respectively (City of Laguna Woods 2014).

a.i) **No Impact.** The closest faults likely to produce large earthquakes are the San Andreas, San Jacinto, Elsinore-Whittier, and Newport-Inglewood faults. These faults are located in Alquist-Priolo special study zones. However, these faults do not traverse the city and as a result, there are no Alquist-Priolo fault hazard zones in Laguna Woods (CGS 2015). Also, the proposed project does not encourage or permit development; therefore, no impacts related to surface fault rupture associated with those faults would occur.

a.ii) **No Impact.** The planning area is subject to strong ground shaking, as is all of seismically active Southern California. The recently updated City of Laguna Woods Safety Element (2014) includes goals, policy objectives, and implementation actions to protect residents, business, and government functions from geologic and seismic hazards. However, implementation of the Conservation Element would not result in development of a specific site and therefore would not expose people and/or structures to potential substantial adverse effects involving seismic-related activity. The update to the General Plan Conservation Element does not propose any actions that would result in development of a specific site or fundamentally change an area in the city. As such, implementation of the Conservation Element update is

<sup>1</sup> The Uniform California Earthquake Rupture Forecast, V. 2 (2008)

not anticipated to have a negative impact on issues associated with strong ground shaking. Therefore, no impacts are associated with this issue area.

a.iii, c) **Less Than Significant Impact.** Liquefaction typically occurs when near-surface (usually upper 50 feet) saturated, clean, fine-grained loose sands are subject to intense ground shaking, causing the soil to lose strength and behave similar to liquid. The potential for liquefaction depends on the magnitude of ground shaking, groundwater conditions, the relative density of the soils, and the age of site-specific geologic units. Seismic-induced liquefaction occurs when a saturated, granular deposit of low relative density is subject to extreme shaking and loses strength or stiffness due to increased pore water pressure. The consequences of liquefaction are typically characterized by settlement, uplift on structures, and increases in the lateral pressure of buried structures. If building foundations are not designed properly, the effects of severe liquefaction during seismic conditions may result in structural failure, leading to substantial structural damage and injury or loss of life. The planning area is subject to liquefaction due to fluctuating groundwater levels that can be 30 feet or closer to the surface. According to the City of Laguna Woods (2012) Local Hazard Mitigation Plan (LHMP), approximately 256 acres (12 percent) of Laguna Woods is susceptible to liquefaction hazards. However, the update to the General Plan Conservation Element does not propose any actions that would result in development of a specific site or fundamentally change an area in the city. Additionally, the City's recently adopted Safety Element (2014) includes goals, policy objectives, and implementation actions to protect residents, business, and government functions from geologic and seismic hazards. As such, implementation of the Conservation Element is not anticipated to have a negative impact on issues associated with liquefaction or landslides. Therefore, impacts would be less than significant.

a.iv) **Less Than Significant Impact.** Landslides and other forms of slope failure form in response to the long-term geologic cycle of uplift, mass wasting, and disturbance of slopes. Mass wasting refers to a variety of erosional processes from gradual downhill soil creep to mudslides, debris flows, landslides, and rock fall—processes that are commonly triggered by intense precipitation, which varies according to climatic shifts. Often, various forms of mass wasting are grouped together as landslides, which are generally used to describe the downhill movement of rock and soil. Some parts of the city are subject to earthquake-induced landslides. As stated in the LHMP (2012), an estimated 77 acres (4 percent) of the city is known to be susceptible to earthquake-induced landslides. However, the Conservation Element update does not propose any construction or development projects, and implementation of the updated Conservation Element is not anticipated to have negative impacts related to slope stability and other geologic conditions. Therefore, impacts related to landslides and slope failure would be less than significant.

b, d) **Less Than Significant Impact.** The soil units in the city are characterized as having rapid runoff potential, making them susceptible to erosion and loss of topsoil. Additionally, the majority of the soils found within the city contain a clay percentage ranging from 18 to 55 percent, which is equivalent to a low (less than 25 percent) to very high (greater than 45 percent) shrink-swell class range. However, the Conservation Element update does not propose any construction or development projects, and implementation of the updated Conservation Element is not anticipated to have negative impacts related to soils and other geologic conditions. Therefore, impacts related to the loss of topsoil would be less than significant.

e) **No Impact.** No septic tanks are proposed as part of the Conservation Element update. No impact would occur.

**VII. GREENHOUSE GAS EMISSIONS**

Issues:	Potentially Significant Impact	Less Than Significant Impact With Mitigation Incorporated	Less Than Significant Impact	No Impact
Would the project:				
a) Generate greenhouse gas emissions, either directly or indirectly, that may have a significant impact on the environment?				X
b) Conflict with an applicable plan, policy, or regulation adopted for the purpose of reducing emissions of greenhouse gases?				X

**Discussion:**

The science of climate change has been extensively vetted by experts and international scientific organizations. Six greenhouse gases are widely recognized as contributing to climate change: carbon dioxide (CO<sub>2</sub>), methane (CH<sub>4</sub>), nitrous oxide (N<sub>2</sub>O), hydrofluorocarbons (HFCs), perfluorocarbons (PFCs), and sulfur hexafluoride (SF<sub>6</sub>). California law regulates these six greenhouse gases, plus nitrogen trifluoride (NF<sub>3</sub>) (City of Laguna Woods 2015). The majority of these gases are emitted by burning fossil fuels such as coal, petroleum, and natural gas.

