City of Vernon General Plan

CITY OF VERNON

GENERAL PLAN

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VERNON GENERAL PLAN

INTRODUCTION

INTRODUCTION

VERNON – FOUNDING OF THE CITY AND ESTABLISHING ITS MISSION

The City of Vernon was founded in 1905 as an industrial city, and it remains so today. This General Plan reflects the long history and continues the City's mission of maintaining Vernon as an ideal location for industry in Southern California.

At the turn of the twentieth century, the lands now comprising Vernon were largely farmland. However, the location south of downtown Los Angeles and the presence of major rail lines led influential businessmen and property owners to encourage railroad companies to run spur lines into the adjacent farmlands. These rail extensions enabled the creation of an "exclusively industrial" city. James J. and Thomas Furlong and John B. Leonis led the city formation effort, and Vernon incorporated in 1905.

Vernon farmland along the Los Angeles River, 1926

Although the presence of the rail lines facilitated industrial development, the process was slow. A few new industrial businesses located in Vernon during the colorful period between incorporation and Prohibition Period of the 1920s. Other businesses located in the City during this period, such as Doyle's bar, which employed 37 bartenders and~~,~~ hosted an arena where 20 world championship boxing matches were held. Vernon also had~~, and~~ ~~had~~ a ballpark for the Vernon Tigers, which~~o~~ won Pacific Coast League championships on multiple occasions ~~also located in Vernon during this period~~.

By the 1920s, Vernon was attracting large stockyards and meatpacking facilities, including slaughtering operations. While the stockyards have vanished, meat processing remains a signature business in the City. The Farmer John's facility, with its iconic pig mural, processes pork products, including the famous Dodger Dogs enjoyed by baseball fans. Refrigerated food storage began as an outgrowth of the early meat packing and processing activities and is now a significant activity as well.

Los Angeles Union Stock Yards in Vernon, 1937

To provide for the service requirements of these activities, including the electrical demands of the cold storage and refrigerated facilities, in the early 1930s the City began building municipal water supply and distribution facilities, as well as its own electrical power plant, which remains in operation. The capability of the City to provide these two critical services at a relatively low cost continues to be a competitive advantage for Vernon in attracting industry.

During the 1920s and '30s, Vernon became the location of choice for many heavy industrial plants, including steel, aluminum, paper, and glass producers. Automobile assembly, canning, and other manufacturing operations also were established in the City in this period. As economic conditions have changed over the decades, however, many of these large-scale industrial operations have relocated out of Southern California or even out of the country.

Vernon Potteries, 1931

The focus of businesses has shifted to smaller, more specialized manufacturing, processing, and storage operations.

The City's business-friendly environment, competitive~~low~~-cost utilities, (largely due to the recent completion of the Malburg Generating Station), and key location for trucking and rail transport continue to position Vernon as an ideal location for industrial uses.

VISION FOR THE FUTURE

As Vernon enters the twenty-first century, its mission and character remains unchanged. For the foreseeable future, Vernon will continue to be an almost totally industrial city, with limited retail commercial and food service operations to support the large day-time business population, and few residences. City policy, land use restrictions, and limited land availability will allow Vernon to continue its mission to attract new, highly specialized industrial businesses.

As noted in the City's 1992 General Plan, national economic and environmental regulations have resulted in the shift of many types of industrial operations to other areas of the world. These forces have affected the type and character of industrial operations in Vernon, as they have elsewhere in the United States. Technological advances, environmental regulations, the cost of labor and raw or processed materials, and the cost of energy and petroleum products necessitate

continuing change in Vernon's industrial operations and in the types of new industries desiring to locate in the City. Together with the aging of both private development and the public infrastructure, these factors require that a framework for guiding future growth and development in the community be developed. This General Plan addresses the continuing change, growth, and development of Vernon over the next two decades and provides a public policy statement regarding the future of the City.

PURPOSE AND SCOPE OF THE PLAN

Adopted by the City Council and available to all businesses, property owners, and others with an interest in the community, the General Plan is available for public review at all times. The Plan complies with the requirement by the State of California that all cities prepare and adopt a comprehensive, long-range plan to serve as a guide for the future. The Plan contains the goals, policies, and explanatory detail about issues important to the future of Vernon. Plan policies address land use (including housing), infrastructure, public safety, resources, and noise within topic-related chapters, or "elements". These elements are:

- Land Use Element
- Infrastructure Element
- Safety Element
- Natural Resources Element
- Noise Element
- Housing Element

General Plan policies and programs are supported by several key documents, listed below. While not technically a part of the Plan, each contributes to the ability of the City officials and staff — as well as the public — to understand the Plan and carry out its mandates. These documents may be updated, modified, or replaced over time, and readers should seek the current version for reference. These additional documents are:

- Final Environmental Impact Report (FEIR) and Monitoring Plan for the General Plan
- Implementation Plan

- Five-Year Capital Improvements Program
- Urban Water Management Plan
- Natural Hazards Mitigation Plan
- Standardized Emergency Management System (SEMS) Multi-hazard Functional Plan

Other documents may be prepared over time to support implementation of the General Plan policies or as may be directed by the State Legislature. These should be reviewed for additional detail regarding various proposals contained in the General Plan.

PUBLIC INVOLVEMENT IN DEVELOPING THE GENERAL PLAN

As part of the General Plan program, the City undertook a public outreach program to identify issues and establish a new General Plan policy foundation. The outreach program included a City mailer, scoping meeting, and public hearings.

The City distributed a mailer to property and business owners in Vernon regarding the General Plan. The mailer asked the Vernon business community to identify issues that can be addressed by the General Plan. Comments returned to the City were recognized in developing the General Plan.

Those attending the scoping session (held in accord with the requirements of CEQA) were also given the opportunity to comment on the Public Review Daft of the Plan and the Zoning Ordinance.

Prior to adoption of the General Plan, the Draft General Plan and associated Environmental Impact Report were circulated for public review and comment. Public hearings were conducted before the Vernon City Council.

RELATIONSHIP OF VERNON GENERAL PLAN TO STATE REQUIREMENTS FOR PLANS

This General Plan contains six elements, as well as a comprehensive Implementation Plan. These elements relate to the seven elements mandated by State law as follows:

Table I-1
Relationship of Vernon General Plan to Mandated State Elements

Vernon General Plan Elements	State Required Elements
Land Use	Land Use
Circulation and Infrastructure	Circulation
Safety	Public Safety
Noise	Noise
Natural Resources	Open Space Conservation
Housing	Housing
	~~Housing~~

RELATED PLANS AND PROGRAMS

State law places the General Plan atop the hierarchy of land use planning regulations, although, as a Charter City, Vernon's Zoning Ordinance is its governing law as to land use. The General Plan provides guidance to the City Council in enacting ordinances relating to zoning, land use, public improvements, and development programs. Also, regional governmental agencies, such as the Southern California Association of Governments and the South Coast Air Quality Management District, have been established in recognition of the fact that planning issues extend beyond the boundaries of individual cities. Efforts to address regional planning issues such as air quality, transportation, and housing needs have resulted in the adoption of regional plans. The policies Vernon adopts are affected by these plans. The following paragraphs describe ordinances, plans, and programs which should be considered in association with the General Plan in development and planning decisions.

Federal Plans and Programs

National Pollutant Discharge Elimination System

As part of a multi-pronged effort to improve the quality of water resources nationwide, the federal government authorized the State Regional Water Quality Control Board

and its regional offices such as the Los Angeles Regional Water Quality Control Board to set up programs to implement National Pollutant Discharge Elimination System (NPDES) goals. Under the NPDES Stormwater Permit issued to the County of Los Angeles and Vernon as a co-permittee, most new development projects in the City are required to incorporate measures to minimize pollutant levels in stormwater runoff. Compliance is required at the time that construction permits are issued, as well as over the long term through periodic inspections.

National Flood Insurance Program

The Federal Emergency Management Agency administers the National Flood Insurance Program (NFIP). The NFIP provides federal flood insurance subsidies and federally financed loans for eligible property owners in flood-prone areas. Vernon has no mapped flood hazard areas.

Clean Water Act

Congress passed the Federal Water Pollution Control Act Amendments of 1972 and the Clean Water Act (CWA) of 1977 to provide for the restoration and maintenance of the chemical, physical, and biological integrity of the nation's lakes, streams, and coastal waters. Primary authority for the implementation and enforcement of the CWA (33 U.S.C. 1251) now rests with the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) and, to a lesser extent, the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers. In addition to the measures authorized before 1972, the CWA implements a variety of programs, including: federal effluent limitations and state water quality standards; permits for the discharge of pollutants and dredged and fill materials into navigable waters; and enforcement mechanisms. Section 404 of the CWA is the principal federal program that regulates activities affecting the integrity of wetlands.

California State Plans and Programs

California Environmental Quality Act (CEQA)

The California Environmental Quality Act (CEQA) was adopted by the state legislature in 1970 in response to a public mandate for thorough environmental analysis of projects impacting the environment. The provisions of the law and environmental review procedure are described in the CEQA Law and Guidelines. CEQA is the instrument for ensuring

that environmental impacts of local development projects are appropriately assessed and mitigated, and if not fully mitigated, ensuring that project benefits to the community are substantial. The Department of Community Services reviews projects for conformance with CEQA.

California Noise Insulation Standards (Title 24)

In 1974, the California Commission on Housing and Community Development adopted noise insulation standards for residential buildings (Title 24, Part 2, California Code of Regulations). Title 24 establishes standards for interior room noise (attributable to outside noise sources). The regulations also specify that acoustical studies must be prepared whenever a residential building or structure is proposed to be located near an existing or adopted freeway route, expressway, parkway, major street, thoroughfare, rail line, rapid transit line, or industrial noise source, and where such noise source or sources create an exterior CNEL (or Ldn) of 60 dB or greater. Such acoustical analysis must demonstrate that the residence has been designed to limit intruding noise to an interior CNEL (or Ldn) of at least 45 dB. The Department of Community Services enforces Title 24.

Seismic Hazards Mapping Act

California's 1990 Seismic Hazards Mapping Act requires the State Geologist to compile maps identifying and describing seismic hazard zones throughout California. Guidelines prepared by the State Mining and Geology Board identify the responsibilities of state and local agencies in the review of development within seismic hazard zones. Development on a site that has been designated as a seismic hazard zone requires a geotechnical report, and local agency consideration of the policies and criteria established by the Mining and Geology Board. Over the years, the program has expanded to include mapping of seismic-related hazards such as liquefaction- and landslide-prone areas. The Safety Element discusses seismic hazards associated with faults and those identified on state seismic hazard maps. Vernon contains only liquefaction-prone areas. The Safety Element contains a map identifying these areas.

AB 32

Assembly Bill 32, the Global Warming Solutions Act (passed in 2006), sets the target of reducing emissions of greenhouse gases statewide to 1990 levels by 2020. The bill assigned the

task of coming up with a scoping plan for this reduction to the California Air Resources Board (CARB). This plan, which CARB's board approved in December 2008, has a range of greenhouse gas (GHG) reduction actions which include direct regulations, alternative compliance mechanisms, monetary and non-monetary incentives, voluntary actions, market-based mechanisms such as a cap-and-trade system, and an AB 32 cost of implementation fee regulation to fund the program.

SB 375

Senate Bill 375 (2008) takes aim at reducing the single largest source of greenhouse gases in California—emissions from passenger vehicles—by working to reduce vehicle miles traveled. The law prompts California regions to work together to lower these emissions, and requires the integration of planning processes for transportation, land use, and housing. SB 375 requires CARB to develop regional reduction targets for automobiles and light trucks GHG emissions. The regions, in turn, are tasked with creating "sustainable communities strategies," which combine transportation and land use elements to achieve the emissions reduction target, if feasible. Vernon is cooperating with these efforts. The Gateway Cities Council of Governments, comprised of 26 local cities including Vernon, completed a *Subregional Sustainable Communities Strategy*, which is a part of the SCAG *Sustainable Communities Strategy*. Vernon is also part of the larger Southern California Association of Governments, or SCAG, and as such participates in the development and implementation of the *Sustainable Communities Strategy* for the SCAG region.

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Regional and County Level Plans and Programs

SCAG Regional Comprehensive Plan and Guide

The Southern California Association of Governments ~~(SCAG)~~ undertakes regional planning for the six-county SCAG region of Los Angeles, Orange, Riverside, San Bernardino, Imperial, and Ventura counties. SCAG's efforts focus on developing regional strategies to minimize traffic congestion, protect environmental quality, and provide adequate housing. The Regional Comprehensive Plan and Guide sets forth broad goals intended to be implemented by participating local and regional jurisdictions and the South Coast Air Quality Management District. SCAG has adopted companion documents to the Regional Comprehensive Plan and Guide, most notably the Regional Transportation Plan (see below).

Congestion Management Plan

The Congestion Management Plan (CMP) is a program adopted by the state legislature and approved by the voters in 1990 through Proposition 111. As a new approach to addressing congestion concerns, the CMP was created for the following purposes:

- To link land use, transportation, and air quality decisions
- To develop a partnership among transportation decision-makers on devising appropriate transportation solutions that include all modes of travel
- To propose transportation projects which are eligible to compete for state gas tax funds

The Los Angeles County Metropolitan Transportation Authority (Metro) is responsible for preparing the County's CMP. Metro is required by state law to monitor local implementation of all CMP elements. Local jurisdictions are required to monitor arterial congestion levels, monitor transit services along certain corridors, and implement an adopted trip reduction ordinance and land use analysis program.

Regional Transportation Plan

The Regional Transportation Plan (RTP) is a component of the Regional Comprehensive Plan and Guide prepared by SCAG to address regional issues, goals, objectives, and policies for the Southern California region into the early part of the 21st century. The RTP, which SCAG periodically updates to address changing conditions in the Southland, has been developed with active participation from local agencies throughout the region, elected officials, the business community, community groups, private institutions, and private citizens. The RTP sets broad goals for the region, and provides strategies to reduce problems related to congestion and mobility.

In recognition of the close relationship between the traffic and air quality issues, the assumptions, goals, and programs contained in the Plan parallel those used to prepare the Air Quality Management Plan.

Air Quality Management Plan

The federal Clean Air Act requires preparation of plans to improve air quality in any region designated as a nonattainment area. The Air Quality Management Plan, or AQMP, prepared by the South Coast Air Quality Management District, first adopted in 1994 and updated on a three-year cycle, contains policies and measures designed to achieve federal and state air quality standards within the South Coast Air Basin. The assumptions and programs in the AQMP draw directly from regional goals, objectives, and assumptions in SCAG's Regional Comprehensive Plan and Guide.

City Level Plans and Programs

Vernon Zoning Ordinance

In recognition of the City's industrial nature, the City's Zoning Ordinance establishes one Zone (the Industrial Zone) throughout the City, and provides for ~~three~~ several Overlay Zones. The Zoning Ordinance establishes land use regulations for the City and each Overlay Zone with respect to permitted uses, allowable intensity, and development standards. The Zoning Ordinance explains the purposes of the Industrial Zone and each Overlay Zone, specifies permitted uses and conditional uses, and establishes development standards, and includes a map describing the location of each Overlay Zone. The Zoning Ordinance is the governing land use law for the City, and to the degree practical, implements the goals, policies, and development expectations established in Vernon's Land Use Plan.

~~*Redevelopment Plan*~~

~~The Redevelopment Agency of the City of Vernon administers the Industrial Redevelopment Project Area, which is governed by a Redevelopment Plan. The properties included in the Project Area were those which exhibited the worst blighting conditions and which were in need of public assistance to ameliorate the problems. The Redevelopment Plan does not dictate parcel-by-parcel future development; rather, the Redevelopment Plan authorizes a variety of tools that the Agency may use to eliminate blight while pursuing land use goals specified in the Redevelopment Plan and the Vernon General Plan. The Redevelopment Plan identifies the following goals for the Redevelopment Agency:~~

- ~~Assembly of land into parcels suitable for modern industrial development with proper off-street parking, loading, storage, and vehicular and pedestrian circulation;~~

- ~~Re-planning, redesign, and upgrading of the inadequate sewer facilities to help remedy obsolete site conditions;~~

- ~~Re-planning, redesign, and reconfiguration of unsafe and inefficient at-grade railroad intersections where necessary to provide adequate vehicular access for trucks, trains, and automobiles to and from the properties they serve, and for through traffic.~~

- ~~Participation of existing owners and tenants in the revitalization and redevelopment of properties.~~

Urban Water Management Plan

Vernon's Urban Water Management Plan provides the long-term plan and vision for managing its water resources and providing a reliable supply of water to its customers. The Plan details water supplies, water quality impacts, water demand management measures, water shortage contingency plan, and water recycling methods.

Water Department Emergency Response and Recovery Plan

The Vernon Water Department Emergency Response and Recovery Plan is designed to prepare the City's Water Department for a planned response to emergency situations associated with natural disasters, technological incidents, and natural security emergencies in, or affecting Vernon Water Department's facilities and its service area. The plan is consistent with the requirements of Government Section 8607 and is intended to be used in conjunction with the State Emergency Plan.

Standardized Emergency Management System Multi-Hazard Functional Plan

Vernon's Standardized Emergency Management System (SEMS) Multi-Hazard Function Plan addresses the City's planned response to extraordinary emergency situations associated with natural disasters, technological incidents, and

natural security emergencies. The plan does not address normal day-to-day emergencies or the well-established and routine procedure used in coping with such emergencies. Instead, the operational concepts reflected in this Plan focus on potential large-scale disasters, which can generate unique situations requiring unusual emergency responses.

