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COUNTY OF VENTURA MEASURE  
(SOAR) SAVE OPENSOURCE and AGRICULTURAL RESOURCES  
INITIATIVE – 2050  
FULL TEXT OF ORDINANCE

The people of the County of Ventura, having adopted the Save Open-space and Agricultural Resources Ordinance (SOAR) on November 3, 1998, and recognizing that said Ordinance will sunset on December 31, 2020, desire to continue the philosophy of and primary substantive matters contained in that initiative measure until December 31, 2050. Accordingly, they do hereby ordain as follows: [Changes from the text of the original initiative and any changes in the County’s General Plan being restated and readopted are indicated with “~~strike-out~~” for deletions; *italics for additions*].

Section 1. Findings and Purpose.

A. Nearly two decades ago, the voters of Ventura County adopted the Save Open-space and Agricultural Resources (SOAR) in order to protect the County’s agricultural, rural, and open space lands, to strengthen the local agricultural economy, and to preserve the County’s quality of life. SOAR has been highly successful in achieving these goals, while allowing for reasonable residential development, allowing the County to meet its housing requirements under state law. Accordingly, for the benefit of existing and future residents, visitors and investors, the people of Ventura County hereby declare their intent to reaffirm, update and extend the provisions of SOAR until the year 2050.

B. Agriculture has been and remains a major contributor to the economy of the County of Ventura, directly and indirectly creating employment for many people, creating enormous actual income which multiplies through the community and generating substantial tax revenues for the County.

Specifically, the Ventura County General Plan provides as follows:

“Agriculture plays an important role in the National, State, and County economy. Ventura County is one of the principal agricultural counties in the State ranking tenth in 1987, with a total income of over 610 million dollars and ranking seventeenth in farm earnings out of 3,175 counties nationally.

This high productivity is made possible by the County’s abundance of the natural resources required for agricultural production; primarily soils, water, climate and topography.” [General Plan, ¶1.6].

C. The County of Ventura with its unique combination of soils, micro-climate and hydrology has become one of the finest growing regions in the world. Vegetable and fruit production from the county of Ventura and, in particular, production

from the soils and silt from the Santa Clara and Ventura rivers have achieved international acclaim, enhancing the County's economy and reputation and standard of living.

D. For agriculture to be sustainable in Ventura County, it must remain economically viable. This SOAR ordinance seeks to add and improve necessary goals and policies to encourage agriculture to remain viable in the County for the life of the ordinance and beyond.

E. Open space likewise contributes to the welfare of the County, as recognized in paragraph 3.2 of the General Plan, not only through the productive use of the land for grazing and other non-irrigated usage, such as forest lands, rangelands, and agricultural lands not designated agricultural, but through the preservation of unique natural resources including but not limited to areas required for the preservation of plant and animal life, habitat for fish and wildlife, areas required for ecological and other scientific study purposes, rivers, bays, estuaries, wetlands, coastal beaches, lakeshores, banks of rivers and streams and watershed lands. Open space continues to contribute to the public health and safety additionally by setting aside from development those lands which require special management or regulation because of hazardous or special conditions such as earthquake fault zones, unstable soil areas, flood plains, watersheds, areas presenting high fire risks, areas required for the protection of water quality, and water reservoirs and areas required for the protection and enhancement of air quality. Open space has worked to promote and continues to promote the formation and continuation of cohesive communities by defining the boundaries and by helping to prevent urban sprawl. Open space promotes efficient municipal services and facilities by confining urban development to defined development areas.

F. Open space designations also include productive lands that are used for agriculture and grazing. These lands are important to the overall economy of the County and the long-term economic viability of these productive lands shall be supported.

G. As importantly, the Rural designation under the General Plan serves not only to buffer intense urban usage from agricultural and open space lands, but it fosters small scale agricultural production while allowing for low-density and low intensity land uses and is a critical component in accommodating the full range of residential and farming/ranching environments.

H. Urban encroachment into Agricultural, Open Space and Rural designated areas can negatively impact agriculture by lessening cultivated acreage, threatening the viability of the agricultural industry and could threaten the public health, safety and welfare by causing increased traffic congestion, associated air pollution, and potentially serious water problems, such as pollution, depletion and sedimentation of available water resources. Such urban encroachment could eventually result in the unnecessary and expensive extension of public services and facilities as well as create inevitable conflicts

between urban and open space and agricultural uses, degrading wildlife habitat and connectivity. To the extent possible, farm worker housing, located in existing urban areas, should be encouraged in order to help sustain the viability of agriculture.

I. The unique character of the County of Ventura and quality of life of County residents depend on the protection of a substantial amount of open space, agriculture, and rural lands. The protection of such lands not only ensures the continued viability of agriculture, but also protects the available water supply and contributes to flood control and the protection of wildlife, environmentally sensitive areas, and irreplaceable natural resources.