Greenhouse gas emissions in Laguna Woods are divided into the following source sectors: residential energy, nonresidential energy, transportation, off-road equipment, solid waste, and water and wastewater. In 2012, residential and nonresidential energy (60%) and transportation (30%) are the major emissions sources in the planning area. Residential energy is the largest emissions sector. This is reflective of Laguna Woods’ built environment, which includes few public roads and limited commercial areas (City of Laguna Woods 2015).

a–b) **No Impact.** This update to the General Plan Conservation Element does not propose any actions that would result in development of a specific site and therefore would not result in any greenhouse gas emissions. Further, policies contained in the Conservation Element are beneficial in helping to reduce impacts associated with greenhouse gases and are designed to reduce communitywide greenhouse gas emissions by tracking and reporting greenhouse gas emissions. Policy Objective CO-8.1 calls for development and implementation of a Climate Action Plan that is aligned with federal and state standards and includes long-term strategies to reduce greenhouse gas emissions consistent with federal and state standards (Action CO-8.1A). Policy Objective CO-8.2 directs the City to demonstrate climate leadership by ensuring that municipal solid waste handling services employ collection practices that minimize vehicle miles traveled and the consumption of fossil fuels (CO-8.2B). Policy objectives in other sections of the element also contribute to greenhouse gas emissions reductions by reducing the amount of solid waste sent to landfills (CO-9.1, CO-9.2, and CO-9.3) and by reducing community-wide energy consumption (CO-4.1 and CO-4.2). Therefore, because the Conservation Element does not propose any new development that would emit greenhouse gases and is designed to help reduce emissions, no impacts would occur.

**VIII. HAZARDS AND HAZARDOUS MATERIALS**

Issues:	Potentially Significant Impact	Less Than Significant Impact With Mitigation Incorporated	Less Than Significant Impact	No Impact
Would the project:				
a) Create a significant hazard to the public or the environment through the routine transport, use, or disposal of hazardous materials?				X
b) Create a significant hazard to the public or the environment through reasonably foreseeable upset and accident conditions involving the release of hazardous materials into the environment?				X
c) Emit hazardous emissions or handle hazardous or acutely hazardous materials, substances, or waste within one-quarter mile of an existing or proposed school?				X
d) Be located on a site which is included on a list of hazardous materials sites compiled pursuant to Government Code Section 65962.5 and, as a result, would it create a significant hazard to the public or the environment?			X	
e) For a project located within an airport land use plan or, where such a plan has not been adopted, within 2 miles of a public airport or public use airport, result in a safety hazard for people residing or working in the project area?				X
f) For a project within the vicinity of a private airstrip, result in a safety hazard for people residing or working in the project area?				X
g) Impair implementation of or physically interfere with an adopted emergency response plan or emergency evacuation plan?				X
h) Expose people or structures to a significant risk of loss, injury, or death involving wildland fires, including where wildlands are adjacent to urbanized areas or where residences are intermixed with wildlands?			X	
i) Would the project include a new or retrofitted stormwater treatment control best management practice (BMP) (e.g., water quality treatment basin, constructed treatment wetlands), the operation of which could result in significant environmental effects (e.g., increased vectors and odors)?				X

**Discussion:**

a–b) **No Impact.** Businesses that use, store, or handle hazardous materials are required to report the names and quantities of those substances to the Orange County Fire Authority pursuant to federal, state, and county laws. Additionally, businesses licensed to sell, handle, or store hazardous materials are required to prepare safety and hazard mitigation plans. However, the Conservation Element update does not propose any action that would result in development of a specific site or have any effect on areas of the city. Therefore, it would not result in the routine transport, use, or disposal of hazardous materials, nor would it result in the release of hazardous materials into the environment. Therefore, no impact would occur.

c) **No Impact.** There are no schools within the planning area. Schools that serve the planning area are located in adjacent communities. Therefore, no impact would occur.

d) **Less Than Significant Impact.** The Cortese List is a compilation of various sites throughout the state that have been compromised due to soil or groundwater contamination from past uses (CalEPA 2015). Based on review of the Cortese List, no sites within the planning area are:

- Listed as a hazardous waste and substance site by the Department of Toxic Substances Control (DTSC) (2015a);

- Listed as a hazardous solid waste disposal site by the State Water Resources Control Board (SWRCB) (2015b);
- Currently subject to a Cease and Desist Order (CDO) or a Cleanup and Abatement Order (CAO) as issued by the SWRCB (2013); or
- Developed with a hazardous waste facility subject to corrective action by the DTSC (2012b).