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VERNON GENERAL PLAN

LAND USE ELEMENT

LAND USE ELEMENT

1.0 PURPOSE AND FOCUS

1.1 Purpose of this Element

This Land Use Element establishes the broad, general policies for how properties are used in Vernon, including location, distribution, type, and intensity of development, with the overarching goal of maintaining Vernon as an industrial city. The Land Use Policy Map graphically illustrates the planned pattern of land use in Vernon and the City's sphere of influence, which consists of unincorporated lands adjacent to Vernon which have a bearing and influence on properties in the City.

The General Plan and Land Use Element goals and policies provide guidance to the City Council and City officials regarding zoning, land subdivision, public improvements, and physical development programs.

The Land Use Element and the circulation portion of the Circulation and Infrastructure Element are closely tied. It is intended that the land use patterns and intensities permitted by Land Use Element policies be supported by the streets,

highways, and other transportation systems planned in the Circulation and Infrastructure Element. Vernon recognizes that its street system is constrained by long-established development patterns, and land use policies have been crafted accordingly to minimize the adverse effects of specific land uses on the local street system. To continue to attract and support industrial businesses, the City must be able to accommodate the vehicular traffic associated with desired uses.

With regard to housing, long-standing City policy has been to discourage housing, recognizing that the traffic, noise, and odors that industrial uses produce are generally incompatible with residential development. In the past, land use policy limited housing to existing, long-established single-family homes and apartments. However, in 2011 the City Council committed to implementing new good governance practices that included adopting land use policies aimed at increasing the voting populous. Specifically, the City has identified specific locations where a limited amount of new housing can be constructed, and has adopted implementing zoning regulations. Recognizing Vernon's mission to remain and industrial city, the locations for housing have been selected to minimize adverse interface between industrial and residential uses. Vernon's city boundaries blur and blend into urban Los Angeles County, and many of the people working in businesses in Vernon live relatively close by in communities removed from industrial conditions and where they have access to parks, grocery stores, pharmacies, and other residential amenities. Thus, it is appropriate that new housing opportunities in Vernon remain very limited.

1.2 Focus

The key policy objective of the City is to remain almost exclusively an industrial city, serving the needs of industry, including local, national, and international consumers of goods produced by manufacturers. To fulfill this objective, this Element describes a limited range of land use categories, establishes standards of use and intensity, and sets forth policies relating to use of properties.

1.3 Flood Management

In 2007, the State adopted legislation that strengthened the long-existing requirement that a General Plan address flood management by specifically mandating that the Land Use Element identify flood-prone areas mapped by either the

Federal Emergency Management Agency (FEMA) or the State Department of Water Resources. Flood Insurance Rate Maps, which are prepared by FEMA, identify potential flood zones. Please refer to the Safety Element, which addresses this issue in detail.

2.0 LAND USE PLAN

The Land Use Plan consists of the Land Use Policy Map and text that describes the types and intensities of permitted uses. The Land Use Plan, along with the Zoning Ordinance, provides guidance and direction for all planning and land use decisions.

2.1 Land Use Terms and Concepts

In discussing how properties may be developed, this Element uses the following planning terms and concepts.

Land Use Designations

"Designation" means a generalized category of land use type, with associated standards of use and development.

Intensity

Intensity is used to describe the level of development existing or permitted on a lot or parcel of land. *Intensity* applies to industrial and commercial land uses. Intensity means the total building square footage, percent of lot coverage, or floor-area ratio established on a property.

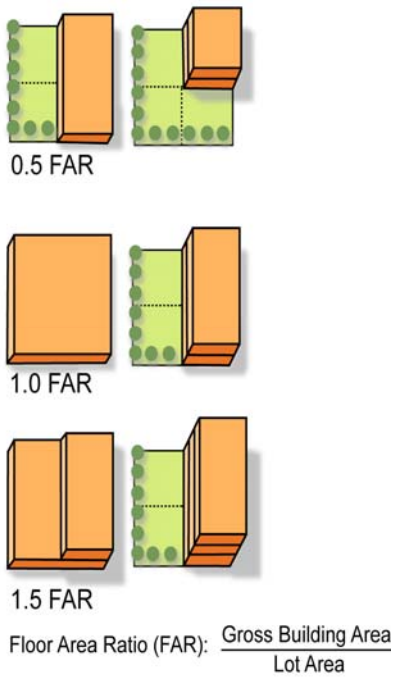


Figure LU-1: Floor Area Ratio

The measure of intensity Vernon has adopted is the floor-area ratio. Floor-area ratio, or FAR, describes the relationship between the total square footage of development on a lot and the area of that lot. In general, the FAR can be determined by dividing the gross floor area of all buildings on a lot by the land area of the lot. A precise definition is contained in the Zoning Ordinance.

FAR and factors such as building square footage, building height, and the percent of the lot devoted to parking, open storage, and similar uses are all interrelated. For example, a 20,000 square-foot building on a 40,000 square-foot lot has a FAR of 0.50:1. This 0.50:1 FAR can accommodate a single-story building that covers half the lot or a two-story building with reduced lot coverage. Figure LU-1 illustrates different FAR calculations.

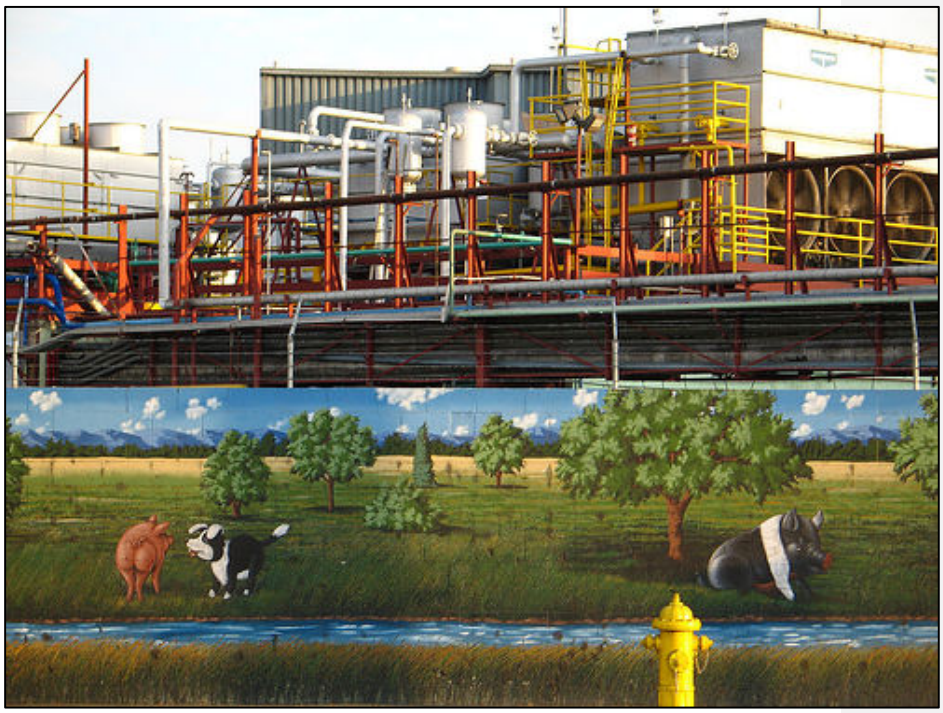
Density

For residential uses, the term density describes the level of development permitted. New residential uses, in addition to

existing homes, are permitted only at a few limited locations in the City. Land use policy limits housing at these locations by establishing a maximum allowable density. Density is described in terms of the number of dwelling units allowed per net acre (du/acre). Net acre is defined as the gross project or lot area, less that portion of the site to be used or dedicated for use as a public road and for flood control purposes.

Substantive Improvements

Several land use policies call for the City to take action, or for new requirements to take effect, when land uses change or when substantive improvements are made to a property. In general, if a building with a nonconforming use is vacant for more than two years, there is a voluntary major alteration or repair (defined as an alteration or repair costing more than 50% of the building's fair market value), or an increase in square footage, such change will require conformity with the permitted uses and development standards of the Zoning Ordinance. The requirements for bringing nonconforming uses into conformity with the Zoning Ordinance are described in detail in the Zoning Ordinance.



A Vernon icon: the Farmer John meat processing plant

2.2 Land Use Designations and Land Use Policy Map

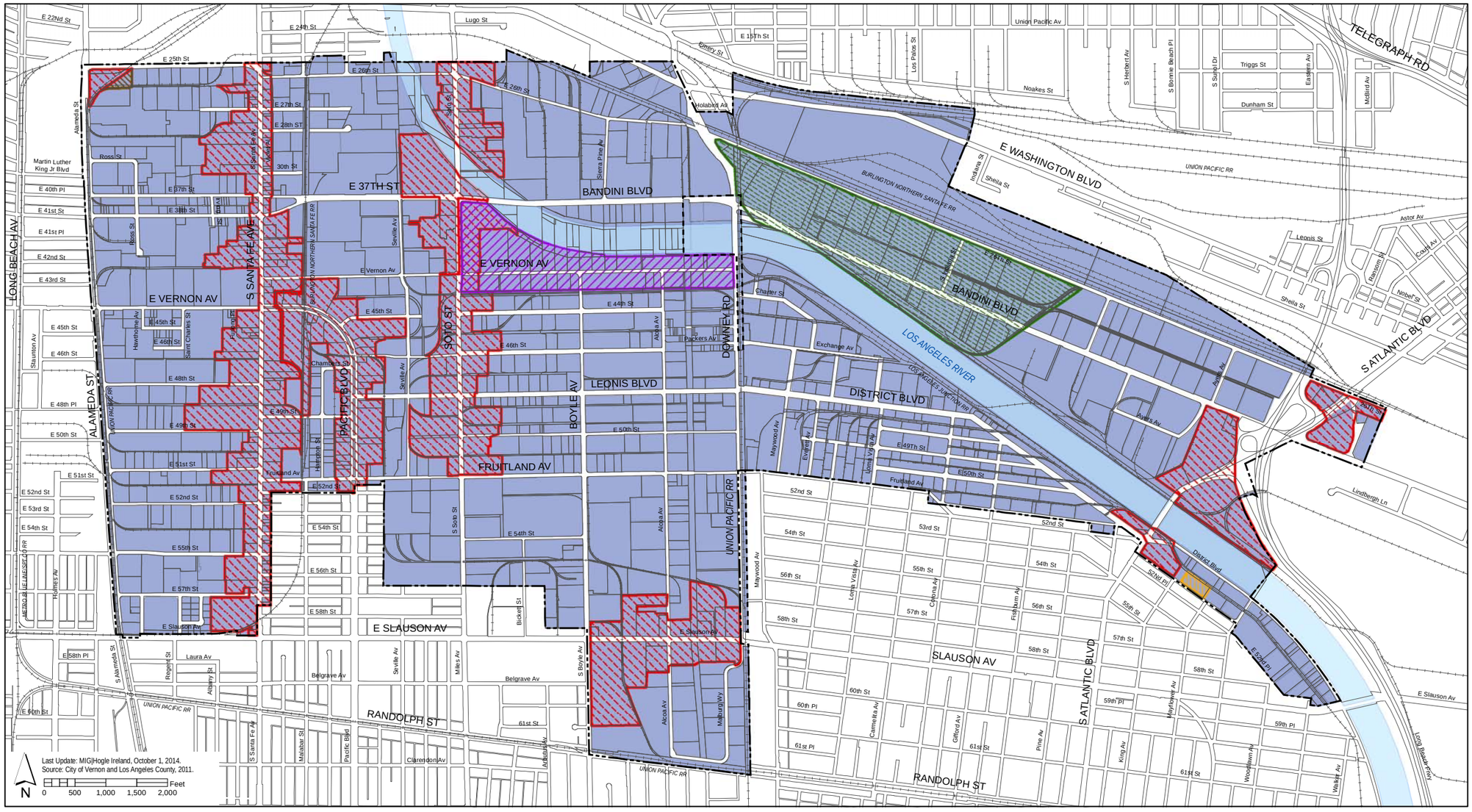
The Land Use Policy Map, Figure LU-2, identifies the planned distribution of land use in Vernon. In recognition of Vernon's unique status as an exclusively industrial city, the General Plan contains one land use category (Industrial), and five Overlay Districts (Commercial, Rendering, Slaughtering, Housing, and Emergency Shelter).

Industrial (I) – The industrial designation is purposefully structured to allow for a broad range of uses that support the City's desire to maintain its status as a regional manufacturing and industrial center. The Industrial land use designation allows manufacturing, industrial uses, refrigerated and cold storage warehouses, data centers, general warehousing, industrial gas manufacturing, and any use or activity undertaken by the City. Refineries, energy generating facilities, hazardous waste facilities, trash to energy facilities, petroleum related uses, and other complementary uses may be permitted with special approval such as a Conditional Use Permit (CUP). Certain ancillary uses may be permitted in accordance with Zoning Ordinance requirements. The maximum permitted FAR is 2:1.

Overlay Districts

All uses allowed in the Industrial category are permitted in the Overlay Districts. Each Overlay District allows certain specialized uses not permitted in other areas of the City. The Zoning Ordinance may impose conditions on the permitted uses and may identify appropriate development standards. The Plan provides for five Overlay Districts:

- Commercial
- Rendering
- Slaughtering
- Housing
- Emergency Shelter



Land Use Designation
- Industrial

Overlay Districts
- Housing
- Emergency Shelter
- Commercial
- Rendering
- Slaughtering

Base Map
- Vernon City Boundary
- Vernon Sphere of Influence
- Freeway
- Railroad
- Los Angeles River

Figure LU-2

LAND USE POLICY MAP

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Commercial Overlay District – The Commercial Overlay District, encompassing ~~210~~ approximately 535 acres, is established along Santa Fe Avenue, Pacific Boulevard, Atlantic Boulevard, and Slauson Avenue, and along portions of Soto Street – as indicated on the Land Use Policy Map – to accommodate retail, commercial, service, and restaurant uses that support the needs of the daily employee population. Such uses may be permitted with a Conditional Use Permit.

Rendering Overlay District – A Rendering Overlay District, encompassing 164 acres, exists in the area indicated on the Land Use Policy Map. With a Conditional Use Permit, lots over one acre may be used for rendering.

Slaughtering Overlay District – The Slaughtering Overlay District, encompassing 83 acres, is designated in the area indicated on the Land Use Policy Map. With a Conditional Use Permit, lots over one acre may be used for slaughtering of animals.

Housing Overlay District – The Housing Overlay District is applicable only to sites that have been specifically identified by the City and determined to be the best locations for housing, given surrounding uses, proximity to services and amenities, and distance from large-scale industrial operations. Residential uses are permitted in this overlay with discretionary review, such as via a Development Agreement, given the ubiquitous nature of industrial businesses in Vernon. No more than 61 units shall be permitted within the Housing Overlay District citywide.

Emergency Shelter Overlay District – The Emergency Shelter Overlay District is applicable only to sites that have been specifically identified by the City and determined to be appropriate locations for emergency shelters. This Overlay is established to comply with requirements of Government Code Section 65583(a)(4).

2.3 Implications of Land Use Policy

Vernon is virtually built out, and at any point in time, few, if any, vacant parcels are available for development. New development only occurs as a result of land recycling, with newer, more modern industrial buildings replacing older facilities. Because many of the oldest buildings cover properties from lot line to lot line (with little or no on-site parking or loading spaces), new development frequently

results in reduced lot coverage and thus reduced building space, as the new use is required to provide parking and loading per current zoning regulations. Thus, implementation of land use policy over time is not anticipated to notably increase the overall intensity of development in Vernon. Rather, uses will shift among the various permitted industrial, manufacturing, and limited commercial and retail uses. Also, up to 61 additional residential units are anticipated to be constructed within the Housing Overlay District.

Total building square footage and the number of employees in Vernon has steadily declined since the early 1990s. The Land Use Element anticipates a continuing decline in building square footage and employees during the period of this General Plan. Table LU-1 identifies the building square footage and employment for the baseline year (2007) and the decline in square footage and employment. This anticipated decline is taken into account in developing land use policy set forth in the Land Use Policy Map and the goals and policies contained in this Element.

Table LU-1
Non-Residential Building Square Footage and Employment Projections

Land Use Designation	Net Acreage (A)	Baseline Year (2007) Development	Build-out Year (2025) Development	Net Increase/ Decrease	Percent Change
Industrial	2,775	**Building Square Footage**			
		62,636,000	61,412,300	-1,223,700	-2.0%
		Employment (B)			
		44,600	43,700	-900	-2.0%

Note: (A) Net Acreage does not include streets or the Los Angeles River.
(B) Number of employees~~Source: EDAW, Inc. . and City of Vernon, 2007.~~

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The City of Vernon has, in the past, discouraged new housing development due to potential conflicts with industry. The City has revised this policy to permit very limited new residential development in specifically designated areas, with the goal of increasing the voting population and enhancing government accountability. Land use policy will permit up to 61 new housing units via the Housing Overlay District. The population increase associated with this land use policy is estimated to be 216 additional Vernon residents, assuming the average Vernon

household size reported in the 2010 Census. This land use policy would triple the baseline 2010 resident population from 112 persons to an estimated 328 persons.

2.4 Relationship of Land Use Policy to the Zoning Ordinance

The Zoning Ordinance is the primary implementation tool for the Land Use Element. Both the Element and the Ordinance describe the distribution and intensity limits for development. Whereas the Land Use Element sets forth the broad policies for future development, the Zoning Ordinance provides specific detail, enforcement mechanisms, development standards, and provides for deviations through Conditional Use Permits, Variances, and amendments to the Zoning Ordinance.

