

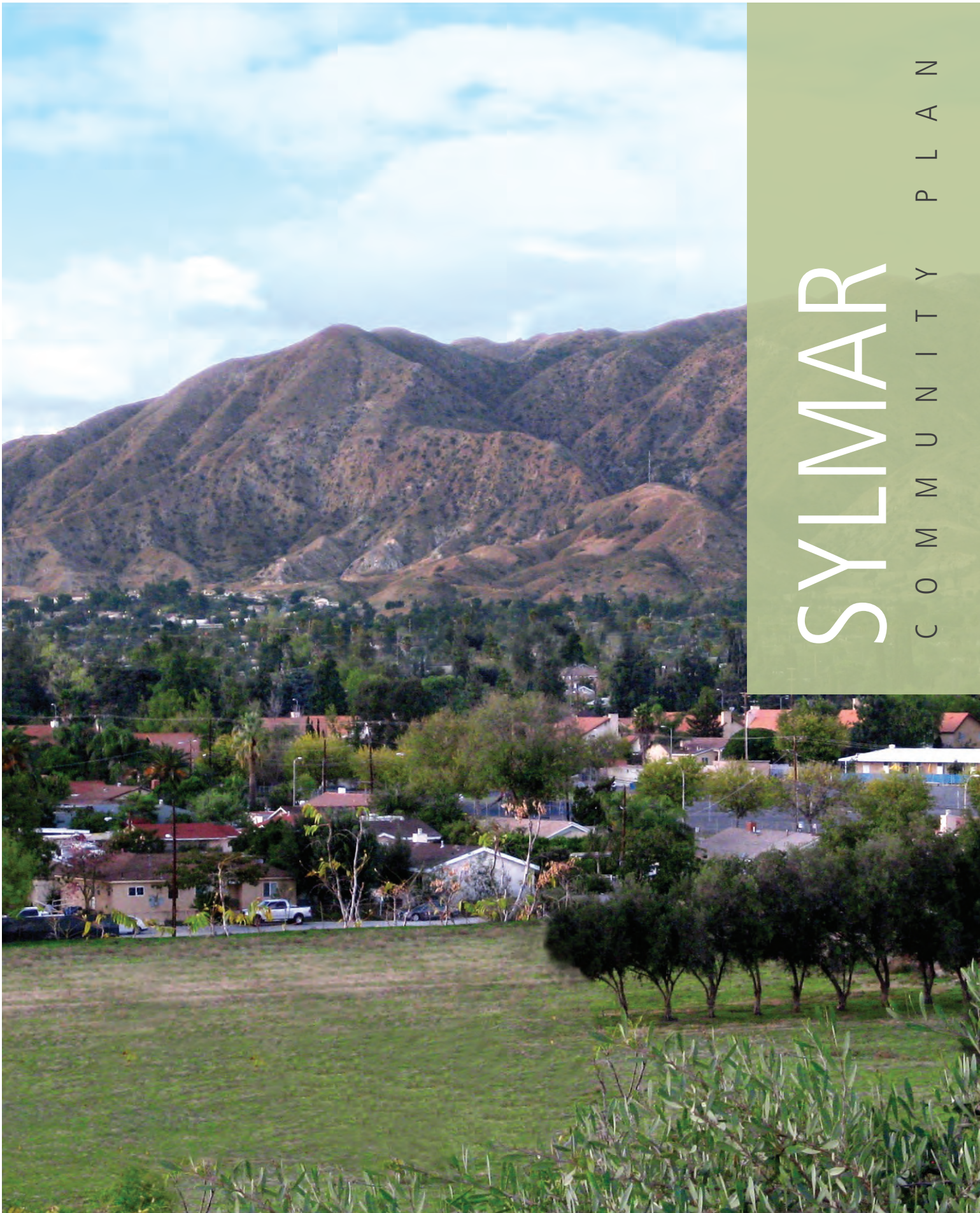
## **EXHIBIT B:**

### **Sylmar Community Plan Text**

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CPC-2006-5569-CPU; ENV-2006-5624-EIR

Recommended by the City Planning Commission on April 25, 2013.



# SYLMAR

C O M M U N I T Y P L A N

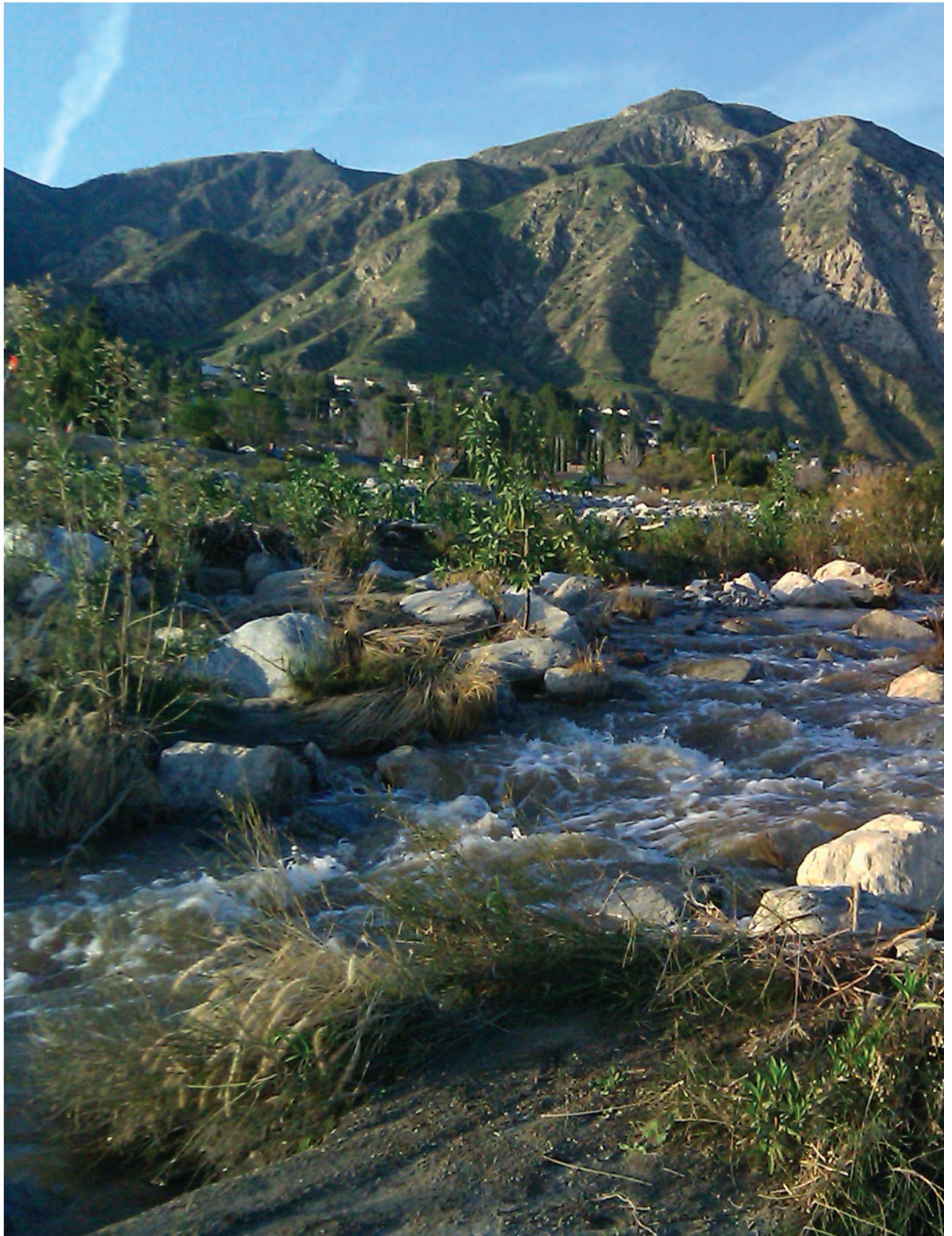


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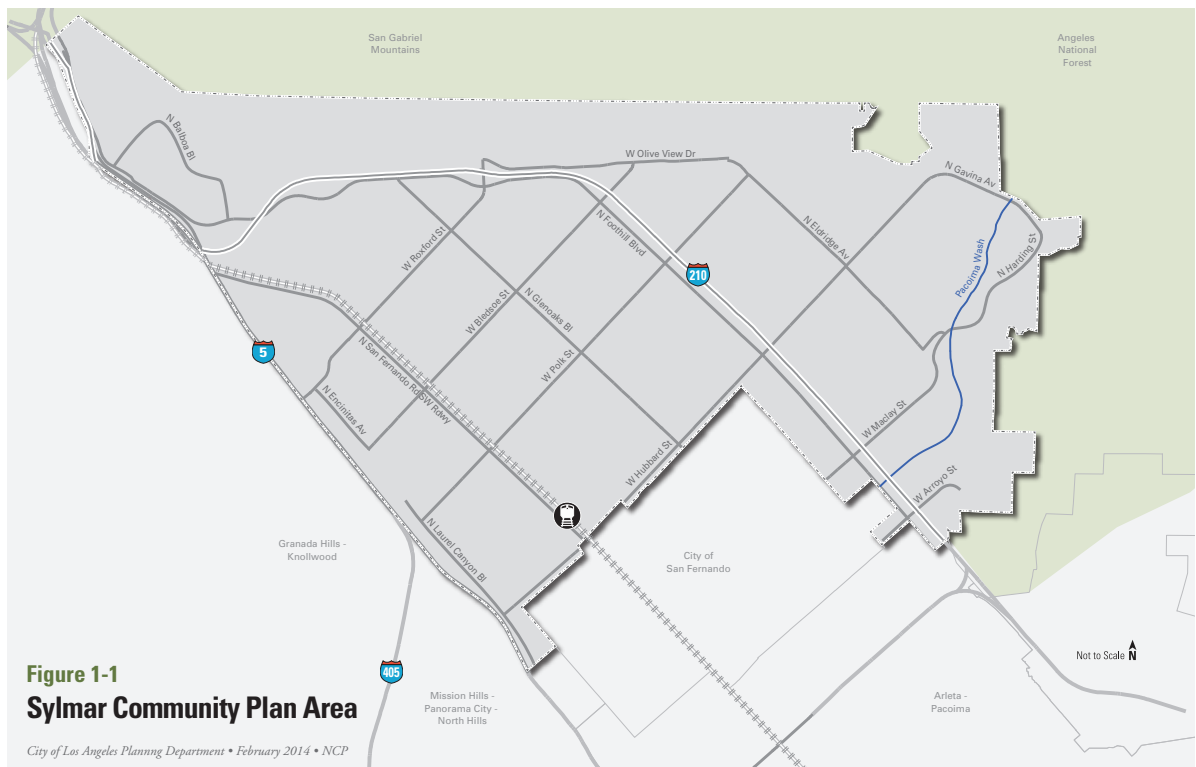


*View of the San Gabriel Mountains from the Carey Ranch neighborhood.*

# Introduction & Orientation

Sylmar is a unique semi-rural suburban community surrounded by scenic mountain views, vast open spaces, and impressive natural beauty. Situated at the foothills of the San Gabriel Mountains in the northeast corner of the San Fernando Valley, this 12-square mile community is located at the northern border of the City of Los Angeles, approximately 28 miles north of downtown, see Figure 1-1, Sylmar Community Plan Area.

The community of Sylmar initially developed as an agricultural outgrowth of the City of San Fernando, with rich soil, an underground water supply, and year round warm climate that supported abundant olive and citrus trees. This community has grown significantly since its olive growing days. Today, Sylmar is a stable semi-rural “bedroom” community at the edge of the City where nearly 80,000 residents appreciate a quiet, slow-paced suburban lifestyle that includes the few remaining equestrian communities in the City. It is a working class community with many multi-generational families, a variety of residential neighborhoods, a mix of commercial uses and services, a thriving light industrial economy, and many natural, cultural, and civic amenities and resources.



The last comprehensive update of the Sylmar Community Plan area was completed in 1997 and since then significant changes have occurred, new issues have emerged, and new community objectives have evolved. It is necessary to update the Community Plan to reflect current conditions and at the same time plan for upcoming changes. Many changes occurring in Sylmar are caused by larger forces beyond the community's direct control, such as demographic trends, climate change, and economic conditions. Planning for upcoming changes is the most effective and beneficial way for the community to accommodate evolving needs.

The Sylmar Community Plan sets a new direction for the future of Sylmar. Most of Sylmar's neighborhoods are well established and are not expected to change significantly as growth occurs in other parts of the community and throughout the rest of the City. Through a collaborative effort involving residents, owners, businesses, and developers, City staff has produced a Community Plan that sets forth actions to achieve a common vision that encompasses the full spectrum of issues and opportunities regarding Sylmar's physical evolution. The Community Plan addresses a wide range of topics including housing and jobs, parks and open space, urban design, infrastructure, and mobility, as well as arts, culture, history, in addition to serving several important purposes:

- To outline a vision for Sylmar's long-term physical and economic development and community enhancement;
- To provide strategies and specific implementing actions that will allow this vision to be accomplished;
- To establish a basis for judging whether specific development proposals and public projects are in harmony with Plan policies and standards;
- To direct City departments, other public agencies, and private developers to design projects that enhance the character of the community, taking advantage of its setting and amenities; and
- To provide the basis for establishing and setting priorities for detailed plans and implementing programs, including zoning ordinances, design overlays, development standards, the Capital Improvements Program, facilities plans, and redevelopment and other area plans.

The Community Plan's importance lies in its ability to shape positive community change, fostering sustainable land use patterns while balancing the unique character of the community with citywide policies and regional initiatives. The process of developing the Sylmar Community Plan was a multi-year collaborative effort in which broad public input was obtained through a series of meetings and workshops where stakeholders provided input and recommendations.



*Many of the residential neighborhoods in Sylmar have stunning views of the San Gabriel Mountains.*



*Single-family neighborhoods comprise the largest portion of land uses within Sylmar.*



*El Cariso Regional Park, a beautiful 79-acre park, is a focal point for the surrounding communities, providing amenities from picnic areas, play areas and tennis courts to a community swimming pool.*



*Industrial parks, like the one on Balboa Boulevard, provide residents with employment opportunities.*

## Plan Organization

The Sylmar Community Plan is organized into six chapters. Each chapter is further organized into sections that deal with specific topics, described below.

**Chapter 1: Introduction and Orientation.** Chapter 1 describes how to use the Community Plan, provides a reader's guide for understanding the Plan, and reviews the relationship of the Community Plan to the City's General Plan and other City agencies.

**Chapter 2: Community Background.** Chapter 2 provides a detailed description of the historical development of the community; describes its relationship to adjoining communities, its environmental setting, and its existing land uses; and identifies population, employment, and housing trends and projections.

**Chapter 3: Land Use and Urban Design.** Chapter 3 expresses the community's vision for the future, describes the community's land uses, and specifies goals and policies that address residential, commercial, industrial development; design improvements; economic development; jobs/housing balance, historic preservation; the community's equestrian lifestyle; diversity of housing choices; and environmental justice. This chapter also includes urban design guidelines for residential, uses that address more specific design issues for Sylmar.

**Chapter 4: Mobility.** Chapter 4 defines goals and policies for the community's circulation system, focusing on enhancing mobility and access to all users. Each mode of transportation is discussed, including walking, bicycling, public transit, horseback-riding, and driving.

**Chapter 5: Community Facilities and Infrastructure.** Chapter 5 discusses key public services and infrastructure, including police, fire, and emergency services, libraries, parks, schools, water, wastewater, solid waste, power (energy), street lighting, and the urban forest. The service provider, existing facilities and service levels, future needs, and issues are identified for each of these facilities or services.

**Chapter 6: Implementation.** Chapter 6 describes how the Community Plan will be implemented. Each policy in Chapters 3, 4, and 5 is implemented by one or more implementation programs. This chapter describes these implementation programs and identifies the responsible City department or agency.

## How to Use the Plan

The Sylmar Community Plan is intended for use by all members of the community, including residents, Neighborhood Councils, business owners, developers, and public officials. The Plan is organized to allow the user to easily find information most relevant to their interest, without perusing the entire document. However, it is important to note that the Plan's policies, guidelines, and implementation programs were not created in isolation, but rather, developed collectively to address community issues in a comprehensive manner.

**For residents and Neighborhood Councils,** the Community Plan identifies the type and scale of land uses permitted, describes changes that may affect neighborhoods, and explains the goals, policies, design guidelines, and implementation programs that guide decisions about future development.

**For businesses,** the Community Plan identifies land use measures that support businesses and encourage future success. The Plan includes policies to support and enhance commercial and industrial development. The Plan also discusses land use strategies to attract new investment in commercial centers and corridors.

**For developers,** the Community Plan introduces the community, provides background information, and establishes development regulations. Developers are encouraged to review all maps, policies, design guidelines, and implementation programs throughout this document to better understand where and what type of development may occur in each part of the community.

**For public officials,** the Community Plan is a part of the General Plan, which is the basis for land use decisions by the City Planning Commissions, other boards and commissions, and the City Council.

**For public agencies,** the Community Plan is intended to help agencies contemplate future actions in the City, such as transportation infrastructure improvements, parks, and schools. The policies located throughout the Plan are interrelated and should be examined comprehensively when making planning decisions.

## Reader's Guide

While the Plan's narrative text and maps frame the key concepts and proposals of the Community, the essence of the Plan lies in its goals, policies, design guidelines, and implementation programs. These declarative statements set forth the City's approach to various issues. Goals, policies, design guidelines, and implementation programs are described below.

### *Goals*

A goal is a statement that describes a desired future condition or "end" state. Goals are change and outcome oriented, achievable over time, though not driven by funding. Each goal in the Community Plan begins with an abbreviated chapter title followed by the number of the goal (i.e., LU1).

### *Policies*

A policy is a clear statement that guides a specific course of action for decision-makers to achieve a desired goal. Policies may refer to existing programs or call for establishment of new ones. Each policy in the Plan is labeled with the abbreviated chapter title, the goal it refers to, and a unique number (i.e., LU1.1).

### *Design Guidelines*

The Citywide Design Guidelines (available at [cityplanning.lacity.org](http://cityplanning.lacity.org)) provide guidance for project designers, decision-makers, and the public on residential, commercial, and industrial projects throughout the City of Los Angeles, covering such topics as planning, building architecture and orientation, landscape and open space, and pedestrian-friendly design. In addition, the Sylmar Community Plan provides guidelines tailored just for single-family residential properties. Guidelines appear throughout Chapter 3, grouped by general topic and individually numbered (i.e. G1).

### *Implementation Programs*

An implementation program is an action, procedure, program, or technique that carries out Community Plan goals and policies. Implementation programs are comprehensive in nature, encompassing amendments of existing and preparation of new plans, ordinances, and development and design standards; modification of City procedures and development review and approval processes; and interagency coordination. Chapter 6 contains a list of all the Plan's implementation programs. They are grouped by general topic and individually numbered (i.e. P1).

## Relationship to the General Plan

California State law requires that cities prepare and adopt a comprehensive, integrated, long-term General Plan to direct future growth and development. The General Plan is the fundamental policy document of a city. It defines how a city's physical and economic resources are to be managed and utilized over time. Decisions by a city with regard to the use of its land, design and character of buildings and open spaces, conservation of existing and provision of new housing, provision of supporting infrastructure and public and human services, and protection of residents from natural and man-caused hazards are guided by and must be consistent with the General Plan.

State law requires that the General Plan contain seven elements: land use, transportation, housing, conservation, open space, noise, and safety. Cities may also choose to incorporate additional elements to more directly address locally significant issues. There must be internal consistency among the elements. In Los Angeles, the thirty-five Community Plans, including the Sylmar Community Plan, comprise the City's land use element, see Figure 1-2, City of Los Angeles Community Plan Areas. In addition, the City has adopted an overarching "Framework Element" discussed below.

### *Citywide General Plan Elements*

- Open Space
- Housing
- Transportation
- Conservation
- Land Use
- Noise
- Safety
- Infrastructure
- Public Facilities and Services
- Framework

## General Plan Framework Element

The City's General Plan Framework Element is the citywide plan that establishes how Los Angeles will grow in the future. Adopted in 1996, and re-adopted in 2001, the Framework Element is a strategy for long-range growth and development, setting a citywide context for the update of Community Plans and citywide elements. The Framework Element responds to state and federal mandates to plan for the future by providing goals, policies, and objectives on a variety of topics, such as land use, housing, urban form, open space, transportation, infrastructure, and public services. Many of the Framework Element's key guiding principles, summarized below, can be advanced at the community level via Community Plans.



**Figure 1-2**  
**City of Los Angeles**  
**Community Plan Areas**  
**Sylmar Community Plan Area**

This is an information map provided for reference purposes only. It is not adopted as a part of the Community Plan.

## Framework Element Guiding Principles

**Grow strategically.** Should the City's population continue to grow, as is forecast by the Southern California Association of Governments (SCAG), growth should be focused in a number of higher-intensity commercial and mixed-use districts, centers, and boulevards, particularly in proximity to transportation corridors and transit stations. This type of focused growth links development with available infrastructure and encourages more walkable, transit-friendly neighborhoods, helping to ease our reliance on the automobile, and minimizing the need for new, costly infrastructure.

**Conserve existing residential neighborhoods.** By focusing much of the City's growth in centers and along commercial corridors, the City can better protect the existing scale and character of its single- and multi-family neighborhoods. The elements that contribute to the unique character of different residential neighborhoods should be identified and preserved whenever possible.

**Balance distribution of land uses.** Maintaining a variety of land uses is crucial to the long-term sustainability of the City. Commercial and industrial uses contribute to a diverse local economy, while residential uses provide necessary housing for the community. Integrating these uses within smaller geographical areas can better allow for a diversity of housing types, jobs, services, and amenities.

**Enhance neighborhood character through better development standards and guidelines.** Better development standards and guidelines are needed to both improve and enhance existing neighborhood character and ensure high-quality design in all types of development. In 2011, the City Planning Commission adopted citywide guidelines for commercial, residential, and industrial projects. In addition, many communities have design regulations in certain key geographic areas, as well as, design guidelines in the Community Plan for particular types of development.

**Improve the connection of public and private spaces through good urban design.** Good urban design improves the relationship between private development and the public realm. The placement of architectural features, windows, entrances, walkways, street trees, landscaping, and lighting all help to establish either a positive or negative interaction between a building and its surroundings. Good urban design practices help to create successful public and private spaces where people feel comfortable and that foster a sense of community.

**Create more small parks, pedestrian districts, and public open space.**

While regional parks and green networks are an important component of the City's open space strategy, more small-scale, urban open spaces must be developed as well, as they are crucial to the quality of life of the City's residents. There are many opportunities at the community level to create public "pocket" parks or mini parks as part of new developments, to enhance pedestrian orientation in key commercial and residential areas, and to build well-designed public plazas and gathering places.