J. The purpose of this initiative is to continue to ensure that agricultural, rural and open space lands are not prematurely or unnecessarily converted to other more intensive development uses incompatible with the purposes of the Agricultural, Open Space and Rural land use designations. Thus, this initiative seeks to further Agricultural, Rural and Open Space objectives which could include, for example, adequate farm worker housing. This initiative further proposes to restate and readopt, with minor amendments, the section of the Ventura County General Plan document entitled Goals, Policies and Programs to support Agricultural, Rural and Open Space objectives thereby helping to ensure that agriculture will remain economically viable in the County for the life of the ordinance and beyond, and the beneficial aspects of the Rural and Open Space designations continue to be protected. Accordingly, the initiative ensures that until December 31, 2050 the General Plan provisions governing Agricultural, Rural and Open Space land use designations and intent, as amended herein, may not be changed except by vote of the people. In addition, the initiative provides that any lands designated as "Agricultural," "Rural" or "Open Space" on the County of Ventura's General Plan "General Land Use Maps" (North Half and South Half of each) [attached as exhibits A and B] adopted by the Board of Supervisors May 24, 1988 as revised through October, 2015 will remain so designated until December 31, 2050 unless the land is redesignated to another land use category by vote of the people, or redesignated by the Board of Supervisors for the County of Ventura pursuant to the procedures set forth in this initiative.

K. This initiative allows the Board of Supervisors to redesignate Rural, Agricultural, and Open Space lands to other more intensive land use designations only if certain findings can be made, including (among other things) that the land is proven to be unsuitable for any form of utilitarian use, and redesignation is necessary to avoid an unconstitutional taking of property without just compensation.

## **Section 2. General Plan Amendment.**

1. Except as otherwise provided herein, this Save Open-space and Agricultural Resources Initiative hereby amends, reaffirms, restates, and readopts until December 31, 2050 the following aspects of the Ventura County General Plan. Deletions

indicated by ~~strike-out~~; additions indicated by *italics* (The Urban land use designation is not part of this initiative, but is added here for context, only):

**Limitations on General Plan Amendments Relating to Agricultural,  
Open Space and Rural Designations**

I.

Pursuant to the provisions of the SAVE OPEN-SPACE and AGRICULTURAL RESOURCES (S.O.A.R.) INITIATIVE the following shall obtain until December 31, ~~2020~~ 2050:

- a) *Until December 31, 2050*, the Agricultural, Open Space and Rural land use designations, and the goals and policies as they specifically apply to those land use designations in Sections ~~3.1~~ 1.6 and 3.2 Ventura County General Plan - GOALS, POLICIES & PROGRAMS (10-20-15 edition) of this General Plan shall not be further amended unless such amendment is approved by vote of the people or by the Board of Supervisors pursuant to the procedures set forth herein.
- b) *All those lands designated as "Agricultural," "Open Space" or "Rural on the "General Land Use Maps" or the "Resources Protection Maps" adopted by the Board of Supervisors for Ventura County on May 24, 1988, and amended through ~~September 16, 1997~~ October 20, 2015, shall remain so designated until December 31, 2050, unless redesignated to another general plan land use category by vote of the people, or redesignated by the Board of Supervisors pursuant to the procedures set forth herein. [Said Maps are attached hereto and incorporated herein as Exhibit's A and B. The General Land Use maps cover the mainland only. Anacapa Island is designated "Open Space" and San Nicholas Island is designated "State or Federal Facility."]*
- c) The Board of Supervisors, following at least one public hearing for presentations by an applicant and the public, and after compliance with the California Environmental Quality Act, may place any amendment to land use designations of Agricultural, Open Space or Rural, or any provision, goal or policy as set forth in subsection *paragraph "a"*, above, on the ballot pursuant to the mechanisms provided by State Law.
- d) The Board of Supervisors without a vote of the people may reorganize, reorder or renumber individual provisions, *including the provisions set forth herein* in the course of ongoing updates of the General Plan in accordance with the requirements of state law. Additional technical, non-substantive language modifications may be made to the General Plan with reference to Agricultural, Open Space or Rural designations for clarification and internal consistency provided such modifications are

consistent with the Findings and Purpose of the initiative creating these provisions.