The Zoning Ordinance includes the following zoning districts to implement land use policy:

Table LU-2
Relationship of Land Use Categories and Zoning Districts

Land Use Designation	Corresponding Zoning District
Industrial	General Industrial (I)
Commercial Overlay	Commercial - 1 (C-1) Commercial - 2 (C-2)
Slaughtering Overly	Slaughtering Overlay (S)
Rendering Overlay	Rendering Overlay (R)
Housing Overlay	Housing Overlay (H)
Emergency Shelter Overlay	Emergency Shelter Overlay (ES)
	Trucking and Freight Terminal Overlay (TF)

3.0 GOALS AND POLICIES

Land use goals and policies related to land use and its distribution and intensity reflect the industrial nature of Vernon. Vernon incorporated in 1905 for the stated purpose of being an exclusively industrial city. This founding purpose has remained largely unchanged over the last century, with the focus of City land use policy on providing suitable sites for industry and providing the infrastructure and services required to serve industrial activities.

GOAL LU-1
Promote and maintain manufacturing and other industrial uses as the primary land use within the City.

POLICY LU-1.1: Designate all properties in Vernon for manufacturing and industrial use, and permit other uses only with a Conditional Use Permit or other discretionary review process. Permit certain uses only in specified Overlay Districts with a Conditional Use Permit or other discretionary review process.

POLICY LU-1.2: Accommodate, at limited and specific areas of the City, those commercial, service, and retail uses that complement but do not detract from the purposely established industrial character of the City.~~Permit only those commercial and retail uses which are necessary to support industry and its employees or as may be required by State law.~~ Limit such uses to the Commercial Overlay District, and permit only with a Conditional Use Permit or other discretionary review process.

POLICY LU-1.3: Permit limited ancillary uses on industrial sites, such as limited office use and showrooms, as necessary to support basic industrial activities.

POLICY LU-1.4: Permit only housing and emergency shelters as may be required by State law and as necessary to foster the City's good governance practices. Ensure adequate review of housing development proposals to minimize potential industrial/housing conflicts.

POLICY LU-1.5: Permit truck and freight terminals on a ~~very~~ limited basis to minimize the impacts associated with heavy trucking activity. Designate such permitted areas using an overlay zoning district or similar mechanism.

POLICY LU-1.5: Continue to maintain up-to-date information regarding flooding hazards consistent with the Safety Element.

GOAL LU-2

Phase out aging industrial building and sites through modernization and replacement.

POLICY LU-2.1: Require private upgrading of off-street parking and loading facilities to comply with the City Zoning Ordinance at the time that any nonconforming building or use is required to be brought into conformity with the Zoning Ordinance.

POLICY LU-2.2: Support cooperative solutions to provide required off-street parking, such as agreements among neighboring businesses and public/private ventures.

POLICY LU-2.3: Continue to enforce all applicable building and health and safety codes.

POLICY LU-2.4: Provide incentives to property owners to revitalize industrial structures or recycle/demolish obsolete or vacant structures.

POLICY LU-2.5: Assist in the reuse of properties from one industrial use to another.

POLICY LU-2.6: Accommodate the expansion of Soto Street north of 37th Street/Bandini Boulevard pursuant to Circulation and Infrastructure Element policy by requiring properties with frontage along this corridor to dedicate land to the public right-of-way sufficient to accommodate the roadway widening in the event that such properties redevelop or undergo substantial improvements.

POLICY LU-2.7: Consider and facilitate proposals for more intensive employment-generating, non-residential development near transit stops.

GOAL LU-3
Maintain Vernon as a highly desirable location for industry, and continue to attract the types of industry the City is well positioned to serve.

POLICY LU-3.1: Review City codes and development requirements on a regular basis to ensure that development costs and standards are competitive with other industrial cities.

POLICY LU-3.2: Foster a City government and governmental structure that is responsive to the needs of industry located in a metropolitan area.

POLICY LU-3.3: Maintain power plants as key land use in the community, and allow for the expansion and/or development of new facilities to provide a reliable, cost-effective source of energy to industrial users.

POLICY LU-3.4: Invest in activities and programs that advertise and promote Vernon as a quality and desirable location for industry.

POLICY LU-3.5: Use development proposals as opportunities to encourage modernization and broaden property improvements goals.

VERNON GENERAL PLAN

CIRCULATION AND INFRASTRUCTURE ELEMENT

CIRCULATION AND INFRASTRUCTURE ELEMENT

1.0 PURPOSE AND FOCUS

1.1 Purpose

The Circulation and Infrastructure Element addresses the movement of goods and people along roadways and railways in the City, as well as the distribution of water, wastewater, stormwater, energy, and information through various conduits.

Vernon's industrial nature involves both manufacturing and logistics. Vernon originally was oriented around rail transport, but over the years goods movement has relied increasingly on trucks, thus heightening the importance of a local street system capable of safely and efficiently handling multi-axle truck traffic.

In addition to good access to transportation, industrial businesses demand reliable, high-volume utilities to properly conduct their operations. Intense land uses require large amounts of electricity and water, and also generate large amounts of sewage. Today's globalized

economy demands fast, high-capacity telephone and other communications systems. To remain competitive as a location for industry, Vernon must be able to deliver or otherwise provide high-quality utility services at competitive prices.

1.2 Focus

California planning law requires the inclusion of a Circulation Element addressing both transportation and non-transportation infrastructure. While all elements of the General Plan must be consistent with each other, the Circulation Element must, by State law, correlate directly to the Land Use Element.

2.0 CIRCULATION PLAN

2.1 Regional Circulation

Streets and Freeways

Vernon lies two miles southeast of the industrial areas of downtown Los Angeles, and both the local roadway and freeway systems directly connect the industrial businesses in Vernon with industrial development in adjacent communities. Key connections include:

- Downtown Los Angeles, via Alameda Street and Santa Fe Avenue;
- The Boyle Heights district of the City of Los Angeles, via Soto Street, Washington Boulevard, and Downey Road;
- The City of Commerce, via Washington Boulevard, Interstate 710, and Atlantic Boulevard;
- The City of Bell, via Bandini Boulevard and Interstate 710;
- The City of Maywood, via Atlantic Boulevard;
- The City of Huntington Park, via Slauson Avenue, Soto Street, Pacific Boulevard, Santa Fe Avenue, and Alameda Street;
- Portions of the City of Los Angeles south of downtown, connected by many streets across the shared boundary of Alameda Street, including Vernon Avenue and Santa Fe Avenue.

Of particular note is the Long Beach Freeway, Interstate 710.

Interstate 710 provides an important direct connection to the ports of Long Beach and Los Angeles. Although less than half a mile of this freeway traverses Vernon, that portion contains the very busy Atlantic Boulevard/Bandini Boulevard interchange. This frequently congested interchange carries a substantial amount of truck traffic from Vernon, particularly from the adjacent Hobart Rail Yard. In August of 2004, the Gateway Cities Council of Governments made preliminary recommendations to improve the Atlantic/Bandini interchange, as well as to build truck ramps directly from the rail yards to the freeway. Engineering plans and studies for this interchange will continue in concert with broader plans for improvements to I-710, with improvements to the interchange expected be accomplished prior to 2030. The timing will depend upon State approvals and funding. Once implemented, the interchange improvements are expected to relieve a major traffic bottleneck and improve safety by separating autos from heavy truck traffic.

The City has undertaken a project to partially relieve congestion at the Atlantic/Bandini interchange. The extension of 26th Street to Bandini Boulevard will provide a means for through traffic to bypass the Atlantic/Bandini interchange.

Railroads

In the early years of the twentieth century, rail transport dominated the distribution of materials and manufactured goods, so an extensive rail network was built in Vernon with main lines, switching yards, and many spur lines to serve industrial properties. Over the years, trucks have come to play a more important role in freight transport, especially for access to individual businesses. Some spur rail lines have been abandoned, but rail traffic still plays a major role in the transport of materials and goods.

Several rail lines cross Vernon, the most important of which is the Alameda Corridor. The Alameda Corridor, opened in 2002, serves as the primary connection between the ports of Los Angeles and Long Beach and the rail yards of Vernon, Commerce, and downtown Los Angeles. The Alameda Corridor places ten miles of track inside the 30-foot-deep Mid-Corridor Trench between the northern

boundary of Vernon at 25th Street south to the State Route 91 freeway. This has eliminated many dangerous and time-consuming conflicts between surface street traffic and at-grade rail crossings, both in Vernon and elsewhere along the line. While the Alameda Corridor takes much of the container shipping traffic that would otherwise use trucks or the older Union Pacific (UP) or Burlington Northern Santa Fe (BNSF) lines, the older lines do still receive some use.

Many at-grade rail crossings remain in the City. These should gradually decrease as the City encourages rail lines to merge facilities, to abandon spur lines, and to participate in separating streets from remaining railways.

The Hobart Yard, located in the northeastern portion of Vernon, links the Alameda Corridor and BNSF lines with the wider transcontinental rail system, serving to assemble longer trains and transfer shipping containers between trucks and trains. Vernon is also home to the smaller Malabar Yard (east of Santa Fe Avenue between Fruitland Avenue and Vernon Avenue), the Los Angeles Junction Yard (between Exchange Boulevard and the Los Angeles River), and a portion of the UP East Yard. Other important rail yards are located nearby but outside of the Vernon city limits.

2.2 Vernon's Street System

Streets in Vernon generally form a grid pattern, although not a regularly spaced grid. Many of the City's streets do not extend more than two or three blocks, with many T-intersections. To accommodate large industrial lots, most streets in Vernon are spaced farther apart than is typical in urban residential or commercial areas; most blocks in the City are between 600 and 2,000 feet long.

2.2.1 Street Classification

Vernon's street system is differentiated by roadway size, function, and capacity. The four basic types of roadways in Vernon are described below. Figure CI-1 presents schematic cross-sections for each type of roadway that represent desirable standards. Deviations from these standards may occur in cases where physical constraints and/or right-of-way limitations are present. Provision of sidewalks and off-street parking may also affect the specific design of roadways. In addition, the median

width of arterials and collectors will vary according to the area being served, right-of-way constraints, and turn lane requirements.

The assignment of these classifications to streets in the City is shown on the Circulation Plan, Figure CI-2.

Freeway

Freeways are controlled-access, high-speed throughways included in the State and federal highway systems. Freeways carry regional through traffic, that is, traffic passing through Vernon without stopping in the City. The Atlantic Boulevard/Bandini Boulevard interchange of the I-710, the Long Beach Freeway, is in Vernon. Access to the regional highway system for Vernon businesses and visitors is provided at the interchange between I-710, Atlantic Boulevard, and Bandini Boulevard. The design, construction, and maintenance of freeways are under the jurisdiction of the California Department of Transportation (Caltrans).

Arterial

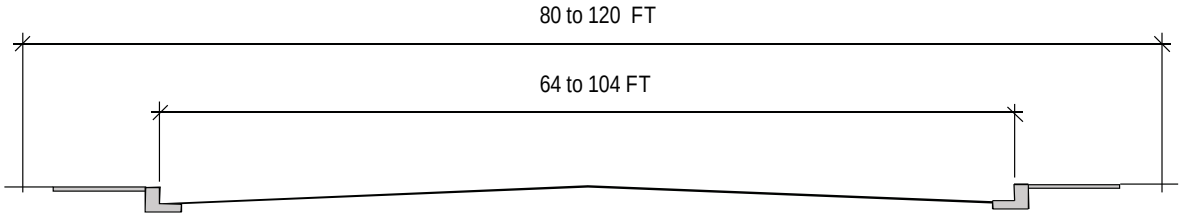
Arterial streets, together with freeways, form a network carrying long-distance, high-speed traffic. Arterial streets transport large volumes of traffic from one part of the City to another and connect to the regional street system. The arterial streets also move traffic between cities in locations where a freeway does not link the two. Of the roadways designed, constructed, and maintained by the City, arterials are designed to have the highest traffic carrying capacity, the highest speeds, and limited interference with traffic flow by driveways. Limitations on truck access to and from abutting properties are most important on arterial streets to prevent obstructions and delays.

Arterial streets aligned generally north-south in Vernon are, from west to east:

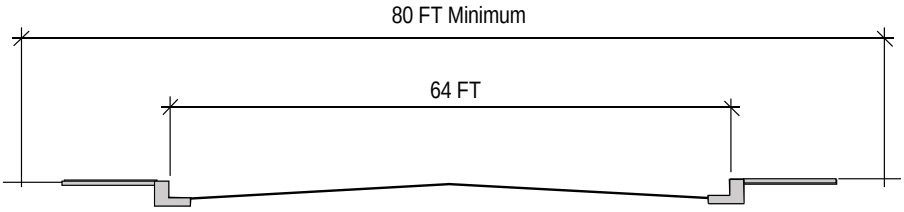
- Alameda Street
- Santa Fe Avenue
- Pacific Avenue (this curves broadly from north-south to east-west before continuing as Vernon Avenue)
- Soto Street
- Downey Road
- Atlantic Boulevard

Figure CI-1: Street Cross Sections

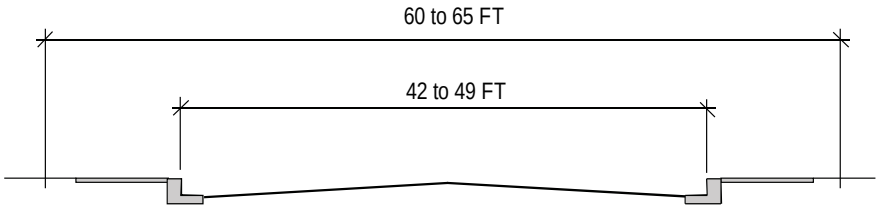
Arterial



Collector Streets



Local Streets



NOTES

1. Total right-of-way width will vary depending upon parkway requirements and existing conditions.
2. Curb and gutter, pavement thickness, and striping shall be as specified by the City Engineer.
3. American Disability Act (ADA) requirements must be met for all pedestrian access.
4. Parking on major roadways will depend on land width and available right-of-way.

INSERT FIGURE CI-2

Arterial streets aligned generally east-west in Vernon are, from north to south:

- Washington Boulevard
- Bandini Boulevard (this continues as 37th Street west of Soto Street)
- District Boulevard between Downey Road and Atlantic Boulevard (this continues as Leonis Boulevard west of Downey Road)
- Slauson Avenue
- East Vernon Avenue/Pacific Boulevard

Collector

Collector streets are intended to serve as intermediate routes, handling traffic between arterial streets and local streets. Collectors are designed primarily to move traffic, but also to provide access to abutting properties. Collectors differ from arterials in that collectors distribute trips from the arterials to ultimate destinations. Conversely, collectors also collect traffic from local streets and channel it onto the arterials. Ideally, collector streets should form a network, but with no one collector extending so far that it functions as an arterial street.

Collector streets in Vernon aligned generally north-south include:

- Boyle Avenue

Collector streets aligned generally east-west in Vernon are, from north to south:

- 25th Street/26th Street
- 38th Street/37th Street (these two streets flow into each other, and continue as Bandini Boulevard east of Soto Street)
- Vernon Avenue (this street is discontinuous and offset at Santa Fe Avenue)
- Leonis Boulevard (this street continues as District Boulevard east of Downey Road)
- District Boulevard east of Atlantic Boulevard
- Fruitland Avenue

Local

Local streets provide direct access to individual parcels. The local street is not designed for through traffic. Rather, local streets should move traffic toward the nearest

collector street. Therefore, speeds on local streets are relatively low, and on-street parking is usually permitted. Local streets are two-lane roadways without medians. When traffic congestion is detected through closed circuit detection cameras and/or via electronic traffic loops, the current signal patterns are adjusted to relieve or reduce the congestion.

2.2.2 Measuring roadway performance

Evaluating the ability of the circulation system to serve Vernon's businesses and other users requires establishing suitable performance criteria. Within the Circulation and Infrastructure Element, two measures are used to describe traffic flow on Vernon's roadways and freeway access points: Volume to Capacity Ratios (V/C) and Intersection Capacity Utilization (ICU). These measures are used to establish Level of Service (LOS) categories describing the performance of roadways and access points throughout the City. Each of these measures is described briefly below.

Volume to Capacity Ratio (V/C)

This measure, consisting of a ratio between volume and theoretical capacity, is used to measure the performance of roadway facilities. Volume is established either by a traffic count (in the case of current volumes) or by a forecast for a future point in time. Capacity refers to the vehicle carrying ability of a roadway at free flow speed, and is a critical component of roadway design. For example, a roadway that carries 16,000 vehicles per day, with the capacity to accommodate 20,000 vehicles per day at free flow speed, has a V/C of 0.80.

Intersection Capacity Utilization (ICU)

This measure is applied using peak hour volumes and considers the geometric configuration of intersections when measuring capacity. Intersection Capacity Utilization sums the V/C ratios for the critical movements of an intersection, and thus accounts for the overall performance of intersections, which are the most critical limitations within the City roadway system.

Level of Service (LOS)

Level of Service (LOS) describes the efficiency and quality of traffic operations. Six categories of LOS – the letter designations A to F – are used to identify traffic conditions, with LOS A representing excellent conditions and LOS F

representing extreme congestion. The LOS designations are based upon V/C ratios calculated for freeway access ramps and roadway segments, as well as ICU values calculated for intersections. Table CI-1 shows V/C and ICU ranges and the corresponding LOS, with a description of corresponding traffic conditions. The City of Vernon uses LOS D as its minimum standard for traffic operations.

Table CI-1
Level of Service Descriptions

Level of Service	Description of Traffic Conditions	V/C or ICU
A	Very short delays at intersections and free flow operation. Vehicles are completely unimpeded and can maneuver freely within traffic.	0.00 – 0.60
B	Short delays of 10 to 20 seconds at intersections. Vehicles are completely unimpeded and can maneuver through traffic.	0.61 - 0.70
C	Stable flow, with delays of 20 to 35 seconds at intersections. Some waiting vehicles may fail to go through the intersection before the green light turns red. Ability to maneuver and change lanes at mid-block is somewhat restricted.	0.71 – 0.80
D	Congestion becomes more noticeable, with delays of 35 to 55 seconds at intersections. Many vehicles are required to stop at signals, and travel speeds along these roadways become slower.	0.81 – 0.90
E	Unstable traffic flow, with delays of 55 to 80 seconds at intersections. Most vehicles are required to wait at least one traffic signal cycle.	0.91 – 1.00
F	Traffic volumes exceed capacity, resulting in jammed intersections. This can result in delays greater than 80 seconds, and/or two-cycle signal waits.	Above 1.00

Source: Highway Capacity Manual 2000, Transportation Research Board, National Research Council

2.2.3 Circulation System Improvements Needed to Meet Level of Service Goals

The City is investigating the following programs with the intent of improving the overall traffic flows throughout Vernon during morning and evening peak hours. These programs include physical improvements, such as widening streets, as well as advanced technological strategies, such as monitoring traffic flows using video and computer systems.