**Improve mobility and access.** The City's transportation network should provide adequate access to jobs, services, amenities, open space, and entertainment, and maintain acceptable levels of mobility for all those who live, work, travel, or move goods in Los Angeles. Attainment of this goal necessitates a comprehensive program of physical infrastructure improvements, traffic systems and traffic demand management techniques, and land use and behavioral changes that reduce vehicle trips. An emphasis should be placed on providing for and supporting a variety of travel modes, including walking, bicycling, horseback riding, public transit, and driving.

**Identify a hierarchy of Districts, Centers, and Boulevards.** The Framework Element provides an overall structure and hierarchy for the City's commercial areas. This hierarchy, described in more detail below, helps us understand the roles that different types of commercial areas play within our communities so that we can better foster their unique characteristics. Our City's commercial areas serve a variety of roles and functions, from small neighborhood gathering places with local cafes and shops to major job centers and entertainment hubs. Although these areas are typically designated for commercial use, they often contain residential and mixed-use buildings as well. Commercial areas are grouped into four general categories: Neighborhood District, Community Center, Regional Center, and Mixed-Use Boulevards.



*The Metrolink Station located in Sylmar serves as a multi-modal transit terminal and transfer point for bus riders.*

## Framework Element Hierarchy

The City's commercial areas are grouped into four general categories: Neighborhood Districts, Community Centers, Regional Centers, and Mixed Use Boulevards. Some Community Plan areas do not contain all four types of districts or centers.



*Abbot Kinney Boulevard in Venice*

**Community Center.** Community Centers differ from Neighborhood Districts in their size and intensity of business and social activity. While they typically include the types of businesses and services found in Neighborhood Districts, they also contain uses that serve the larger community, like hotels or motels, small offices, cultural and entertainment facilities, and schools and libraries. Generally, Community Centers are medium-scaled, although this varies depending on the character of the surrounding area. Community Centers are often served by small shuttles, local and rapid buses, or subway stops.



*Hollywood and Western Avenue*



*Century City*

**Regional Center.** A Regional Center is a hub of regional commerce and activity and contains a diversity of uses such as corporate and professional offices, residential buildings, retail commercial malls, government buildings, major health facilities, major entertainment and cultural facilities, and supporting services. Regional Centers cater to many neighborhoods and communities and serve a much larger population than either Community Centers or Neighborhood Districts. They are generally high-density places whose physical form is substantially differentiated from the lower-density neighborhoods of the City. They typically provide a significant number of jobs, but are also non-work destinations as well. As a result of their densities and functions, Regional Centers are usually located near major transportation hubs or along major transportation corridors. There are no Regional Centers identified in the Sylmar Community Plan.

**Mixed-Use Boulevard.** Mixed-Use Boulevards serve as the "connecting spaces," linking Neighborhood Districts, Community Centers, and Regional Centers with one another. The scale, density, and height of development along designated Mixed-Use Boulevards vary throughout the City, but are intended to be compatible with adjacent residential neighborhoods. The term "mixed-use" connotes a variety of uses occurring within the boulevard, but also the potential for mixing uses within individual structures, such as commercial on the ground floor and residential above. Mixed-Use Boulevards should provide community and neighborhood commercial uses, public services, cultural facilities, school classrooms, and similar facilities to residents and employees within walking distance of surrounding residential neighborhoods and accessible from the boulevard's public transit.



*Downtown Los Angeles*

## Relationship to Other Agency Plans

A variety of agencies and organizations influence development and land use decision-making in the Community Plan area, see Figure 1-3, Other Agency Plans. In each case, the plans and use of property by other agencies must be consistent with the Community Plan. This required consistency holds true for redevelopment and capital improvement programs and projects, development entitlements, and other actions pertaining to the City's physical development. Relevant agencies and plans in Sylmar include:

### **Community Redevelopment Agency of Los Angeles (CRA/LA)**

CRA/LA, a Designated Local Authority (DLA), is the successor to the former Los Angeles Community Redevelopment Agency, the public agency established in 1948 pursuant to California State Law (Code Section 33000), to attract private investment into economically depressed communities. Although ABX1-26 dissolved the Agency in 2012, the land use authorities granted in the Redevelopment Project Area Plans remain effective and will continue to be administered by the DLA.

The Earthquake Disaster Assistance Project Area in Sylmar includes portions along San Fernando Road, Hubbard Street, and Foothill Boulevard. The Project was established in 1994 as a result of the Northridge Earthquake. While this Plan is set to expire in 2015, efforts are underway to expand its boundaries and extend its life, so that efforts to stimulate economic development in this part of Sylmar can continue.

**Los Angeles Community College District (LACCD)** LACCD consists of nine colleges, including the Los Angeles Mission College (LAMC) which is located within the Sylmar CPA. LAMC has prepared the 2009 Facilities Master Plan to help guide the development of the instructional and support facilities needed to accommodate increased enrollment through 2015. However, City Planning approval is not required prior to LAMC obtaining necessary permits. See Figure 5-1, Public Facilities.

### **Los Angeles County Metropolitan Transportation Authority (Metro)**

Metro is the state chartered regional transportation planning and public transportation operating agency for the County of Los Angeles. The agency develops and oversees transportation plans, policies, funding programs, and both short-term and long-range solutions that address the County's increasing mobility, accessibility and environmental needs. Metro operates the Sylmar/San Fernando Metrolink Station located in the southwest corner of the community.

### **The Angeles National Forest (ANF)**

ANF was established by Executive Order in December 1892. It covers about 700,000 acres and is the backyard playground to Sylmar and the greater Los Angeles area. ANF manages the watershed within its boundaries and provides valuable water to Southern California and protects surrounding communities from catastrophic floods. ANF is located in the San Gabriel Mountains of Los Angeles County.

### **Los Angeles Unified School District (LAUSD)**

LAUSD currently operates several K-12 schools in Sylmar, including one high school. In addition, LAUSD operates early childhood education centers, adult schools, and a continuation program within Sylmar. The LAUSD develops an annual Planning and Development Branch Strategic Execution Plan, which describes goals and progress for school site planning. However, City Planning approval is not required prior to LAUSD obtaining necessary permits. See Figure 5-1, Public Facilities.

### **Santa Monica Mountains Conservancy (SMMC)**

SMMC was established by the California State Legislature in 1980 to help create and preserve parkland in both wilderness and urban settings. The SMMC Zone covers an area from the edge of the Mojave Desert to the Pacific Ocean, including the San Gabriel Mountains and the Rim of the Valley Trail Corridor which are in the northern portions of Sylmar. The Sylmar Community Plan seeks to coordinate efforts to preserve and protect parkland, watershed, and open spaces by providing adequate buffers and transitional uses between the foothills and the rest of the community.

### **State Enterprise Zone (SEZ)**

SEZ program targets distressed areas throughout California, providing special incentives designed to encourage business investment and promote the creation of new jobs. A portion of the southeast corner of Sylmar is within the boundaries of the East Valley Region of the Los Angeles State Enterprise Zone. Businesses in this enterprise zone can take advantage of special State tax credits and deductions that are intended to stimulate business attraction, growth, and retention, and increased employment opportunities within Sylmar.

### **Sylmar Property and Business Improvement District (S-PBID)**

S-PBID is a public-private partnership established in 2007 to fund improvements within the district's boundaries. It consists of property owners and commercial tenants who are dedicated to promoting business development and improving the area's quality of life. The district is located within a three-quarter mile area along San Fernando Road between Polk and Hubbard Street. Business Improvement Districts deliver supplemental services such as capital improvements and beautification for the area – all funded by a special assessment paid by property owners within the district.

### **The United States Army Corps of Engineers (USACE)**

USACE is one of the primary agencies responsible for flood control. There are several flood control channels within Sylmar, such as the Pacoima Wash. Permits are required for work or structures within navigable waters, discharge of dredged or infill material into waters, and many water bodies, such as the Pacoima Wash, and wetlands are subject to USACE's regulatory authority. The proposed playing fields near the Pacoima Wash are subject to its regulatory authority.



## Special Districts

One of the primary methods of implementing the Community Plan is through zoning regulations. Special districts or overlays allow zoning regulations to be tailored specifically to the community, taking into account geographic features, architecture, history and unique character or design features. As shown in Figure 1-4, Special Districts, several such districts or overlays that influence decision-making in the community include:

### **Sylmar Equinekeeping “K” District**

The Sylmar Equinekeeping “K” District, amended concurrently with this Community Plan, is an overlay ordinance that preserves the equestrian lifestyle on residential lots in the north and central areas of Sylmar by maintaining minimum lot size, equinekeeping lot features, adequate distance to non-equinekeeping neighbors, as well as assisting in access to and development of equestrian trails. This “K” District includes a set of conditions in addition to those in the L.A.M.C. Equinekeeping “K” District section. The Community Plan Design Guidelines also include specific guidelines for equinekeeping neighborhoods.

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

The Sylmar CPIO provides standards for development projects, including new development and improvements to existing properties, within the community. The intent of the CPIO is to enhance the identity of the community and to improve the walkability and appearance of neighborhood districts, commercial areas, and multiple family residential areas near public transit.

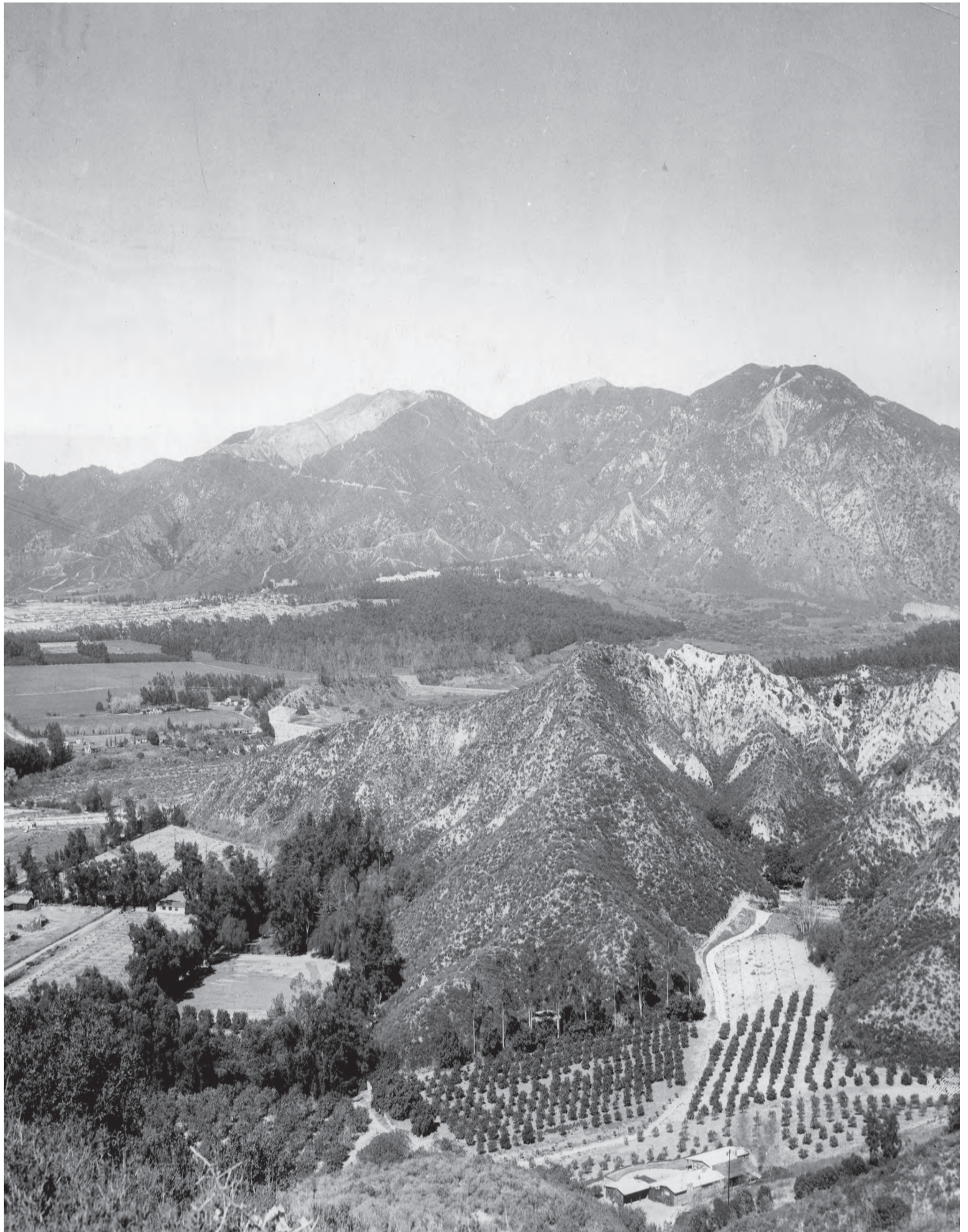


**Legend:**

- Community Plan Implementation Overlay (CPIO) District
- Equinekeeping "K" District
- Railroad
- Metrolink Station
- Streets
- Freeways
- Community Plan Boundary

**Figure 1-4**  
**Special Districts**  
**Sylmar Community Plan Area**

This is an informational map provided for reference purposes only. It is not adopted part of the Sylmar Community Plan.



*Tract housing increasing in the Valley (1957). Courtesy of Hollywood Citizen News/Valley Times Collection/Los Angeles Public Library.*

# Community Background

Once the site to the world's second largest olive groves, today Sylmar is a quaint bedroom community with a variety of services and amenities nestled in the foothills of the San Fernando Valley.

The earliest recorded inhabitants of the San Fernando Valley were the Tongva Indians, also known as the Gabrielinos. In 1797, a group of Spanish expeditioners, led by Gaspar de Portola, built the Mission San Fernando Rey de Espana, three miles south of Sylmar and the Mission Wells and Settling Basin. By the turn of the century the Mission had become a small, thriving center of trade where fruits, vegetables, olives, wine, and livestock were bought and sold. The Mission was the center of regional activity in the Valley until the City of San Fernando, located near the Southern Pacific Railroad tracks, was founded in 1874 by Charles Maclay. The railroad line, which traverses the western sector of the community, was completed in 1876 and linked San Fernando with downtown Los Angeles and San Francisco. The completion of the railroad tracks connected the valley with the rest of the nation, and was crucial to Sylmar's early development. Figure 2-1, Community Structure, highlights key points of interest in and around Sylmar.



*Indian Women at the San Fernando Rey de Espana Mission (1890). Courtesy of C.C.Pierce & Co./Los Angeles Public Library.*



*Mission Wells and Settling Basin, Los Angeles Historic-Cultural Monument No. 50.*

By the mid-nineteenth century, smaller independent towns began emerging around the City of San Fernando, including *Morningside* — the community now known as Sylmar. The area developed as an agricultural outgrowth of the City of San Fernando. In 1886, a group of Illinois businessmen purchased 2,000 acres of land, east of the railroad tracks on San Fernando Road and south of Roxford Street, and planted over 1,000 acres with olive trees. The nutrient-rich soil, underground water supply, and year round warm temperatures produced some of the world's finest olives and olive oil. During this period, Sylmar was considered to have the second largest olive grove and mill in the world. The packaging plant located near the railroad tracks on San Fernando Road and Roxford Street continued to sell olives and olive oil under the Sylmar Packing Label until 1925.

The completion of the Los Angeles Aqueduct in 1913, stretching 233 miles from the Owens River to the Los Angeles region, transformed Los Angeles, as it brought water to the City through the terminus at the northwest corner of the community that is now Sylmar. The area of Morningside was shortly renamed Sylmar ("sea of trees") after incorporation into the City of Los Angeles in 1915. Most of the northern rural areas in the valley were also annexed into the City around the same time in order to gain access to the new water supply, more than doubling the size of Los Angeles. With a new stable supply of water, combined with near perfect weather and soil conditions, Sylmar was an ideal place to cultivate farms and produce commodities and for many years flourished as a strong farming community.

For most of the 1920s and 1930s, Sylmar produced olive oil, pickled olives, and varietal flowers. Horse ranching and poultry farming were also historically part of the economic life of the area. The barns and other structures that survive provide a strong visual characteristic of the early history of Sylmar. Stetson Ranch is the most notable ranch in the area, though no early buildings or farm structures remain. The limited number of architectural resources from each period of Sylmar's history indicate that the community remained rural until the 1950s.



*Los Angeles Aqueduct Dedication (1913). Courtesy of Herald-Examiner Collection/Los Angeles Public Library.*



*Sylmar Packing Corporation (1950). Courtesy of Hollywood Citizen News/Valley Times Collection/Los Angeles Public Library.*

The end of World War II and the ensuing “baby boom” accelerated urbanization and population growth in the Valley and the rest of the City. The demand for growth that followed the mid-twentieth century spurred urbanization and effectively eliminated the olive industry and the small agricultural farms located in Sylmar. It was during this period, between 1940 and 1960 that much of the community’s housing stock was built, with single-story ranch-style homes that still predominate in many neighborhoods. During this time, the first major shopping center was built on Foothill Boulevard and the two major freeways (the Foothill and the Golden State) that traverse the community began construction, connecting Sylmar with the rest of the City and attracting new industries to Sylmar.

In conjunction with the new levels of urbanization, the Sylmar Branch Library opened in 1961. The first public park was formally dedicated in 1964 on the site of the old El Retiro School for Girls at Polk Street and Borden Avenue and is now the Sylmar Recreational Park, the only community Park in Sylmar. In 1969, the Hang Gliders Flight Park opened west of the Pacoima Wash, offering an alternative site for residents seeking recreational space north of the Foothill Freeway.

The 1970s were “rebuilding” years, as efforts moved forward to rebuild or transform structures that were destroyed in the 1971 Sylmar Earthquake. The destroyed Veterans Administration Hospital became the Veterans Memorial Park and the former tuberculosis sanitarium was rebuilt as Valley Care Olive View-UCLA Medical and Health Center, the only county hospital in the North Valley. In 1975, the Foothill Freeway (I-210), the 79-acre El Cariso County Regional Park and Golf Course, and the 11-acre Los Angeles Mission College were also completed. In 1978, the Los Angeles County Juvenile Hall was constructed, one of the few juvenile centers in the Valley. Three new mobile homes parks opened in the northwest area of the community in the late 1970s, and many shopping centers, and industrial developments, such as distribution warehouses, also began emerging east of the railroad tracks.



*Olive View Medical Center (1970). Courtesy of The Valley Relics Collection.*



*Olive Groves on Roxford Avenue (1937). Courtesy of the Los Angeles Public Library.*

In the 1980s, Sylmar experienced some of the highest population and housing growth rates in the City. The community grew by nearly twenty thousand residents and more than 4,500 residential units were built within a decade. Sylmar also transitioned from an Anglo to a Latino majority population. A number of large condominiums, and commercial, and industrial developments were constructed filling in most of the un-built land along major corridors and near the freeways.

By the 1990s, growth rates had tapered off. Most of the development took place along the periphery of the community where large parcels still remained undeveloped. Several industrial parks and planned residential neighborhoods were constructed during this time period. In 1993, the Sylmar/San Fernando Metrolink Station was built linking Sylmar to Lancaster and downtown Los Angeles and providing connections to Metro, LADOT, and the Santa Clarita Transit bus systems. In 1994, Sylmar was struck by another earthquake, the Northridge Earthquake, damaging large portions of its infrastructure.

Today, Sylmar is a relatively established semi-rural suburban community with a variety of services and amenities. Most of the recent residential activity has entailed remodeling or upgrading existing homes and/or subdividing large lots into small, more compact single and multi-family housing. The nearly completely destroyed Oakridge Mobile Home Park is seeing signs of rebirth after the fire of 2008; with a new community center and homes constructed. Interest in redeveloping Sylmar's commercial and industrial districts and public facilities has gained momentum in recent years. Several new mixed-use housing, retail, and office projects have been entitled near the Sylmar/San Fernando Metrolink station, existing shopping centers have been remodeled, and new industrial businesses have opened. San Fernando Road has begun to see improvements; with a new bike lane and street trees, and a new landscaped median. In addition, the Los Angeles Unified School District has upgraded many of its facilities and the Los Angeles Mission College has expanded its campus adding new facilities and amenities.

Over the next decade, the focus of development in Sylmar will be to enhance those elements and features of the community that contribute to its overall sense of charm, character, and function while directing growth strategically so that new development is compatible with existing land uses and scale and preserve the natural environment. Established residential neighborhoods will be protected and are not expected to change significantly as growth occurs in other parts of Sylmar and targeted locations in the City. New housing will be directed towards the Sylmar/San Fernando Metrolink Station and other major corridors. The community's local economy will be protected by preserving existing industrial and commercial land and by providing new opportunities to expand where appropriate and feasible. This strategic and balanced approach will not only protect residential neighborhoods and the natural resources, but will provide new housing, commercial, and industrial opportunities in areas that have the infrastructure and amenities in place to support growth.



*Multiple family housing in Sylmar, located along Foothill Boulevard.*



*The North Valley Business Center, located on Telfair Avenue, is one of the main industrial parks within the community of Sylmar, providing employment opportunities.*



*A pleasant bicycle path, shaded by street trees along San Fernando Road.*



*Oakridge Mobile Home Park resurges after devastation caused by the 2008 wildfires.*



Angeles National Forest

San Gabriel Mountains

Sunland - Tujunga - Lake View Terrace - Shadow Hills - East La Tuna Canyon

City of San Fernando

Mission Hills - Panorama City - North Hills

Granada Hills - Knollwood

### Figure 2-1 Community Structure Sylmar Community Plan Area

This is an informational map provided for reference purposes only. It is not adopted part of the Sylmar Community Plan.

City of Los Angeles Planning Department • February 2014

**Legend:**

- Parks & Open Space
- Community Services
- Shopping Centers
- Neighborhood Shops
- Industrial Services & Employment Centers
- Transit-Oriented Area
- Railroad
- Metrolink Multimodal Station
- Streets
- Freeways
- Community Plan Boundary
- Stetson Ranch
- Hang Gliders Park
- Baseball Fields
- Golf Course
- Hospital
- Wilson Canyon Library
- Veteran's Memorial
- Pacoima Wash
- Mission College

Not to Scale

## Existing Land Uses

Sylmar is a semi-rural suburban community framed by open space, as illustrated in Chart 2-1, Land Use Distribution. Its natural and man-made boundaries have helped define the area and have influenced its development pattern. It is bounded by the San Gabriel Mountains and Angeles National Forest to the north and east, the Pacoima Wash to the southeast, the City of San Fernando to the south, the Golden State Freeway (I-5) and San Diego Freeway (I-405) to the west, and is traversed by the Foothill Freeway (I-210) through the northeast portions of the community. The community of Sylmar is relatively built-out with a mixture of single and multiple family residential, commercial, industrial, civic, passive and recreational uses, and public facilities within a “sea of trees.”