- e) The Board of Supervisors, without a vote of the people, may re-designate ~~Rural designated~~ *properties otherwise designated (e.g., residential or commercial) to Rural, Agricultural, or Open Space; may redesignate Rural properties to either Agricultural or Open Space; or, may re-designate Open Space to Agricultural pursuant to the provisions for making such amendments set forth in state law and Board adopted policies. Once redesignated, those redesignated lands become subject to the rules contained in this initiative for any further redesignation. Moreover, the Board of Supervisors without a vote of the people may increase the minimum lot size for any land use designation, but may not decrease Rural, Agricultural or Open Space minimum lot sizes.*
- f) The Board of Supervisors, without a vote of the people, may redesignate “Agricultural” designated properties to Open Space if the Board of Supervisors makes all of the following findings supported by substantial evidence:
- i) The land proposed for redesignation has not been used for agricultural purposes in the past 2 years and is unusable for agricultural due to its topography, drainage, flooding, adverse soil conditions, or other physical reasons;
  - ii) The land proposed for redesignation is immediately adjacent to areas developed in a manner compatible with the uses allowed under Open Space;
  - iii) Adequate public services and facilities are available and have the capacity and capability to accommodate the Open Space uses allowed;
  - iv) The proposed redesignation is compatible with agricultural uses, does not interfere with accepted agricultural practices, and does not adversely affect the stability of land use patterns in the area; **and**
  - v) The land proposed for redesignation does not exceed 40 acres for any one landowner in any calendar year, and one landowner may not obtain redesignation pursuant to this subdivision (f) more often than every other year. Landowners with any unity of interest are considered one landowner for purposes of this limitation; *and*
  - vi) *Notice of such Proposed Modification is given according to the County’s standard notice requirements to neighboring properties; and as well, not less than 30 days prior to the proposed modification appearing on the Board of Supervisors’ agenda, to LAFCo, to the City in whose Area of Interest the property to be redesignated is located, and to all individuals or organizations*

*who or which have indicated a desire for such Notice by requesting the same by placing his/her/its name and contact information with the Clerk of the Board of Supervisors.*

- g) *The Board of Supervisors, following at least one public hearing for presentations by an applicant and the public, and after compliance with the California Environmental Quality Act, may amend, without a vote of the people, the Rural, Agricultural, or Open Space land use designations to comply with state law regarding the provision of housing for all economic segments of the community. Such amendment may be adopted only if the Board of Supervisors, based on substantial evidence makes each of the following findings:*
- i) The land is immediately adjacent to existing compatibly developed areas and the applicant for the amendment has provided to the County evidence that the Fire Department, Police Department, Department of Public Works, the Resource Management Agency applicable water and sewer districts, and the school districts with jurisdiction over such land have or will provide adequate capacity to accommodate the proposed development and provide it with adequate public services; and,*
  - ii) That the proposed development will address the highest priority need identified in the analysis by which the County has determined it is not in compliance with state law, i.e., low and very low income housing; and,*
  - iii) That there is no existing residentially designated land available to accommodate the proposed development; and,*
  - iv) Notice of such proposed amendment is given according to the County's standard notice requirements to neighboring properties; and as well, not less than 30 days prior to the proposed modification appearing on the Board of Supervisors' agenda, to LAFCo, to the City in whose Area of Interest the property to be redesignated is located, and to all individuals or organizations who or which have indicated a desire for such Notice by requesting the same by placing his/her/its name and contact information with the Clerk of the Board of Supervisors.*
- g)h) The Board of Supervisors, without a vote of the people, may redesignate Agricultural, Open Space or Rural properties provided the Board complies with the following two conditions:
- i) The Board makes a finding based upon the advice of the County Counsel that the designation of the property effects an unconstitutional taking of the landowners' property; and
  - ii) In permitting the redesignation, the Board allows a less restrictive designation to be applied to the property only to the extent necessary to avoid the unconstitutional taking of the landowner's property.



i) *Approval by a vote of the people is accomplished when a General Plan amendment is placed on the ballot through any procedure provided for in the Election Code, and a majority of the voters vote in favor of it. Whenever the Board of Supervisors adopts an amendment requiring approval by a vote of the people pursuant to the provisions of this subsection, the Board's action shall have no effect until after such a vote is held and a majority of the voters vote in favor of it. The Board of Supervisors shall follow the provisions of the Election Code in all matters pertaining to such an election.*

h)j) The Board of Supervisors, without a vote of the people, may amend the provisions of the General Plan which apply to the Agricultural, Open Space or Rural designations, as set forth in subsection "a", above, for the express purpose of further protecting and preserving resources identified in the General Plan, provided that said amendment(s) are consistent with the Findings and Purpose of the initiative adopting these provisions of the General Plan.

~~i) In recognition of the urban nature of the Piru community and to provide essential flexibility to the Board of Supervisors to address the special needs of that community, the Board of Supervisors, without a vote of the people, may amend the land use designations on the General Land Use Map, as set forth in subsection "b", above, for land located within the Piru Redevelopment Area or land described by the following Assessor Parcel Numbers:~~

056-0-180-01	056-0-180-08
056-0-180-02	056-0-190-05
056-0-180-06	056-0-190-06
056-0-180-07	056-0-190-09

~~The total land represented by this subsection "i" is set forth on Exhibit "A"~~

k) *This initiative is not intended to impede The Board of Supervisors, without a vote of the people, from being able to rezone land consistent with the Existing Community Land Use designations on the General Plan Land Use Map(s), and related text, as set forth herein. Consistent with this subsection k), Thomas Aquinas College, 10000 Ojai Rd., Santa Paula, CA 93060 shall be deemed an Existing Community, and may be rezoned appropriately and developed according to its needs as a college subject to standard rules and regulations and permit requirements of the Board of Supervisors. The boundaries of the college are set forth herein as Exhibit "C."*

l) Following December 31, 2020 2050, redesignations of then existing General Plan designations may be occasioned by the Board of Supervisors without a vote of the people. Until then, approval by a vote of the people is

accomplished when a General Plan amendment is placed on the ballot through any procedure provided for in the Election Code, and a majority of the voters vote in favor of it. Whenever the Board of Supervisors adopts an amendment requiring approval by a vote of the people pursuant to the provisions of this ~~subsection~~ *initiative measure* the Board's action shall have no effect until after such a vote is held and a majority of the voters vote in favor of it.