Transportation System Management

Although widening some roads in Vernon may help in reducing traffic congestion, Vernon must pursue alternative cost effective and efficient methods in improving traffic flows. Due to narrow streets and limited right-of-ways, Vernon's traffic congestion can no longer be resolved by capacity enhancements such as lane re-striping or roadway widening. An alternative strategy is implementation of Intelligent Transportation Systems (ITS), which allows a city to control traffic signals by using advanced computer technologies, monitor traffic using video monitoring, and provide traveler information to motorists. The City intends to work toward implementing ITS systems at strategic locations to improve traffic flows.

The City recommends implementing an ITS program, the Los Angeles County automated traffic surveillance and control (ATSAC) system, in an effort to improve traffic flow and increase capacity throughout the City. Traffic signal surveillance and control is a developing method of measuring the efficiency of traffic signal systems. This approach consists of installation of surveillance cameras and traffic volume counters to monitor traffic flow.

Implementation of a citywide ATSAC system will improve many of the deficient intersections to an acceptable level of service. In addition to the ATSAC system, the following physical improvements will also help alleviate traffic congestion in the City.

26th Street Extension

The City is planning to improve east to west access, near the I-710 Freeway and Atlantic Boulevard, by extending 26th Street easterly across Atlantic Boulevard and connecting with Bandini Boulevard. This improvement

will help improve intersection conditions at Atlantic Boulevard/Bandini Boulevard/I-710 Freeway interchange.

Atlantic Boulevard Bridge Widening

The City of Vernon is planning to widen the Atlantic Boulevard Bridge over the Los Angeles River. The project plans to widen bridge to six lanes.

Soto Street Widening

Soto Street is a key north-south arterial that brings traffic from Interstate 10 to and through Vernon. Of the north-south arterials in the City, Soto Street has the best ability to handle higher volumes, and particularly through volumes. In 2002, the City of Vernon conducted the Soto Street Corridor Study to identify the best way to improve traffic flow along Soto Street and also relieve peak-hour congestions on parallel arterials. The preferred alternative involves widening Soto Street from four lanes to six lanes, three in each direction. This configuration requires widening the public right-of-way between 37th Street/Bandini Boulevard and Olympic Boulevard.

Widening the public right-of-way will require each property owner with frontage along this section of Soto Street to dedicate between eight and 14 feet of property, depending on location, to public use. The City will require this dedication when a property undergoes a complete redevelopment or substantial improvement. The City may also proactively acquire some rights-of-way to achieve the planned configuration.

When fully implemented, this plan will allow traffic to move more freely on Soto Street, improving the Level of Service. It will also have a secondary traffic-moderating effect on nearby streets.

I-710 Freeway Improvements

In a regional effort to improve truck movement from the ports to inland areas and overall increase the capacity of the I-710 Freeway, Caltrans has embarked on a major improvement program for the I-710 Freeway. The following improvements have been identified for the I-710 Freeway, between Slauson Avenue and Washington Boulevard, which will significantly contribute to traffic improvements in Vernon:

- The addition of two dedicated truck lanes with direct access to Hobart Rail Yard;
- Added general purpose lanes on the Freeway;
- Modication of Atlantic and Bandini Boulevards interchange;
- Addition of Slauson Avenue interchange;
- Closure of Washington Boulevard Interchange; and
- Extension of District Boulevard and creation of new intersection at Slauson Avenue.

2.3 Off-Street Parking and Loading Facilities

Vernon's streets support a significant load of heavy truck traffic. Since the street system was developed early in the twentieth century, streets are typically narrower than industrial street standards, and the streets were not designed to handle today's truck sizes and volume of traffic. Large multi-axle vehicles encounter difficulties maneuvering on the streets, and congestion and traffic back-ups frequently occur as trucks enter and leave properties. Many properties have small driveways and inadequate loading bays, and trucks making these difficult maneuvers to access properties can block traffic and cause delays. Further contributing to on-street congestion is significant on-street parking. Many businesses do not provide adequate off-street parking for employees, largely because the properties were developed before parking of any maginitude was required. As properties transition to other uses, creating sufficient off-street parking to meet current zoning standards is extremely difficult.

The City has considered many approaches to addressing the problems associated with inadequate off-street parking and loading facilities, including establishing criteria (such as vacancy in the building for over a year, major alteration or repair, or increase in square footage of a building) that would require the owner of a non-conforming property to bring parking and loading facilities into compliance with the City's zoning standards. However, the widespread nature of the non-conformities makes this a difficult and costly proposition. Thus, the City will look to implement over time a variety of techniques to minimize congestion resulting from on-street parking and undersized or poorly configured loading facilities, which may include:

- Restricting truck movements at key intersections and along key road segments;

- Allowing for development of shared parking facilities;
- Establishing parking restrictions along key travel corridors; and
- Requiring that parking and loading comply with current zoning code requirements whenever substantial property modifications are proposed, the property has been vacant for over a year, or there is a proposed increase in floor area.

2.4 Other Transportation Modes

Vernon is served by buses operated by the Los Angeles County Metropolitan Transit Authority (Metro). As an important center of employment, several Metro bus lines serve Vernon, providing an important alternative to personal automobiles as a means of commuting to and from work.

Buses are particularly important for Vernon for several reasons. First, they provide transportation for workers who may be low income and cannot readily afford an automobile or gasoline. Second, by reducing the number of cars on the road, they reduce traffic and conflicts between cars and heavy trucks. Third, bus service reduces the strain on employers to provide parking for their workers.

Located west of the City of Vernon, the Metro's Blue Line light rail system also provides an important regional link for Vernon commuters. The Blue Line has a station at Vernon Avenue, approximately one-quarter mile west of the City boundary. From this station or adjacent stations at Washington Boulevard or Slauson Avenue, workers may walk to their workplaces or connect to one of several bus lines.

While bicycles represent an additional mode of travel, biking is not encouraged on Vernon's streets due to the heavy truck traffic and narrow configuration of many streets, which would present dangers to cyclists. The City of Vernon will cooperate with the Metropolitan Transportation Authority and other local agencies in their efforts to complete a bicycle path along the levee of the Los Angeles River connecting downtown Los Angeles with the waterfront in Long Beach.

3.0 MEETING INFRASTRUCTURE NEEDS

3.1 Water and Wastewater

Three water agencies supply water to the businesses, residents, and utilities in Vernon (see Figure CI-3). The majority of the City's water is supplied by the City of Vernon's Water Department. The area north of the Los Angeles River and east of a line just west of Indiana Street is supplied by the California Water Service Company (Cal Water), East Los Angeles District. The small portion of Vernon south of the Los Angeles River and east of Atlantic Boulevard is serviced by Maywood Mutual Water Company Number 3.

The City of Vernon water system has received a Class I rating, the highest possible, by the Insurance Service Organization. The City's water distribution system consists of 250,000 linear feet of pipe, nine wells, seven ground-level reservoirs, one elevated tank, and a below-ground reservoir. The total storage capacity is 16 million gallons. In addition, Vernon has a direct interconnection to the Metropolitan Water District (MWD). The MWD connection provides both a supplemental water source and an emergency supply in the event of a major power outage. The average pressure in the distribution systems is about 75 pounds per square inch (psi).

Details of the sources and levels of water consumption used by the City of Vernon Water Department are provided in the Resources Element.

The City owns its own sewerge collection system which discharges into the system managed by the Los Angeles County Sanitation Districts (LACSD). The majority of Vernon is within District 23, but also contains territory in Districts 1 and 2.

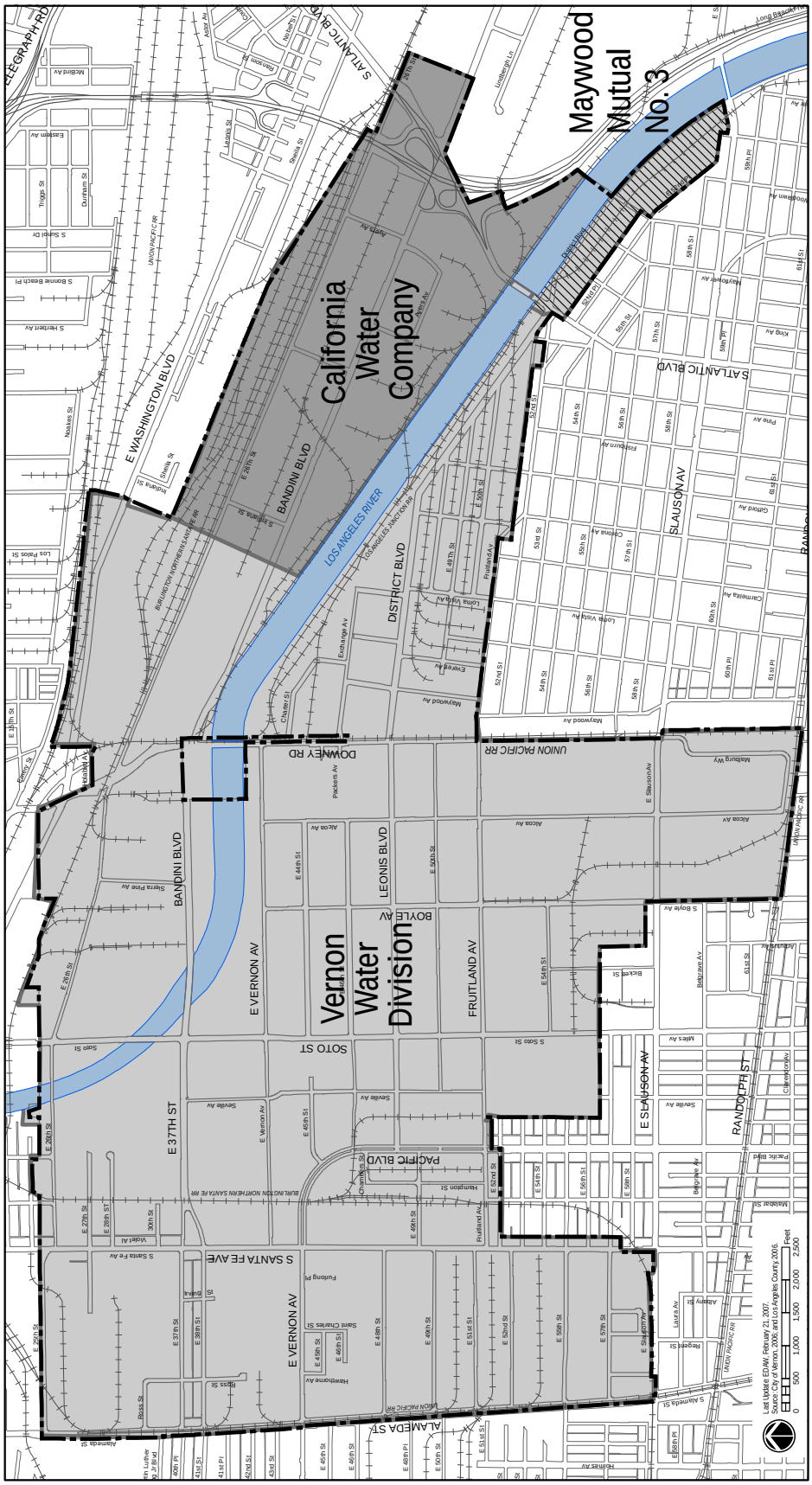


Figure CI-3
WATER SERVICE

These Districts, along with more than a dozen others, are signatories to a Joint Outfall Agreement. This agreement provides for the operation and maintenance of an interconnected Joint Operating System of wastewater collection, treatment, reuse, and disposal facilities across a large portion of the urban region. The Joint Operating System includes the following treatment plants:

- Joint Water Pollution Control Plant, Carson;
- Whittier Narrows Water Reclamation Plant (WRP), near South El Monte;
- Los Coyotes WRP, Cerritos;
- San Jose Creek WRP, near Industry;
- Long Beach WRP, Long Beach; and
- Pomona WRP, Pomona.

All of the sewerage generated in Vernon is treated by the Joint Water Pollution Control agency.

3.2 Storm Drainage

Stormwater runoff in Vernon is conveyed through local and and Los Angeles County Flood Control District storm drainage systems. Discharges are regulated under an existing NPDES permit for municipal stormwater (NPDES Permit CAS004001, Order No. 01-182, and in particular, Subsection 8.14.6.3-Industrial Stormwater). This permit was not written specifically for Vernon; it covers most of Los Angeles County and includes Vernon as a co-permittee. The permit establishes a framework of requirements for monitoring discharges and water quality, performing best management practices, and submitting reports to the Regional Water Quality Control Board, Los Angeles Region.

To address growing concerns with stormwater runoff contamination in urban areas, the Los Angeles Regional Water Quality Control Board (LARWCB) looks for co-permittees to capture and treat runoff on individual parcels at the time properties are redeveloped. The LARWCB policy is to seek to infiltrate as much of the stormwater as practical. In Vernon, this approach is difficult,primarily due to the industrial nature of the City and the potential for ground water contamination and the need to utilize available surface area to meet parking and loading requirements. The City supports a more comprehensive approach and will continue to explore

options to meet NPDES requirements creatively and in ways that can help achieve other City goals as well.

3.3 Electrical Generation and Distribution

The City of Vernon operates its own Light and Power Department, supplying customers throughout the City with reliable and comparatively low-cost electrical power. The City generates electrical power and also purchases power from third-party suppliers through its connection with the Southern California Edison bulk power system and the Cal-ISO grid at the Laguna Bell Substation.

For many years, the City's power-generating facility has supplied local customers with local power, supplemented as needed through connections to the grid. More recently, the Malburg Generating Station, which is a combined cycle plant with two natural-gas-fired combustion turbines and one steam turbine, has been providing additional power. However, in an effort to be able to supply nearly all of the local electrical demand, the City intends to construct a new natural gas-fired power plant at 3200 Fruitland Avenue. When constructed, the Vernon Power Plant is expected to have a capacity of 914 megawatts of electric power using three natural-gas-fired combustion turbines and one steam turbine.

Vernon anticipates that when this facility is operational, Vernon will not need to import electricity from outside sources, and will even be able to contribute to the regional electricity reserves through a line connecting the plant to Southern California Edison's Laguna Bell substation in Commerce.

3.4 Communications and Information Technology

To attract new businesses and to accommodate businesses' ever-changing telecommunications needs, Vernon has established a network of fiber-optic cables in the City. This enables businesses to receive exceptionally clear telephone and internet service, giving Vernon an advantage when competing for business. The City will continue to be proactive in developing telecommunications systems beneficial to businesses, including the development of data centers in the City.

3.5 Gas System

As a means of attracting and retaining industrial users, the City has developed a system for transporting and providing natural gas to businesses within the City at competitive prices. The City is currently providing natural gas to the Malburg Generating Plant and other businesses. A fully developed distribution system exists and connection is available to all businesses.

4.0 GOALS AND POLICIES

To support the needs of existing businesses in Vernon and to attract new enterprises consistent with the City's vision to remain an industrial city, Vernon will continue to improve its infrastructure – from the street system to energy facilities to communications systems.

GOAL CI-1
Provide a balanced transportation system for the safe and efficient movement of people, goods, and emergency services throughout the City.

POLICY CI-1.1: Continue to improve the street system to meet the minimum standards contained in this Element.

POLICY CI-1.2: Continue to coordinate with the rail companies to provide for efficient rail service that minimizes impacts on the local street system.

POLICY CI-1.3: Limit transportation-related uses, including freight and truck terminals, to existing sites.

POLICY CI-1.4: Limit rail yards to areas agreed on and consolidate rail spurs where feasible.

POLICY CI-1.5: Evaluate implementing measures that reduce the maneuvering of trucks on streets with substantial traffic during periods of high traffic volumes.

POLICY CI-1.6: Continue to pursue grade separation for railroad crossings on designated streets.

POLICY CI-1.7: Encourage the continued improvement of services provided by the Los Angeles County Metropolitan Transit Authority to Vernon and adjacent cities to provide good access from home to job and job to home for persons employed in Vernon.

POLICY CI-1.8: Encourage the use of ride sharing and public transit for persons employed in the City to reduce traffic congestion and the need for off-street parking in the City.

POLICY CI-1.9: Continue to work with Caltrans and neighboring jurisdictions to improve the Atlantic/Bandini/I-710 intersection and to make improvements to the I-710 Freeway, including direct truck ramps to the rail yards and exploring the potential for adding an interchange at Slauson Avenue to improve access to the City.

POLICY CI-1.10: Gradually eliminate unnecessary rail spur lines, and permit the combination of properties across spur lines.

POLICY CI-1.11: Widen Soto Street consistent with the cross section shown in Figure CI-1.

POLICY CI-1.12: Consider installing and maintaining an ATSAC system to improve traffic flow.

POLICY CI-1.13: Cooperate with the Metropolitan Transportation Authority and other local agencies in their efforts to complete a bicycle path along the levee of the Los Angeles River connecting to adjacent jurisdictions.

GOAL CI-2:
Work toward the provision of adequate off-street parking and loading facilities for each business.

POLICY CI-2.1: Implement methods to encourage provision of new off-street parking and loading facilities.