However, ARCO #5831 is listed as a leaking underground storage tank cleanup site by the SWRCB (2015a). The Conservation Element update does not propose actions that will result in development or other activity that would affect this site. As such, this impact would be less than significant (City of Laguna Woods 2015a).

e-f) **No Impact.** The planning area is not located within an airport land use plan, within 2 miles of a public airport or public use airport, or in proximity to a private airstrip. As such, no impact would occur.

g) **No Impact.** The Conservation Element update does not involve any roadways or access points that could conflict with emergency planning efforts. No impact would occur.

h) **Less Than Significant Impact.** The City of Laguna Woods is served by the Orange County Fire Authority. Within the planning area, there are Very High, High, and Moderate Fire Hazard Severity Zones (Cal Fire 2011a, 2011b). However, the Conservation Element update does not propose actions that would result in development within these areas. Therefore, impacts would be less than significant.

i) **No Impact.** The Conservation Element update does not propose actions that would result in development. No stormwater features, such as detention basins, that could result in ponding water which could attract vectors or result in odors are included as part of the update. No impact would occur.

**IX. HYDROLOGY AND WATER QUALITY**

<b>Issues:</b>	<b>Potentially Significant Impact</b>	<b>Less Than Significant Impact With Mitigation Incorporated</b>	<b>Less Than Significant Impact</b>	<b>No Impact</b>
Would the project:				
a) Violate any water quality standards or waste discharge requirements?				<b>X</b>
b) Substantially deplete groundwater supplies or interfere substantially with groundwater recharge such that there would be a net deficit in aquifer volume or a lowering of the local groundwater table level (e.g., the production rate of pre-existing nearby wells would drop to a level which would not support existing land uses or planned uses for which permits have been granted)?				<b>X</b>
c) Substantially alter the existing drainage pattern of the site or area, including through the alteration of the course of a stream or river, in a manner which would result in substantial erosion or siltation on- or off-site?				<b>X</b>
d) Substantially alter the existing drainage pattern of the site or area, including through the alteration of the course of a stream or river, or substantially increase the rate or amount of surface runoff in a manner which would result in flooding on- or off-site?				<b>X</b>
e) Create or contribute runoff water which would exceed the capacity of existing or planned stormwater drainage systems or provide substantial additional sources of polluted runoff?				<b>X</b>
f) Otherwise substantially degrade water quality?				<b>X</b>
g) Place housing within a 100-year flood hazard area as mapped on a federal Flood Hazard Boundary or Flood Insurance Rate Map or other flood hazard delineation map?				<b>X</b>
h) Place within a 100-year flood hazard area structures which would impede or redirect flood flows?				<b>X</b>
i) Expose people or structures to a significant risk of loss, injury or death involving flooding, including flooding as a result of the failure of a levee or dam?				<b>X</b>
j) Inundation by seiche, tsunami, or mudflow?				<b>X</b>
k) Potentially impact stormwater runoff from construction activities?				<b>X</b>
l) Potentially activity potentially impact stormwater runoff from post-construction activities?				<b>X</b>
m) Result in a potential for discharge of stormwater pollutants from areas of material storage, vehicle or equipment fueling, vehicle or equipment maintenance (including washing), waste handling, hazardous materials handling or storage, delivery areas, loading docks, or other outdoor work areas?				<b>X</b>
n) Result in the potential for discharge of stormwater to affect the beneficial uses of the receiving waters?				<b>X</b>
o) Create the potential for significant changes in the flow velocity or volume of stormwater runoff to cause environmental harm?				<b>X</b>
p) Create significant increases in erosion of the project site or surrounding areas?				<b>X</b>

**Discussion:**

**Surface Water**

The planning area is in the San Juan Hydrologic Unit, which is located in the southern portion of Orange County. Laguna Woods lies within the boundaries of three receiving watersheds that are part of the San Juan Hydrologic Unit: the Newport Bay Watershed, the Laguna Coastal Streams Watershed, and the Aliso Creek Watershed (City of Laguna Woods 2015a).

The US Environmental Protection Agency identifies impaired bodies of water under federal Clean Water Act Section 303(d). Impairment is measured by total maximum daily load (TMDL), which is the maximum amount of a pollutant that a body of water can receive while still meeting water quality

standards. A total maximum daily load must be developed for each waterbody on the Section 303(d) list<sup>2</sup>. If a listed waterbody has multiple impairments, a total maximum daily load must be developed for each impairment. Irrigation runoff, nutrients, trash, and stormwater pollutants upstream and within Laguna Woods all contribute to water pollution (City of Laguna Woods 2015a).