*m) To preserve the maximum amount of land in agricultural production as possible, the processing of food beyond the limits currently allowed by Ventura County's general plan and policies should take place in existing urban areas that have appropriate supporting infrastructure.*

*Notwithstanding the foregoing limitations on the Board of Supervisors, in order to support the processing of locally grown food, before January 1 of 2030 the Board of Supervisors may, without a vote of the people, re-designate up to a total of 12 acres of land, dispersed throughout the County, provided they comply with the following conditions:*

- i) The Board has amended the appropriate provisions of the County's General Plan and other planning policies, and the amendment(s) conform with state laws governing such land use designations;*
- ii) The Board finds the re-designation will allow for the processing of locally grown food that would otherwise likely be transported out of county for processing;*
- iii) The re-designated land is no greater than 3 acres in size and does not require the expansion or extension of new sewer lines to the facility; and,*
- iv) The Board of Supervisors approved the action with at least four of the five Supervisors voting in the affirmative.*

*j) n) The Board of Supervisors, without a vote of the people, may amend the land use designations on the General Land Use Maps, as set forth in subsection "b", above, to any Existing Community designation for land which, prior to the effective date of the ordinance setting forth these provisions, is found to contain lawfully established urban building intensities or urban land uses, to the minimum extent necessary to validate such pre-existing uses consistent with the Findings and Purpose of the ordinance adopting these provisions of the General Plan.*

2. ~~In addition, this initiative\* General Plan Amendment hereby reaffirms~~ *This initiative restates and readopts the following referenced Goals and Policies (omissions do not indicate deletion, just irrelevance to the purposes of this initiative) of the Ventura County General Plan until December 31, 2050. Deletions continue to be indicated by ~~strike out~~; additions by italics:*

## 1.6 Farmland Resources

\* \* \*

### 1.6.1 Goals

1. Preserve and protect ~~irrigated~~ agricultural lands as a nonrenewable resource to assure the continued availability of such lands for the production of food, fiber and ornamentals.
2. Encourage the continuation and development of facilities and programs that *support agricultural production and* enhance the marketing of County grown agricultural products.
3. *Improve the economic viability of agriculture through policies that support agriculture as an integral business to the County.*
4. *Encourage opportunities for Ventura County residents to buy local agricultural products.*

### 1.6.2 Policies

1. Discretionary development located on land designated as Agricultural (see Land Use Chapter) and identified as Prime Farmland or Farmland of Statewide Importance on the State's Important Farmland Inventory, shall be planned and designed to remove as little land as possible from potential agricultural production and to minimize impacts on topsoil.
2. Hillside agricultural grading shall be regulated by the Public Works Agency through the Hillside Erosion Control Ordinance.
3. Land Conservation Act (LCA) Contracts shall be encouraged on ~~irrigated~~ farmlands *and Open Space lands*.
4. The Public Works Agency shall plan transportation capital improvements so as to mitigate impacts to important farmlands to the extent feasible.
5. The County shall preserve agricultural land by retaining and expanding the existing Greenbelt Agreements and encouraging the formation of additional Greenbelt Agreements.
6. Discretionary development adjacent to Agricultural-designated lands shall not conflict with agricultural use of those lands.

## 3.2 Land Use Designations

Six basic land use designations are utilized on the General Land Use Map: Urban, Existing Community, Rural, Agricultural, Open Space, and State and Federal Facilities. In addition, the General Land Use Map includes an overlay designation of Urban Reserve. These designations are defined as follows:

- The **Urban** land use designation is utilized to depict existing and planned urban centers which include commercial and industrial uses as well as residential uses where the building intensity is greater than one principal dwelling unit per two acres.

This designation has been applied to all incorporated lands within a city's

Sphere of Influence as established by the Local Agency Formation Commission (LAFCO), and unincorporated urban centers within their own Areas of Interest which may be candidates for future incorporation.