POLICY CI-2.2: Encourage cooperative efforts among businesses to resolve off-street parking problems and meet zoning code requirements.

POLICY CI-2.3: Explore the potential of creating public parking lots for employee parking using parking assessment districts or redevelopment powers.

POLICY CI-2.4: Require an existing business or property to comply with zoning code requirements for off-street parking and loading at such time as any nonconforming building or use is required to be brought into conformity with the Zoning Code.

GOAL CI-3
Maintain the water supply system to meet both normal demand and emergency needs.

POLICY CI-3.1: Periodically evaluate the entire water supply and distribution systems to determine their continued adequacy and to attempt to eliminate deficiencies or enhance service.

POLICY CI-3.2: Require all new developments and expansions of existing facilities bear the cost of providing adequate water service to meet the increased demand which they generate.

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POLICY CI-3.3: Implement the programs and policies contain in the City's Urban Water Management Plan, including particularly those related to reliability planning and conservation and reuse.

POLICY CI-3.4: Use reclaimed water for cooling and other functions at the Malburg Generating Station and the future Vernon Power Plant to the greatest extent feasible.

GOAL CI-4
Maintain the sewer system to assure the health and safety of all residents and businesses.

POLICY CI-4.1: Periodically evaluate the sewage disposal system to determine its adequacy to meet changes in demand and changes in types of waste.

POLICY CI-4.2: Ensure that all new developments bear the cost of expanding the sewage disposal system to handle any increase in load that they generate.

POLICY CI-4.3: Investigate and implement means of financing maintenance and improvements to the sewer system.

GOAL CI-5
Maintain the storm drainage system to assure the protection of lives and property of in Vernon.

POLICY CI-5.1: Periodically evaluate the size and condition of the storm drainage system to determine its ability to handle expected storm runoff.

POLICY CI-5.2: Evaluate the impact of all new developments and expansion of existing facilities on storm runoff, and require that the cost of upgrading existing drainage facilities to handle the additional runoff is paid for by the development which generates the need to improve a facility.

POLICY CI-5.3: Monitor the use and storage of hazardous materials to prevent accidental discharge into the storm drainage system.

POLICY CI-5.4: Allow new development projects to creatively implement NPDES standards and requirements.

GOAL CI-6
Improve the City's capability to generate and supply electric power to achieve energy self-sufficiency.

POLICY CI-6.1: Expand, operate, and maintain an electrical utility system in an effort to provide an adequate level of service to businesses and other uses in the City.

POLICY CI-6.2: Improve the electrical utility system in an effort to allow the City to meet any changes in demand over time.

POLICY CI-6.3: Cooperate and/or participate with other agencies or parties in the expansion or development of power generation.

POLICY CI-6.4: Evaluate the impact of all new development on the electrical energy system, and require that the cost of upgrading existing facilities is paid by the development, which necessitates the upgrade.

POLICY CI-6.5: Expand the City's capability to generate and provide natural gas to enhance the power/energy supply system.

GOAL CI-7
Provide the highest quality communications and information technology services throughout the City.

POLICY CI-7.1: Work with communication and technology service providers to provide for state-of-the-art internet, phone, and wireless communications equipment and services.

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VERNON GENERAL PLAN

JANUARY 2013

2014-2021

HOUSING ELEMENT

HOUSING ELEMENT

1.0 INTRODUCTION

Vernon is located near the geographic center of Los Angeles County. The City is bounded on the north and west by Los Angeles, on the east by Commerce and Bell, and on the south by Huntington Park and Maywood. Vernon is three miles southeast of downtown Los Angeles (Figure H-1) and 15 miles north of major harbor and port facilities in San Pedro and Long Beach.

The City's fully industrial nature generally creates conflicts with housing due to safety and environmental concerns. The Southern California Council of Governments (SCAG) historically has assigned Vernon very low housing production goals – and in the case of this cycle, a Regional Housing Needs Allocation (RHNA) of two units - in recognition of Vernon's unique status as city devoted almost exclusively to industrial uses.

Past City policy has precluded the development of any new residential units due to potential conflicts with industry. However, efforts by the City to create and implement a number of reforms and initiatives to enhance the accountability and transparency of its government and better provide for the

welfare of its residents and businesses have led to a policy change regarding housing. Specifically, the City of Vernon has established a policy to increase the City's population to enhance government accountability through the construction of approximately 30 to 50 new non-City owned housing units, including units specifically designated for low- and very low-income households.

Also, the City of Vernon is committed to maintaining the existing, long-established housing stock of 31 units.

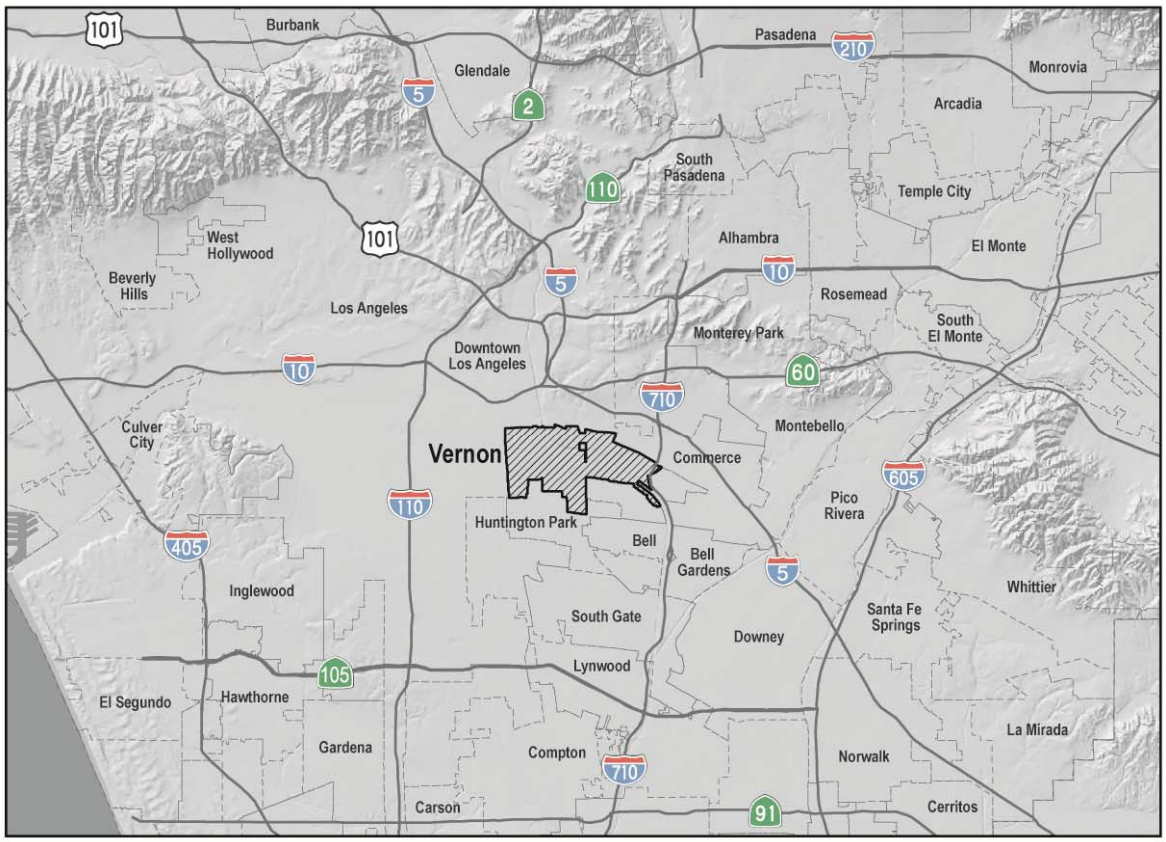

Figure H-1: Regional Location

1.1 State Requirement

The California Government Code is very specific concerning the preparation and content of a housing element. It is the only element which must be reviewed by the State for completeness and compliance with the law before it is adopted. The element examines existing conditions and, through analysis, identifies housing needs and presents programs to meet those needs. The legislature has deemed that the Housing Element is the appropriate mechanism to implement State-wide goals regarding the provision of decent and suitable housing for all persons. The Government Code also makes it clear that the provision of affordable housing is the responsibility of all local governments and that they, using vested powers, should make a conscious effort to see that there are housing opportunities for all income groups (Section 65580). The intent of the State housing element requirements is based on the following concerns (Section 65581):

1. Local governments should recognize their responsibilities in contributing to the attainment of the State's housing goals;

2. Cities and counties should prepare and implement housing elements coordinated with State and federal efforts to achieve the State's housing goals;

3. Each local jurisdiction should participate in determining the necessary efforts required to attain the State's housing goals; and

4. Each local government must cooperate with other local governments to address regional housing needs.

This Housing Element was prepared in compliance with State requirements, and covers the 2014-2021 planning period for jurisdictions in the SCAG region.

Many of the housing goals and programs which are desirable in non-industrial jurisdictions are not feasible in Vernon. The noise, dust, vibration, chemical wastes, and odors from Vernon's local industries (many of which operate around the clock) serve as a deterrent to housing development in almost all locations within the City. Moreover, housing generally should not be encouraged in close proximity to heavy industry

for health and safety reasons. The Government Code makes it clear that the local government has the responsibility to consider such environmental factors in the Housing Element (Section 65580[e]). Therefore, while each requirement of State housing element law is referenced, this Housing Element reflects the unique realities within the City of Vernon. Potential sites for new housing have been analyzed in detail, including the conduct of a health risk assessment to identify the most preferable sites.

1.2 Relation to Other General Plan Elements

The Vernon General Plan is comprised of the following six elements:

- Land Use;
- Circulation and Infrastructure;
- Housing;
- Safety;
- Resources; and
- Noise.

The Housing Element builds upon the other General Plan elements and is entirely consistent with the policies and proposals set forth by the Plan. The General Plan was comprehensively updated in 2007. As portions of the General Plan are amended in the future, the Plan (including the Housing Element) will be reviewed to ensure that internal consistency is maintained.

1.3 Sources of Information

The City of Vernon consists of two Census Tracts in the 2010 Census, including all of 5324.00 and a small portion of 5323.04. The 2010 Census incorrectly indicates that a portion of Census Tract 5323.02 is located in the City of Vernon; however, any actual overlap of the City boundary and Census Tract 5323.02 is a mapping error and does not represent any substantial area.

The 2010 Census indicates that there are 29 housing units in Vernon, of which 28 were occupied as of 2010. However, both the 1990 and the 2000 Censuses has incorrectly documented the City's unit count figures. The State Department of Finance (DOF) provides more up-to-date housing information based on the Census data. For the 2012 DOF housing estimates, the

housing count has been adjusted to accurately reflect Vernon's housing count known number of units: 31.. The Southern California Association of Governments (SCAG) also prepares growth forecasts for the Regional Transportation Plan (RTP) and the Regional Housing Needs Assessment (RHNA) for cities within the SCAG region. SCAG's 2012 adopted growth forecasts identify Vernon as having 30 households in 2008, with a projection for 30 units in 2035.

The City has verified the existence of 31 units within its jurisdiction (of which 30 were occupied as of September 2012), the addresses for which are listed in Appendix C. While Census and SCAG data are used within the Housing Element, it is hereby acknowledged these data represent an undercount of two units and one unit, respectively. In addition, because of the City's extremely limited housing stock, combined with the fact that the City owns 26 of these units, original data from the City on housing and household characteristics are utilized where available in place of the Census.

In addition to housing conditions and market information provided by the City, the following documents serve as supplemental material to the Vernon Housing Element and are incorporated by reference:

1. 2012 SCAG Regional Transportation Plan Socioeconomic Projections

2. 2010 Comprehensive Housing Affordability Strategy (CHAS) data; HUD tabulations based on 2006-2010 American Community Survey Five-Year Estimates developed by the U.S Census Bureau

1.4 Public Participation

Section 65583 (c)(6)(A) of the Government Code states: "The local government shall make a diligent effort to achieve public participation of all economic segments of the community in the development of the housing element, and the program shall describe this effort."

For purposes of this Housing Element, outreach to the community was conducted to assess the types of and locations for housing to be considered as part of the City's reform

process. The following meetings were held to gather input into the development of the Housing Element:

- ***Housing Commission Workshop, February 9, 2012***. The Housing Element consultant made a presentation to the Commission that provided an overview of the City's housing commitments, reviewed options to meet those commitments, identified known constraints, and identified sites under consideration for potential housing.

- ***Vernon Chamber of Commerce Meeting, March 29, 2012.*** The Housing Element consultant met with Chamber representatives and made a presentation similar to that conducted with the Housing Commission.

- ***City Council Workshop, April 17, 2012***. Based on input received during the two meetings described above, the Housing Element consultant refined the presentation to focus on preferred housing sites, options for housing types, and potential environmental and health risks located on or near the preferred sites.

In addition, community residents were provided the opportunity to review and comment on the Draft Element prior to adoption. Upon receipt of comments from the State Department of Housing and Community Development (HCD) on the Draft Element, the City Council conducted a public hearing on the Element. (The City Council has not created a separate Planning Commission, so all public hearings are conducted before the Council.) For all hearings, notice was published in the local newspaper, posted in the City, and mailed to those who have a request for notice on file in advance of the hearing. The Draft Element was available for review online and in the City's Community Services Department. Copies were made available on request to any person at a nominal charge. The public hearing provided an opportunity for public comment, and recommendations were considered by City Council for incorporation into the Element.

In December of 2007, the City adopted a comprehensive revision to its Zoning Ordinance. As part of this process, the City held a series of public meetings with property and

business owners to discuss changes to the document. This successful outreach process resulted in full support of the revisions to the Zoning Ordinance. As part of this Housing Element Update, the Zoning Ordinance was again amended to create an overlay zone to be applied to sites where housing will be permitted. A second overlay was created to allow for the establishment of emergency housing pursuant to Government Code 65583(a)(4). The City conducted a comprehensive review of the most viable housing sites in the City, and through the new overlay districts has established implementing zoning to facilitate housing development.

The City made the draft Housing Element, with revisions as recommended by HCD, available to the public in December 2012 through January 2013. Notices of the public hearing held on February 5, 2013 and availability of the document for review were mailed to the following service providers:

- Human Services Association, Bell Gardens
- Los Angeles County Social Services Department, Cudahy
- St. Matthias Social Service Center, Huntington Park
- Mexican American Opportunity Foundation – Community Services, Commerce
- Ability First/East Los Angeles Center, Los Angeles
- Eastern Los Angeles Regional Center, Alhambra

The notice indicated the web location of the draft Element for download by interested parties, and asked that comments be directed to S. Kevin Wilson, Director of Community Services and Water.

2.0 HOUSING NEEDS ASSESSMENT

2.1 Population and Housing Trends

City records indicate that Vernon's housing stock and related resident population base has undergone little change since 1980. The City had a 1980 housing stock of 35 dwelling units, supporting a resident population of 85 persons. Only one residential unit has been constructed since that time. Several substandard residential units have been removed from the housing stock, including three units in 1984, one unit in 1985, and one in 1992, bringing the current unit count to 31. These housing units are all located west of Downey Road.

Since 1980, the resident population has ranged between 77 and 120 persons, with the current population estimated by the 2010 Census to be 112 persons. For 2012, the Department of Finance reported 120 persons. The 2006-2010 American Community Survey indicates that the majority of residents in Vernon are employed in management, service, and sales industries.

Table H-1
Vernon Employment 2010

Occupation	Residents Employed	% of All Jobs
Managerial, Business, Science, and Arts	10	19%
Sales and Office	19	36%
Service Occupations	10	19%
Production, Transportation, Material Moving	7	13%
Natural Resources, Construction, Maintenance	7	13%
Farming, Forestry, Fishing	0	0%
Total Employed Residential Jobs	**53**	**100%**

Source: U.S. Census 2006-2010 American Community Survey Five-Year Estimates

On April 4, 2012, the SCAG Regional Council adopted the *2012-2035 Regional Transportation Plan/Sustainable Communities Strategy (RTP/SCS): Towards a Sustainable Future.* As illustrated in Table H-2, SCAG projects that in 2035, the households and population in Vernon will remain constant at 30 and 100, respectively. SCAG's projections were made at a time prior to the City's reform commitments and thus do not reflect the population and household growth that will result from new housing units.

Table H-2
Projected Population and Household Growth 2008-2035

	2008		2020		2035	
	Pop	Hshlds	Pop	Hshlds	Pop	Hshlds
SCAG	100	30	100	30	100	30

Source: 2012 SCAG Regional Transportation Plan Growth Forecast

2.2 Housing Characteristics

Households

According to the California Department of Finance, the 31 housing units in Vernon (see Table H-2) house a population of 120 persons. Average household size is 4.0 persons per unit. Housing vacancy is generally very low in the City, with only one rental unit unoccupied according to the 2010 Census. No owner-occupied housing is vacant.

Table H-3 presents 2012 data on housing units per structure, as reported to the State Department of Finance. The majority of Vernon's housing stock is comprised of single-family dwellings, with only one apartment building located in the City. The City owns 84 percent of the total housing stock: 26 dwelling units, 18 of which are single-family dwellings and one of which is an eight-unit apartment building. The City rents these units. As part of the reform initiative, the City established a lottery system for the units to allow a broader base of persons to be eligible to rent units in Vernon.

Table H-3
Housing Characteristics 2010 and 2012

Housing Characteristics	2010	2012
Total Housing Units	**31**	**31**
Single, Detached	19	19
Single, Attached	2	2
Two to Four Units	2	2
Five Plus Units	8	8
Mobile Homes	0	0
Occupied Units/Total Households	28	30
Average Household Size	4.0	4.0
Vacancy Rate	3.45%	3.23%
Total Population	**112**	**120**

Source: City of Vernon, 2012 and State of California, Department of Finance, E-5 Population and Housing Estimates for Cities, Counties, and the State, 2011 and 2012, with 2010 Benchmark. Sacramento, California, May 2012.