Residential uses comprise the largest portion of land uses within Sylmar, with 4,380 acres or 64 percent of the community designated for residential uses. More than half, 57 percent, is designated for single-family uses, with the remaining 7 percent designated for multi-family uses. Single-family residential uses are located throughout the community. Most of the single-family neighborhoods are characterized by single-story ranch style homes that were built post World War II with more recent development characterized by two-story modern and post-modern architecture. The oldest single-family neighborhoods are located in the central portion of the community featuring semi-rural characteristics such as large lots with horsekeeping, stables, and equestrian trails that lead into the national forest.

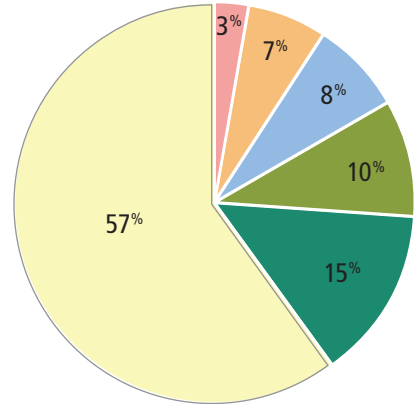
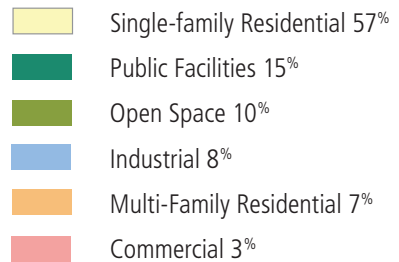


Chart 2-1

### Land Use Distribution (2006)



Source: City of Los Angeles  
Department of City Planning, 2010.



Typical single-family residential neighborhood in Sylmar.



*The small-scale, two-story buildings with individual front entrances are characteristics of many of the apartments and condominiums on Foothill Boulevard.*



*Typical single-story commercial development in Sylmar.*



*Streets lined with trees is characteristic of many Sylmar industrial districts.*

Multiple family uses consist of nearly seven percent or about 484 acres of the land in Sylmar. Most of the multi-family neighborhoods are concentrated in the central west portion of the community along Foothill Boulevard and in the south east portion near the Sylmar/San Fernando Metrolink Station, with several residential neighborhoods along Hubbard Street, San Fernando Road, and along the fringes of the community. The older neighborhoods comprise of a mix of two and three-story attached and detached apartments and condominiums with newer development varying from two-story townhomes to four-story apartment buildings. There are also several mobile home parks located throughout the community.

Commercial land uses comprise less than three percent or about 195 acres of the land in Sylmar. Most of this land is located in the southern portions of the community along the commercial corridors of Foothill Boulevard, Glenoaks Boulevard, Gladstone Avenue, and Laurel Canyon. These corridors consist of shopping centers containing a mix of retail, office and financial services, auto-related uses, and general commercial services and uses. Several smaller neighborhood commercial districts are located throughout the community at major intersections along Glenoaks Boulevard, Roxford Street, and Foothill Boulevard. These districts provide a variety of uses that serve the immediate local residential neighborhoods. There are also two mixed-use boulevards along San Fernando Road and Maclay Avenue which offer a variety of commercial uses and residential units.

Industrial land use comprises approximately 530 acres or eight percent of the land in Sylmar. Industrial uses are concentrated in the central west portion of the community along the railroad tracks and in the northwest and southeast corners of the community near major freeways. Sylmar has two light industrial districts, one located in the southeast corner of the community near the I-210 freeway and the other in the central west portion of the community near the railroad tracks. The uses located in these districts contain a mix of distribution and warehouse uses and industrial services such as machine and print shops. In addition, two industrial parks are located in the western portion of the community near the I-5 freeway. The uses in these parks primarily consist of research and development with some distribution uses. A small cluster of industrial uses is located on the western edge of the community containing primarily warehouse uses.

Open space comprises 676 acres or ten percent of the community. The largest open space area is located in the eastern portion of the community, north of the I-210 freeway, and includes El Cariso Community Regional Park and Golf Course, the Pacoima Wash, Hanggliders Flight Park, Sylmar Independent Baseball League, and Veterans Memorial Community Regional Park. Additional open space is located in the northern portion of the community, abutting the San Gabriel Mountains and Angeles National Forest. This area includes two specialty parks that serve the equestrian community, Stetson Ranch and Wilson Canyon Parks. These parks provide trailheads that lead up to the Rim of the Valley Trail Corridor and the Angeles National Forest. In addition, a community park is centrally located near three public schools and a neighborhood park is located in southwest corner of Sylmar. Other open space areas include the historically designated Mission Wells and Debris Basin located in the southwest corner, the Pioneer Cemetery centrally located in the community, and the two flood control channels that traverse the community.

Public Facilities, such as schools, fire stations, hospitals, and utilities, is the second largest land use designation in the community representing 1,046 acres, or 15 percent. Olive View-UCLA Medical Center is the largest public facility with Los Angeles Mission College being the second largest public facility in Sylmar, both located north of the I-210 freeway. The third largest public facility is a Department of Water and Power facility that consists of a power receiving station, several water storage containers, and the transmission line right-of-ways that run parallel to the I-210 freeway and bisect the community in its western portion. Other public facilities include: the juvenile detention facility located in the northwest corner of the community, the library and fire station centrally located on Polk Street, and 10 public schools located throughout the community.



*Stetson Ranch, located at the base of the Angeles National Forest in Sylmar, is a shady rural park that offers hiking and equestrian trails, as well as equestrian staging areas.*



*Sylmar has been called “the world capital of hang gliding” and pilots have been flying hang gliders over the area since 1969.*



*Olive View-UCLA Medical Center is a hospital, funded by Los Angeles County, and is one of the primary healthcare delivery systems in the north San Fernando Valley.*



*Parks, open space, and public facilities, such as the Lakeside Debris Basin, offer recreational opportunities throughout Sylmar.*

## Relationship to Adjacent Communities

The community of Sylmar is located in the northeast section of the San Fernando Valley at the southern foot of the San Gabriel Mountain range. Adjacent communities within the City of Los Angeles include Granada Hills–Knollwood and Mission Hills–Panorama City–North Hills and the incorporated City of San Fernando. Sylmar shares the southern boundary with the City of San Fernando and much of its history, identity, and ethnic community. The City of San Fernando and nearby cities, such as Burbank and Santa Clarita, provide retail and entertainment opportunities not found locally. In exchange, Sylmar employs many blue and white collar workers that reside in nearby communities. Sylmar also offers a variety of recreational activities, such as horseback riding, hang gliding, and hiking opportunities. It also provides higher educational opportunities, health services, and correctional facilities to nearby communities. Lastly, Sylmar offers rail services to nearby residents traveling locally and regionally.

## Trends and Projections

The State of California requires that cities plan for changes in population, housing, and employment; if growth is projected, each city must accommodate a share of the region’s anticipated growth. These projections are developed by the Southern California Association of Governments (SCAG), which forecasts population and job growth for the cities and counties in the six-county Southern California region. The City must then accommodate, or create the “capacity” for, these projected levels of population, housing, and employment through its Community Plans. This section describes the Sylmar Community Plan’s population, housing, and employment projections, as well as other influencing factors that may impact these estimates. In addition, recent state legislation, including two important climate change bills, is discussed.

## Population, Housing and Employment

SCAG’s 2030 population and housing forecasts for Los Angeles are based on historic and recent growth trends. The Department of City Planning (DCP) refines the population and housing allocations within the City’s 35 communities so that projected growth is directed to regional and commercial centers, consistent with the Framework Element and other City policies.

The Sylmar Community Plan is designed to accommodate the 2030 population, housing, and employment projections based on assumptions about the amount of development that can reasonably be expected to occur during the life of the plan, given the Community Plan’s land use designations and policies. Past building data demonstrates that many sites will not be built to the maximum densities permitted by the Community Plan for a variety of reasons, including economic conditions and market trends, financial lending practices, construction and land acquisitions costs, physical site constraints, and other General Plan policies or regulations. These reasonable expectations about the level of future development determine the Community Plan’s capacity to absorb any increase in population, housing, and employment. The 2030 projections and plan capacity for population, housing units, and employment in Sylmar are shown in Table 2-1, Population, Housing and Employment Projections and Capacity for Sylmar.

**TABLE 2-1**  
**Population, Housing, and Employment Projections**  
**and Capacity for Sylmar**

	Existing (2005 Estimate) <sup>1</sup>	2030 Projection	Plan Capacity
Population (persons)	71,794	85,993 <sup>2</sup>	88,008
Housing (dwelling units)	18,329	23,887 <sup>2</sup>	24,438
Employment (jobs)	19,619	25,660 <sup>3</sup>	26,453

<sup>1</sup> Southern California Association of Governments (SCAG), 2005 estimate.

<sup>2</sup> City of Los Angeles Department of City Planning, adjusted SCAG projection.

<sup>3</sup> SCAG projection.

## Other Influencing Factors

In any planning effort, population projections and estimates are prepared in an attempt to anticipate, predict, and forecast population trends over a planning period. Understanding population change is necessary to predict future demand for housing units, land area for future development, transportation demand, community facilities and natural resources within the Plan area. It needs to be recognized, however, that these figures are only best estimates and are derived from regional data disaggregated to the city and community level. The intensity of development is affected by many factors and the rate at which population, jobs and housing grow may be faster or slower than anticipated. External factors, such as global economic trends, demographic changes, immigration and migration, global warming, and water rights and related litigation may also influence community development. These factors are difficult to quantify and are often beyond the control of local jurisdictions, but are important considerations as future trends are anticipated, predicted, and forecasted.

## State Legislation

At the state level, Senate and Assembly bills are often adopted that influence local planning policy. The Sylmar Community Plan includes new policies and programs that address these important objectives. For example, legislation calls for greater local emphasis on greenhouse gas reductions as well as better integration of transportation and land use planning:

**Global Warming Solutions Act of 2006 (Assembly Bill 32)** requires California to reduce its greenhouse gas emissions to 1990 levels by no later than 2020. The California Air Resources Board (CARB), as the State's lead air pollution control agency, was assigned primary responsibility for coordinating development of those measures needed to achieve the required emissions reductions.

**Complete Streets Act of 2007 (Assembly Bill 1358)** requires cities when updating its General Plan, to provide for the routine accommodation of all users of the roadway including motorists, pedestrians, bicyclists, individuals with disabilities, seniors, and users of public transportation.

**Landmark Land Use and Greenhouse Gas State Law of 2008 (Senate Bill 375)** helps to implement Assembly Bill 32's greenhouse gas reduction goals by targeting transportation-related emissions through better integration of land use and transportation planning.



# Land Use & Design

Sylmar serves as a bedroom community where residents appreciate a quiet, slow-paced, semi-rural suburban lifestyle that offers close proximity to amenities and jobs within the community and the greater San Fernando Valley and provides needed resources and amenities to the city and region. The focus of development in Sylmar will be to enhance those elements and features of the community that contribute to its overall sense of charm, character, function, and livability, while directing growth strategically so that new development is compatible with existing land uses and scale and protects the natural environment.

This Chapter provides guidance regarding the ultimate land use pattern and development for Sylmar. Based on Elements of the City of Los Angeles' General Plan, this Chapter formulates a coherent set of goals, policies, and design guidelines to guide growth in a manner that helps preserve, protect, and enhance existing natural, historic, architecture, and cultural resources. These land use policies and design guidelines serve as the central organizing element for the Community Plan, providing strategies for accomplishing the Community Plan's vision. This chapter is organized into four general categories:

- Residential
- Commercial
- Industrial
- Historic, Architecture, and Cultural Resources

Goals and policies for community facilities and infrastructure are included in Chapter 5. The programs to implement the Plan's goals, policies, and design guidelines are included in Chapter 6.

# Sylmar Vision Statement

To achieve the goal of a sustainable future with a high quality of life, the Sylmar Community Plan includes the following Vision Statement that describes what the community seeks to become — how it will look, function, and how it might be better or different in the future. The Vision Statement gives the plan a purpose and provides a basis for its development. The vision for Sylmar is for a stable community that provides a high quality of life for its residents: one that builds upon its distinct natural beauty and resources, rich agricultural and cultural heritage, and proximity to various interstate highways and public transit. Sylmar envisions a community that:

- Maintains a semi-rural suburban atmosphere, as a primarily “bedroom” community, by sustaining and protecting residential areas, increasing and enhancing its recreational areas, public facilities and services, and improving its commercial and industrial areas;
- Promotes a conservative plan which preserves existing single-family residential neighborhoods and accommodates a variety of housing opportunities near public transit, services, and amenities at densities that complement existing neighborhoods and designs that create appropriate transitions from one housing type to another;
- Preserves the rustic charm and equestrian lifestyle of the area by protecting equestrian-oriented neighborhoods, incorporating and developing trails, and retaining historic/cultural resources and significant features;
- Is carefully planned and balanced, allowing for an increase in urban conveniences and opportunities without overpowering the semi-rural suburban community they serve;
- Features sustainable growth that supports and revitalizes commercial areas and transit-oriented, mixed-use corridors in need of physical and economic improvements, and which encourages pedestrian activity and use of public transit.
- Enhances and preserves existing commercial areas ensuring there is an adequate level of commercial services provided throughout the Plan area;
- Supports environmentally sensitive industrial and employment centers that provide local and regional jobs and bolster the community’s economic and physical condition;
- Preserves as much of the natural terrain and environment as possible through thoughtful development of the areas near the foothills and the Pacoima Wash. The conservation of natural terrain and open space areas in the foothills north of the Foothill Freeway are especially important, since they are part of the Tujunga Watershed; and
- Supports an adequate circulation system that will allow traffic to flow on major streets and create a safe and landscaped atmosphere for pedestrians, bicyclist, and equestrians.

## *Vision Statement*

The Vision Statement is unique to the Sylmar Community Plan, and provides a foundation for change that is shared by community members, homeowners, developers, business owners, elected officials, and City departments.



*The San Gabriel Mountains serve as a backdrop to the semi-rural suburban neighborhoods in Sylmar.*



*Quiet residential neighborhoods with a semi-rural lifestyle characterize the community.*

## *General Plan*

The City's General Plan is a dynamic document consisting of several elements: Framework, Conservation, Housing, Open Space, Service Systems, Transportation, Air, Noise, Safety, and Land Use.

The Land Use Element of the General Plan is comprised of 35 Community Plans that are the official guide to the future development of the City of Los Angeles. The Community Plans are intended to promote an arrangement of land uses, streets, and services which encourage and contribute to the economic, social, and physical health, safety, welfare, and convenience of the people who live and work in the community. The Community Plans ensure that sufficient land is designated for housing, commercial, employment, educational, recreational, cultural, social and aesthetic needs of the City's residents.

## General Plan Land Use

The 35 Community Plans of the City of Los Angeles, which constitute the Land Use Element of the General Plan, guide the location and intensity of private and public uses of land; direct the arrangement of land uses, streets, and services; and encourage the economic, social, and physical health, safety, welfare, and convenience of people who live and work in the community. Land uses are organized into general classifications — residential, commercial, industrial, and open space — which are further defined by use, intensity, and density as noted on Table 3-1, Sylmar Community Plan Land Use. Each land use category includes a list of permitted zones, which delineate the types of uses, densities, intensities, and building heights permitted on a particular parcel. Figure 3-1, Sylmar General Plan Land Use Map, is a graphic representation of the location of Sylmar's land use classifications that reflects the policies contained in the Community Plan.



*The Sylmar Community Plan designates areas appropriate for housing growth, such as those near transit options.*

TABLE 3-1

**General Plan Land Use\***

Land Use Designations	Corresponding Zones	Net Acres	Total Acres	% of Total Acres
<b>Total</b>			<b>6,808</b>	
<b>Residential</b>			<b>4,267</b>	<b>63%</b>
<i>Single Family Neighborhoods</i>			<i>3,847</i>	<i>56%</i>
Minimum	A1, A2, RE40	770		11%
Very Low I	RE20, RA	790		12%
Very Low II	RE15, RE11	251		4%
Low I	RE9, RS	870		13%
Low II	R1	914		13%
Low III	RD5, RD6	252		4%
<i>Multiple Family Neighborhoods</i>			<i>420</i>	<i>6%</i>
Low Medium I	RD4, RD3	257		4%
Low Medium II	RD1.5, RD2	77		1%
Medium	R3	86		1%
<b>Commercial</b>			<b>212</b>	<b>3%</b>
Neighborhood Commercial	CR, C1, C1.5	23		<1%
Community Commercial	C2, C4, R3, RAS3	189		3%
<b>Industrial</b>			<b>586</b>	<b>9%</b>
Limited Industrial	M1, MR1	481		7%
Light Industrial	M2, MR2	105		2%
<b>Other</b>			<b>1,744</b>	<b>26%</b>
Open Space	OS, A1	680		10%
Public Facilities	PF	889		13%
Public Facilities - Freeways	PF	173		3%

\* Updated on 11/22/13

Angeles National Forest

San Gabriel Mountains

Sunland -  
Tujunga -  
Lake View  
Terrace -  
Shadow Hills -  
East La Tuna  
Canyon

City of  
San Fernando

Mission Hills -  
Panorama City -  
North Hills

Granada Hills -  
Knollwood

### Figure 3-1 General Plan Land Use Sylmar Community Plan Area

This is an informational map provided for reference purposes only. It is not adopted as part of the Sylmar Community Plan.

City of Los Angeles Planning Department • May 2015

Not to Scale

**Legend:**

**Residential**

*Single Family Neighborhoods*

- Minimum
- Very Low I
- Very Low II
- Low I
- Low II
- Low III

*Multiple Family Neighborhoods*

- Low Medium I
- Low Medium II
- Medium

**Commercial**

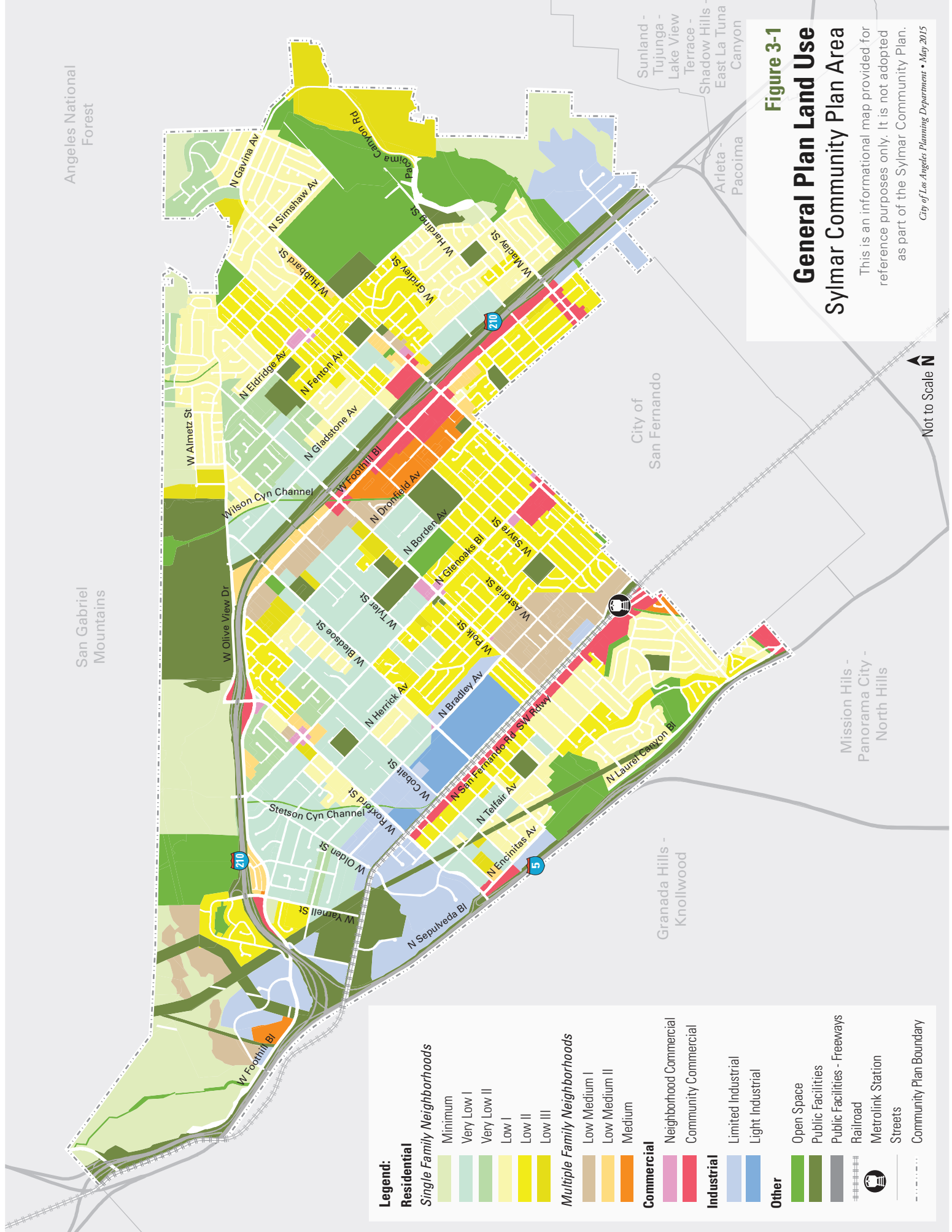
- Neighborhood Commercial
- Community Commercial

**Industrial**

- Limited Industrial
- Light Industrial

**Other**

- Open Space
- Public Facilities
- Public Facilities - Freeways
- Railroad
- Metrolink Station
- Streets
- Community Plan Boundary



## Community Themes

As discussed in Chapter 1, the General Plan Framework Element establishes guiding principles for growth and development for the city. While all Community Plans implement these guiding principles, Los Angeles is a city of diverse neighborhoods and communities and with that comes many varied and localized issues. The Sylmar Community Plan carries out the Framework guiding principles through its land use designations, its policies and specific community focused themes. The community themes provide more detailed expression of the community's vision statement and lay the foundation for the Community Plan's goals, policies, design guidelines, and implementation programs. They build on major points of agreement that emerged from community discussions about the valued qualities of Sylmar, hopes and aspirations for the future, and strategies for achieving the vision. The Sylmar Community Plan Themes are as follows:

### **Preserve the Semi-Rural Suburban Character.**

Preservation of rural character has been an ongoing theme for many communities in the North Valley. As development pressures increase, the challenge of preserving the unique rural character of each community also increases. Residents of Sylmar enjoy a semi-rural suburban lifestyle and want to recognize and protect the qualities that contribute to this way of life. Preserving the community's semi-rural character also protects the environment from adverse impacts associated with more intense development. The abundance of natural features in Sylmar, such as the "sea of trees", contributes to the high quality of life and the semi-rural character that attracted residents to the community in the first place. Where development of land is proposed, the densities and design should be of a nature that will maintain the semi-rural character of the area. This Community Plan preserves the character of existing single-family and equestrian-oriented neighborhoods which promote Sylmar's agricultural heritage by maintaining lower density land use designations, limiting the allowed residential density of some commercial areas, and establishing goals and policies that support the development of an equestrian trails system.