According to the Environmental Protection Agency (2014), the Newport Bay Watershed is currently listed as impaired by many different pollutants, including pesticides such as chlordane and toxaphene, dichloro-diphenyl-trichloroethane (DDT), nutrients, sediment and siltation, copper and other metals, fecal coliform, pathogens, polychlorinated biphenyls (PCBs), sediment toxicity, and selenium. The concentration of impaired waters is downstream of Laguna Woods, near Newport Beach. Efforts have been under way since 1975 to reduce these pollutants. While continued efforts are needed to restore the watershed's beneficial uses, reducing nutrients has been largely successful in reducing pollutant loads within impaired water areas. San Diego Creek Reach 2 is the main receiving waterbody in this watershed within the planning area (City of Laguna Woods 2015a).

Only a small portion of the Laguna Coastal Streams Watershed fails to meet water quality standards and is listed as having impaired waters. The identified area is outside of the subwatershed that includes Laguna Woods. Laguna Canyon Channel is the main receiving waterbody in this watershed within the planning area (City of Laguna Woods 2015a).

According to the Environmental Protection Agency, water quality in the Aliso Creek Watershed is currently listed as impaired by many different pollutants, including indicator bacteria, nitrogen, phosphorus, selenium, nitrogen, benzo(b)fluoranthene, dieldrin, and sedimentary toxins. The primary source of impairment is from urban runoff and storm sewers, with secondary non-point source and natural sources. Areas of the watershed with impaired waters include portions of Laguna Woods, including Aliso Creek, which is the main receiving waterbody in the planning area (City of Laguna Woods 2015a).

### **Groundwater Hydrology**

The Coastal Plain of the Orange County Groundwater Basin (Orange County Basin), which is within the South Coast Hydrologic Region (DWR 2004), underlies the northern portion of the planning area. The rest of the planning area is not located within an adjudicated groundwater basin; therefore, no delineated groundwater basin evaluations exist for the remaining portion of the planning area. Recharge to the basin is derived from percolation of Santa Ana River flow, precipitation infiltration, and well injection. The Santa Ana River flow contains natural flow, reclaimed water, and imported water that are spread in the basin forebay. Groundwater levels are generally lower than in the mid- to late 1900s, when the basin was considered to have been full.

a, c–f, k–p) **No Impact.** Implementation of the Conservation Element would not result in significant impacts to water quality. In fact, one of the goals of the Conservation Element is to improve receiving water quality, which is supported by Policy Objective CO-7.1A (Adopt, review, update, and enforce regulations including, but not limited to, regulations pertaining to the attainment of goals, targets, and standards established by National Pollutant Discharge Elimination System permits). Additionally, no site-specific proposed development is associated with the Conservation Element update. Therefore, there would be no construction-related stormwater runoff or potential for discharge of stormwater to affect the beneficial uses of the receiving waters. As such, no impact to water quality would occur.

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<sup>2</sup> The Environmental Protection Agency (2014) defines receiving water body as creeks, streams, rivers, lakes, estuaries, groundwater formations, or other bodies of water into which surface water, treated waste, or untreated waste are discharged.

b) **No Impact.** Laguna Woods does not depend on groundwater for its water supply. Additionally, the Conservation Element update will not result in any development that would require groundwater sources for water supply. As such, the update will not impact groundwater levels, and no impacts to groundwater will occur.

g-i) **No Impact.** Flooding occurs in areas where drainages become overwhelmed by the amount of runoff received. Often this will occur in the built environment as a result of inadequate drainage infrastructure (either missing or undersized). According to the Federal Emergency Management Agency (FEMA) Flood Insurance Rate Map Panels 426 and 427, flood potential in Laguna Woods is generally low. The majority of the city lies outside of the 100- or 500-year flood zones. Additionally, Chapter 10.04 of the City of Laguna Woods Municipal Code establishes construction standards and provisions for flood hazard protection and adopts the Flood Insurance Rate Map floodplain study and maps. Therefore, no impact would occur.

j) **No Impact.** Given that the westernmost portion of the city is located approximately 7 miles from the Pacific Ocean, no impact is anticipated from a potential tsunami. Additionally, per the City of Laguna Woods General Plan EIR, if an earthquake generates a sudden landslide into a large mountain lake or reservoir, or a coastal fiord, adjacent and downslope areas could be devastated by flooding and muddy debris flows. The city is not situated in an area that is at risk from this geologic phenomenon. Additionally, the project site is not located adjacent to, nor does it contain, any large bodies of water that could produce a seiche. No impact would occur.