Housing Condition

Given the limited housing stock in Vernon, City staff is able to assess housing conditions on an ongoing basis. Although the housing stock is older (largely built before 1950), City staff has determined that all 31 units, or 100% of the housing stock, is well maintained and in good condition. No units have been determined to need replacement. One unit, which had fallen into disrepair, was demolished by its owner in 1992. A major reason for the unusually good quality of housing conditions in Vernon is the City's ownership of 84 percent of the housing stock and its responsibility for maintaining these units. As needed, the City performs any required repairs and upgrades. The great demand for industrial space in the City means that unnecessary or poorly maintained units are unlikely to remain unless acquired by the City.

Housing Affordability

The California Health and Safety Code Section 50052.5 provides the following definition of affordable housing cost based on the area median income level (AMI) adjusted by family size and income level:

Table H-4
Housing Affordability Based on Income

	Calculation of Affordable Housing Cost for Owner	Calculation of Affordable Housing Cost for Renters
Extremely Low Income (0-30% MFI)	30% of 30% AMI	30% of 30% AMI
Very Low Income (0-50% MFI)	30% of 50% AMI	30% of 50% AMI
Lower Income (51-80% MFI)	30% of 70% AMI	30% of 60% AMI
Moderate Income (81-120% MFI)	35% of 110% AMI	30% of 110% AMI

Because the City's resident population is so small, household needs are negligible when traditional needs analysis methods are applied. The Comprehensive Housing Affordability Strategy (CHAS)—special 2000 Census tabulations developed by HUD—provides a specific breakdown of household income adjusted for family size. According to CHAS Data, one-quarter of the households in Vernon were low income, earning between 51 and 80 percent of the Los Angeles County median family income (MFI) of $64,800. All other households earned more than 80 percent MFI. Due to the fact that the City owns and rents most of the housing at unusually low monthly rents, housing overpayment is virtually non-existent.[1] As of 2012, City-owned apartments and houses largely rented at the following monthly payments, well below market levels for the region:

- 1-bedroom apartment $120
- 2-bedroom apartment $240
- 1-bedroom house $120
- 2-bedroom house $240
- 3-bedroom house $360

[1] No housing units in the City have been sold in recent years. As such, an estimate of ownership housing costs is unavailable. However, recent (2012) land sales for large industrial sites have been priced at approximately $40 per square foot, depending on location, soil condition and necessary demolition costs.

Implementation of the good government reforms now underway will result in annual rent increases for persons currently living in the units.

Using the California Health and Safety Code's updated affordability thresholds, current housing affordability at the County level can be estimated for the various income groups (Table H-5).

Housing overpayment occurs when a households pays more than 30 percent of gross monthly income on housing costs. A comparison of housing costs in Vernon and maximum affordable prices for low-income households in Los Angeles County shows that the City's rental rates are well below the maximum affordable rents for very low-income (less than 50% MFI) households, and some one- and two-bedroom apartments may even be affordable to extremely low-income households (although the CHAS data indicate that there are no very low- or extremely low-income households in the City). As such, no households in Vernon experience a housing cost burden.

As rental rates rise over time pursuant to the good government reform initiatives, households will experience increased housing costs. Rental rates are anticipated to transition to market rate costs by 2016, as shown below, through annual increases in rent. Additionally, when there is a change in tenancy, new tenants will pay market rate. Market rate costs will be affordable for very low and moderate income households.

1-bedroom unit: $120 to $696
2-bedroom unit: $240 to $1,450 to $839 to $1,450
3-bedroom unit: $240 to $1,114 to $1,000 to $1,700

Certain segments of the population may have a more difficult time finding decent, affordable housing due to special circumstances. Government Code Section 65583(a) requires cities to evaluate the following special needs households in the Housing Element: elderly, disabled persons, developmentally disable persons, large families, female-headed households, farmworkers, and the homeless. Due to the small size of the City's resident population, the magnitude of households in Vernon with special needs is very small.

Table H-5
Affordability Matrix

Income Group	AMI adjusted by size		Affordable Monthly Payment		Housing Costs		Maximum Affordable Price	
			Renter	Owner	Utilities	Taxes and Insurance	Home	Rental
Extremely Low (0-30% MFI)		**30% AMI**						
One Person		$13,605	$340	$340	$50	$80	$46,078	$290
Small Family		$17,490	$437	$437	$100	$90	$54,219	$337
Four Person Family		*$19,440*	*$486*	*$486*	*$125*	*$95*	$58,331	$361
Large Family		$21,000	$525	$525	$150	$100	$60,305	$375
Very Low (30-50% MFI)		**50% AMI**						
One Person		$22,675	$567	$567	$85	$115	$80,452	$482
Small Family		$29,150	$729	$729	$125	$130	$103,889	$604
Four Person Family		*$32,400*	*$810*	$810	*$175*	*$140*	$108,549	*$635*
Large Family		$35,000	$875	$875	$200	$145	$116,224	$675
Lower (50-80% MFI)	**60%AMI**	**70%AMI**						
One Person	$27,210	$31,745	$680	$794	$100	$165	$115,922	$580
Small Family	$34,980	$40,810	$875	$1,020	$150	$190	$149,172	$725
Four Person Family	*$38,880*	*$45,360*	$972	$1,134	*$200*	*$210*	$158,766	*$772*
Large Family	$42,000	$49,000	$1,050	$1,225	$250	$220	$165,564	$800
Moderate (81-120% MFI)		**110% AMI**						
One Person		$49,885	$1,247	$1,455	$100	$215	$249,986	$1,147
Small Family		$64,130	$1,603	$1,870	$150	$260	$320,264	$1,453
Four Person Family		*$71,280*	$1,782	$2,079	*$200*	*$280*	$350,645	*$1,582*
Large Family		$77,000	$1,925	$2,246	$250	$300	$371,880	$1,675

Notes:

1. Small Family = 3 persons; Large Families = 5 persons
2. Property taxes and insurance based on averages for the region
3. Calculation of affordable home sales prices based on a down payment of 10%, annual interest rate of 6.5%, 30- year mortgage, and monthly payment 30% of gross household income
4. Based on Los Angeles County MFI $64,800 and 2012 HCD State Income Limits
5. Monthly affordable rent based on payments of no more than 30% of household income

Special Needs Groups

Elderly

The special needs of many elderly households result from their lower, fixed incomes, physical disabilities, and dependence needs. According to the 2010 Census, 14 residents in Vernon are age 65 and above, representing 12 percent of the population. The proportion of elderly persons in Vernon is likely to remain low as the majority of the City's limited housing stock is occupied by working-age persons.

Disabled Persons

Disability is a physical or mental condition that affects the functioning of a person. Physical disabilities can hinder access to housing units of conventional design, as well as limit the ability to earn adequate income. The Census defines a disability as a long-lasting physical, mental, or emotional condition. This condition can make it difficult for a person to do activities such as walking, climbing stairs, dressing, bathing, learning, or remembering. This condition can also impede a person from being able to go outside the home alone or to work at a job or business.

The City's heavily industrial environment presents added constraints to the disabled. Large volumes of street and rail traffic, and delays caused by trains and parked trucks additionally limit the maneuverability of handicapped individuals. In order to address the needs of its handicapped residents and employees, the City enforces requirements for handicapped accessibility in new construction, and has undertaken a program to install curb ramps for wheelchairs.

Developmentally Disabled

According to Section 4512 of the Welfare and Institutions Code a "developmental disability" means a disability that originates before an individual attains age 18 years, continues, or can be expected to continue, indefinitely, and constitutes a substantial disability for that individual which includes mental retardation, cerebral palsy, epilepsy, and autism. This term shall also include disabling conditions found to be closely related to mental retardation or to require treatment similar to that required for individuals with mental retardation, but shall not include other handicapping conditions that are solely physical in nature.

The State Department of Developmental Services (DDS) currently provides community based services to persons with developmental disabilities and their families through a statewide system of 21 regional centers, four developmental centers, and two community-based facilities. Vernon is served by the South Central Los Angeles Regional Center and the Frank d. Lanterman Regional Center. These facilities provide point of entry to services for people with developmental disabilities. In Vernon, only one person is a consumer of the services provided at the local Regional Center.

In order to assist in the housing needs for persons with developmental disabilities, the City will implement programs to coordinate housing activities and outreach with the Regional Center and, encourage housing providers to designate a portion of new affordable housing developments for persons with disabilities, especially persons with developmental disabilities, and pursue funding sources designated for persons with special needs and disabilities.

Large Families/Overcrowding

Large families are identified as a group with special housing needs based on the limited availability of adequately sized, affordable housing units. Large households are often of lower income, which can result in the overcrowding of smaller dwelling units and in turn accelerate unit deterioration. The 2010 Census identifies eight renter-occupied households as having five or more members. The City's industrial character presents similar disadvantages for families with children as it does for the handicapped. Access to residential services, such as education, recreation, and local retail goods and services, is along roadways with high levels of truck traffic, railroad crossings, and loading activities. These conditions make pedestrian access to residential service facilities difficult and often unsafe, particularly for children.

In terms of household overcrowding (defined as greater than 1.01 persons per room), the 2010 Census identifies no overcrowded rental or ownership housing in Vernon[2]. Thus, household overcrowding is not an issue.

[2] The 2010 Census indicated that 15 rental housing units were overcrowded, but the margin of error was so high it was not used for this analysis. Also, because the City owns virtually all units in the

Female-Headed Households

Female-headed households tend to have low incomes, thus limiting housing availability for this group. The 2010 Census identifies two female-headed households in Vernon, representing seven percent of all households. The housing needs of female-headed households of lower income can be addressed through the continued provision of the currently existing affordable housing in the City.

Farmworkers

According to the 2010 Census, no Vernon residents have Farming, Forestry, and Fishing occupations. Due to the lack of opportunities for agricultural operations and the highly industrial nature of the City, no farming operations exist in Vernon. As such, the City has no need for farmworker housing.

Homeless

Throughout the country, homelessness has become an increasing problem. Factors contributing to the rise in homelessness include the general lack of housing affordable to low and moderate-income persons, increases in the number of persons whose incomes fall below the poverty level, reductions in public subsidy to the poor, and the deinstitutionalization of the mentally ill.

According to the Gateway Cities Council of Governments Homeless Action Plan, homeless "hotspots" surveys were conducted during the summer and fall of 2011, during which outreach workers noticed homeless couples and individuals sleeping under bridges and around the Los Angeles River on a nightly basis near the City of Vernon. Other than this one-time observation and casual comment, very few homeless persons have been recorded living in Vernon largely because the City is not desirable for the homeless given the City's industrial environment and its lack of social and residential services.

On October 15, 2007, Governor Arnold Schwarzenegger signed into law SB2, which amends Government Code Sections 65582, 65583, and 65589.5 of State Housing Element Law. This legislation requires local jurisdictions to strengthen provisions for addressing housing needs of the homeless, including the

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community, the City can easily assess whether units are overcrowded.

identification of a zone or zones where emergency shelters are allowed as a permitted use without a conditional use permit.

Due to very low homeless population in the City and the industrial nature of the community, the City's policy position is that development of emergency shelters in Vernon is not a good solution for addressing regional homelessness issues. Placing a homeless shelter in an area that has been deemed largely inappropriate for new housing due to environmental concerns—including noxious odors from rendering and slaughtering, proximity to hazardous waste sites, and truck traffic pollution and noise—could raise potential environmental justice concerns.

A large number of facilities for homeless individuals and families are located within a five-mile radius of the City, in locations that do not have the environmental constraints that exist in Vernon. For example, the Salvation Army Shelter in the city of Bell is a regional emergency shelter offering emergency and transitional care for up to 340 homeless adults, including 154 in the shelter, 128 in the drug and alcohol program, and 49 in longer term transitional housing. In addition to a place to stay, the Bell Shelter provides case management; substance abuse rehabilitation; individual and group therapy/counseling; on-site health care, medical referrals and HIV/AIDS education; job training; on-site adult education classes and life skills classes.

However, given that State law requires all jurisdictions to comply SB2 mandates, the City has established an emergency shelter overlay zone to be applied to a single parcel at the northwest corner of the City.

Future Housing Needs

State law requires jurisdictions to provide for their fair share of regional housing needs. SCAG determines the projected housing needs for Southern California jurisdictions. Future housing needs reflect the number of new units needed in a jurisdiction (future demand), plus an adequate supply of vacant housing to assure mobility and new units to replace losses. These needs were forecast by the 2014-2021 Regional Housing Needs Assessment (RHNA), which considered on a regional and local level: market demand for housing, employment opportunities, availability of suitable sites and public facilities, commuting patterns, type and tenure of

housing need, and housing needs of farm workers. The 2014-2021 RHNA establishes a future housing need of two units in the City of Vernon, with one unit to be affordable to very low-income households and one unit to low-income households.

Energy and Water Conservation

Compared with Vernon's energy-intensive industries, housing consumes only a small proportion of the City's total energy consumption. The City utilizes the California Green Building Standards Code for all construction to minimize energy consumption. Necessary sound insulation on residential units also results in effective heat insulation, thus reducing energy usage.

Electric power in Vernon is provided by the City's local power plant and municipal utility system. The Southern California Gas Company and the City of Vernon Light & Power Department Gas Division provide fuel for most natural gas heating needs, and offers programs for water heater insulation, attic insulation, and water flow limiting devices. Water is provided to all dwelling units either from groundwater pumped by the Vernon Community Services and Water Department or by import from the Metropolitan Water District. Compared to the large local industrial users, residential water use is minimal, and no special conservation steps have been deemed necessary for housing.

3.0 HOUSING CONSTRAINTS

3.1 Governmental Constraints

Historically, housing growth has been virtually nonexistent in Vernon due to City policy that has discouraged, and in 2007 precluded, the development of any new residential units. City policy-makers have for decades determined that the pervasive industrial environment and land use incompatibilities related to hazardous materials storage and processing, background contamination, noxious odors, noise pollution, and truck and railroad traffic make Vernon an inappropriate location for new housing. However, as part of the City's good governance reform initiative, City leaders have agreed to establish a way to allow for a very limited amount of new housing at a location or locations that would not result in significant land use conflicts, would minimize exposure of housing residents to adverse

environmental conditions, and would provide access to stores, schools, parks, and other amenities that residents would need. The City has made a commitment to amend the Zoning Ordinance to allow for the future development of a limited number of new residential units via a Housing Overlay zone, to be applied to two or fewer parcels.

Zoning Ordinance

Vernon comprehensively updated its Zoning Ordinance in 2007. The Ordinance did not include any development processes or standards to allow for residential projects, nor did the City have permit processing fees, site improvement requirements, impact fee requirements, or procedures for new residential development. With establishment of the Housing Overlay zone, new permitting procedures and development standards for targeted new residential development are now available. Given the unique conditions in the City and the fact that the sites to which the overlay will be applied are owned by the City, the City permitting process consists of a Development Agreement. In addition, the Housing Overlay zone allows transitional and supportive housing subject to the same permitting processes as other housing in the Housing Overlay zone without any special regulatory requirements.

A Development Agreement is considered the most appropriate way to permit housing in Vernon given the unique characteristics of this industrial city. A Development Agreement provides a high degree of flexibility in defining the development standards for a housing project. Through a Development Agreement, the City can work with prospective housing developers to craft the provisions that will apply to site planning, provision of parking and open space, height limits, etc. Because the General Plan allows up to 30 units per acre, a prospective developer can propose innovative approaches to multifamily housing.

Rather than establish concrete development standards, Section 26.4.5-5 of the Zoning Ordinance sets forth performance standards for residential development as follows:

"Sec. 26.4.5-5 Findings. After a public hearing, the City Council shall approve a proposed residential development and related Development Agreement only after first making all of the following findings:

a) The design, location, size, and operating characteristics of the proposed residential will be compatible with the existing land uses in the vicinity;

b) The proposed density is consistent with density standards and all applicable policies contained in the General Plan;

c) The site and site plan are physically suitable in terms of design, location, shape, size, and the provision of public and emergency vehicle access, and public services and utilities, including but not limited to (fire protection, police protection, potable water, schools, sewerage, solid waste collection and disposal, storm drainage, and wastewater collection, treatment, and disposal;

d) On-site traffic circulation for pedestrians and vehicles is designed into the development to allow residents to move easily through the development and to avoid pedestrian/vehicular conflicts and further, to ensure appropriate access for fire and police response and surveillance equal to or better than what would normally be created by compliance with the Site Planning Standards of Section 26.4.1-7;

e) The proposed project provides suitable, usable common and/or private open space that will meet the passive and/or active recreation needs of the resident. Common open space areas and setbacks are provided with landscaping and other improvements suitable for the development proposed;

f) The proposed project provides adequate parking to meet the residents' needs and to avoid parking impacts on surrounding properties;

g) Refuse/recycling collection areas are located to provide easy access to for all residents and collection vehicles, and to minimize noise impacts on residents;

h) To the extent feasible, the project design incorporates sustainable development features."

Given the flexibility of these standards and the need to address unique conditions in Vernon, the requirement for a Development Agreement is not considered a constraint. In fact, in response to a request for proposals for housing development on the site on 52nd Street, the City received five submittals and selected the one which can achieve objectives for providing affordable housing.

Renovation, Restoration, Maintenance, and Repair

The City will continue to permit the renovation, restoration, maintenance, and repair of existing residential uses. Residential rehabilitation projects are permitted in Vernon, and the rehabilitation is a "Minor Alteration or Repair," as defined in the Zoning Ordinance (less than 50 percent of the fair market value of the buildings on the lot).[3] As a practical matter, the expansive definition of "Minor Alteration or Repair" and lack of development standards result in limited governmental constraints (other than complying with the building code) that would prevent a homeowner from upgrading or improving a residence within the existing square footage.