### **Protect the Environment and Natural Resources and Expand Recreational Amenities and Opportunities.**

Promoting a healthy environment is critical to maintaining a sustainable community. Sensitive areas such as the Pacoima Wash and the watershed, the upper portions of the community adjacent to the Angeles National Forest, and other valuable resources and recreational amenities should be protected and expanded. While new development promotes economic vitality, it should not adversely affect the community's environmental quality and access to public open spaces and recreational opportunities. With new development, there is an opportunity to implement more environmentally-friendly building practices such as installing permeable surfaces, planting fire resistant landscapes, and integrating the trails network. This Community Plan contains goals and policies that help to protect and restore the environment and improve the quality of life for residents, now and in the future.

## *Sustainable Development*

Sustainable development encompasses established principles of good planning and advocates a proactive approach to future development. The basic concept of sustainability is meeting the needs of current generations without compromising the ability of future generations to meet their own needs. Sustainable development can be further defined as promoting the "three E's": environment, economy, and equity.

What does sustainable development look like on the ground? In a community that is developing sustainably, the neighborhood is the basic building block of urban design and is characterized by walkability, mixed-use development, and mixed-income housing. Walkability is a function of compactness and density. Attention to streetscape and public spaces is a key design element in creating desirable places to live. Such neighborhoods are more likely to support efficient transit systems. The character and function of each neighborhood is then placed properly within its regional setting. This approach to planning, from the neighborhood to the regional level, is often referred to as "smart growth."

### **Expand Housing Opportunities.**

This Community Plan creates new housing options, mostly near the Sylmar/San Fernando Metrolink Station and in areas identified for mixed-use, in accordance with the Framework guiding policy to focus growth in higher-intensity commercial centers close to transportation and services. Many of the community's neighborhoods, including single-family and equestrian-oriented neighborhoods, are established and not expected to change significantly as growth in other parts of the community occurs. This Community seeks to direct growth away from established residential neighborhoods towards transit-oriented districts and corridors near commercial centers. Other areas – particularly near the Metrolink Station – will support an increase in residential and commercial activity.

### **Enhance Distinct Neighborhoods, Districts, Centers, and Mixed-Use Areas.**

The establishment of lively and walkable commercial districts is a key goal of this Community Plan to retain elements of Sylmar's small town environment. Community input received during the outreach process reflected a strong need for shopping and other community services within walking distance of neighborhoods. This Community Plan aims to support the creation and maintenance of distinctive neighborhoods, districts, and centers that provide visual diversity, varying intensities of residential and commercial activity that are appropriate to their location, and plentiful opportunities for social interaction. It identifies districts, centers, and boulevards that reflect a defined local character, scale, and relationship to adjacent neighborhoods and provide a full complement of uses with easy access to parks, stores, and other amenities of everyday living. Development intensities are designed to retain low-scale residential neighborhoods, concentrate more intense development in specific locations, and maximize accessibility to amenities, while providing transition in scale and height to lower-density neighborhoods.



*Pedestrian amenities, visually intriguing landscaping, and areas where people can interact help create distinct and livable neighborhoods.*

### Promote the Metrolink Station as the Town Center of Sylmar.

Identified as the “heart” of the community, the area immediately surrounding the Sylmar/San Fernando Metrolink Station is considered a transit-oriented town center with substantial development opportunity. In particular, San Fernando Road has a significant amount of underutilized commercial land and has the potential for much greater land use intensity which could accommodate a variety of services and uses. A mix of housing, retail, service, and civic/institutional amenities that are well-designed and inviting for people to walk and ride their bikes are encouraged and supported along this corridor by the new Community Plan. Office space and other employment-generating uses which provide employment opportunities and help support the existing local economy are also encouraged in the new Community Plan.

### Preserve Industrial Areas for Local Jobs and Revenue.

Industrial uses, particularly specialty firms that are solely allowed in industrial zones, are disappearing. Industrial districts are increasingly compromised by conversion pressures into commercial and residential uses. A renewed commitment to the preservation of industrial zones for jobs in Sylmar can improve the jobs-housing balance, maintain a healthy local economy with revenue and employment opportunities, help pay for services such as fire, police, and libraries, and help ensure appropriately located land suitable to accommodate existing, new and relocating industrial firms. The various industrial districts in Sylmar are important economic and employment areas serving the local community and the greater San Fernando Valley. This Community Plan retains the industrial land use designation and zoning in Sylmar and contains goals and policies that help to support existing businesses and encourage new business opportunities that are compatible with the environment.



*Preserving industrial land in Sylmar helps ensure local employment opportunities and economic growth.*



*The Sylmar/San Fernando Metrolink Station provides access to multiple transit opportunities, increasing access to jobs and amenities and decreasing vehicle dependence for those who live nearby.*

## Residential Areas

Most of Sylmar is designated for residential uses, with single-family residential as the predominant land use, as seen on Figure 3-2, Residential Areas. Single-family neighborhoods are located throughout the community, with equinekeeping neighborhoods clustered primarily in the northern and central portions of the community. Multi-family neighborhoods are concentrated in the central portions of the community, along major corridors.

The community of Sylmar contains a wide range of housing options, meeting the various needs of a diverse population. Residential types vary from large equinekeeping lots with horse stables and corrals, to compact single-family dwellings with panoramic views of the foothills, to manufactured homes, and rental and ownership multi-family units. The housing stock also varies in age, from homes built over a century ago to new townhomes built this year.

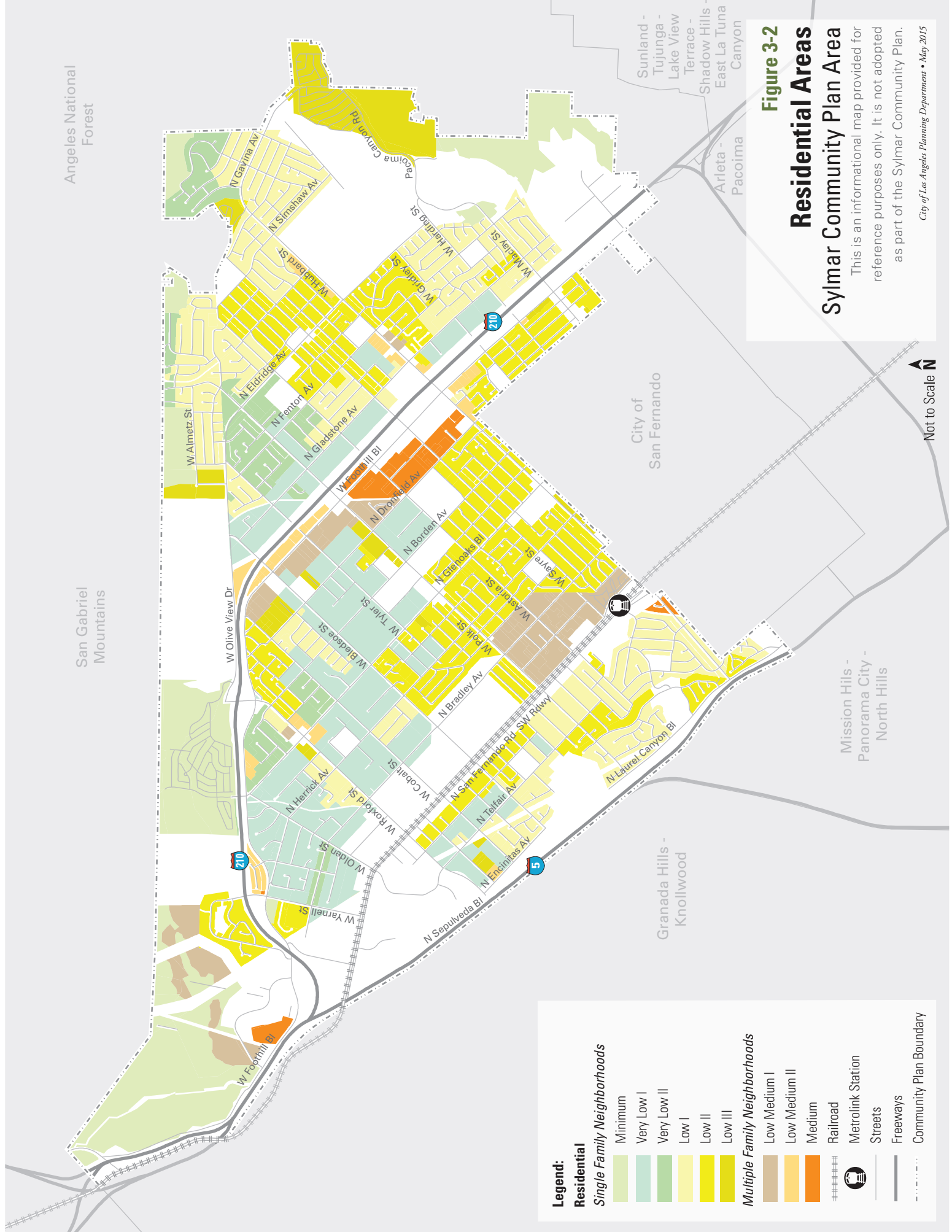
Sylmar will remain a predominantly semi-rural, suburban residential community. Most of the residential neighborhoods are well established and not expected to change significantly. Growth will be directed to major corridors with public transit, mixed-use boulevards, and existing neighborhoods in transition to higher density.



*Ranch style architecture is typical of residential neighborhoods in Sylmar, representing the semi-rural character of the community.*



*Single family residential homes vary in age and type, with more recently constructed subdivisions compatible with surrounding neighborhoods.*



Angeles National Forest

San Gabriel Mountains

City of San Fernando

Granada Hills - Knollwood

Mission Hills - Panorama City - North Hills

Sunland - Tujunga - Lake View Terrace - Shadow Hills - East La Tuna Canyon

**Figure 3-2**  
**Residential Areas**  
**Sylmar Community Plan Area**  
 This is an informational map provided for reference purposes only. It is not adopted as part of the Sylmar Community Plan.

City of Los Angeles Planning Department • May 2015

Not to Scale

**Legend:**

**Residential**

**Single Family Neighborhoods**

- Minimum
- Very Low I
- Very Low II
- Low I
- Low II
- Low III

**Multiple Family Neighborhoods**

- Low Medium I
- Low Medium II
- Medium

##### Railroad

Metrolink Station

— Streets

— Freeways

- - - - - Community Plan Boundary

## Residential Issues and Opportunities



*In maintaining single family neighborhoods, the community plan preserves the equestrian lifestyle and the overall semi-rural character of the community.*



*With new residential development, there is an opportunity to construct new trails or improve existing trails, which will improve trail safety and connectivity throughout the community and region.*

Throughout the Sylmar Community Plan update process, opportunities were provided for community members and stakeholders to comment on the proposed plan changes at a variety of public workshops and presentations. As a result of public input and staff research, issues and opportunity areas were identified. Goals and policies were then developed to specifically address these areas, and are included in this section. A primary concern was the preservation of neighborhood character and the need for neighborhood services within walking distance. Following is a summary of key issues and opportunities:

- Residents and visitors alike have had a longstanding concern for preserving the equestrian lifestyle and amenities in this area. As development pressures have mounted in these lower-density portions of the City, equestrian-oriented lots have been subdivided into sizes too small to accommodate equines, buffers between equine and non-equine lots have been diminished, and commonly used trails have also been obscured or interrupted by new developments. This pressure has resulted in a loss of valuable and irreplaceable equinekeeping lots that contribute to the rich rural character of the area. Improved regulations can assure existing equestrian-oriented neighborhoods are preserved and that future development in these areas contributes to the community's overall semi-rural way of living. Amending the Equinekeeping "K" District with requirements to preserve minimum lot sizes and features of equestrian lots, as well as an interconnected trails system in the area, will ensure preservation of the equestrian lifestyle in Sylmar and adequate buffering between uses.
- Development pressures over time have increased density in areas that have been predominantly low-density residential. Preserving lower-density areas with land use designation and zoning will help to retain the larger lot sizes and semi-rural suburban character of this area. It will also direct new higher density growth where it is more appropriate, such as the areas near the Sylmar/San Fernando Metrolink Station and commercial areas and mixed-use boulevards along major corridors. This will provide new housing opportunities that are connected to public transit, services, and facilities which incentivize walking and biking and reduce vehicle trips and miles traveled.
- There is an interest in environmental protection, in particular preserving wildlife corridors from housing developments that interfere with wildlife passage and maintaining unobstructed mountain views. Minimizing and regulating development along the Foothills and the Pacoima Wash through zoning, policy and design guidelines will help preserve wildlife corridors and scenic vistas.

- Public safety with regard to natural disasters, protection from wildfires, mudslides, and flooding are among some the issues of particular concern to residents. Retaining lower densities near the foothills and minimizing development will help to provide for defensible spaces against disasters, and allow percolation of rain and run-off water into the Tujunga/Pacoima Watershed, recharging the City’s groundwater.
- Inconsistent zoning and development patterns over several decades have created inappropriate or non-existent transitions in use, scale and massing from multi-family areas and commercial boulevards to adjacent residential and equinekeeping neighborhoods. Improved transitions and connectivity between various types of residential, commercial and industrial land uses will create better development and neighborhoods in the future.
- The need for affordable senior housing and assisted living facilities is a key concern due to demographic and economic trends and projections. In Sylmar, such facilities would increase the opportunities for “empty nest seniors” to downsize from large single-family homes while remaining within the community and the reach of supportive social, cultural and family networks.
- Preserving small neighborhood serving amenities within residential areas serves the larger goal of reducing vehicle trips by making walking or bicycling more viable options for simple conveniences.



*Residential neighborhoods consisting of manufactured homes offer alternative, affordable, single-family housing options for residents of the community.*



*Senior housing and assisted living facilities provide local housing options for the growing population of seniors.*

## All Residential Areas



*Residential neighborhoods in Sylmar consist largely of single-family homes that boast large landscaped setbacks and mature shade trees along the public right-of-way.*



*This pocket park provides opportunities for open space, playground and picnic areas, trails, and walkways and offer a significant option for regular physical activity for residents.*

The goals and policies in this section reflect the community’s vision to preserve the low-density, single-family, equestrian-oriented neighborhoods that provide quality residential environments, while providing new housing opportunities that enhance existing residential neighborhoods, complement the surrounding environment, and provide residential amenities. Each of the community-specific design guidelines in this section and the Residential Citywide Design Guidelines should be considered, although not all will be appropriate in every case, as each project will require a unique approach. However, to achieve the goal of excellence in new design, projects should incorporate these design guidelines to the maximum extent feasible, in order to meet the intent of this Community Plan.

**Goal LU1: Complete, livable and quality neighborhoods throughout Sylmar that provide a variety of housing types, densities, forms and design, and a mix of uses and services that support the needs of residents.**

### Policies

- LU1.1. **Choice in Type, Quality, and Location of Housing.** Provide a variety of housing types that accommodates households of all sizes and for all persons regardless of income, age, ethnic background, and physical needs throughout Sylmar’s residential neighborhoods and in targeted mixed-use areas.
- LU1.2. **Existing Housing Stock.** Minimize the loss of good quality, affordable housing and encourage the replacement of demolished housing stock with new affordable housing opportunities. Minimize displacement of residents when building new housing.
- LU1.3. **Recreational Amenities.** Incorporate amenities for residents, such as on-site recreational facilities, passive open spaces, and community gardens which promote physical activity, fitness, and health.
- LU1.4. **Land Lease Communities.** Preserve existing and support new land lease communities, such as mobile home parks and manufactured housing. Encourage the rehabilitation and modernization of aging and substandard land lease communities, while addressing the displacement of residents.
- LU1.5. **Affordability.** Promote the use of existing citywide programs to increase rental and housing ownership opportunities, such as small lot subdivisions, when and where appropriate, and density bonuses in exchange for affordable housing set asides.
- LU1.6. **Multiple Housing.** Direct multi-family housing growth to neighborhoods designated as Low Medium and Medium Residential.

Goal LU2: **Well-designed residential neighborhoods that enhance the pedestrian experience and exhibit the architectural characteristics and qualities that distinguish Sylmar.**

## Policies

- LU2.1. **High-Quality Development.** Design projects to achieve a high level of quality in accordance with the Sylmar Community Plan Design Guidelines for Residential Areas, Residential Citywide Design Guidelines, and other applicable design guidelines. Projects are required to incorporate to the maximum extent feasible applicable design guidelines.
- LU2.2. **Neighborhood Compatibility.** Require infill development, new structures and additions to be compatible with the suburban characteristics and qualities of existing residential neighborhoods and dwelling units with regards to scale, mass, building orientation, heights, setbacks, and entrances, topography, parking arrangement, landscaping, and parkways.
- LU2.3. **Design Standards.** Support design standards to achieve transition in scale when neighborhoods planned for multifamily residential uses abut existing single family residential uses and/or neighborhoods planned for single family residential uses.
- LU2.4. **Utility Design.** Integrate service elements and infrastructure such as mechanical equipment, trash enclosures and utilities with the design of projects. Locate service elements and infrastructure away from street views and screen and/or enclose equipment in order to enhance the pedestrian experience and aesthetic appeal of the building and overall neighborhood. Underground utilities where possible.



*Parking is located to the rear of the building and away from the corner. Access is taken from a side street.*



*At-grade, open and inviting front yards help activate the street, maintain human scale, and soften the transition of buildings to the street. The low wall also encloses private open space while still allowing social interaction.*

Goal LU3: **Residential neighborhoods that embrace and contribute to the semi-rural, equestrian lifestyle of the surrounding area and preserve the rustic charm enjoyed by residents.**

### Policies

- LU3.1. **Historic Resources and Significant Features.** Preserve existing historic resources, significant vegetation, trees, and other natural features which contribute to the overall charm and rural character of the area. Encourage the rehabilitation and rebuilding of deteriorated housing as a means of preserving Sylmar’s character.
- LU3.2. **Character.** Design residential development, especially development adjacent to equinekeeping lots, to contribute to the equestrian and rural lifestyle of the area by incorporating defining characteristics such as ranch-style and western architecture and landscaped open spaces.

### *Trails*

Trails throughout Los Angeles take different forms and are implemented in a variety of ways. This Community Plan indicates on the Trail Network map, as shown in Figure 4-5, both the Rim of the Valley Trail Network, which consists of existing and proposed trails, as well as other existing and proposed trails. This map serves as a tool for improving trail awareness, quality, safety, and connectivity.

Some trails are located on public land in parks, or on dirt trails through vacant land, while others are located in the street alongside vehicles and bicycles and are not always marked. Trails alongside streets or traversing parks may be either informal dirt tread, or improved tread with rails or fences. The trails alongside the streets may be within the public right-of-way, or within easements on private property. Some trails alongside roads consists of maximized space in the public right-of-way, resulting in one trail that has adequate width to accommodate horses and/or other trail users. Trails through undeveloped land may be informal, traditionally used trails, or easements, which sometimes have established right of public access. As part of discretionary actions on division of land and other cases, decision-makers may require improvement of an existing trail with tread and fences or rails. The City may also sometimes require dedication of an easement to the public right-of-way, Chapters 3, 4, and 5 contain goals, policies, and design guidelines for trails. In addition, the Sylmar Equinekeeping “K” District contains conditions, in addition to the Los Angeles Municipal Code requirements, which support equinekeeping on residential lots and the Trail Network.

LU3.3. **Trail Network and Connections.** Reinforce the viability of equine uses and accessibility to open space and recreational opportunities by requiring new developments, subdivision tracts, parcel maps, small lot subdivisions, and infrastructure improvement projects that abut or connect with a trail to develop and/or improve the Trail Network, as shown on Figure 4-5. A formal dedication for a public easement for trail purposes shall be required. Refer to Chapter 4 for additional policies and design guidelines.

LU3.4. **Non-Public Trails.** New developments, subdivision tracts, parcel maps, and small lot subdivisions over which a trail is shown on Figure 4-5, Trail Network, may require dedication where a prescriptive right of access has been established. Projects may offer a private easement to grant public access to trails, if in accordance with the applicable Sylmar Design Guidelines.

Goal LU4: **Distinct equestrian-oriented neighborhoods that promote and enhance Sylmar’s agricultural and equestrian heritage, semi-rural character, and horsekeeping way of life.**

### Policies

LU4.1. **Preservation of Equinekeeping Areas.** Strongly discourage discretionary actions, including zone changes, zone variances, conditional use, or divisions of land, that do not preserve equinekeeping and agricultural uses within Sylmar’s equinekeeping districts and neighborhoods.

LU4.2. **Equinekeeping Lot and Use Preservation.** Maintain a minimum lot size of 17,500 square-feet in designated residential areas that are within an Equinekeeping “K” District.



*When new residential development is located adjacent to an identified trail, trail development and improvement as part of the project will provide linear open space and additional recreational opportunities for residents.*



*Existing neighborhoods are encouraged to develop or improve trails, which will enhance equestrian lifestyle.*

- LU4.3. **Agricultural Lot and Open Space Preservation.** Maintain a minimum of one acre in all designated Minimum residential areas, especially adjacent to the foothills, the Pacoima Wash, and other open space areas and natural resources.
- LU4.4. **Legal Non-Conforming Equinekeeping Lot Protection.** Maintain existing legal non-conforming equinekeeping lots and uses, regardless of whether they are located within an Equinekeeping “K” District, to preserve the equestrian heritage within Sylmar.
- LU4.5. **Expansion of Equinekeeping Districts.** Establish new, or expand existing, equinekeeping districts where appropriate and feasible.