**X. LAND USE AND PLANNING**

Issues:	Potentially Significant Impact	Less Than Significant With Mitigation Incorporated	Less Than Significant Impact	No Impact
Would the project:				
a) Physically divide an established community?				X
b) Conflict with any applicable land use plan, policy, or regulation of an agency with jurisdiction over the project (including, but not limited to the general plan, specific plan, local coastal program, or zoning ordinance) adopted for the purpose of avoiding or mitigating an environmental effect				X
c) Conflict with any applicable habitat conservation plan or natural community conservation plan?				X

**Discussion:**

a–c) **No Impact.** The Conservation Element update does not propose any actions that would result in development of a specific site, fundamentally change an area in the city, or require any revisions to zoned density or land use designation for any parcel. As discussed in subsection IV, Biological Resources, Issue f), Laguna Woods is in proximity to and adjacent to the habitat reserve system created by the Orange County Natural Community Conservation Plan (NCCP). However, no development associated with the Conservation Element update is proposed. As such, adoption and implementation of the goals and policies of the updated Conservation Element would not physically divide an established community, nor would the element conflict with any established land use plan, policy, regulation, or applicable habitat conservation plan or natural community conservation plan. No land use and planning impacts would occur.

**XI. MINERAL RESOURCES**

Issues:	Potentially Significant Impact	Less Than Significant Impact With Mitigation Incorporated	Less Than Significant Impact	No Impact
Would the project:				
a) Result in the loss of availability of a known mineral resource that would be of value to the region and the residents of the state?				X
b) Result in the loss of availability of a locally-important mineral resource recovery site delineated on a local general plan, specific plan or other land use plan?				X

**Discussion:**

a–b) **No Impact.** Laguna Woods is developed predominantly with urbanized land uses, including residential and commercial uses. As mapped by the California Department of Conservation, portions of the planning area are designated as a Mineral Resource Zone. A portion of the planning area is designated Mineral Resource Zone 3, indicating that the significance of mineral resources cannot be evaluated using available data (City of Laguna Woods 2015a). The balance of the planning area is designated as Mineral Resource Zone 1, meaning that available geologic information indicates no significant mineral deposits or a minimal likelihood of significant mineral deposits. The Conservation Element update does not propose any actions that would result in development of a specific site and does not propose any actions that would result in the loss of mineral resources. Therefore, no impacts would occur.

**XII. NOISE**

Issues:	Potentially Significant Impact	Less Than Significant Impact With Mitigation Incorporated	Less Than Significant Impact	No Impact
Would the project result in:				
a) Exposure of persons to or generation of noise levels in excess of standards established in the local general plan or noise ordinance, or applicable standards of other agencies?				X
b) Exposure of persons to or generation of excessive groundborne vibration or groundborne noise levels?				X
c) A substantial permanent increase in ambient noise levels in the project vicinity above levels existing without the project?				X
d) A substantial temporary or periodic increase in ambient noise levels in the project vicinity above levels existing without the project?				X
e) For a project located within an airport land use plan or, where such a plan has not been adopted, within 2 miles of a public airport or public use airport, exposure of people residing or working in the project area to excessive noise levels?				X
f) For a project within the vicinity of a private airstrip, exposure of people residing or working in the project area to excessive noise levels?				X

**Discussion:**

a–f) **No Impact.** The Conservation Element update does not propose any actions that would result in development and does not propose any actions that would expose people to, or generate, excessive groundborne vibration levels or noise levels in excess of applicable state or local standards or the guidelines of the City’s Noise Ordinance. Additionally, Chapter 7.08 of the City of Laguna Woods Municipal Code regulates excessive, unnecessary, and unreasonable noise from various sources in the city. Considering there is no development associated with implementation of the updated Conservation Element, or any actions proposed that would generate noise, no impacts would occur.

**XIII. POPULATION AND HOUSING**

Issues:	Potentially Significant Impact	Less Than Significant Impact With Mitigation Incorporated	Less Than Significant Impact	No Impact
Would the project:				
a) Induce substantial population growth in an area, either directly (for example, by proposing new homes and businesses) or indirectly (for example, through extension of roads or other infrastructure)?				X
b) Displace substantial numbers of existing housing, necessitating the construction of replacement housing elsewhere?				X
c) Displace substantial numbers of people, necessitating the construction of replacement housing elsewhere?				X

**Discussion:**

a–c) **No Impact.** The City’s General Plan Land Use Element provides policies and standards intended to guide the City in ensuring the safety of existing and future residents. The update to the Conservation Element does not include construction or operational components that could induce population growth, nor does it require the demolition of housing or other structures that could displace people. Therefore, no impact would occur.

**XIV. PUBLIC SERVICES**

<b>Issues:</b>	<b>Potentially Significant Impact</b>	<b>Less Than Significant Impact With Mitigation Incorporated</b>	<b>Less Than Significant Impact</b>	<b>No Impact</b>
a) Would the project result in substantial adverse physical impacts associated with the provision of new or physically altered governmental facilities, need for new or physically altered governmental facilities, the construction of which could cause significant environmental impacts, in order to maintain acceptable service ratios, response times, or other performance objectives for any of the public services:				
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Fire protection?</li> </ul>				<b>X</b>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Police protection/code enforcement?</li> </ul>				<b>X</b>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Schools?</li> </ul>				<b>X</b>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Parks?</li> </ul>				<b>X</b>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Other public facilities?</li> </ul>				<b>X</b>

**Discussion:**

a) **No Impact.** Adoption and implementation of the updated Conservation Element would not have direct physical effects on the environment and would not result in any changes to the existing land use designations in the General Plan. As a result, the update to the Conservation Element would not result in an increased resident population, nor would it result in additional visitors requiring additional facilities or resources. Therefore, no impact would occur.