If the hard costs of improvements equal or exceed, over a three-year period, 50 percent of the then-current fair market value of the building, then the improvement, if voluntary, will be defined as a "Major Alteration or Repair" and terminate the legal nonconforming status of the residence. A Major Alteration or Repair is considered to be the functional equivalent of a tear-down and re-build, which the City does not permit, for the same reasons that it does not permit new construction of residences. However, if the Major Alteration or Repair is necessitated by a natural disaster, such as an earthquake or fire, the owner does have the right to rebuild the residence. At that time, the development standards for the home would be developed. The City did not undertake to

[3] A minor alteration is that for which the hard costs charged, incurred, or paid for such renovation, alteration, or repair, over a three year period, commencing when the permit required is issued, or if no permit is required, when the physical portion of the renovation, alteration, or repair is commenced, is less than 50 percent of the current fair market value of all of the buildings located on the same lot.

develop those criteria at this time since there are only five private residences in Vernon.

The Major Alteration provision does not constrain the maintenance of the existing housing stock, as property owners are permitted to undertake a broad array of improvements that extend the life of residential structures and improve unit conditions. Under State law, any and all such improvements can be pursued consistent with Health & Safety Code Section 17922(d) and Section 17958.8 relating to the alteration and repair of existing buildings. Section 17922(d) relates to the standards adopted by the State, which the Zoning Ordinance in no way invalidates. This section discusses the use of original materials and methods for the repair, replacement, or extension as long as it meets Building Code standards. The Zoning Ordinance has no provisions or limitations on the construction materials utilized. Section 17958.8 is similar, as it is addresses the use of original construction materials and methods. Nothing in the Zoning Ordinance or Building Code prohibits the use of original materials and methods, with the exception of an unreinforced masonry structure, which would have to be seismically retrofitted. As no residential units in Vernon are constructed of unreinforced masonry, this does not affect any housing units.

All residential units in the City are in good condition, with no units requiring a major alteration during the planning period. Of those units owned by the City, the City intends to renovate seven units due to age, although all are currently in good, habitable condition. These seven units have had new HVAC systems installed in recent years.

No residential property owners have proposed major renovations to their properties. Residential property owners participated in the recent Zoning Ordinance revision process, and none expressed opposition to the standards that apply to existing, nonconforming residential structures in the City, including the prohibitions on increasing square footage and undertaking major alterations. All residences – whether owned by the City or others – are in good condition, according to City staff. As described above, residential rehabilitation that constitutes a minor alteration (costing, over a three year period, less than 50 percent of the market value of the building) is permitted. Because minor alterations are permitted and existing standards will allow renovations of these units, the limit on major alterations is not considered an impact to the

maintenance and improvement of the City's housing stock. As discussed later in this section, to accommodate housing needs of the disabled, the Zoning Ordinance has be revised to remove restrictions on major alterations as needed through the implementation of reasonable accommodation procedures.

It is the City's intent to encourage and actively participate in the rehabilitation of existing residential units. The process is straightforward and not burdensome; there is no entitlement process required for rehabilitation projects. Residential rehabilitation projects that are Minor Alterations or Repairs and do not exceed the existing square footage require only a building permit. The building permit process timeframe depends on the complexity of the renovation. Complex renovations involving new electrical systems, plumbing, etc. can take up to three weeks to process. The City has no intention of removing any of the 31 units in the City, as all units are in good condition.

Replacement of housing units that have been demolished or destroyed due to force majeure (defined as an event that is not within the control of the owner of the property, including, without limitation, earthquake, flood, fire, and acts of war or terrorism) are permitted. A building permit would be required, and a housing unit would be permitted to be rebuilt up to the existing building square footage. The development standards for the reconstructed dwelling would be determined at that time.

Building Code Amendments

The City has adopted the California Building Code with some minor local amendments related primarily to industrial buildings in the City. Per Health and Safety Code Sections 17958.5 and 17958.7, the City made required findings and filed such findings with the California Building Standards Commission. The amendments include administrative processes such as the establishment of City permit fees and appeals boards, as well as requirements specific to hazardous and industrial uses such as fire access roads, spray booths, and storage of explosive and flammable materials. Vernon has also made additional amendments to protect the safety of workers and residents within the City. Specifically, the City requires all wiring to be in a metallic conduit, to protect workers and residents from hazards of accidentally driving a nail or screw through wiring. There is a marginal cost increase associated

with this precaution, but the benefit associated with safer installation outweighs the cost. The City has also made amendments to require Class A and B roofing material, which is more fire resistive and can stop the potential spread of fire. While this type of roofing material may be more expensive than some standard materials, this amendment is necessary to prevent and quickly extinguish fires that may have far more costly impacts. As such, no restrictions or amendments have been adopted in the Building Code that would constrain housing in the City.

Permit and Infrastructure Fees

The City assesses various fees to cover the costs of permit processing (Table H-6). Most of the fees charged are flat fees based on the cost of services, or tiered fees based on the size and cost of the improvement. Fees charged are comparable to surrounding communities in Los Angeles County, and as such, do not pose a constraint to housing maintenance and preservation. Owners intending to renovate or improve existing residential units are required to obtain a building permit for a minor alteration. The fee, which is reviewed annually, is based on the cost of the improvement.

Because future residential development will occur on no more than two parcels on properties owned by the City, no special fees will be required for processing development applications. The vehicle for approving projects will be through a Development Agreement with the City.

Because the development will occur on existing lots well served by streets, water lines, sewer lines, and all other urban-level infrastructure, no off-site improvements will be required to allow housing development to proceed.

Table H-6
Permit and Processing Fees

Building Permits	
Cost of Renovation	**Fee**
$1.00 to $2,000	$80
$2,001 to $5,000	$80 for the first $2,000 plus $4 for each additional $100
$5,001 to $25,000	$200 for the first $5,000 plus $10 for each additional $1,000
$25,001 to $50,000	$400 for the first $25,000 plus $7.50 for each additional $1,000
$50,001 to $100,000	$587.50 for the first $50,000 plus $5.50 for each additional $1,000
$100,001 to $500,000	$862.50 for the first $100,000 plus $4 for each additional $1,000
$500,001 and up	$2,462.50 for the first $500,000 plus $3.10 for each additional $1,000
Inspection and Other Fees	
Description	**Fee**
Inspection Outside of Normal Hours (minimum of 4 hours)	$89.70/hour (minimum of $358.80)
Reinspection Fee	$89.70/hour
Additional Plan Review	$150/hour
Final, Parcel, or Tentative Map	$1,250 - $2,000
Conditional Use Permit	$2,875
Zoning Variance or Amendment	$2,000
Building Code Variance	$1,000

Source: City of Vernon Fees, Effective July 1, 2008

Housing Maintenance

The Vernon Department of Community Services is responsible for code enforcement and the maintenance and upkeep of all City-owned units. Enforcement of building code standards does not constrain the improvement of housing in Vernon but instead serves to maintain or improve the condition of the limited, existing housing stock.

Of the 31 units in the City, only five are not owned by the City. City staff has investigated and determined that none of these

five units requires significant rehabilitation. At this time, an active code enforcement program is unwarranted due to the limited number of privately owned units (five) and the fact all units are currently in good condition and continue to be well maintained by the owners. The City encourages active maintenance of the housing stock, as evidenced by the extensive rehabilitation the City has undertaken on those housing units that it owns. Community Services Staff is active in the community, and will respond to any visible code enforcement violations or complaints that may require rehabilitation of units.

Property owners are permitted and encouraged to perform proper upkeep and maintenance, which can include renovations, as long as the existing square footage is not exceeded and the cost of the renovation, over a three-year period, does not exceed 50 percent of the market value of buildings on the lot. For all practical purposes, all other controls, permit processes, and fees do not constrain the maintenance and preservation of the City's housing stock.

Constraints to Housing for Persons with Disabilities

The City has adopted the California Building Standards Code. Standards within the Code of the City of Vernon (through the adoption of the California Building Standards Code) include provisions to ensure accessibility for persons with disabilities. These standards are consistent with the Americans with Disabilities Act. No local amendments that would constrain accessibility or increase the cost of housing for persons with disabilities have been adopted, except that the Zoning Ordinance would not permit the floor area of the residence to be increased or permit any major alterations that equal or exceed 50 percent of the current fair market value of the buildings on the lot. These restrictions have been addressed the implementation of a reasonable accommodation procedures to accommodate housing needs of the disabled (discussed below).

Definition of Family

Sometimes, a city's definition of "family" can limit access to housing for persons with disabilities when the word is narrowly defined. This can illegally limit the use of housing as group homes for persons with disabilities, but not limit housing for families. The Vernon Zoning Ordinance does not define family, and therefore is nondiscriminatory in its application.

Reasonable Accommodation

The Fair Housing Act, as amended in 1988, requires that cities and counties provide reasonable accommodation to rules, policies, practices, and procedures where such accommodation may be necessary to afford individuals with disabilities equal housing opportunities. While fair housing laws intend that all people have equal access to housing, the law also recognizes that people with disabilities may need extra tools to achieve equality. Reasonable accommodation is one of the tools intended to further housing opportunities for people with disabilities. Reasonable accommodation provides a means of requesting from the local government flexibility in the application of land use and zoning and building regulations or, in some instances, even a waiver of certain restrictions or requirements because it is necessary to achieve equal access to housing. Cities and counties are required to consider requests for accommodations related to housing for people with disabilities, and to provide the accommodation when it is determined to be "reasonable" based on fair housing laws and the case law interpreting the statutes.

State law allows for a statutorily based four-part analysis to be used in evaluating requests for reasonable accommodation related to land use and zoning matters and can be incorporated into a reasonable accommodation ordinance or procedures. This analysis gives great weight to furthering the housing needs of people with disabilities and also considers the impact or effect of providing the requested accommodation on the City and its overall zoning scheme. Developers and providers of housing for people with disabilities must be ready to address each element of the following four-part analysis:

- The housing that is the subject of the request for reasonable accommodation is for people with disabilities as defined in federal or state fair housing laws;

- The reasonable accommodation requested is necessary to make specific housing available to people with disabilities who are protected under fair housing laws;

- The requested accommodation will not impose an undue financial or administrative burden on the local government; and

- The requested accommodation will not result in a fundamental alteration in the local zoning ordinance.

The City abides by the Fair Housing Act, and has instituted a clearly defined process for making requests for reasonable accommodation to provide exceptions in zoning, land-use, permitting processes, and building codes. The City has developed reasonable accommodation procedures in its Zoning Ordinance and will provide information on the procedures on the City's website (Housing Element Program 4).

The State has removed any City discretion for review of small group homes for persons with disabilities (six or fewer residents). The City does not impose additional zoning, building code, or permitting procedures other than those allowed by State law.

The City does not impose special permit procedures or requirements that could impede the retrofitting of homes for accessibility. A retrofit would be permitted as a minor alteration (requiring a building permit), as long as the cost of the retrofit was less than 50 percent of the market value of the buildings. The City's requirements for building permits are standard, straightforward, and not burdensome. No CUP or other special permitting requirements are required for retrofitting homes for accessibility.

The City's adopted reasonable accommodation procedures are ministerial and include, but not be limited to, identifying who may request a reasonable accommodation (i.e., persons with disabilities, family-members, landlords, etc.), timeframes for decision-making, and provision for relief from the various land-use, zoning, or building regulations that may constrain the housing for persons of disabilities. The procedure also includes consideration of allowing an increase in habitable floor area of an existing residence to accommodate disabled persons.

The City will also explore the feasibility of offering fee reductions for permit processes that involve retrofitting residences for accessibility purposes.

3.2 Non-governmental Constraints to Housing

In Vernon, limited land is available which would be suitable for the development of housing. The Housing Element inventory of vacant and underutilized sites identifies two potential sites for residential development. The limited sites available for residential development are due to serious environmental conditions which render the majority of sites throughout Vernon unsuitable for residential development. Environmental factors affecting potential residential development are related to hazardous materials storage and processing, background contamination, noxious odors, noise pollution, and truck and railroad traffic generated by the City's pervasive industrial land uses. Inadequate access to residential services is an additional constraint to residential development in the City. These factors contribute to the limited number of sites available for residential development.

Market Constraints

Government Code Section 65583(a)(5) requires communities to include an analysis of potential and actual nongovernmental constraints upon the maintenance, improvement, or development of housing for all income levels, including the availability of financing, the price of land, and the cost of construction.

Based upon information regarding the Vernon commercial and industrial market, recent (2012) sales for large developed industrial sites have been priced at approximately $96 per square foot, depending on location, soil condition, and necessary demolition costs.[4] Effective land costs, which also include remediation required to make old industrial sites developable for residential use, make the cost of land significantly higher. Land costs for vacant sites have been priced at approximately $1.4 million per acre of land ($31 per square foot of vacant land). [5] Additional costs that would also have to be incurred to make land suitable for residential development include testing for ground contamination, remediation for residential development, and providing minimum safety and nuisance improvements. Although these

[4] Loopnet.com Industrial Properties for Sale Search. August 15, 2012. <http://www.loopnet.com>
[5] Loopnet.com Industrial Properties for Sale Search. August 15, 2012. <http://www.loopnet.com>

additional costs might be feasible if the sites were otherwise suitable for residential development, the environmental problems from surrounding uses are so severe that both private market and assisted housing development is precluded on any site in the City.

Because the majority of the City's housing stock is owned and managed by the City, maintenance and improvements are overseen and funded by the City. As such, there are no market constraints on the maintenance of housing in the City. The City actively performs maintenance and repairs on all City-owned buildings.

Hazardous Materials

With its history as an industrial City dating to incorporation in 1903, heavy and prolonged industrial use in Vernon is reflected in the following conditions (refer to Figure H-2):

- A high concentration of both underground (38 facilities with 82 underground storage tanks) and above-ground hazardous material storage tanks throughout the City. There are also 20 leaking underground storage tanks clean-up sites.

Within the City, approximately 570 businesses handle/store hazardous materials. Thirty-eight of these businesses handle high levels of extremely dangerous materials regulated by the State.

- Numerous underground pipelines throughout the City, many carrying potentially explosive materials

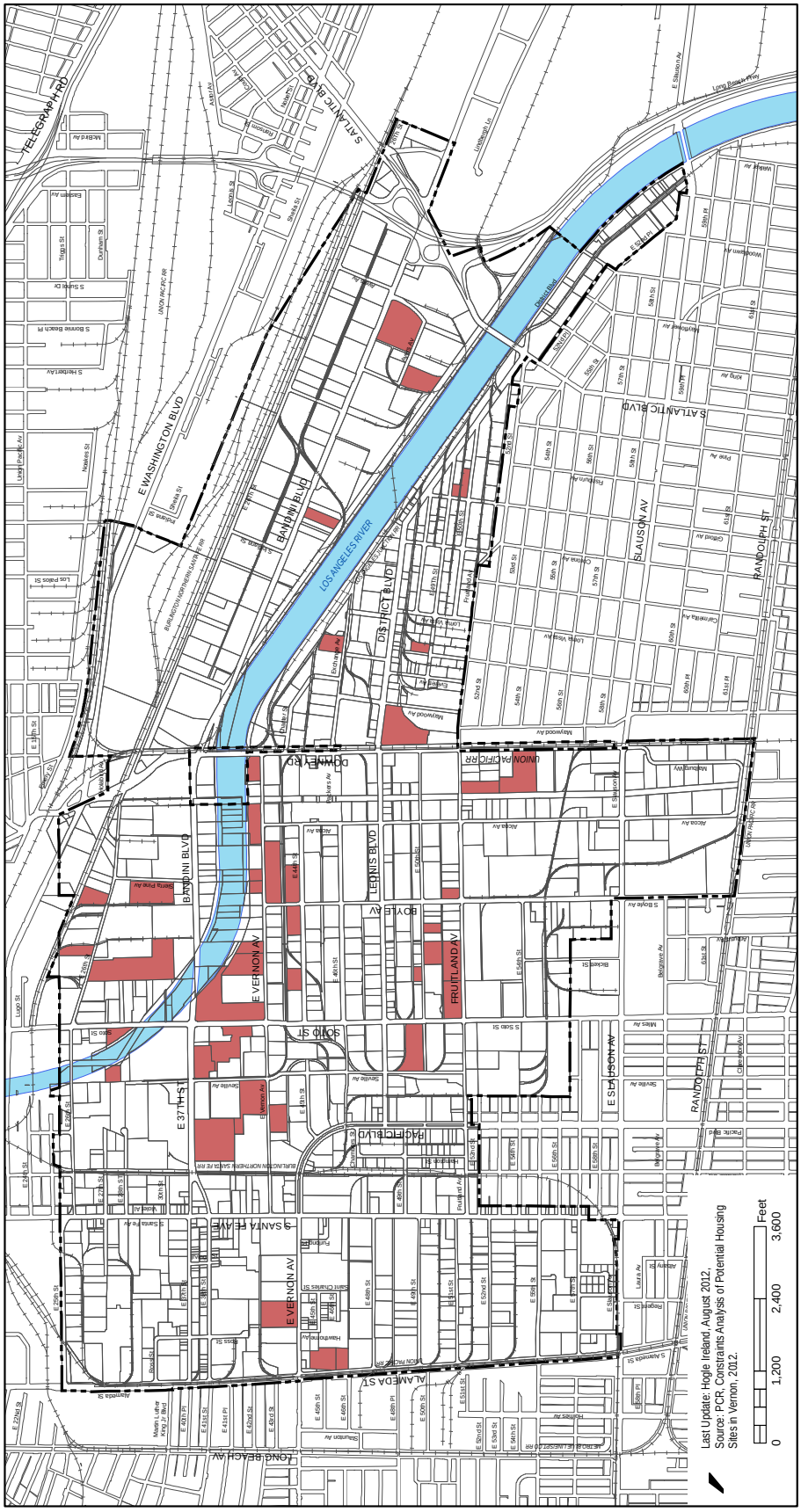

Figure H-2
Highly Toxic Regulated Substances

- Residual soil contamination resulting from prior manufacturing activities on the sites and from previously abandoned chemical waste, open disposal pits, aeration ponds, landfills or petroleum related activities (a high lead content in the soil is common). Six sites in Vernon are on the EPA Superfund List, but none of them are on the National Priority List.