**Goal LU5. Lots within and adjacent to equinekeeping areas that are designed to ensure the feasibility of equinekeeping on equestrian lots and compatibility with adjacent non-equinekeeping lots.**

- LU5.1. **Division of Land and Grading.** Design new subdivision tracts, parcel maps, and small lot subdivisions within an Equinekeeping “K” District according to the Sylmar Design Guidelines to ensure room for on-site horse facilities and site accessibility via an equine path from the driveway to the pad area. Achieve the intended purpose of the “K” District by providing adequate and level equine pad areas, and arrange the location of homes, equine pads and stables, lot access and gates, trails and trail easements and access points, and grading, according to the Design Guidelines.
- LU5.2. **Transitions.** Provide additional setbacks and density fading on all higher density development, including all residential and non-residential development, adjacent to equinekeeping lots regardless of location within an Equinekeeping “K” District.
- LU5.3. **Additional Structures.** Second dwelling units or accessory living quarters are permitted only as permitted by LAMC and if they do not adversely affect any equinekeeping uses on the subject lot or adjacent lots, or the ability to maintain equinekeeping uses on the subject lot or any adjacent lot. Restrict permanent structures, including swimming pools and tennis courts, from being constructed or located within any portion of the required equine pad and stable areas.
- LU5.4. **Proper Distances from Stables/Stalls.** Maintain proper distances from equine stables/stalls and habitable rooms of any dwelling unit and neighbor’s dwelling unit, including accessory living quarters. Refer to the Sylmar Design Guidelines.
- LU5.5. **Notification of Future Residents.** Approval of non-equinekeeping developments adjacent to equinekeeping lots should include notification to future residents that animal keeping uses are permitted in adjacent lots.

**Goal LU6. Safe, well designed hillside development that complements the natural environment and preserves the beautiful scenic vistas, foothills, and vast open spaces.**

- LU6.1. **Hillside Density.** Limit the intensity and density in hillside areas to that which can be reasonably accommodated by infrastructure and natural topography. Notwithstanding any land use designation maps to the contrary, all projects with average natural slopes in excess of 15 percent, including Tract Maps and Parcel Maps, shall be limited to the minimum density housing category for the purposes of enforcing the slope density formula of LAMC Sections 17.05C and 17.50E.
- LU6.2. **Emergency Access.** Design developments to provide for safe, direct, and efficient exit of residents during emergency events. Investigate and consider feasible secondary access connections as part of hillside subdivisions. Require extensions, completions, and connections of existing street network where feasible to provide secondary access to hillside development.
- LU6.3. **Slope Preservation and Grading.** Cluster homes on those portions of undeveloped hillside areas that have less than a 15 percent slope in order to retain the steeper slopes in their natural state or in a natural park-like setting, minimize the amount of grading and the alteration of the natural topography, and provide more open space opportunities for recreation and equestrian use. The density pattern indicated in the Community Plan may be adjusted to facilitate development on the more level portions of the terrain provided that the total number of dwelling units indicated in any development is not increased over that allowed by the Community Plan based on the net area of development.



*This hillside subdivision tract provides open landscaped setback areas and pedestrian sidewalks. Trees are located in the front setback area in lieu of a parkway between the sidewalk and the street.*



*Hillside development should provide safe alternative routes and walking paths for hillside residents in case of an emergency or natural disaster.*

## Ridgelines

Ridgelines are characterized as being prominent backdrops where development should not occur. The San Gabriel Mountains, located on the northern edge of the Community Plan, is an example of a significant ridgeline that should be protected.

- LU6.4. **Topography Preservation.** Use the natural topography as the primary criteria to determine the placement and/or alignment of houses, roads, drainage facilities, equestrian facilities, and other necessary structures. Design developments to be integrated with and visually subordinate to natural features and terrain. Condition new development in the hills to protect public views from public roadways and parklands to the maximum extent feasible.
- LU6.5. **Mountain Viewshed Protection.** Design development near ridgelines so that it does not break the mountain silhouette of a significant ridgeline. Discourage building and grading on ridgelines to protect ridges and environmentally sensitive areas, and to prevent erosion associated with development and visual interruption of the ridge profile.
- LU6.6. **Development Limitations.** Support hillside mansionization regulations to protect single-family neighborhoods from out-of-scale development throughout Sylmar. Enforce the City’s Baseline Hillside Mansionization Ordinance.
- LU6.7. **Retaining Walls.** Minimize the use of retaining walls and when necessary design them to be compatible with the architectural style, materials, and detail of the principal structure. Utilize stepped or terraced retaining walls with planting or trails where appropriate, as an alternative to tall retaining walls. Consider living walls systems, or garden on walls, as an alternative to concrete where retaining walls are necessary.
- LU6.8. **Landscaping.** Incorporate landscaping that supports slope stability and provides fire protection.



Constructing single-family homes below significant mountain ridgelines will preserve the scenic views of the hillsides in Sylmar.



Siting and construction of structures with regard for the natural topography helps prevent soil erosion while preserving mountain views along the foothills.

Goal LU7. **Environmentally sustainable residential development that uses green design and technology and water conservation methods to minimize consumption of non-renewable natural resources and replenish the City’s watershed by capturing and storing water in Sylmar’s underground basin.**

- LU7.1. **“Green” Building.** Utilize “green” building strategies such as solar panels, insulating buildings to minimize consumption of non-renewable natural resources, and orienting windows, building volumes and second stories to maximize solar access.
- LU7.2. **Permeable Surfaces.** Increase areas of permeability by minimizing driveway and curb cut widths, limiting driveway paving to the width required to access a garage, and utilizing permeable surfaces on driveways, walkways, trails, and outdoor spaces in order to capture, infiltrate, and store water underground.
- LU7.3. **Landscaping.** Retain existing vegetation and trees and use native and drought-tolerant landscape and drip irrigation when developing the site in order to conserve water.
- LU7.4. **Canopy Trees.** Provide canopy trees in planting areas for shade and energy efficiency, especially on south and southwest facing facades.



*Residential solar panels promote environmentally-friendly power, using renewable energy from the sun. Solar panels can add value to a project when integrated appropriately.*



*Bioswales in the streetscape design of a neighborhood can increase storm water infiltration and remove pollution and silt from surface runoff water.*

## Single-Family Residential Neighborhoods

The community of Sylmar consists of mostly single-family residential neighborhoods built post World War II with modest ranch style homes, as seen on Figure 3-3, Single-Family Residential Areas. These neighborhoods boast large mature trees and spectacular views of the foothills that lie within the Tujunga/Pacoima Watershed. The neighborhoods in the north central areas of the community are among the few places in the city where one can maintain equine and other limited livestock and get a glimpse of the City's agricultural and equestrian heritage. These neighborhoods and surrounding areas feature semi-rural characteristics such as large equinekeeping lots with access paths for horse trailers, horsekeeping areas with stables and corrals, and equestrian trails that lead to the Angeles National Forest and the Rim of the Valley Trails Corridor. The neighborhoods in the southern portion contain some of the oldest and most affordable housing stock in the community, featuring cozy single-story homes built on traditionally small lots. More recent neighborhoods can be found along the fringes of the community, consisting of two-story suburban townhomes and manufactured housing.

Sylmar's single-family residential neighborhoods are an important element of the community's character and identity. Most of the single-family residential neighborhoods are not expected to change significantly. The majority of the additional housing units would be accommodated in areas in transition, which include areas along Roxford, Polk, Hubbard, Gladstone Avenue, and Foothill Boulevard. The goals, policies, and design guidelines in this Community Plan reflect the community's vision to preserve its single-family and equestrian neighborhoods while providing additional housing opportunities that embrace the rural charm, character, and lifestyles of the area.



*The single family neighborhood are among the most prominent land uses in Sylmar.*



*The single story-shaped ranch style home is characteristic of Sylmar.*

Angeles National Forest

San Gabriel Mountains

City of San Fernando

Granada Hills - Knollwood

Mission Hills - Panorama City - North Hills

Sunland - Tujunga - Lake View Terrace - Shadow Hills - East La Tuna Canyon

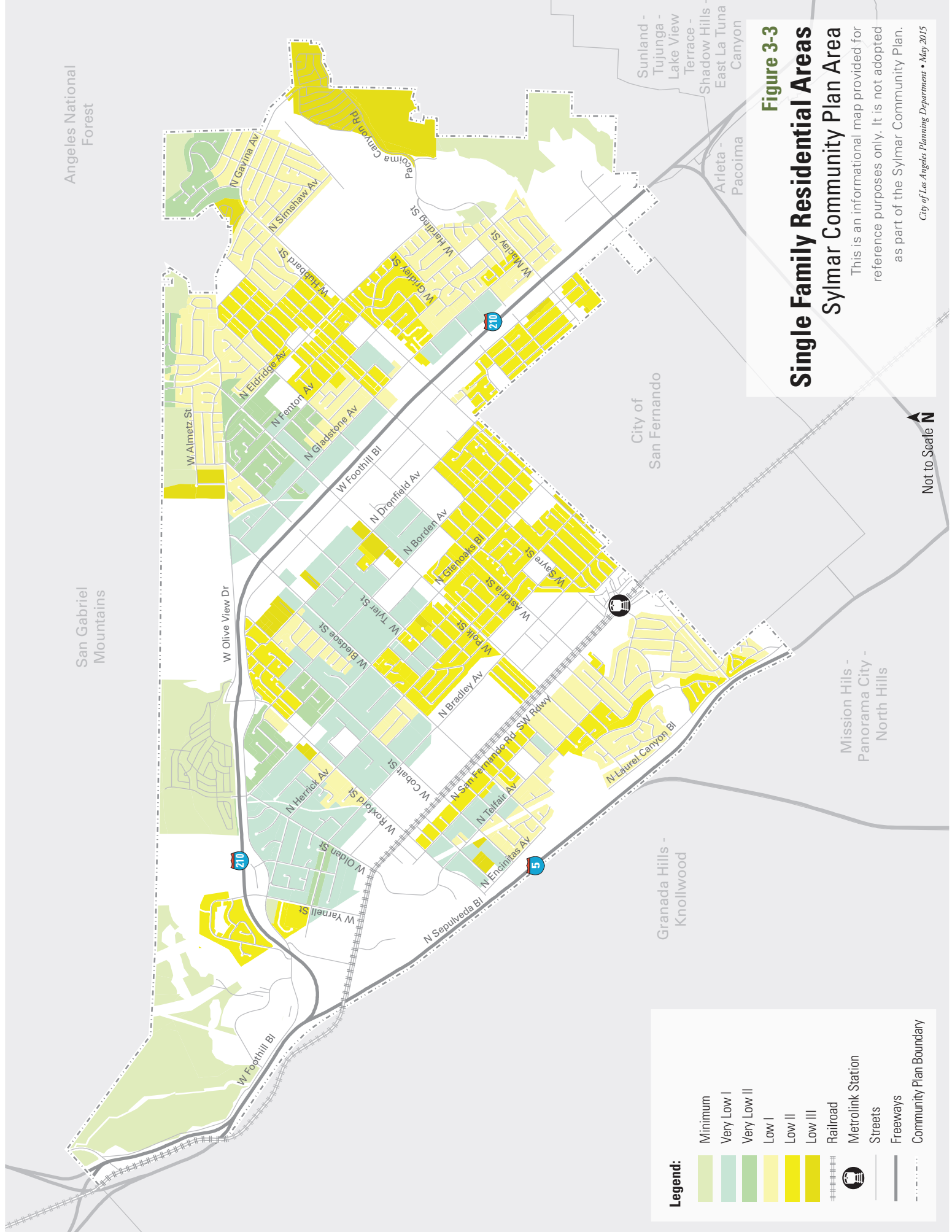
**Figure 3-3**

# Single Family Residential Areas Sylmar Community Plan Area

This is an informational map provided for reference purposes only. It is not adopted as part of the Sylmar Community Plan.

City of Los Angeles Planning Department • May 2015

Not to Scale



**Legend:**

- Minimum
- Very Low I
- Very Low II
- Low I
- Low II
- Low III
- Railroad
- Metrolink Station
- Streets
- Freeways
- Community Plan Boundary

Goal LU8. **Established low-density single-family neighborhoods that provide quality living environments for a diversity of households and new housing opportunities that enhance the existing low-density residential and semi-rural, suburban lifestyle that has long characterized the community of Sylmar.**

- LU8.1. **Neighborhood Preservation.** Preserve single-family zoned residential neighborhoods, while maintaining the existing character and scale. Enforce the City's Baseline Mansionization ordinance.
- LU8.2. **Housing Density.** Maintain the existing density of single-family residential neighborhoods by directing intensive residential development to areas identified in this Community Plan that have the capacity to accommodate such growth, to neighborhoods designated as Low Medium and Medium Residential.
- LU8.3. **Flag Lots.** Discourage flag lots as part of any subdivision tract, parcel map, or small lot subdivision. Allow flag lots only when property development is not otherwise practical due to adjacent topography and/or when street access cannot reasonably serve the lot and all other alternatives have been exhausted, and with application of design guidelines.

### *Low Density for Smart Growth*

An important principle of "smart growth" is preserving open space, farmland, natural beauty, and important environmental areas and redirecting population growth to areas with more public transit and employment options through increased housing density in areas where transit and job centers are located. Retaining the low density development and agricultural designations and zones in Sylmar helps direct more intensive development, and therefore more of the population, to the public transit and job centers of Los Angeles. Practicing smart growth in this way supports a more environmentally-sustainable and efficient city, as well as a variety of housing options throughout the city as a whole.

Goal LU9. **New subdivision tracts, parcel maps, or small lot subdivisions which are compatible with the environment and surrounding development pattern and overall neighborhood character with respect to density, lot size and width, grading, setbacks, orientation, streetscape, and circulation.**

- LU9.1. **Lot Size and Width.** Transition new development with regards to lot size and width so that new lots are compatible with existing adjacent lots and surrounding neighbors. Lots may be increased in size so as to more closely conform to the size of existing contiguous lots or nearby parcels.
- LU9.2. **Setbacks.** Where there is an existing average prevailing setback, apply the setback to provide continuity along the street edge. Apply additional setbacks in side and rear yards abutting equinekeeping lots.
- LU9.3. **Grading.** Work with the natural topography of the site to avoid dramatic and unnecessary grade changes by utilizing landform grading.
- LU9.4. **Building Orientation.** Maintain the suburban character of the neighborhood by configuring buildings to front public streets, not driveways. Design corner buildings to be prominent by building to both the front and side property lines facing a street.
- LU9.5. **Garage Location and Driveways.** Consider prevailing garage location and driveway patterns by incorporating such patterns into the design scheme. Innovative designs are encouraged that minimize the visual impact of garages facing the street.



*Landscaped low-lying walls and fences, as shown in this subdivision tract, are characteristic of Sylmar's residential neighborhoods.*



*Landscaped front yard setbacks and parkways are common in many Sylmar neighborhoods and represent the suburban character of the community, as shown in this example.*

- LU9.6. **Streetscape.** Continue to provide open and inviting landscaped yard setbacks and parkways by restricting gated or walled communities that isolate the project from the neighborhood and surrounding community.
- LU9.7. **Fences and Walls.** Utilize low-lying, open fence design and limit walls and fences within the street-side setback areas in order to provide front entries that are visible from the street. Attractively landscape the setback areas to screen and enhance their appearance.
- LU9.8. **Road Width.** Consider existing road widths and streetscape patterns to avoid unnecessary non-contiguous improvements of sidewalks, curbs, and streets.



*Landscaped front yard setbacks and parkways are common in many Sylmar neighborhoods and represent the suburban character of the community, as shown in this example.*



*Landscaped setbacks contribute to neighborhood aesthetics and pleasant pedestrian environments.*

# Multiple Family Residential Neighborhoods

Multiple family residential neighborhoods are predominantly located along Foothill Boulevard in the east central portion of Sylmar with varying types of housing units interspersed throughout the community, as shown in Figure 3-4, Multiple Family Residential Areas. The northern portion along Foothill Boulevard consists of smaller scale two-story condominiums and apartments that are characterized by private pedestrian entrances and mature street trees near equestrian-oriented neighborhoods while the southern portion ranges from two to four-story buildings with varying streetscape patterns. Additional housing units are located in the western portion, near the Sylmar/San Fernando Road Metrolink Station, and are among the oldest in the community, consisting of variety of apartment units and mobile home parks that cater to senior citizens.

Sylmar’s multi-family residential neighborhoods offer a variety of ownership and rental opportunities that are near public transit, services, and amenities, meeting the various needs of a diverse population. The majority of the additional housing units would be accommodated along Foothill Boulevard, Maclay Street, San Fernando Road, and around the Metrolink Station. The goals, policies, and design guidelines in this Community Plan aim to strengthen existing multiple family residential neighborhoods while ensuring that new development provides additional amenities, well-designed and compatible with its environment.



*Multiple family housing that incorporates building articulation, landscaping, and entryways that face the street complement nearby single family neighborhoods and provide more attractive homes.*



*Directing pedestrian access to the street encourages community members to walk when development is at grade separation.*

**Goal LU10. A variety of multiple family housing located on or near major corridors that provide safe and convenient access to public transit, services, and amenities.**

- LU10.1. **Corridor Development.** Improve and stabilize existing multiple family residential neighborhoods, allowing for growth particularly in areas along Foothill Boulevard and adjacent streets – Maclay Street, San Fernando Road, and within a half mile of the Sylmar/San Fernando Metrolink station – where there is sufficient public infrastructure and services.
- LU10.2. **Pedestrian Pathways.** Provide accessible, comfortable, and safe pedestrian connections within and around the project. For units not adjacent to a street, provide landscaped pedestrian pathways that are separate from auto circulation routes.
- LU10.3. **Entrances.** Promote pedestrian activity by placing entrances at grade level or slightly above, and unobstructed from view from the public right-of-way. Entryways below street level should be avoided.



*Prominent entrances that are visible from the street and accessible from the public right-of-way create a more inviting and pleasant pedestrian environment.*



*Building entryways with landscaping that includes shade trees and easy access to the public right-of-way fosters a sense of security and creates a more attractive and pedestrian-friendly atmosphere.*



Angeles National Forest

San Gabriel Mountains

City of San Fernando

Granada Hills - Knollwood

Mission Hills - Panorama City - North Hills

Sunland - Tujunga - Lake View Terrace - Shadow Hills - East La Tuna Canyon

**Figure 3-4**

**Multiple Family Residential Areas  
Sylmar Community Plan Area**

This is an informational map provided for reference purposes only. It is not adopted as part of the Sylmar Community Plan.

City of Los Angeles Planning Department • May 2015

**Legend:**

- Low Medium I
- Low Medium II
- Medium
- Railroad
- MetroLink Station
- Streets
- Freeways
- Community Plan Boundary

Not to Scale

Goal LU11. **Multiple family developments, including small lot subdivisions, apartments, and condominiums, that exhibit the architectural characteristics and qualities that distinguish Sylmar, while incorporating complementary design elements and appropriate transitions.**

- LU11.1. **Character and Design.** Create well-designed multiple family dwelling units and buildings that reflect a high level of architectural and landscape quality, both within interior courtyards and in exterior areas, to enhance the public realm.
- LU11.2. **Building Orientation.** Design small lot subdivisions, low-rise townhomes, apartment buildings, and condominiums to ensure that all street facing units have a primary entrance facing the street. For medium density buildings without ground floor entrances for individual units, create a prominent ground or first floor entry, such as a highly visible lobby or atrium.
- LU11.3. **Setbacks.** Apply additional setbacks for multi-family projects adjacent to single-family and equinekeeping lots to ensure that new buildings are compatible with existing structures in the surrounding area.
- LU11.4. **Density Transitions.** Develop small lot subdivisions on multi-family lots adjacent to single-family homes to serve as a transitional density and aesthetic buffer.



*Transitional building heights, complementary design, and consistent setbacks help provide a smooth transition from a commercial center to a neighborhood with multiple family housing.*



*This sketch illustrates how a new building may be designed to fit into an existing neighborhood with varying building types.*

- LU11.5. **Building Separations.** When designing small lot subdivisions or projects built over two or more lots, provide sufficient space between buildings, articulation along the street frontage, and visual breaks to diminish the scale and massing. Locate required open space next to lower intensity uses in order to increase building separations and intensify landscaping between the development and adjacent uses.
- LU11.6. **Transitions.** Where multi-family projects are adjacent to single-family zones, provide a sensitive transition by maintaining a height compatible with adjacent buildings. Require appropriate transitions in scale where new multiple-family developments abut single-family neighborhoods.
- LU11.7. **Parking and Driveways.** Minimize the appearance of driveways and parking areas, maintain continuity of the sidewalk, and mitigate the impact of parking visible to the street. Parking and driveways should be located toward the rear or side of buildings and away from the public right-of-way. On corner lots, parking should be oriented as far away from the corner as possible.
- LU11.8. **Fences and Walls.** Utilize low-lying, open fence design and limit walls and fences within the street-side setback areas in order to provide front entries that are visible from the street. Attractively landscape the setback areas to screen and enhance their appearance.



*Architectural features such as arches, articulation and patios, combined with landscaping can help enhance the appearance of multiple family housing, as well as maintain small scale neighborhood settings.*



*Open entryways, courtyards, attention to architectural integrity, and abundant landscaping will help maintain the small scale character that is prominent in Sylmar.*

## Design Guidelines for Residential Areas



The community-specific design guidelines in this chapter and the Residential Citywide Design Guidelines establish the minimum level of design that shall be observed in all projects within the Community Plan area. The intent of the design guidelines is to promote a stable and pleasant environment, with desirable character, for the residents and users of the community. In addition, the design guidelines ensure that new structures, and alterations and renovations to existing structures make a positive aesthetic contribution to the built environment, provide adequate public amenities and increase neighborhood identity. The overall goal and purpose of the design guidelines is to improve the community's identity and livability and to create unique, inviting and safe public spaces.

Projects are required to incorporate to the maximum extent feasible applicable design guidelines. Discretionary projects require a finding by the decision-maker that the project is in conformance with the intent of the applicable design guidelines and shall become part of the conditions of approval of the project. Early consultation with Planning staff, including consideration of long-term maintenance, is one of the essential way of assuring implementation of Citywide and these community-specific Design Guidelines for Sylmar.

### Character and Design

- G1. Incorporate Ranch-style architectural details such as the use of low-pitched and hipped roofs, deep-set eaves, large picture windows, recessed entryways, varying front setback planes, wooden or brick exterior wall siding, and/or L-shaped design to encourage and enhance the traditional post-World War II character found in many of Sylmar's single-family residential neighborhoods.
- G2. Maintain the suburban character of the neighborhood by configuring buildings to front public streets, not driveways. Design corner buildings to be prominent by building to both the front and side property lines facing a street. In detached condominiums or small lot subdivisions, orient the unit closest to the primary street towards the street.