**XV. RECREATION**

<b>Issues:</b>	<b>Potentially Significant Impact</b>	<b>Less Than Significant Impact With Mitigation Incorporated</b>	<b>Less Than Significant Impact</b>	<b>No Impact</b>
a) Would the project increase the use of existing neighborhood and regional parks or other recreational facilities such that substantial physical deterioration of the facility would occur or be accelerated?				<b>X</b>
b) Does the project include recreational facilities or require the construction or expansion of recreational facilities which might have an adverse physical effect on the environment?				<b>X</b>

**Discussion:**

a–b) **No Impact.** Adoption and implementation of the goals and policy objectives in the Conservation Element update would not result in greater demand for parks and recreational facilities. In addition, these goals and policy objectives do not conflict with the City’s General Plan Land Use and Open Space Elements, which ensure that parks and recreational facilities are developed, protected, and preserved. No impact would occur.

**XVI. TRANSPORTATION/TRAFFIC**

Issues:	Potentially Significant Impact	Less Than Significant Impact With Mitigation Incorporated	Less Than Significant Impact	No Impact
Would the project:				
a) Conflict with an applicable plan, ordinance, or policy establishing measures of effectiveness for the performance of the circulation system, taking into account all modes of transportation including mass transit and non-motorized travel and relevant components of the circulation system including but not limited to intersections, streets, highways and freeways, pedestrian and bicycle paths, and mass transit?				X
b) Conflict with an applicable congestion management program, including, but not limited to level of service standards and travel demand measures, or other standards established by the county congestion management agency for designated roads or highways?				X
c) Result in a change in air traffic patterns, including either an increase in traffic levels or a change in location that results in substantial safety risks?				X
d) Substantially increase hazards due to a design feature (e.g., sharp curves or dangerous intersections) or incompatible uses (e.g. farm equipment)?				X
e) Result in inadequate emergency access?				X
f) Conflict with adopted policies, plans, or programs regarding public transit, bicycle, or pedestrian facilities, or otherwise decrease the performance or safety of such facilities?				X

**Discussion:**

a–f) **No Impact.** The Conservation Element update does not propose any actions that would result in development of a specific site or fundamentally change an area in the city, nor would it have a negative impact on traffic. The City’s General Plan Circulation Element addresses all modes of travel and provides goals and policies to guide the development and maintenance of the transportation system. The 2002 General Plan EIR identified significant impacts that would result from an increase in traffic. These impacts were analyzed in the General Plan EIR and would not be affected by this update to the Conservation Element. No impacts would result.

**XVII. UTILITIES AND SERVICE SYSTEMS**

Issues:	Potentially Significant Impact	Less Than Significant Impact With Mitigation Incorporated	Less Than Significant Impact	No Impact
Would the project:				
a) Exceed wastewater treatment requirements of the applicable Regional Water Quality Control Board?				X
b) Require or result in the construction of new water or wastewater treatment facilities or expansion of existing facilities, the construction of which could cause significant environmental effects?				X
c) Require or result in the construction of new stormwater drainage facilities or expansion of existing facilities, the construction of which could cause significant environmental effects?				X
d) Have sufficient water supplies available to serve the project from existing entitlements and resources, or are new or expanded entitlements needed?				X
e) Result in a determination by the wastewater treatment provider which serves or may serve the project that it has adequate capacity to serve the project's projected demand in addition to the provider's existing commitments?				X
f) Be served by a landfill with sufficient permitted capacity to accommodate the project's solid waste disposal needs?				X
g) Comply with federal, state, and local statutes and regulations related to solid waste?				X

**Discussion:**

a–e) **No Impact.** Since no development is associated with the Conservation Element update, its implementation is not anticipated to have a negative impact on utilities and service systems, as the element does not propose any projects, programs, or actions that could reasonably be expected to exceed wastewater treatment requirements; result in the construction or expansion of water, wastewater treatment, or stormwater drainage facilities; result in insufficient water supplies or landfill capacity; or violate solid waste–related regulations. Therefore, the Conservation Element would not result in impacts to utilities.

f, g) **No Impact.** Solid waste disposal service in Laguna Woods is currently provided through a franchise service agreement with Ware Disposal Co. Inc., which also serves a number of surrounding communities. Ware Disposal provides services to single-family homes, multi-family residential buildings, and commercial customers. The company's Madison Materials public disposal and transfer station is located in Santa Ana and is open to all residents and businesses of Orange County. Laguna Woods residents have both trash and recycling services, and can elect to choose green waste service for yard trimmings. Service for commercial customers can be offered up to seven days a week (City of Laguna Woods 2015a).