\* \* \*

- The **Existing Community** designation identifies existing urban residential, commercial or industrial enclaves located outside Urban designated areas. An Existing Community may include uses, densities, building intensities, and zoning designations which are normally limited to Urban designated areas but do not qualify as urban centers. This designation has been established to recognize existing land uses in unincorporated areas which have been developed with urban building intensities and urban land uses; to contain these enclaves within specific areas so as to prevent further expansion; and to limit the building intensity and land use to previously established levels. *Thomas Aquinas College is newly designated in this initiative as Existing Community, with the intention that it be confined to its current boundaries with the understanding that it may continue to intensify its building for its educationally related purposes.*

- The **Rural** designation identifies areas suitable for low-density and low-intensity land uses such as residential estates of two acres or greater parcel size and other rural uses which are maintained in conjunction with agricultural and horticultural uses or in conjunction with the keeping of farm animals for recreational purposes.

The Rural designation also identifies institutional uses such as boarding and non-boarding elementary and secondary schools. Additionally, the designation is utilized for recreational uses such as retreats, camps, recreational vehicle parks and campgrounds.

The designation of areas for Rural land uses is intended to accommodate the need for low density rural residential development, which, in conjunction with the higher density development of the Urban designated land uses, will provide a full range of residential environments.

The areas considered for inclusion in the Rural designation are existing clusters of rural development and areas deemed appropriate for future rural residential development.

- The **Agricultural** designation is applied to ~~irrigated~~ lands which are suitable for the cultivation of crops and the raising of livestock.

Because of the inherent importance of agriculture as a land use in and of itself, agriculture is not subsumed under the Open Space land use designation, but has been assigned a separate land use designation.

- The **Open Space** designation encompasses land as defined under Section 65560 of the State Government Code as any parcel or area of land or water which is essentially unimproved and devoted to an open-space use as defined in this section, and which is designated on a local, regional or State open-space plan as any of the following:

- o Open space for the preservation of natural resources including, but not limited to, areas required for the preservation of plant and animal life,

including habitat for fish and wildlife species; areas required for ecologic and other scientific study purposes; rivers, streams, *wetlands*, bays and estuaries; and coastal beaches, lakeshores, banks of rivers and streams, and watershed lands.

- o Open space used for the managed production of resources, including but not limited to, forest lands, rangeland, agricultural lands not designated agricultural; areas required for recharge of groundwater basins; bays, *wetlands*, estuaries, marshes, rivers and streams which are important for the management of commercial fisheries; and areas containing major mineral deposits, including those in short supply.

- o Open space for outdoor recreation, including but not limited to, areas of outstanding scenic, historic and cultural value; areas particularly suited for park and recreation purposes, including access to lakeshores, beaches, and rivers and streams; and areas which serve as links between major recreation and open-space reservations, including utility easements, banks of rivers and streams, trails, and scenic highway corridors.

- o Open space for public health and safety, including, but not limited to, areas which require special management or regulation because of hazardous or special conditions such as earthquake fault zones, unstable soil areas, flood plains, watersheds, areas presenting high fire risks, areas required for the protection of water quality and water reservoirs and areas required for the protection and enhancement of air quality.

- For purposes of the County General Plan, "open space" also includes the following:

- o Open space to promote the formation and continuation of cohesive communities by defining the boundaries and by helping to prevent urban sprawl.

- o Open space to promote efficient municipal services and facilities by confining urban development to defined development areas.

- **The State or Federal Facility**

\* \* \*

- **The Urban Reserve overlay**

\* \* \*

The following goals and policies apply to land use designations:

### 3.2.1 Goals

#### 1. Urban:

(1) Recognize areas within the County planned for urban development which are currently incorporated or which are candidates for future incorporation.

(2) Direct urban development to existing cities and unincorporated urban centers within their own Area of Interest, and maintain open space between urban areas.

(3) Discourage outward expansion of urban development when suitable developable areas exist within cities and unincorporated urban centers.

## 2. Existing Community:

Recognize and confine existing urban enclaves which are outside Urban designated areas, even though the enclaves may include uses, densities, and zoning designations normally limited to Urban designated areas.

## 3. Rural:

Recognize and plan for low density rural residential and recreational development, while preserving resources, avoiding hazards, and providing adequate public facilities and services.

## 4. Agricultural:

(1) ~~Identify~~ *Recognize* the farmlands within the County that are critical to the maintenance of the local agricultural economy and which are important to the State and Nation for the production of food, fiber and ornamentals.

(2) Preserve and protect agricultural lands as a nonrenewable resource to assure their continued availability for the production of food, fiber and ornamentals.

(3) *Promote the economic viability of agricultural lands by assisting agricultural producers and establishing zoning policies that support long term investments in agriculture.*

(3) (4) Maintain agricultural lands in parcel sizes which will assure that viable farming units are retained.

(4) (5) Establish policies and regulations which ~~restrict~~ *encourage* agricultural land to *remain in* farming and related uses. ~~rather than other development purposes.~~

(5) (6) Restrict the introduction of conflicting uses into farming areas.