## Design Guidelines for Residential Areas (continued)



- G3. Configure new development so that it continues to engage the street, sidewalk, and public realm by providing individual entrances, large windows, porches, or other entry features to face a street.
- G4. Maintain compatible heights with adjacent and nearby buildings to help preserve the existing low-lying character of Sylmar's single-family residential neighborhoods. Second floor or higher stepbacks should be consistent with prevailing or adjacent buildings.
- G5. Situate development entryways within three feet above the grade of the sidewalk to avoid buildings and entryways that tower above or are sunken below the street.
- G6. Match existing neighborhood setbacks and on streets with varying setbacks, align dwellings between the existing maximum and minimum setback.
- G7. Modulate building volumes and façade articulation to help convey a sense of individual units and enhance the pedestrian experience. To break massing, utilize multiple planes, stepbacks and architectural treatments such as recessed windows, columns, moldings, and projections. Vary the heights and rooflines, and use offsets in wall planes on all elevations to reduce the visual scale and provide visual interest to a building and individual units.
- G8. Avoid the repetitive use of a single building configuration or façade design. Provide rhythm to building elevations which adds unity and interest without monotony. Utilize architectural features such as balconies, porches, decks, awnings, arcades, trellises, color, materials, and diverse roof forms or landscape features such as trees, shrubs, and vines to create articulation and a diverse building façade.
- G9. Arrange a collection of buildings to frame outdoor places, such as a landscaped focal point or courtyard.

## Design Guidelines for Residential Areas (continued)



See G11-G12



See G15

### Circulation and Parking

- G10. Consider existing road widths and streetscape patterns to avoid unnecessary non-contiguous improvements of sidewalks, curbs, and streets.
- G11. Consider prevailing garage location and driveway patterns and incorporate such patterns into the design scheme. Innovative design schemes are encouraged that minimize the visual impact of garages facing the street.
- G12. Minimize the appearance of parking areas by locating parking areas to the rear of buildings and/or providing parking underground, landscaping visible parking areas. Parking areas should not be sited on corners adjacent to intersections.
- G13. Utilize decorative walls and/or landscaping to buffer residential uses from parking areas and structures. Design parking structure exteriors to match the style, materials and color of the main building to integrate parking with the design of buildings.
- G14. Limit the number of curb cuts and width of driveways. Avoid excessively wide driveways.
- G15. Separate pedestrian pathways from auto circulation routes by providing landscaped sidewalks and walkways from sidewalk for homes not adjacent to the street. Utilize a change in grade, materials, textures or colors to improve pedestrian visibility and safety. Minimize the amount of elevation changes through careful grading so as to facilitate disabled access.

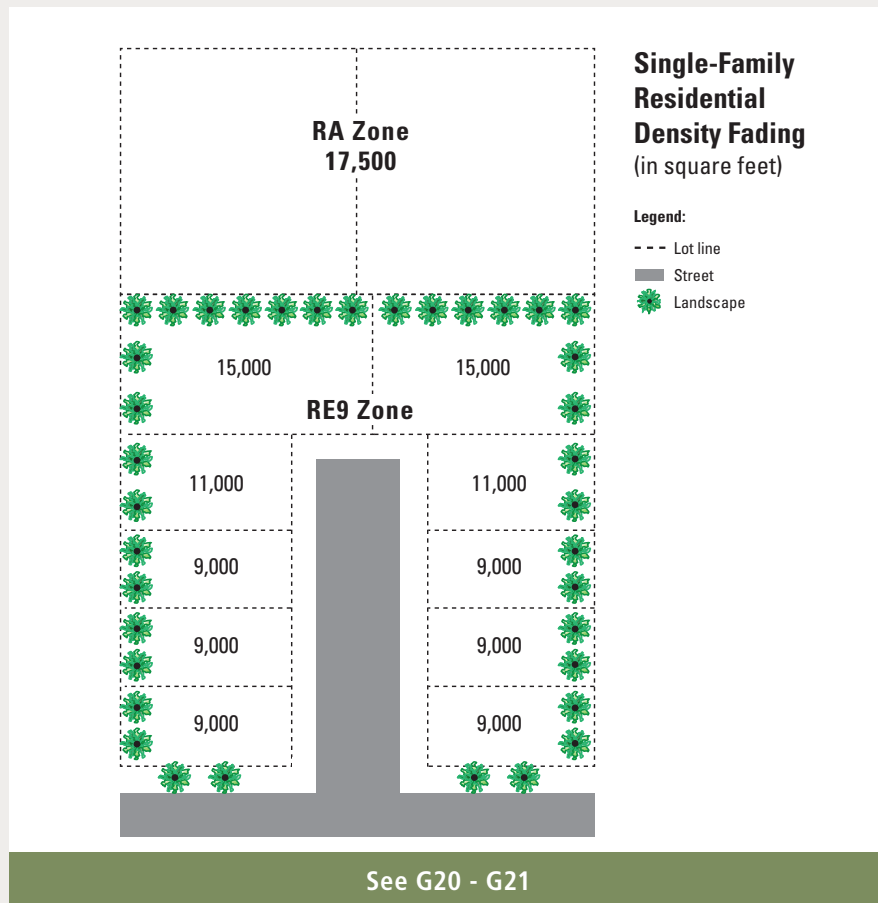
## Design Guidelines for Residential Areas (continued)



### Landscaping, Fences, and Walls

- G16. Continue to provide open and inviting yard setbacks and parkways that are landscaped with a variety of native and/or drought tolerant plant materials, which contribute to the suburban character of this residential community.
- G17. Prohibit gated or walled communities that isolate the project from the neighborhood and surrounding community.
- G18. Utilize low-lying, open fence design and limit walls and fences within the street-side setback areas to 42 inches in height in order to provide front entries that are visible from the street. Attractively landscape the setback areas with native and/or drought tolerant plants to screen and enhance their appearance.
- G19. Barbed wire and razor wire fencing are not appropriate. Consider alternatives to chain link fencing.

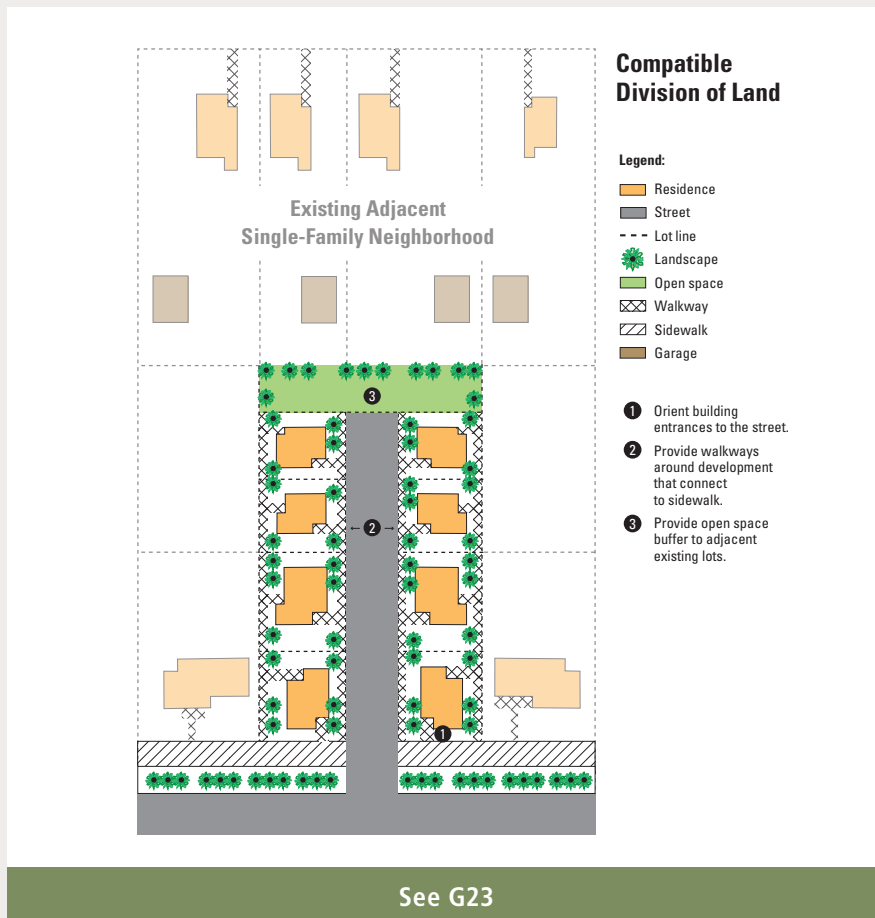
## Design Guidelines for Residential Areas (continued)



### Neighborhood Transitions

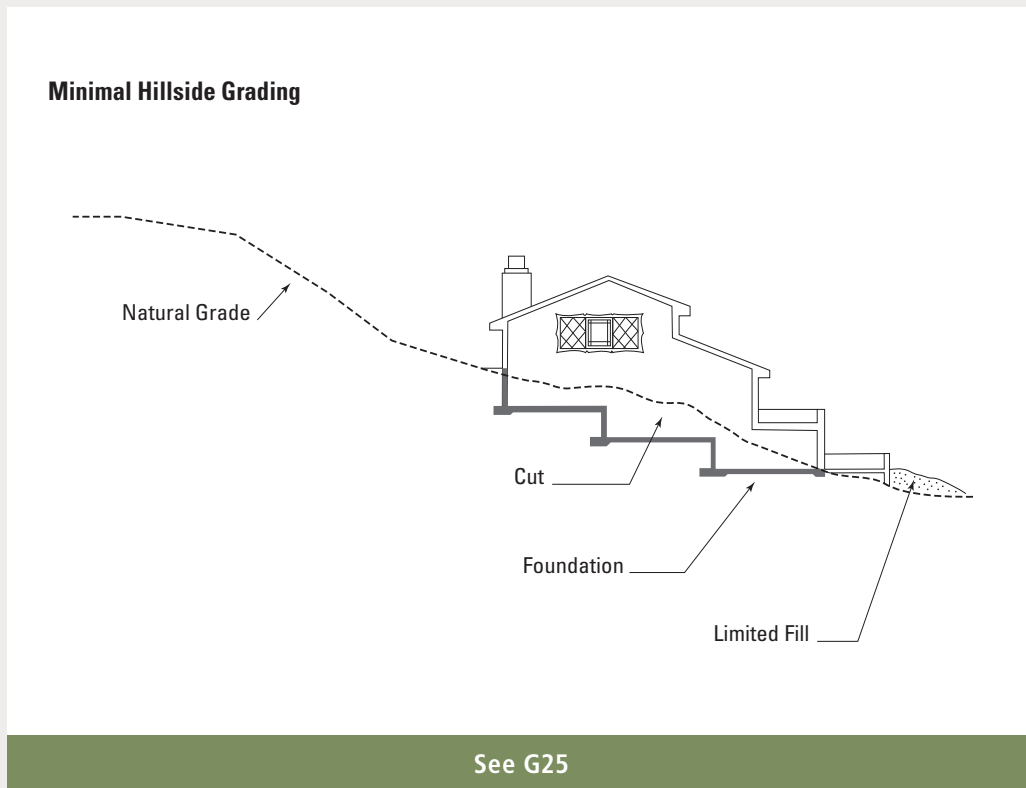
- G20. Lots may be increased in size so as to more closely conform to the size of existing contiguous lots or nearby parcels.
- G21. Transition new development with regard to lot size (density fading) and width so that new parcels are compatible with existing adjacent lots and surrounding neighbors.
- G22. Buildings setbacks for the zoning district should be considered a minimum. Provide larger setbacks for multiple-family projects adjacent to single-family and equinekeeping lots.

## Design Guidelines for Residential Areas (continued)



- G23. Provide and locate open space next to lower intensity uses in order to increase building separations and intensify landscaping between the development and adjacent uses to help mitigate impacts, particularly visual intrusion on private outdoor space of adjacent backyards.
- G24. Position building heights and mass according to the intensity of the adjacent use. Shorter buildings with small footprints should be sited near lower intensity uses while taller, more massive buildings should be located near higher intensity uses and toward the center of the site. Shorter walls should be sited near small structures.

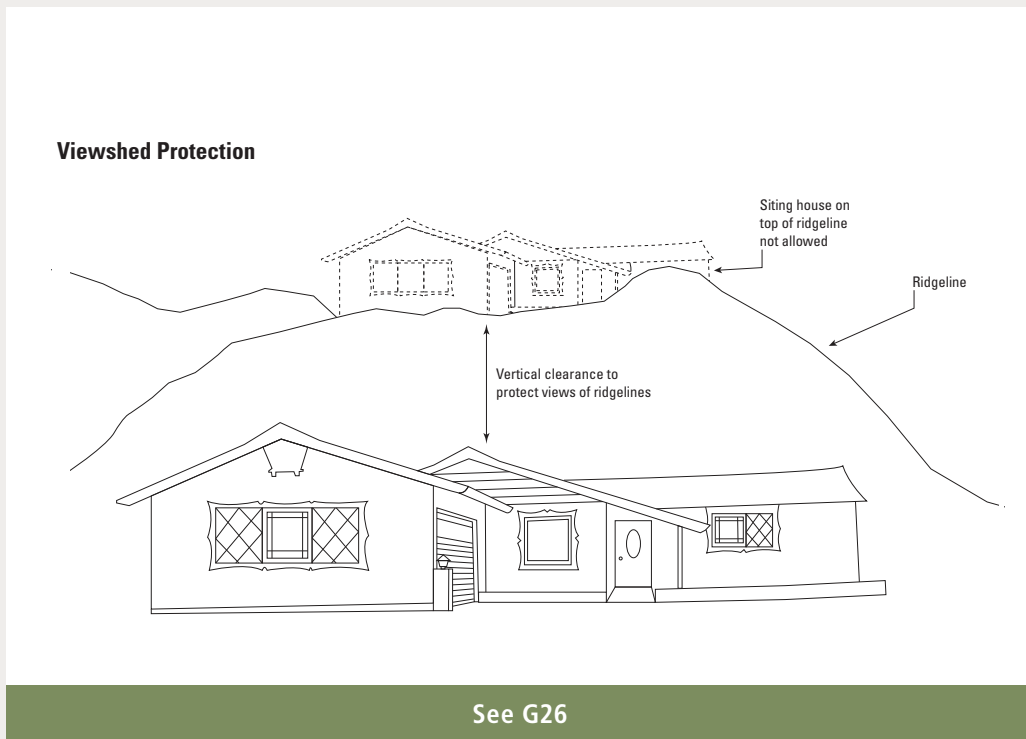
## Design Guidelines for Residential Areas (continued)



### Hillside Neighborhoods

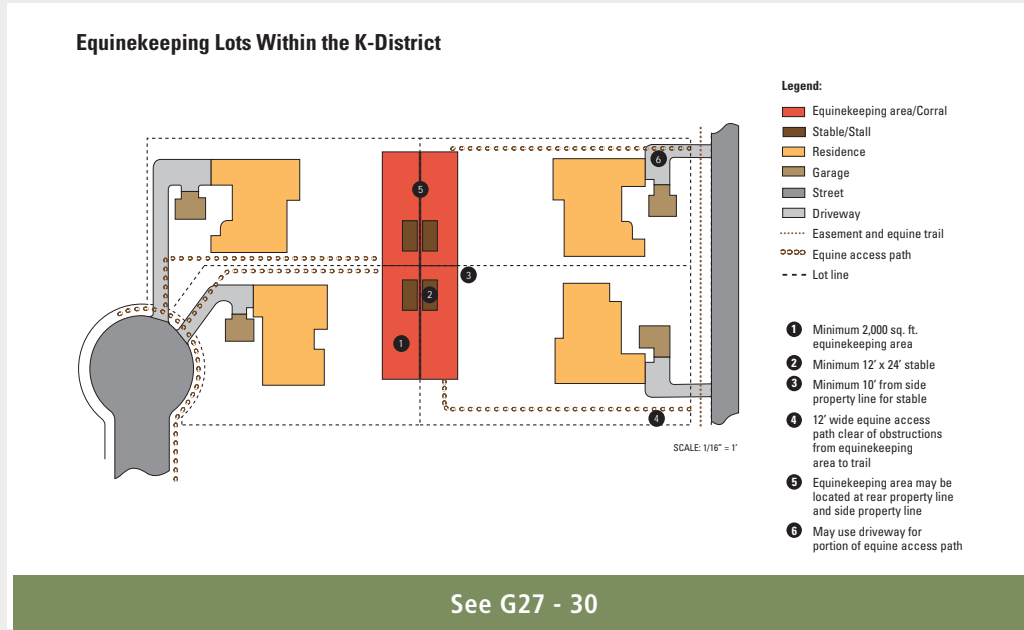
- G25. Step buildings up or down the hill to retain the natural grade and to limit the amount of grading required.

## Design Guidelines for Residential Areas (continued)



- G26. Maintain a vertical clearance between ridgelines and development and site projects below ridgelines in order to maintain and preserve scenic viewsheds with the community. Siting houses on top of ridgelines is not permitted.

## Design Guidelines for Residential Areas (continued)

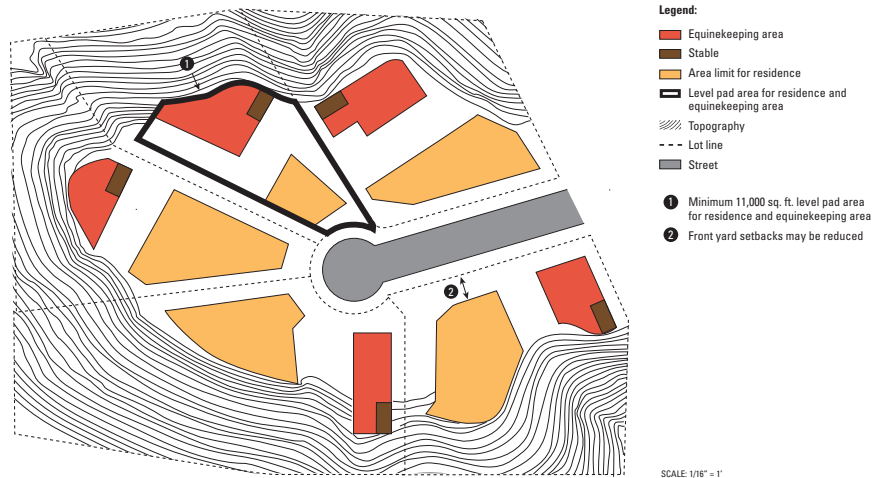


### Equestrian-Oriented Neighborhoods

- G27. Maintain a 2,000 contiguous square-foot level pad area with a minimum width of 24 feet, including a 12'x24' (288-square foot) equine stable area. The pad area should include a 12'x12' (144-square foot) area for storage of feed and equipment, graded to permit quick and adequate drainage, and be permanently set aside for equine use. No permanent structure, including swimming pools and tennis courts, should be constructed or located within any portion of the pad area. Such structures may be permitted outside of the required equine stable and pad areas.
- G28. On small lot subdivision lots, communal equestrian facilities are encouraged in townhouse and detached condominium developments.
- G28. Equine pad and stable areas may be located at the rear property line. Reduced front yard setbacks may be considered to enlarge the backyard area for the purposes of optimizing the intended use of the level pad area and minimizing overall grading and to allow for a better layout for equines and is allowed as long as the reduction does not endanger the equinekeeping use.
- G29. On all lots, the equine pad area may be located within required side yard setbacks depending on the unique features of a site.
- G30. Where access is taken from the front facing street, a 12-foot wide equine access path should be provided. A driveway which is a minimum of 12-feet in width may function dually as an equine access path for the portion of the path that extends from the street to the end of the driveway. Permeable driveway materials are preferred.

## Design Guidelines for Residential Areas (continued)

### Specific Requirements for Equinekeeping on Hillside Lots Within K-District



See G34

- G31. Where lot access is taken from a side or rear yard of the lot, a gate should be installed to provide direct access for the rider to the trail, sidewalk, or street.
- G32. An adequate on-site parking area should be provided for equine trailers preferably adjacent to the equinekeeping area near the driveway. It is desirable that the parking surface is permeable.
- G33. Utilize decomposed granite, grasscrete, or other similar permeable material to construct the equine access path and parking area for equine trailers.
- G34. On hillside equinekeeping lots, the combined pad area for the primary residence and equinekeeping area shall be a minimum of 11,000 square-feet to ensure adequate separation and to permit construction of larger residential dwellings.

## Commercial Areas

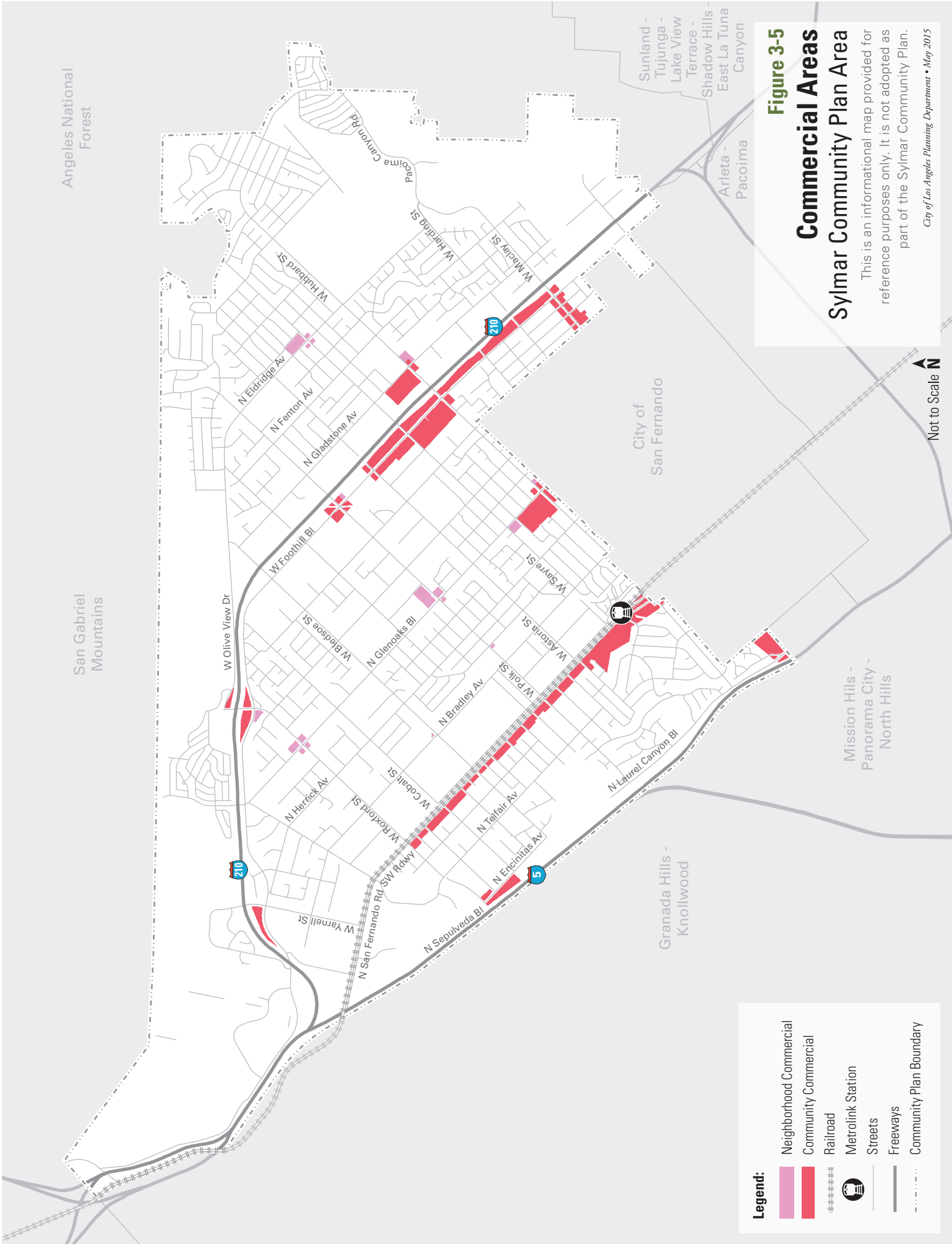
Commercial uses represent a small proportion of Sylmar and are located primarily along major arterials with nodes of varying sizes at specific intersections, as shown in Figure 3-5, Commercial Areas. Four Community Centers, four Neighborhood Districts, two Mixed-Use Boulevards, and one Transit-Oriented District serve as focal points for surrounding residents and visitors, providing neighborhood services and retail, including grocery stores, restaurants, small professional offices, and other similar uses and services. Other general commercial uses are dispersed throughout the community and provide important goods and services to nearby residents. Auto-related uses are located throughout the community, along major corridors near freeway on-and-off-ramps.