Laguna Woods sends waste to five landfills to which Laguna Woods. Two of the landfills, the Azusa Land Reclamation Company Landfill and the Olinda Alpha Sanitary Landfill, are scheduled to reach capacity and be closed within the next decade. However, the amount of waste sent to these two facilities is very small; in 2013, it accounted for 130 tons, or approximately 1 percent of the total waste that Laguna Woods sent to a landfill. The Frank R. Bowerman Sanitary Landfill, which received 96 percent of the waste generated in Laguna Woods in 2013, is not expected to reach capacity and be closed until 2053 (City of Laguna Woods 2015a).

However, the Conservation Element does not propose any actions that would result in development of a specific site or change land use designations or development potential in any area of the city. The goals and policies in the Conservation Element are intended to protect, conserve, and manage natural resources

including water, soils, wildlife, and historical, paleontological, and archaeological resources to the extent possible at the local level. In fact, policies contained in the updated Conservation Element help to reduce waste generation and increase waste diversion. For example, Goal CO-9 directs the City to divert two-thirds of local waste from landfills. The City will achieve this goal by enforcing regulations that promote waste and recycling goals (Policy Objective CO-9.1), expanding opportunities for recycling and reuse of waste (Policy Objective CO-9.2), and demonstrating waste and recycling leadership (Policy Objective CO-9.3). For these reasons, no impacts to solid waste would occur.

**XVIII. MANDATORY FINDINGS OF SIGNIFICANCE**

Issues:	Potentially Significant Impact	Less Than Significant Impact With Mitigation Incorporated	Less Than Significant Impact	No Impact
a) Does the project have the potential to degrade the quality of the environment, substantially reduce the habitat of a fish or wildlife species, cause a fish or wildlife population to drop below self-sustaining levels, threaten to eliminate a plant or animal community, reduce the number or restrict the range of a rare or endangered plant or animal, or eliminate important examples of the major periods of California history or prehistory?				X
b) Does the project have impacts that are individually limited, but cumulatively considerable? (“Cumulatively considerable” means that the incremental effects of a project are considerable when viewed in connection with the effects of past projects, the effects of other current projects, and the effects of probable future projects.)				X
c) Does the project have environmental effects which will cause substantial adverse effects on human beings, either directly or indirectly?				X

**Discussion:**

a–c) **No Impact.** Implementation of the Conservation Element update is not anticipated to degrade biological resources or the overall quality of the natural environment in Laguna Woods, to eliminate important historic or prehistoric resources, to have environmental effects causing substantial adverse effects on humans, or to have cumulatively considerable impacts. The Conservation Element update would have a beneficial impact on residents and businesses because it would implement ways to improve and maintain surface water and groundwater quality; reduce communitywide greenhouse gas emissions; and conserve energy by promoting efficiency and alternative sources. Additionally, adoption and implementation of these goals and policies would not require any changes to existing zoning or General Plan designations for parcels in the city. Therefore, no impacts would occur.

## References

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- . 2015b. GeoTracker. Accessed January 26. [geotracker.waterboards.ca.gov](http://geotracker.waterboards.ca.gov).



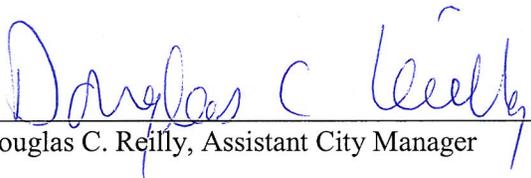
The update to the Conservation Element would not materially affect the physical environment nor result in any new environmental impacts not already contemplated in the City's General Plan EIR.

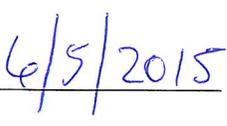
**POTENTIAL IMPACTS:** The Initial Study prepared for the General Plan Conservation Element Update finds that the proposed project could not have a significant impact on the environment. Therefore, a Negative Declaration has been prepared.

**DOCUMENTS AVAILABLE FOR REVIEW:** Related documents – including the proposed Conservation Element update, background report, initial study, and draft negative declaration – are available for public review at City Hall and on the City's website at [www.lagunawoodscity.org](http://www.lagunawoodscity.org).

**COMMENTS REQUESTED:** Comments will be accepted by the City of Laguna Woods prior to final approval of the Negative Declaration and action on the proposed project. The public review period extends **from Monday, June 22, 2015 to Wednesday, July 22, 2015**. Comments should be submitted in writing to City Hall either via letter or similar correspondence or via email at [cityhall@lagunawoodscity.org](mailto:cityhall@lagunawoodscity.org).

**UPCOMING MEETINGS/HEARINGS:** The City of Laguna Woods City Council will conduct a public hearing and consider adoption of the General Plan Conservation Element Update on **Wednesday, July 29, 2015 at 2:00 p.m.** at City Hall. The City Council may exercise their discretion to continue or reschedule the public hearing with appropriate notices as required by State law. In addition to submitting comments during the public review period, interested parties either favoring or opposing the proposed project are invited to present their views at the public hearing.