(7) *Subject to state law, the Guidelines for Orderly Development, and applicable zoning requirements, actively promote infrastructure, sized not larger than necessary for the specific project, for farm worker housing to support the continuing viability of agriculture.*

## 5. Open Space:

(1) Preserve for the benefit of all the County's residents the continued wise use of the County's renewable and nonrenewable resources by limiting the encroachment into such areas of uses which would unduly and prematurely hamper or preclude the use or appreciation of such resources.

(2) Acknowledge the presence of certain hazardous features which urban development should avoid for public health and safety reasons, as well as for the possible loss of public improvements in these areas and the attendant financial costs to the public.

(3) Retain open space lands in a ~~relatively undeveloped~~ *non-urbanized* state so as to preserve the maximum number of future land use options.

(4) Retain open space lands for outdoor recreational activities, parks, trails and for scenic lands.

(5) Define urban areas by providing contrasting but complementary areas which should be left ~~generally undeveloped~~ *non-urbanized*.

(6) Recognize the intrinsic value of open space lands and not regard such lands

as "areas waiting for urbanization."

*(7) Land Conservation Act (LCA) Contracts shall be encouraged on farming and grazing and open space lands.*

*(8) Support the productive agricultural activities of Open Space designated lands that are commonly used for agriculture, grazing, and ranching and that are important to the overall economy of Ventura County.*

\* \* \*

### **3.2.2 Policies**

\* \* \*

#### **2. Existing Community:**

(1) The Existing Community designation shall include existing unincorporated urban enclaves located outside cities and unincorporated urban centers.

(2) The Existing Community designation may recognize the range of zones present in the area, be they residential, commercial, or industrial, *or otherwise* as well as the range of existing population densities and building intensities.

\* \* \*

#### **3. Rural:**

(1) Lands designated Rural are those located outside areas designated Urban or Existing Community which are deemed suitable and appropriate for low-density rural residential or recreational development.

(2) The smallest minimum parcel size consistent with the Rural land use designation is two acres. Subzones may require larger minimum parcel sizes.

#### **4. Agricultural:**

(1) The Agricultural land use designation shall primarily include lands which are designated as Prime Farmlands, Farmlands of Statewide Importance or Unique Farmlands in the State's Important Farmland Inventory (IFI), although land may not be designated Agricultural if small areas of agricultural land are isolated from larger blocks of farming land (in such cases, the agricultural land is assigned to the Open Space or Rural designation of the surrounding properties).

(2) The smallest minimum parcel size consistent with the Agricultural land use designation is 40 acres. Subzones may require larger minimum parcel sizes.

(3) Agricultural land shall be utilized for the production of food, fiber and ornamentals; animal husbandry and care; uses accessory to agriculture and limited temporary or public uses.

#### **5. Open Space:**

(1) Open Space should include areas of land or water which are set aside for the preservation of natural resources, including, but not limited to, areas required for the preservation of plant and animal life, including habitat for fish and wildlife species; areas required for ecologic and other scientific study purposes; rivers, streams, bays, *wetlands*, and estuaries; and coastal beaches, lakeshores, banks of rivers and streams, and important watershed lands.

(2) Open Space should also include areas set aside for managed production of resources, including, but not limited to, forest lands, rangeland, agricultural lands not otherwise designated Agricultural; areas required for the recharge of groundwater basins; bays, estuaries, marshes, rivers, and streams which are important for the management of commercial fisheries; and areas containing major mineral deposits, including those in short supply.

(3) Open Space should also include areas within which recreational activities can be pursued, including, but not limited to, use and enjoyment of recreational trails *and areas for hunting and fishing*. Preservation of open space also serves to protect areas of outstanding scenic, historic, and cultural value; areas particularly suited for park and recreation purposes, including access to lakeshores, beaches, and rivers and streams; and areas which serve as links between major recreation and open space reservations, including utility easements, banks of rivers and streams, trails, and scenic highway corridors.

(4) Open Space should also include areas of land or water which are set aside for public health and safety, thereby safeguarding humans and property from certain natural hazards, including, but not limited to, areas which require special management or regulation because of hazardous or special conditions such as earthquake fault zones, unstable soil areas, flood plains, watersheds, areas presenting high fire risks, areas required for the protection of water quality and water reservoirs, and areas required for the protection and enhancement of air quality.

(5) Open Space should also include undeveloped natural areas surrounding urban designated areas which have been set aside to define the boundaries of the urban-designated areas, to prevent urban sprawl, and to promote efficient municipal services and facilities by confining the areas of urban development.

(6) The smallest minimum parcel size consistent with the Open Space land use category is 10 acres. Subzones may require larger minimum parcel sizes.

(7) The minimum parcel size for Open Space properties contiguous with the Agricultural land use designation shall be 20 acres.

### **Section 3. Implementation.**

A. Upon the effective date of this initiative, the General Plan Amendment shall be deemed inserted in the Ventura County General Plan, Goals, Policies and Programs document as an amendment thereof; except, that if the four amendments of the mandatory elements of the general plan permitted by state law for any given calendar year have already been utilized in 2016, prior to the effective date of this initiative, this General Plan amendment shall be deemed



inserted in the County General Plan on the first day of January of the following calendar year.