*Commercial development along Foothill Boulevard with parking located at the rear and pedestrian entrances business directly from the sidewalk.*



*Pedestrian friendly commercial development with ground floor commercial retail and office space above.*



**Figure 3-5**

# Commercial Areas Sylmar Community Plan Area

This is an informational map provided for reference purposes only. It is not adopted as part of the Sylmar Community Plan.

**Legend:**

- Neighborhood Commercial
- Community Commercial
- Railroad
- 🚆 Metrolink Station
- Streets
- Freeways
- Community Plan Boundary



*Public open space that caters to families.*



*Outdoor dining areas in commercial developments that provide proper lighting, planters and other landscaping elements create a more friendly and walkable environment.*



*Emphasize the use of Spanish style-architecture and design elements, including earth tone colors, window awnings, and a mixture of landscaping.*



*Outdoor seating areas associated with commercial and community-serving land uses promotes pedestrian activity and encourages individuals to utilize these areas.*

## Commercial Issues and Opportunities

As part of the Sylmar Community Plan update process, community members and stakeholders were given opportunities to comment on the proposed changes. Issues of opportunity areas were identified as a result of public input and goals and policies were developed to specifically address them. Following is a summary of key issues and opportunities in Sylmar:

- The community has a strong interest in preserving existing commercial land. While new housing is desirable, by directing housing development near the Sylmar/San Fernando Metrolink Station and other mixed-use corridors, and to designated residential areas, existing commercial centers and districts can be enhanced and preserved to ensure an adequate level of goods and services are provided throughout the Plan area.
- Residents desire the convenience of neighborhood serving commercial uses and “small town” retail establishments within walking distance of neighborhoods. While many of the existing establishments provide a mix of local goods and services, the overall mix does not serve the community’s full range of residents and lifestyles. There is an opportunity to capitalize on existing underutilized establishments and vacant sites and provide opportunities for small-businesses and local jobs, promote healthy neighborhood activity, and reduce vehicle trips.
- More entertainment–related uses, such as movie theaters, sit-down restaurants, and those that cater to all ages and families, are desirable. The absence of these establishments causes many residents with expendable income to travel outside of Sylmar and the City to find such uses.
- Sylmar needs neighborhood and community gathering areas, such as a civic center or community plaza. New commercial development should provide public open spaces so that residents can shop and socialize.
- Residents desire more attractive commercial development. There is a need for improved commercial design and building materials, an appropriate amount and style of signage, and improved landscaping. Policies and design guidelines for new commercial development and remodels will assist in a transition to an improved pedestrian–friendly environment for the commercial areas in Sylmar.

## All Commercial Areas

The goals and policies in this section reflect the community's vision to preserve existing commercial land to ensure an adequate level of goods and services are provided throughout Sylmar. It is also the intent of these goals and policies to promote high-quality commercial development. Each of the Commercial Citywide Design Guidelines should be considered, although not all will be appropriate in every case, as each project will require a unique approach. However, to achieve the goal of excellence in new design, projects should incorporate these guidelines to the maximum extent feasible, in order to meet the intent of the Community Plan.

**Goal LU12. Strong and competitive commercial areas that serve the community with a wide range of goods and services, support the local businesses and economy, and provide employment opportunities and revenue to the City.**

- LU12.1. **Commercial Preservation.** Protect areas designated and zoned for commercial use so that commercial development and reinvestment is encouraged and the community maintains and increases its employment base. Strongly discourage new residential-only development in commercially designated and zoned areas.
- LU12.2. **Commercial Development.** Locate new commercial uses within existing established commercial areas. Accommodate larger projects within Community Centers and near the Sylmar/San Fernando Metrolink Station to minimize impact on residential neighborhoods and help retain the existing community fabric.
- LU12.3. **Lot Consolidations.** Consolidate and deepen shallow commercial areas in a manner that is compatible with prevailing urban form as a means to stimulate existing businesses and create feasible opportunities for new development that is appropriate in terms of scale and character.
- LU12.4. **Equestrian-Related Services.** Encourage uses which serve the equestrian community, such as equine feed stores and veterinary clinics, to locate within Sylmar.
- LU12.5. **Auto-Related Uses and Services.** Allow for the development of new auto-related uses and services, such as gasoline stations, drive-thru establishments, automobile sales and repair, and storage facilities in specific designated Community Commercial land located near the freeways on- and off-ramps. Expansions and modifications of existing auto-related uses are required to be designed to achieve a high-quality architectural and landscape character.

**Goal LU13. Commercial and mixed-use development that complement adjacent and surrounding neighborhoods and contribute to Sylmar's semi-rural character and agricultural heritage.**

- LU13.1. **Neighborhood Compatibility.** Ensure that new development adjacent to residential neighborhoods is designed in a manner that is sensitive to existing and adjacent buildings so that it blends in with the neighborhood context.
- LU13.2. **Height Limits.** Design new commercial structures to be compatible in height with surrounding residential neighborhoods.
- LU13.3. **Transitions.** Provide transitional setbacks and upper floor stepbacks for new projects adjacent to residential uses in order to maintain access to light and air and minimize operational impacts.
- LU13.4. **Parking Structures Adjacent to Residential Uses.** Utilize a decorative wall and landscaped setbacks to buffer residential uses from parking areas and structures. Shield and direct on-site lighting onto driveways and walkways and away from adjacent residential uses.



*The visual impact of a commercial parking areas can be reduced by providing a buffer like a planter box with landscaping.*



*Spanish-style architecture is a common feature in Sylmar's commercial centers.*

- LU13.5. **Rural Character.** Reinforce the distinctive semi-rural character of the area by incorporating rural features and equestrian-oriented elements, such as ranch-style architecture, hitching posts, and horse parking areas, in remodels and new development, especially commercial areas within or near an Equinekeeping “K” Supplemental Use District and/or adjacent to a trail. Refer to Chapter 4 for additional trail policies and design guidelines.
- LU13.6. **Trail Network and Connections.** Design new development and infrastructure improvement projects that abut or connect with an identified trail to develop and/or improve the Trail Network, as shown on Figure 4-5. Provide amenities that support the equestrian lifestyle, including rider height crossing signals at signalized intersections and signs. Refer to Chapter 4 for additional trail policies and design guidelines.



*A local restaurant in Sylmar.*



*A trail abutting a commercial lot connecting to the Saddletree Ranch Trailhead.*

## *Healthy Communities*

A growing body of research has shown that there are connections between development patterns, community design and health outcomes. Crafting a more health-friendly Community Plan is critical to the overall health of a community. The Community Plan takes several steps to make community health a priority by developing land use and development strategies that encourage walking, bicycling, horseback riding, and crime prevention through environmental design; and supporting an active, inclusive, and responsive community where healthy habits are encouraged, rather than discouraged, by the environments we build.

Goal LU14. **Attractive and pedestrian-oriented commercial areas that are safe, easily accessible, and enhance the unique commercial and cultural character of the community.**

- LU14.1. **High-Quality Development.** Design projects to achieve a high level of quality and developed in accordance to the Commercial Citywide Design Guidelines and other applicable design guidelines. Projects are required to incorporate to the maximum extent feasible applicable design guidelines.
- LU14.2. **Building Orientation.** Improve neighborhood character and the pedestrian environment of commercial areas by siting buildings so they interact with the sidewalk and the street, contribute to a sense of human scale, and support ease of accessibility to buildings.
- LU14.3. **Pedestrian Access and Connections.** Provide safe and direct pedestrian entrances from the sidewalk and the street and encourage connections to abutting commercial development. Utilize techniques to increase motorist awareness of pedestrians, such as lighting, raised crosswalks, changes in paving, signage or other devices.
- LU14.4. **Building Façade.** Create and reinforce neighborhood identity and a richer pedestrian environment by incorporating features on the building façade that add visual interest to the environment, architectural elements that add scale and character, and building elements that enhance comfort and security of pedestrians.
- LU14.5. **On-site Landscaping.** Provide landscaped areas with shade trees on-site that complement the character of the built environment, add beauty and visual interest, increase pedestrian comfort, and extend the sense of the public-right-of-way onto the site.
- LU14.6. **Streetscape.** Design developments to create inviting districts with landscaped sidewalks lined with shade trees, street furniture, and other pedestrian amenities (or streetscape features), open with visual and physical permeability, and pedestrian-oriented connections, where local residents will be attracted and encouraged to walk to nearby commercial establishments.

LU14.7. **Public Amenities.** Integrate public amenities such as community meeting rooms, civic auditoriums, childcare, plazas, play areas, and public art and open spaces in new development to create destinations for residents to shop and gather and to foster creativity and the arts.

LU14.8. **Parking Lots and Structures.** Treat parking lots and structures with wall textures, colors, and dimensional modules that are coordinated with the architecture of the main building.

LU14.9. **Off-Street Parking and Driveways.** Ensure that clear and convenient access for pedestrians is not minimized by vehicular needs, eliminate auto-pedestrian conflicts, and maintain the character of a pedestrian-friendly street. Locate parking behind or within structures or otherwise fully or partially screened from public view. Where possible, replace surface parking areas with well-designed structured parking and infill parking areas with multi-story mixed-use buildings. Minimize the number of driveways and limit the width of each driveway to the minimum required.

LU14.10. **Lighting and Graffiti.** Use lighting and graffiti abatement to help reduce street crime and violence and promote a sense of safety and the attractive appearance of commercial centers and parking areas. Install on-site lighting along all pedestrian and vehicular access ways.

LU14.11. **Utilities.** Integrate service elements and infrastructure such as mechanical equipment, trash enclosures and utilities with the design of projects. Locate service elements and infrastructure away from crosswalks or sidewalks and screen and/or enclose equipment in order to enhance the pedestrian experience and aesthetic appeal of the building and overall neighborhood. Underground utilities whenever possible.

LU14.12. **Loading and Service Entrances.** Locate loading and service entrances to the side or rear of the building, away from public view of the streets, and incorporate these facilities into the overall design of the building to minimize the visual impact.

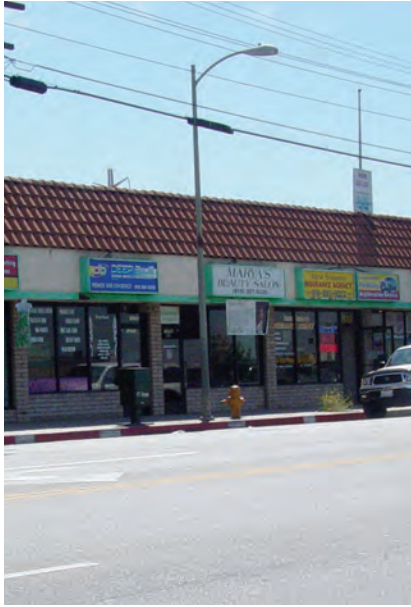
LU14.13. **Signage.** Encourage the removal of existing pole, pylon, and roof-top signs and replace them with more appropriate pedestrian-friendly signage such as monument signs, when renovating and developing commercial sites. Restrict new pole and pylon signs, billboards, and digital or electronic signage in all commercial areas, except in specific-designated commercial areas. All signage shall complement the main structure and contribute to the rural character of the area.



*Safe, accessible and attractive landscaped sidewalks encourage pedestrian activity along busy streets.*



*Mechanical equipment can be screened from public view by using innovative techniques.*



*Commercial development along Foothill Boulevard provides residents with a mix of services.*



*Large sidewalks with curb bulb-outs encourage businesses to provide landscaping and orient their entrances towards the public street create a more inviting streetscape to pedestrians and customers.*

**Goal LU15. A traditional strip corridor with a vibrant town center on Foothill Boulevard that offers a wide variety of neighborhood shopping, services, and recreational opportunities near housing.**

- LU15.1. **Corridor Development.** Design new infill development to be compatible with the traditional small-scale, pedestrian-oriented, commercial corridor development pattern that exists along both sides of Foothill Boulevard, by locating building frontages at the front property line and placing on-site parking to the side or rear of buildings so that parking does not dominate the streetscape.
- LU15.2. **Historic Resources and Significant Features.** Preserve historic structures and older buildings that add to the character of the existing traditional low-scale commercial corridor development along Foothill Boulevard.
- LU15.3. **Public Services.** Support the retention of existing public services, such as the post office, and encourage new services to locate in this general area.
- LU15.4. **Central Business District.** Encourage new commercial uses, such as retail, restaurants, and professional services in the Sylmar Central Business District located along both sides of Foothill Boulevard from Hubbard Street to Astoria Street.
- LU15.5. **Office Space.** Encourage the development of commercial office space, primarily for professional services such as legal, advertising, marketing, public relations, real estate, financial services, insurance, accounting, computer programming and architecture on the northeast side of Foothill Boulevard between Hubbard Street and Gridley Avenue.
- LU15.6. **Foothill Streetscape.** Enhance the appearance of Foothill Boulevard from Hubbard Street to Astoria Street by providing landscaped parkways that are lined with a variety of palm trees and deciduous trees.
- LU15.7. **Pedestrian Amenities.** Enhance the pedestrian-friendly environment of Foothill Boulevard by increasing street and property lighting, improving way-finding signage, providing bus stop shelters and other pedestrian amenities. Consider providing sidewalk “pop-outs” at Hubbard Street, Sayre Street, and Astoria Street as part of new developments to further enhance the pedestrian environment.
- LU15.8. **Utilities.** Underground utilities or locate utilities at the rear of the site so as to maintain and enhance the streetscape on both sides of the street.

Goal LU16. **Sustainable commercial development that uses environmentally-friendly design and technology and water conservation methods which help to minimize consumption of non-renewable natural resources and replenishes the City's underground basin.**

- LU16.1. **Eco-Friendly Design.** Design new buildings to respond to the climate of Sylmar through their orientation, massing, and construction. Consider utilizing passive solar design strategies, such as overhangs and shade trees, orienting building volumes, windows, and second-stories to maximize solar access, constructing well-insulated wall systems, and providing usable covered outdoor areas to generate more comfortable and energy-efficient buildings.
- LU16.2. **Landscaping.** Include sustainable landscape strategies such as using deciduous trees to shade buildings in the summer and allow filtered light to penetrate during the winter, planting native and drought-tolerant shrubs, hedges, and vines to reduce water usage, utilizing permeable surfaces on walkways and outdoor spaces and vegetated swales to cleanse and infiltrate water directly onto the ground, and installing drip irrigation systems to conserve water.
- LU16.3. **Historic Resources and Significant Features.** Adapt and reuse historic structures and older buildings as a sustainable way of conserving the character of Sylmar and reinforcing neighborhood character. Respond to unique natural characteristics such as mature trees and topography, on both the project and adjacent sites.



*A commercial development providing a variety of shaded outdoor spaces.*



*Awnings and trees shade buildings and sidewalks and vegetation helps capture runoff.*

## Neighborhood Districts

Sylmar contains four main Neighborhood Districts, located throughout the community, providing daily convenience services to people living in nearby residential areas, as shown in Figure 3-6, Neighborhood Districts. Typical establishments found in these areas include markets, barber and beauty shops, laundromats and dry cleaners, restaurants, convenience stores, coffee shops, and small professional offices. These districts contain mostly small-scaled, single-story buildings at key intersections. Neighborhood Districts in Sylmar include the following:

- Eldridge Avenue and Sayre Street
- Glenoaks Boulevard and Polk Street
- Glenoaks Boulevard and Roxford Street
- Glenoaks Boulevard and Sayre Street



*A local small business providing neighborhood serving uses.*



*Gathering spaces in new commercial development projects enhance pedestrian activity.*



Goal LU17. **Quaint, pedestrian-friendly neighborhood commercial districts that serve surrounding neighborhoods and businesses as local gathering places where people can shop and socialize.**

- LU17.1. **Neighborhood-Oriented Uses and Services.** Encourage the retention of existing and the development of new neighborhood services and retail that serve the surrounding residents.
- LU17.2. **Housing.** Prohibit new residential uses in neighborhood commercial districts to maintain an adequate level of neighborhood commercial services within walking distance to existing residential areas.
- LU17.3. **Small-Scale Development.** Design projects to be compatible in scale and character with surrounding neighborhoods so that they do not interrupt the community fabric or street grid. Limit buildings to two stories in height in designated neighborhood commercial districts.
- LU17.4. **Streetscape.** Locate building frontages close to the front property line to create a strong street wall and place on-site parking to the side or rear of buildings so that parking does not dominate the streetscape. Design building facades, including storefronts, to be oriented to the street, limit fences facing a street to 42 inches in height, and provide direct pedestrian access into buildings from sidewalks so that they enhance the public realm and actively engage pedestrians.
- LU17.5. **Public Amenities.** Incorporate outdoor spaces, such as plazas and courtyards that accommodate outdoor dining and other activities. Support sidewalk dining to enhance the pedestrian atmosphere.



Commercial development incorporating the use of earth tone colors and natural materials helps reinforce the community's character.



Outdoor dining areas help improve the visual appearance of commercial districts.

# Community Centers

Sylmar contains four major Community Centers located along major corridors that provide multiple types of services and businesses catering to the needs of residents, employees, visitors, and businesses within the community, as shown in Figure 3-7, Community Centers. These Centers are characterized by larger lots and buildings that are set back with parking fronting the street developed in the mid to late-20th century. Community Centers in Sylmar include the following:

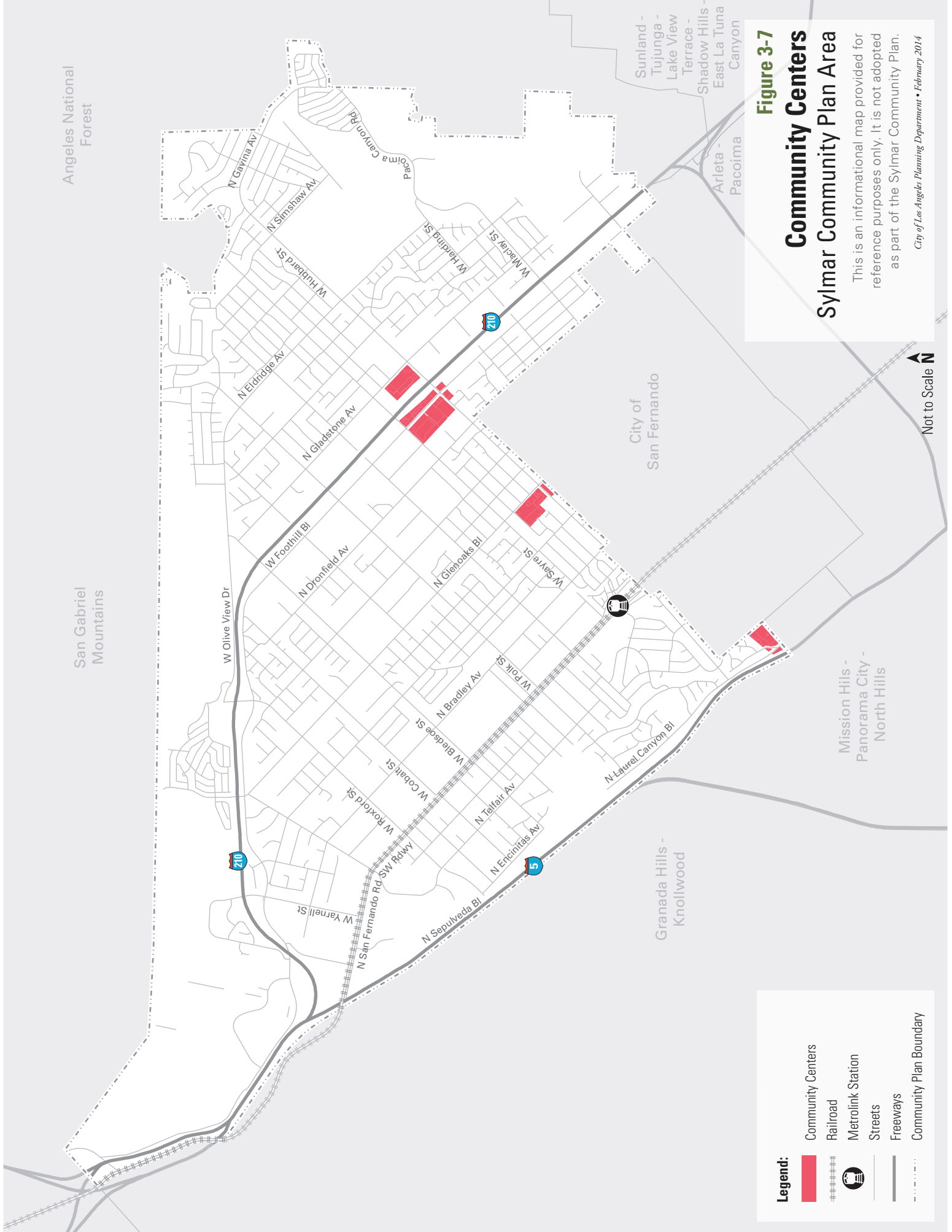
- Glenoaks Boulevard and Hubbard Street
- Foothill Boulevard (from Hubbard to Sayre Street)
- Gladstone Boulevard and Hubbard Street
- Laurel Canyon and Rinaldi Street



Existing condition of commercial center with a mix of uses.



Existing shopping center with a landscaped parking area.



**Figure 3-7**  
**Community Centers**  
**Sylmar Community Plan Area**

This is an informational map provided for reference purposes only. It is not adopted as part of the Sylmar Community Plan.