  
\_\_\_\_\_  
Douglas C. Reilly, Assistant City Manager

  
\_\_\_\_\_  
Date

**7.3**  
**SOLID WASTE HANDLING SERVICES**

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# City of Laguna Woods Agenda Report

**TO:** Honorable Mayor and City Councilmembers  
**FROM:** Christopher Macon, City Manager  
**FOR:** July 29, 2015 Adjourned Regular Meeting  
**SUBJECT:** Solid Waste Handling Services

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## Recommendation

1. Receive staff report.  

AND
2. Open public hearing.  

AND
3. Receive public testimony.  

AND
4. Continue the public hearing to the Regular Meeting of the Laguna Woods City Council at 2:00 p.m. on Wednesday, August 19, 2015 at Laguna Woods City Hall, 24264 El Toro Road, Laguna Woods, CA 92637.  

AND
5. Provide direction to staff regarding the development of a Request for Proposals (RFP) to solicit competitive proposals from qualified firms to provide solid waste handling services under a franchise agreement.

**Background**

The City is currently preparing for a competitive process to select solid waste franchisee(s) in order to provide Laguna Woods residents and businesses with affordable rates and access to a variety of environmentally friendly recycling and disposal opportunities. The competitive process is intended to select franchisee(s) to provide solid waste handling services beginning after the City's existing franchise agreement with Ware Disposal, Inc. ends in December 2015.

Mayor Connors and Councilmember Horne were appointed by the City Council to serve on its Ad Hoc Solid Waste Franchise Committee. The Ad Hoc Committee's charge is to assist with the preparation of an RFP for solid waste handling services and make recommendations to the City Council regarding approval of the same. The Ad Hoc Committee will also review, evaluate, and make recommendations to the City Council regarding the proposals submitted in response to the RFP.

The next solid waste handling services franchise agreement will include provisions relating to: maximum rates and minimum levels of service for all customers located within Laguna Woods including, but not limited to, cart and bin collection; services to ensure compliance with applicable State laws and promote the City's waste diversion goals; and, a new organics waste recycling program to comply with Assembly Bill 1826 (2013-14) and increase waste diversion.

**Discussion**

The City Council conducted a public hearing and provided direction to staff on the subject of solid waste handling services on June 17, 2015. Today's meeting is the second of two public hearings and an additional opportunity for City Council discussion and direction, as well as public testimony, in advance of the finalization and release of the RFP. As a part of the staff report, in-home bulky item collection services will be discussed. Staff is recommending that the public hearing be continued to August 19, 2015 at which time it is anticipated that the City Council will be asked to consider approving the RFP and authorizing its release.

Previous opportunities for public input, in advance of the finalization or release of the RFP, have included a business roundtable meeting (September 16, 2014), a resident roundtable meeting (October 7, 2014), a meeting with representatives of the Golden Rain Foundation of Laguna Woods (October 8, 2014), two meetings with the City's former Planning & Environmental Services Committee (October 9,

2014 and November 13, 2014). Invitations for community-specific meetings were extended to all residential communities and homeowner's associations in Laguna Woods; however, only the Golden Rain Foundation elected to participate. Outreach is continuing and any individual or entity is welcome to request a meeting.

### **Fiscal Impact**

Funds to support this project are included in the City's budget.

Rates for solid waste handling services are established by the franchise agreement and charged to customers. The City receives several payments from the franchisee, including a 5% franchise fee based on gross annual receipts.

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**8.1**

**APPOINTMENT OF LEAGUE OF CALIFORNIA  
CITIES 2015 ANNUAL BUSINESS MEETING  
DELEGATE AND ALTERNATE DELEGATES**

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# City of Laguna Woods

## Agenda Report

**TO:** Honorable Mayor and City Councilmembers

**FROM:** Christopher Macon, City Manager

**FOR:** July 29, 2015 Adjourned Regular Meeting

**SUBJECT:** Appointment of League of California Cities 2015 Annual Business Meeting Delegate and Alternate Delegates

---

### **Recommendation**

Appoint members of the City Council to serve as the delegate, first alternate, and second alternate at the League of California Cities 2015 Annual Business Meeting.

### **Background**

The League of California Cities is hosting its annual conference on September 30 – October 2, 2015 in San Jose. Each year, participating cities select a delegate and up to two alternate delegates to represent and vote on behalf of their cities at the annual business meeting portion of the annual conference. The delegates consider and take action on resolutions that establish League of California Cities policy.

### **Discussion**

The League of California Cities has requested that the City Council appoint a delegate and up to two alternate delegates for the 2015 Annual Business Meeting. Mayor Pro Tem Hatch, Councilmember Horne, Councilmember Moore, and City Manager Macon currently plan to attend.

### **Fiscal Impact**

Expenses associated with the League of California Cities' annual conference and business meeting can be accommodated in the City's budget.

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