*B. The provisions of this General Plan Amendment shall prevail over any conflicting revisions to the County of Ventura's General Plan as amended through the date of this initiative, or to the County of Ventura's "General Land Use Maps" as amended through the date of this initiative which conflict with the initiative. The County of Ventura is hereby authorized and directed to amend the Ventura County General Plan, all specific plans, the Ventura County Zoning Ordinance, the Ventura County Land Use and related zoning maps and other ordinances and policies affected by this initiative as soon as possible and in the manner and time required by any applicable state law, to ensure consistency between the policies adopted in this initiative and other elements of the Ventura County General Plan, all specific plans, the Ventura County Zoning Ordinance, the Ventura County Land Use and related zoning maps and other ordinances and policies. Upon the adoption date all General Plan amendments, rezonings, specific plans, tentative or final subdivision maps, parcel maps, conditional use permits, building permits or other ministerial or discretionary entitlements for use not yet approved or issued shall not be approved or issued unless consistent with the policies and provisions of this initiative. Other than for the exceptions provided herein, upon the effective date of this General Plan Amendment, the County and its departments, boards, commissions, officers and employees shall not grant, or by inaction allow to be approved by operation of law, any general plan amendment, rezoning, specific plan, subdivision map, conditional use permit, building permit or any other ministerial or discretionary entitlement, which is inconsistent with the purposes of this General Plan Amendment unless in accordance with the provisions of this General Plan Amendment.*

*C. The date that the notice of intention to circulate this initiative measure was submitted to the elections official of the County of Ventura is deemed the "submittal date." The County General Plan in effect on the submittal date and the General Plan as amended by this initiative comprise an integrated, internally consistent and compatible statement of policies for the County of Ventura. In order to ensure that nothing in this initiative measure would prevent the County of Ventura General Plan from being an integrated, internally consistent and compatible statement of the policies of the County, as required by state law, and to ensure that the actions of the voters in enacting this initiative are given effect, any amendment to the General Plan that is adopted between the submittal date and the date that the General Plan is amended by this initiative measure shall, to the extent that such interim-enacted provision is inconsistent with the General Plan provisions adopted by Section 2 of this initiative measure, be amended as soon as possible and in the manner and time required by state law to ensure consistency between the provisions adopted by this initiative and other elements of the Ventura County General Plan.*

**Section 4. Exemptions for Certain Projects.**

This General Plan Amendment initiative shall not apply to or affect the following:

- A. Any project which has acquired any of the following:
  - i. A vested right pursuant to state or local law;
  - ii. A validly approved and fully executed development agreement with County; or,
  - iii. Approval of a vesting tentative map.
- B. This initiative shall not be interpreted to apply to any land or use that, under state or federal law, is beyond the power of the local voters to affect by the initiative power reserved to the people via the California Constitution. Nothing in this Initiative shall be applied to preclude the County's compliance with state laws governing second units or the use of density bonuses where authorized by state law.

**Section 5. Severability.**

This measure shall be interpreted so as to be consistent with all federal and state laws, rules, and regulations. If any section, subsection, sentence, clause, phrase, part, or portion of this measure is held to be invalid or unconstitutional by a final judgment of a court of competent jurisdiction, such decision shall not affect the validity of the remaining portions of this measure. The voters hereby declare that this measure, and each section, subsection, sentence, clause, phrase, part, or portion thereof would have been adopted or passed even if one or more sections, sub-sections, sentences, clauses, phrases, parts, or portions are declared invalid or unconstitutional. If any provision of this initiative is declared invalid as applied to any person or circumstance, such invalidity shall not affect any application of this measure that can be given effect without the invalid application. This initiative shall be broadly construed in order to achieve the purposes stated in this initiative. It is the intent of the voters that the provisions of this measure shall be interpreted by the County and others in a manner that facilitates the confinement of urban uses thereby protecting and promoting agricultural, open space and rural lands, and preventing urban sprawl for the duration of the Ordinance.

**Section 6. Amendment or Repeal.**

Until December 31, ~~2020~~ 2050, this General Plan Amendment initiative may be amended or repealed only by the voters at ~~a general~~ a *County-wide* election.