*City of Los Angeles, Planning Department • February 2014*

**Legend:**

- Community Centers
- Railroad
- 🚆 Metrolink Station
- Streets
- Freeways
- Community Plan Boundary

Not to Scale

Goal LU18. **Vibrant, healthy, and attractive commercial centers that serve as destination points for civic, cultural, and economic life for the adjoining neighborhoods and community, and provide needed goods and services, and jobs in a pedestrian-friendly environment.**

- LU18.1. **Commercial Development.** Promote commercial development by reducing building setbacks adjacent to a public street and reducing off-street parking requirements. Reductions in on-site parking requirements may be considered if it can be determined that the quantity of proposed parking would adequately serve the site or that additional on-street parking or shared parking is provided.
- LU18.2. **Activity-Generating Uses.** Encourage the owners of existing commercial shopping centers to include additional uses, such as restaurants, entertainment, childcare facilities, public meeting rooms, recreation, and public open spaces, which enhance neighborhood activity.
- LU18.3. **Housing.** Permit residential uses above the ground-floor or behind the street frontage. Encourage the development of affordable housing within Community Centers.
- LU18.4. **Surface Parking Lots.** Reduce the negative impacts of vast expanses of asphalt or other paving material by landscaping the parking lot with regularly spaced canopy trees. Require a dedicated landscaped pedestrian pathway or path of travel through the parking lot area.
- LU18.5. **Circulation.** Create and improve pedestrian and bicycle connections by providing dedicated sidewalks connecting businesses within the development, surrounding the development, and connecting the development to nearby neighborhoods. Provide access through barriers separating the development from adjacent neighborhoods.
- LU18.6. **Pole and Pylon Signs.** Limit height of pole and pylon signs to generally 45 feet in all Community Centers.

### *Transit and Public Benefits*

Public transportation plays an integral role in improving a City's prosperity, equity and mobility. It fosters more livable communities by creating corridors that become natural focal points for economic and social activities which help create strong neighborhood centers that are more economically stable, safe and productive. Transit-friendly, walkable communities reduce reliance on motor vehicles and promote higher levels of physical activity and has the potential to reduce health threats by reducing polluting emissions, providing a safe alternative to automobile travel and contributing to a stress-free commute.

## Transit-Oriented District and Mixed-Use Boulevards

Sylmar contains a Transit-Oriented District and two Mixed-Use Boulevards that provide a combination of multiple family housing and commercial uses and services near public transit, as shown in Figure 3-8, Transit-Oriented District and Mixed-Use Boulevards. The highest appropriate development intensities are targeted generally within a quarter mile of the Sylmar/San Fernando Metrolink Station, supported by a mix of housing and neighborhood commercial uses extending along San Fernando Road and Maclay Street. Typical establishments found in these areas include neighborhood commercial uses, public services, cultural facilities, school classrooms, and similar facilities. Sylmar's Transit-Oriented District and Mixed-Use Boulevards include the following:

- San Fernando Road Transit-Oriented District between Hubbard and Astoria Streets
- San Fernando Road Mixed-Use between Astoria and Roxford Streets
- Maclay Street Mixed-Use between Foothill and Glenoaks Boulevards



*Landscaped setbacks soften the building heights.*



*New commercial development within close proximity to transit that provides a mix of community-serving uses is encouraged along San Fernando Road and Maclay Street.*



**Figure 3-8**  
**Transit-Oriented & Mixed-Use Districts**  
**Sylmar Community Plan Area**

This is an informational map provided for reference purposes only. It is not adopted as part of the Sylmar Community Plan.

**Legend:**

- Transit Oriented Districts
- Mixed Use Districts
- Railroad
- Metroink Station
- Streets
- Freeways
- Community Plan Boundary

Not to Scale

**Goal LU19. A vibrant Transit-Oriented District and Mixed-Use Boulevards that builds upon the existing residential core and Sylmar’s Metrolink station, and provide a mix of commercial and residential uses, shopping and employment opportunities, open spaces, and civic uses.**

- LU19.1. **Transit-Oriented Development.** Encourage projects to include a mix of transit-supportive uses, such as shops, restaurants, offices, housing, and hotels within a quarter mile of the Sylmar/San Fernando Metrolink Station that would serve local residents, employees, businesses, and transit commuters.
- LU19.2. **Ground Floor Retail and Commercial.** Include ground-floor retail/commercial uses fronting San Fernando Road within a quarter mile of the Station. Require ground-floor retail/commercial uses on all corner lots on San Fernando Road between Hubbard and Polk Streets.
- LU19.3. **Mixed-Use Development.** Promote mixed-use projects in proximity to the Sylmar/San Fernando Metrolink Station, along transit corridors, and in identified mixed-use boulevards.
- LU19.4. **Incentives.** Utilize higher Floor Area Ratio (FAR) to incentivize mixed-use development and residential growth near the Sylmar/San Fernando Metrolink Station.
- LU19.5. **Density.** Allow higher density residential development which includes neighborhood service tenants, such as grocery stores and coffee shops, within the project site so that residents have access to everyday uses and minimize automobile trips.



*Mixed-used development allows for a building to be utilized for a longer period of time and gives residents the option to use transit instead of automobiles.*



*Transit-oriented development with a variety of commercial and residential uses for community members and commuters to enjoy.*

- LU19.6. **Housing.** Include a variety of new housing types, such as townhomes, apartments, and condominiums that cater to a diversity of households near public transit as a means of enhancing retail, transit viability, and reducing vehicle trips.
- LU19.7. **Mobile Home Park.** Consider preservation, reconfiguration, and relocation options for the existing mobile home park(s) as part of any planned redevelopment.
- LU19.8. **Community Amenities.** Encourage new development projects, particularly projects which utilize floor area incentives or density bonuses, to incorporate community facilities such as libraries, child care facilities, community meeting rooms, public art and plazas, senior centers, police sub-stations, and/or other appropriate human service facilities.
- LU19.9. **Parking Lots and Structures.** Support opportunities for developing commercial uses on the Sylmar/San Fernando Metrolink Station Park and Ride lot. Ensure that adequate parking space for transit patrons is provided.
- LU19.10. **Shared Parking.** Design large projects with multi-use facilities to share parking and amenities between uses and with other adjacent developments. Consider sharing parking with the Sylmar/San Fernando Metrolink Station Park and Ride lot.
- LU19.11. **On-Street Parking.** Increase on-street parking opportunities, such as angled parking, that support unique shopping experiences and calm traffic movement while providing additional parking for local businesses and services along Maclay Street between Foothill Boulevard and the City Boundary.
- LU19.12. **Local Transit Services.** Promote para-transit and other local shuttle systems, and bicycle amenities that provide access for residents of adjacent neighborhoods.

## Reducing Vehicle Miles Traveled

Small incremental increases in station intensity can result in large decreases in per household Vehicle Miles Traveled (VMT) which reduces transportation costs.

Station areas have the potential to reduce VMT and auto-dependence.

Ensuring that a regional transit network connects to major job centers is another key component of reducing auto dependency.

**Goal LU20. Visually rich Transit-Oriented Districts and Mixed-Use Boulevards that are vibrant, engage pedestrians, and contribute to street life, vitality, and safety along San Fernando Road and Maclay Street.**

- LU20.1. **Building Orientation and Setbacks.** Orient buildings toward the boulevards and maintain a consistent landscaped setback that enlivens the street wall with main entrances fronting the street. Develop the site so that the majority of the building façade is built to the property line in order to create a consistent street wall along the sidewalk.
- LU20.2. **Corner Lots.** Design buildings located at intersections to define and give prominence to the corner on which they are sited, by acknowledging both street facades with façade articulation and detail.
- LU20.3. **Pedestrian-Oriented Architecture.** Incorporate architectural features that encourage walking, such as storefront windows, awnings, and arcades and include architectural features that divide large buildings into smaller, human-scaled components.
- LU20.4. **Architectural Design.** Utilize architecture to create a sense of place and build upon Sylmar’s agricultural history. Projects near the Metrolink Station are encouraged to utilize elements of Spanish-Colonial Revival style architecture.



*Window transparency, and entrances oriented toward the street frontage create a pedestrian friendly environment.*



*Commercial development with outdoor seating areas enhance the streetscape and encourage pedestrian activity.*

- LU20.5. **Streetscape.** Support efforts to continue to improve the appearance and safety along San Fernando Road and Maclay Street through distinctive streetscapes and unified landscape treatments that prioritize pedestrians. The revitalized streets should include large deciduous shade trees punctuated by palm trees and unique street lights to help distinguish these areas. Support the development of Streetscape Plans along San Fernando Road and Maclay Street.
- LU20.6. **Connectivity.** Improve the connectivity along San Fernando Road by implementing techniques to make the pedestrian environment more pleasant on longer blocks or find ways to break down the scale of these superblocks with new pedestrian connections, such as incorporating streetscape and hardscaped improvements and private easements for public use.
- LU20.7. **Metrolink Connections.** Improvements for this area should foster a connection between the Metrolink Station, railroad tracks, and the major arterial intersection of San Fernando Road. Pedestrian connections across San Fernando Road and a multi-modal transit plaza to promote transit access to and from the existing rail station is highly supported and encouraged.



*Streetscape improvements have helped strengthen the appearance of the Sylmar/San Fernando Metrolink Station and the surrounding vicinity.*



*Landscaped medians along San Fernando Road near the Metrolink Station.*

## Industrial Areas

Sylmar has a significant amount of industrial uses, predominantly located in the southeast corner and northwest portion of the community, near the freeways, as shown on Figure 3-10, Industrial Areas. The industrial areas consist of mostly warehouse and distribution centers, light manufacturing, and research and development, providing local residents and surrounding communities with employment opportunities. Sylmar's industrial base is well-established and industrial land will be preserved to help maintain a core employment base.

## Industrial Issues and Opportunities

Throughout the Sylmar Community Plan update process, opportunities were provided for community members and stakeholders to comment on the proposed plan changes. As a result of public input and staff research, issues and opportunities were identified. Following is a summary of key issues and opportunities identified:

- One of Sylmar's strongest assets is its thriving industrial sector. Preserving Sylmar's industrial land for existing and new businesses helps to contribute to the community and the city's well-being, and provides the City with the necessary revenue to deliver the services desired by its residents.
- There are opportunities for "green" technology and "green" companies, research and development businesses, food production, artisan industries and media production to locate in Sylmar.



*High quality design of industrial buildings helps enhance the character of the industrial and business parks in Sylmar.*



*Sunset Farms Business Park is one of the largest business centers providing jobs in the north San Fernando Valley.*

- The Bradley Avenue industrial area is fully occupied with industrial uses but is viewed as being underutilized. It has the potential for being developed of introducing business park-related amenities like restaurants, café, open space, such as a plaza, and other business-supporting amenities, and job training centers or targeted incubator facilities.
- The industrial district on Arroyo Street, north of Foothill Boulevard, is a stable district comprised of older industrial businesses. However, the buildings front a very narrow road making it very difficult to navigate large trucks and vehicles conducting business in this area. Limiting delivery on-site or to non-peak hours and requiring sufficient on-site parking for employees, customers, and visitors and restricting off-site parking during peak hours could potentially alleviate some of this problem.
- Landscaped streetscapes are an important characteristic of Sylmar. Many of the industrial parks and districts are lined with canopy trees and parkways which contribute to the semi-rural character of the area. New development should enhance and maintain this attribute.
- Some of the older industrial districts are unsightly for businesses. There are tremendous opportunities to enhance these areas by providing landscaped entrances, removing or replacing chain link fences fronting public streets, and requiring parking at rear or side. Parking directly between buildings and the street should be avoided.



*Landscaped walkways with a mix shrubs and shade trees create inviting entrances for the public.*



*Newer industrial parks in Sylmar provide research and development as well as other “green” industrial land uses to the community plan area.*



Angeles National Forest

San Gabriel Mountains

City of San Fernando

Granada Hills - Knollwood

Mission Hills - Panorama City - North Hills

Sunland - Tujunga - Lake View Terrace - Shadow Hills - East La Tuna Canyon

**Figure 3-9**  
**Industrial Areas**  
**Sylmar Community Plan Area**

This is an informational map provided for reference purposes only. It is not adopted as part of the Sylmar Community Plan.

- Legend:**
- Limited Industrial
  - Light Industrial
  - Railroad
  - ⊞ Metrolink Station
  - Streets
  - Freeways
  - Community Plan Boundary

Not to Scale

**Goal LU21. Industrial uses that provide job opportunities, particularly for residents, and minimize environmental and visual impacts to the community.**

- LU21.1. **Employment Preservation.** Retain industrial planned designations to maintain the industrial employment base for existing and new businesses that provide higher-skilled and high wage manufacturing and research/development jobs.
- LU21.2. **Industrial Land Retention.** Restrict large industrially planned parcels located in predominantly industrial areas to be developed with uses that support the industrial base of the City and community.
- LU21.3. **Residential Restrictions.** Prohibit all residential uses in the MR1 zones, except for accessory residential uses.
- LU21.4. **Job Safety.** Ensure that industrial land uses are safe for human health and the environment and that they provide a robust source of employment.
- LU21.5. **On-site Parking.** Require adequate customer and employee parking be provided for all types of industrial and manufacturing facilities, and that truck traffic and parking be restricted from residential areas.

### *Job-Housing Balance*

Trends show that people are traveling longer distances to their places of employment. By planning communities with better balances of jobs and housing units, work trips can be shortened and therefore have a significant impact on vehicle miles traveled (VMT). A job-housing balance can also help reduce tailpipe emissions and improve air quality, reduce traffic congestion and lower personal transportation costs, slower increases in housing costs, and the potential to reduce public costs for new road construction and improvements. Additional benefits from balancing jobs and housing include achieving greater social equity, reducing class segregation, and creating interesting, pedestrian-oriented places.



*Sunset Farms Business Park provides a jobs housing balance with a mix of housing options in the form of apartments and condos.*



*Curvilinear streets within industrial areas helps with the transition of uses and provides visual enhancement.*



*Landscaped setbacks and mature street trees that provide shade aids in the beautification of industrial land uses within the community.*

Goal LU22. **Land use compatibility between industrial, residential and commercial uses, improving the aesthetic quality and design of industrial areas.**

LU22.1. **High-Quality Development.** Design projects to achieve a high level of quality, and developed in accordance to the Industrial Citywide Design Guidelines and other applicable design guidelines. Projects are required to incorporate to the maximum extent feasible applicable design guidelines.

LU22.2. **Neighborhood Compatibility.** Require design techniques, such as appropriate building orientation and scale, landscaping, buffering, noise insulation and increased setbacks, in the development of new industrial properties adjacent to non-industrial uses to improve land use compatibility and to enhance the physical environment.

LU22.3. **Transitional Uses.** Require transitions for industrial uses, including scale, massing, and setbacks, in those areas in close proximity to residential neighborhoods.

LU22.4. **Landscaped Buffers.** Incorporate landscaped buffers between the buildings and abutting residential properties. Methods to buffer projects should include a combination of increased setbacks, landscaping, berms and/or screening, and fencing.

LU22.5. **Street Beautification.** Encourage streetscape improvements such as street trees, sidewalks, landscaping, lighting, and undergrounding of utilities. Projects within the two industrial parks, Telfair Avenue and Balboa Boulevard, should maintain the existing landscaped pattern.

LU22.6. **Walls and Fences.** Design walls, fences, and screens used for concealment purposes to blend with the site's architectural style and soften them with clinging vines or shrubs. When security fencing is required, utilize a combination of solid pillars, open iron fence elements, solid wall segments, and grillwork. Chain link fencing and barbed wire fencing is not allowed.

LU22.7. **Integration of Utilities.** Integrate service elements and infrastructure such as mechanical equipment, trash enclosures and utilities with the design of projects. Locate service elements and infrastructure away from crosswalks or sidewalks and screen and/or enclose equipment in order to enhance the pedestrian experience and aesthetic appeal of the building and overall neighborhood. Underground utilities whenever possible.

Goal LU23. **Environmentally-friendly businesses that offer green jobs, safer neighborhoods, and a healthier environment, and utilize design, technology, and water conservation methods which help minimize consumption of non-renewable natural resources and replenishes the City's underground basin.**

- LU23.1. **Environmentally Friendly Businesses.** Support "green" business growth and encourage the replacement of polluting land use activities with environmentally-friendly businesses.
- LU23.2. **Sustainable Industry.** Incentivize development opportunities for businesses that employ "green" or clean technologies, building practices, and processes.
- LU23.3. **Eco-Friendly Design.** Design new buildings to respond to the climate of Sylmar through their orientation, massing, and construction. Consider utilizing passive solar design strategies, such as overhangs and shade trees, orienting building volumes, windows, and second-stories to maximize solar access, constructing well-insulated wall systems, and providing usable covered outdoor areas to generate more comfortable and energy-efficient buildings.
- LU23.4. **Landscaping.** Include sustainable landscape strategies such as using deciduous trees to shade buildings in the summer and allow filtered light to penetrate during the winter, planting native and drought-tolerant shrubs, hedges, and vines to reduce water usage, utilizing permeable surfaces on walkways and outdoor spaces and vegetated swales to cleanse and infiltrate water directly onto the ground, and installing drip irrigation systems to conserve water.



*Encourage and support environmentally friendly businesses within the industrial areas of the community.*



*An industrial building with wall-climbing vines.*

## Historic, Architectural, and Cultural Resources



*Heritage Park offers passive open space and creatively tells the story of the history of the area.*



*Heritage Park also provides a Mission-style plaza, trail that winds through the park, and an abundance of drought-tolerant plants.*

The community of Sylmar has a rich built history based on its agricultural roots and equestrian heritage – from the first City aqueduct to the second oldest cemetery in the San Fernando Valley. The preservation of historic resources protects this built legacy, ensuring continuity and the retention of the community’s collective memory. Historic preservation also offers economic benefits, as communities throughout the nation have used preservation as a successful tool to promote revitalization and economic development.

Citywide historic preservation policies have been established through a Cultural Heritage Master Plan, the Conservation Element of the General Plan, and the work plan of the Department of City Planning’s Office of Historic Resources (OHR). In addition to these policies, the City of Los Angeles has launched SurveyLA — an ambitious citywide survey to document historic resources across Los Angeles. Results of SurveyLA will inform the development of policies to preserve historically and architecturally significant buildings that have not yet achieved official historic designation. SurveyLA is coordinated by Office of Historic Resources.

There are a number of potentially significant historical resources located within the community of Sylmar. These include building types which represent several phases of the architectural evolution in the City of Los Angeles, such as the California Ranch House, Farmhouse, Spanish Colonial Revival, and American Colonial Revival.

The Community Plan contains goals and policies that aim to preserve historic resources that protect the built legacy, ensuring continuity and the retention of the community’s collective memory. The Community Plan reflects the Community’s vision to preserve the areas agricultural and equestrian heritage and its built legacy and ensures that the area’s significant historic resources are protected, preserved, and or enhanced.

As of 2012, three sites have been designated as Historic-Cultural Monuments (HCM) and/or California State Historical Landmarks (CHL), in recognition of their significance in the social and cultural history of the community, See Figure 3-10. The three identified historical sites include:

- San Fernando Mission Wells and Settling Basin
- San Fernando Pioneer Memorial Cemetery
- Los Angeles Aqueduct Cascades

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

The San Fernando Mission Wells and Settling Basin was built in the early nineteenth century in order to have access to water. Located near the Sylmar Metrolink Station, this six-acre well site is the oldest existing source of water supply in the City, other than the Los Angeles River. The Wells are now owned and operated by the Department of Water of Power (DWP) and are still a valuable source of water supply for the City. The Wells were declared Los Angeles Historic-Cultural Monument #50 in 1967.

### **San Fernando Pioneer Memorial Cemetery**

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

### **Los Angeles Aqueduct Cascades**

The Los Angeles Aqueduct was completed in 1913 in order to provide the City with a reliable source of water supply. The aqueduct is located just north of the Foothill and Balboa Boulevard intersection and is the terminus of the Los Angeles — Owens River Aqueduct which brings water 338 miles from the eastern slopes of the Sierra Nevada to the City. The aqueduct was declared a California State Historical Landmark in 1958 and Los Angeles Historic-Cultural Monument #742 in 2003.



*San Fernando Pioneer Cemetery, Los Angeles Historic-Cultural Monument #586.*



*Sylmar contains a number of homes that reflect the historic character and architecture of the Sylmar community.*



Goal LU24. **A community with distinct and historically significant character which values and preserves its historic resources and cultural amenities for future generations to enjoy.**

- LU24.1. **Historic Preservation.** Protect, preserve, and enhance identified cultural and historical resources.
- LU24.2. **Cultural Resources.** Support existing cultural and historic resources, such as the Pacoima Wash, Veterans Memorial Park, Stetson Ranch Equestrian Park, and Wilson Canyon Trailhead, as cultural resources for the community.
- LU24.3. **Resource Identification.** Support the completion of SurveyLA or other future comprehensive survey within the Sylmar Community Plan Area. Ensure careful review under the California Environmental Quality Act (CEQA) of project proposals affecting resources identified in the survey as eligible for historic designation.
- LU24.4. **Rehabilitation.** Encourage preservation and rehabilitation of historic resources. Promote the use of the City’s Mills Act Historical Property Contract Program, the Federal Historic Rehabilitation Tax Credit, and the California Historical Building Code. Any project which involves designated historic resources, including the City of Los Angeles Historic-Cultural Monuments shall conform with the Secretary of the Interior’s Standards for Rehabilitation.



*Mural art in commercial areas promote a sense of community identity and pride.*



*Sylmar’s semi-rural character is reflected by residents in unique ways throughout the community.*

- LU24.5. **Restoration and Re-Use.** Promote the restoration and reuse of existing buildings as a key component of the City's sustainability policies.
- LU24.6. **Historic Integration.** Encourage the design of new buildings that respect and complement the character of adjacent historic resources.
- LU24.7. **Special Districts.** Support the study of Residential Floor Area (RFA) Special Districts or Community Design Overlays (CDOs) for neighborhoods that retain a cohesive character but are not eligible to become Historic Preservation Overlay Zones (HPOZs).
- LU24.8. **Community Partnerships.** Forge partnerships with relevant neighborhood organizations to advance preservation efforts in the community through educational and informational programs.
- LU24.9. **Partnerships.** Partner with the Los Angeles Housing Department and other agencies to identify new financial resources for rehabilitation grants and loans to low- and moderate-income owners of historic resources.



*The Sylmar Business Improvement District sponsored the design and implementation of banners along San Fernando Road that reflect Sylmar's identity.*



*It is the intent of this community plan to preserve the stable single family residential areas that reflect the historic character of Sylmar's development.*