*I:\R-S-T-U\SOAR\2016A\2016\County\FINAL.wpd*


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# Exhibit A

Ventura County General Plan  
Goals, Policies and Programs  
**GENERAL PLAN LAND USE MAP**  
Figure 3.1 South Half  
April 6, 2012

- Agropolis (43 Acre Min.)
- Open Space (70 Acre Min.)
- Rural (15 Acre Min.)
- Rural (2 Acre Min.)
- Existing Communities

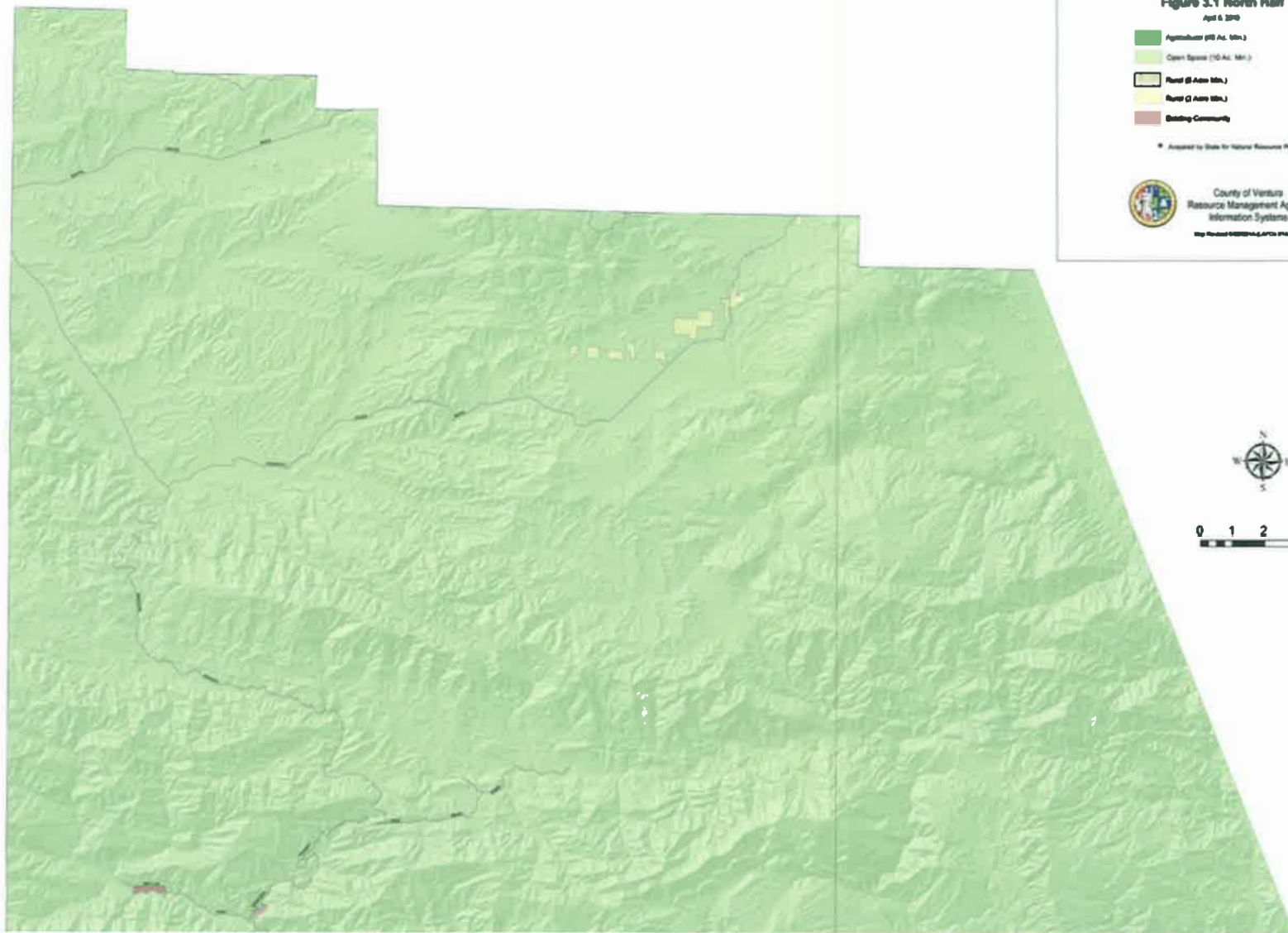
\* Approved by State for National Resource Protection

 County of Ventura  
Resource Management Agency  
Information Systems  
Map Project 1200000100 CAPS 04/06/12



Boundary Shading and Symbols for National Resource Protection Agency, Agency Name, April 6, 2012  
Map Project 1200000100 CAPS 04/06/12

# Exhibit B



Ventura County General Plan  
Goals, Policies and Programs  
**GENERAL PLAN LAND USE MAP**  
Figure 3.1 North Half  
April 6, 2010

- Agriculture (40 Ac. Min.)
- Open Space (10 Ac. Min.)
- Rural (R Area Min.)
- Rural (R2 Area Min.)
- Building Community

\* Approved to State for National Resource Protection

County of Ventura  
Resource Management Agency  
Information Systems  
Map Number 00000000000000000000



# Exhibit C

Thomas Aquinas College



- Legend**
- Thomas Aquinas College
  - City Boundary
  - City Center
  - School Boundary

City of Santa Paula and Surrounding Area

Prepared for the County of Ventura, 12 December, 2010  
Map Date: December 2010  
The map was prepared for the County of Ventura  
by the City of Santa Paula, California  
12/10/10, 10:00 AM