- Approximately 130 miles of railroad track historically treated with herbicides for weed control. Rights-of way show patterns of contamination from spilling, overfilling, or transfer of chemicals.

- Four California EPA-permitted hazardous waste treatment, storage and disposal facilities

- Ten closed landfill sites

Overfilling storage tanks, leaking pipes, and leaking tanks have resulted in residual soil contamination in Vernon. Sixteen sites have been declared Proposition 65 sites (determined by laboratory tests to have excessive carcinogenic or teratogenic chemical contamination). Remediation plans are required to decontaminate the soil.

Due to high background and other petroleum contamination and lack of feasible clean-up options, several sites were remediated with covenants being recorded to advise future purchasers of the presence of contamination. Due to public health concerns, these sites would be unsuitable for future sensitive land uses such as housing.

A significant potential for chemical spills or accidents exists due to the high concentration of underground storage tanks in Vernon. The City's Underground Tank Program has resulted in the removal of over 1,000 tanks. Additionally, where structures were threatened by tank removal, numerous underground tanks were abandoned in place.

Another component of hazardous materials control in Vernon is the "right to know" program. All businesses in the City are required to submit inventories of all hazardous materials used or stored. The City currently has 571 businesses that handle or store hazardous materials. Class C businesses with very high maximum daily volumes (2,001 to 1,000,000 pounds) are the most prevalent, and are located throughout the City. The risk

of upset from businesses handling such high volumes of chemicals, many of which are toxic, is a factor that must be considered in land use planning.

If high levels of certain highly toxic chemicals are present in a business' hazardous materials inventory, these businesses are further regulated through the California Accidental Release Prevention Program (CALARP). Such businesses are required to provide the City's Environmental Health Department with a CALARP report detailing how they plan to prevent the release of such chemicals, as well as presenting a plan for clean-up and notification if there were an accidental release. Such regulated chemicals include ammonia and chlorine gas and could impact a large geographic area if released. As illustrated in Figure H-2, Vernon currently has 38 businesses regulated under CALARP.

The locations of businesses throughout the community with underground storage tanks and/or use or storage of chemical materials indicate that the entire City is subject to chemical spills or accidents, thereby illustrating its inappropriateness for future residential development.

In summary, Vernon's prolonged history as an industrial City has resulted in significant background contamination. Industries that store or use hazardous materials are pervasive throughout the City.

Noxious Odors

Numerous industries that generate noxious odors operate in Vernon, including several focused on the slaughtering and rendering of animals. Overlay districts have been designated in the City's General Plan and Zoning Ordinance to isolate the locations of offensive industrial uses responsible for excessive noxious odors. These overlay districts include a "Slaughtering Overlay" for uses which involve the slaughtering of animals, and a "Rendering Overlay" for the location of rendering facilities. These uses generate significant adverse effects related to odor and release of toxic materials, making residential land uses highly incompatible within their vicinity. Revisions to the Zoning Ordinance will include new standards to address odor control in the Rendering and Slaughtering Overlay Districts.

Noise

As could be expected in a highly industrial city, properties in Vernon are exposed to high levels of noise emanating from stationary industrial activity, as well as from trucks, automobiles, and railroad operations. Numerous companies operate equipment such as large presses and pumps which produce excessive vibrations and generate noise well beyond the level of acceptability for noise-sensitive land uses within the vicinity. Arterial roadways in Vernon have a very high proportion of truck traffic (approximately 30 percent), thereby intensifying noise levels along the City's roadways. In addition, four main railroad lines and a number of switching operations are located in the City, and these generate significant levels of noise day and night.

Figure H-3, derived from the Noise Element, presents noise contours developed for Vernon in 2007 as part of the update to the General Plan. The Zoning Ordinance establishes a one-hour standard of 65 dB(A) between 7:00 A.M. and 10:00 P.M. within 0.10 mile of a school or residence, and a 60 dB(A) standard between 10:00 P.M. and 7:00 A.M. within 0.10 mile of a school or residence.

As evidenced by the contour map, most properties in Vernon are exposed to noise levels of 65 CNEL[6] or greater, and therefore are normally incompatible with sensitive land uses. The noise contours are based on roadway traffic and do not account for stationary noise sources. The probability is that areas mapped as being outside the 65 dB CNEL may in fact experience excessive noise levels from intermittent or other sources.

Truck and Railroad Traffic

Vernon is traversed by approximately 130 miles of railroad tracks, with approximately 96 at-grade and seven grade-separated railroad crossings. As previously mentioned, truck traffic is extremely heavy, comprising nearly one-third of all traffic in the City. These conditions not only contribute to excessive noise levels, but also create safety hazards for pedestrians, particularly a problem for the elderly, persons with disabilities, and families with children.

[6] Community Noise Equivalent Level (CNEL) is a noise measure that accounts for increased human sensitivity to noise at night.

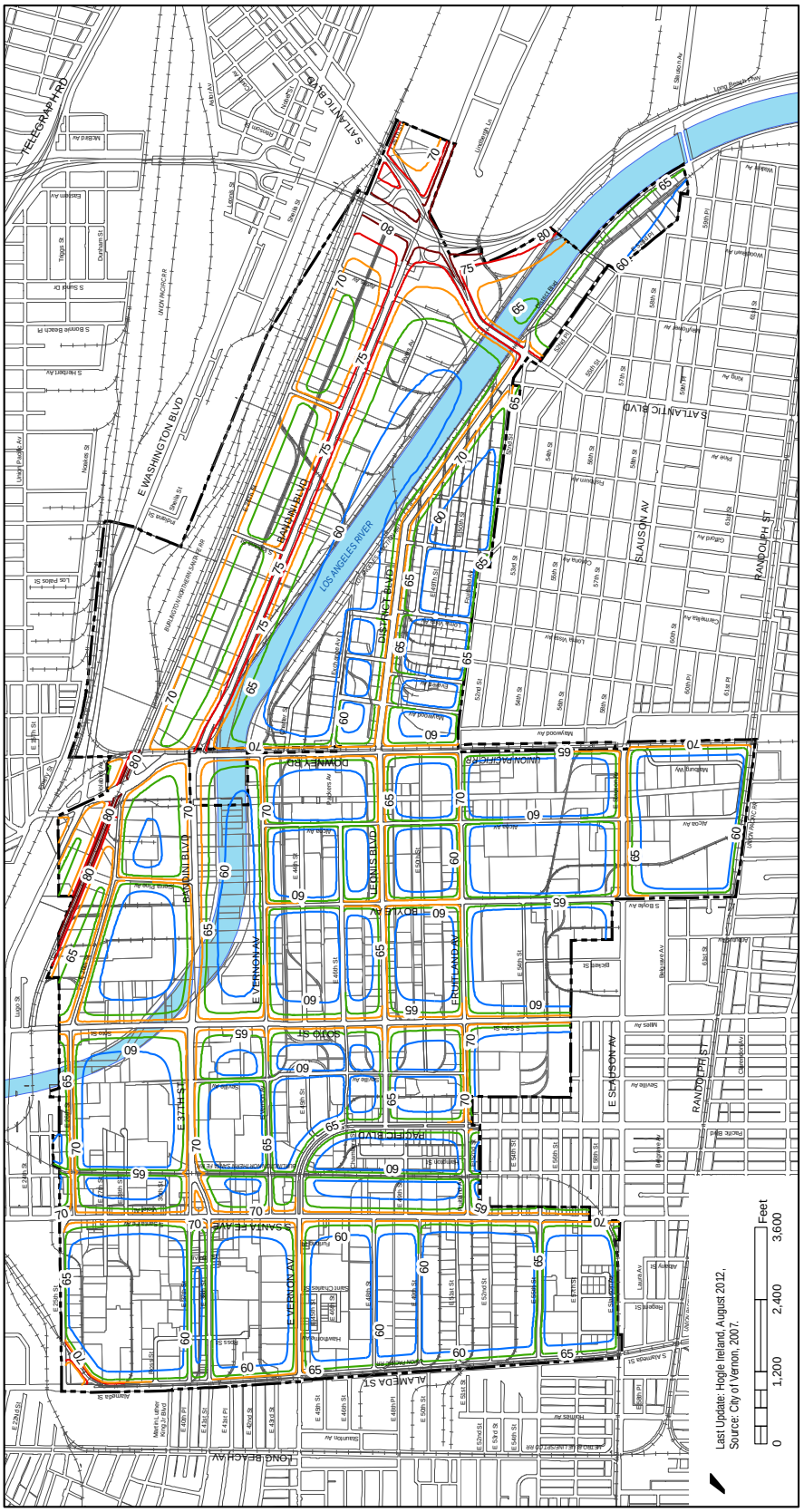

Figure H-3
2007 Noise Contours

Although the construction of the Alameda Corridor has consolidated rail traffic between the Ports of Los Angeles and Long Beach and downtown Los Angeles, no plans have been announced to vacate existing mainline railroads. Some spur tracks have been eliminated, but have been replaced by truck transportation. Also, the rail lines are being considered as routes for future transit rail traffic connecting Orange County to downtown Los Angeles' Union Station. Figure H-4 indicates the principal transportation elements that contribute to noise and pollution in the City of Vernon: the Long Beach Freeway, arterial roadways, collector streets and mainline railroads.

Residential Service Adequacy

Residential development requires the provision of services to meet the needs of the resident population. Services provided at the municipal level include education, recreation, and local retail goods and services. While few such residential services are situated within Vernon, they are generally located within close enough proximity to adequately serve currently existing residences in the City via car or public transportation. However, access to these residential services is along roadways with high levels of track traffic, railroad crossings, and loading activities. These conditions make pedestrian access to residential service facilities difficult and unsafe, particularly for children. However, areas that border the residential neighborhoods of the adjacent city of Maywood are in close proximity to community services, including schools, parks, and local shopping.

Summary of Constraints to Residential Development

Environmental degradation related to hazardous materials and background contamination, noxious odors, noise pollution and truck and railroad traffic present land use conflicts for future residential development in the City. In addition, the lack of adequate, safe access to residential services acts to constrain housing opportunities in Vernon. Although extensive industrial development throughout Vernon has resulted in environmental conditions that limit new housing sites, one or two areas along the City's southern boundary could potentially accommodate a very limited amount of new residential development to meet the City's good governance commitment to the State legislature.

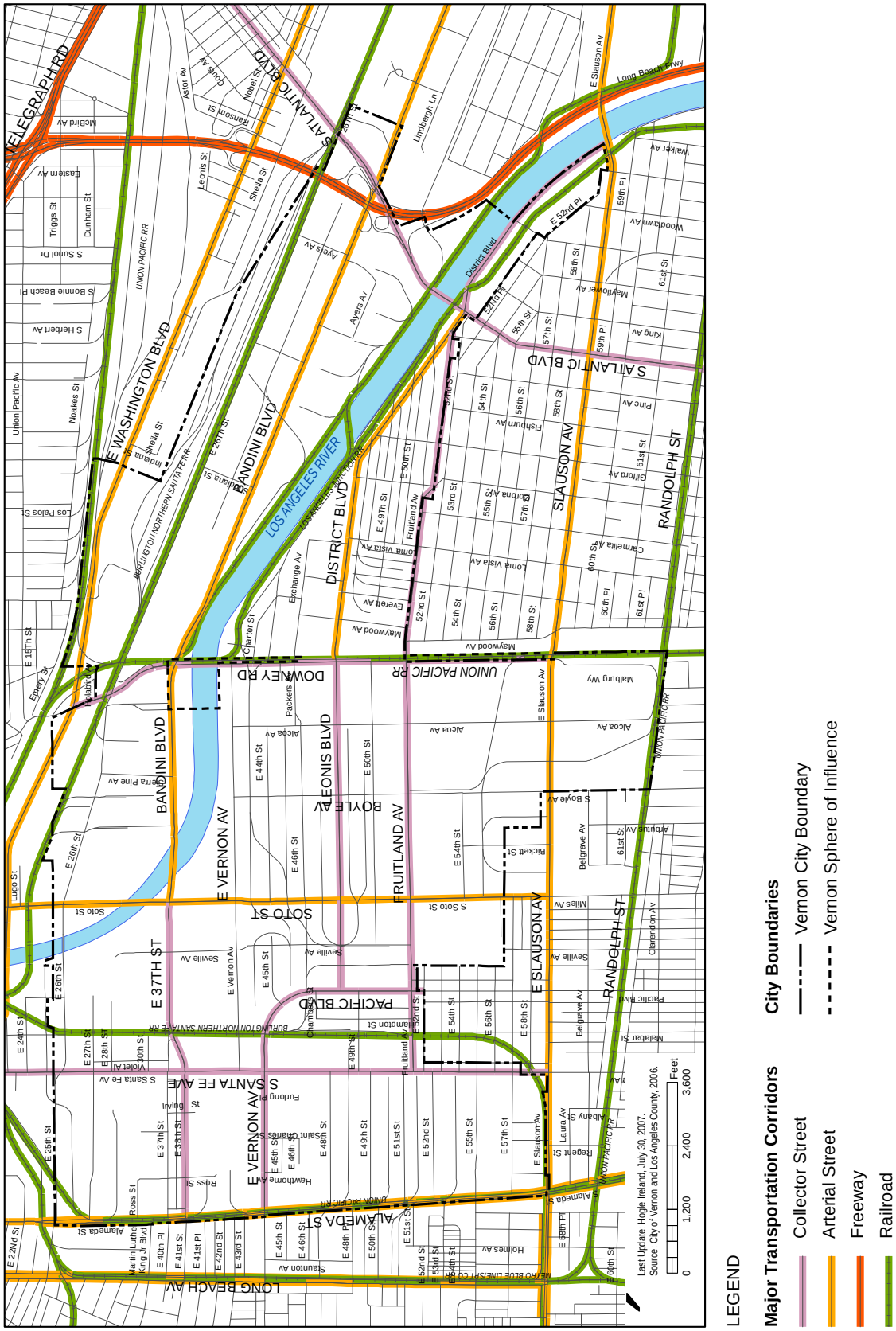

Figure H-4
Major Transportation Corridors

4.0 HOUSING OPPORTUNITIES

As described in Section 3.0, due to inherent incompatibilities between residential uses and the City's heavy industrial environment, future residential development is for the most part not desirable or recommended anywhere in Vernon. The City's policy over many decades has been to discourage development of any new housing units. However, given the City's commitment to the State legislature to expand the voter base, sites must be identified where 30 to 50 new units could be built in Vernon, provided that impacts associated with pervasive industrial operations and extensive site contamination can be wholly addressed, and further provided that housing sites provide new residents with suitable access to schools, open space, and shopping.

Proposed sites for new residential housing would be preferred along Vernon's boundaries, near residential neighborhoods in the adjacent cities of Maywood and Huntington Park. These areas are less impacted from Vernon industrial uses and trucking traffic, but also have good access to services and amenities that support established residential neighborhoods in these adjacent cities.

To assess the current potential for residential development in Vernon as required under Housing Element statutes, staff has identified both vacant properties and underutilized buildings, defined as dilapidated and/or unreinforced masonry structures suitable for demolition.

City staff conducted a field survey of vacant and underutilized properties throughout the entire City. Although some of these sites are located throughout the City, staff subsequently narrowed the potential sites down to areas in the City that are in close proximity to community services and amenities. Potential sites within the Commercial Overlay District were also dismissed due to the potential impacts to residential uses being close to industrial uses. In addition, a key consideration was to ensure that any new residential development would not impede the ability of existing or future adjacent industrial properties to attract a broad range of industrial users, consistent with the City's mission.

To permit housing at the potential sites identified, the City is amending the Land Use Element to establish a Housing Overlay, where residential uses are permitted at a density of up

to 30 units per acre. A similar approach is being used in the Zoning Ordinance to correspond to the General Plan designation. In the Zoning Ordinance, the Housing (-H) overlay district will allow housing development with approval of a Development Agreement. This approach is being used given Vernon's unique character as an industrial city. The Development Agreement will provide for maximum flexibility for development standards while ensuring appropriate features are incorporated into a project to address surrounding industrial businesses in Vernon. The Zoning Ordinance provisions for the Housing overlay district include that all Development Agreements, at a minimum address those standards outlined on pages 20 and 21 of this element.

Potential Residential Housing Sites

Two vacant sites and underutilized properties were considered to have some limited potential for residential development, and one site was identified as having the potential to accommodate emergency housing. These sites are described in Table H-7. The following discussion evaluates these sites in terms of environmental safety and residential service adequacy.

Table H-7
Potential Housing Sites

Site No.	Location	Zoning	Maximum Density	Assumed Density	Acreage	Total Units
Potential Sites for Housing						
A	4675 E. 52nd Drive	General Industry (I)	30 du/ac	24 du/ac	2.06	49
B	4459 E. 52nd Drive	General Industry (I)	30 du/ac	24 du/ac	0.52	12
				Total	**2.58**	**61**

Site A

Site A is a 2.1-acre site located along the northern side of 52nd Drive and owned by the City of Vernon. The south side of 52nd Drive is a residential neighborhood located in Maywood. The site is approximately 500 feet southeast of the Atlantic Boulevard and District Boulevard intersection, and several hundred feet south of the Los Angeles River. Site A is entirely vacant. North of the site is a railroad line, and to the southeast is Sanchez Upholstery Supply. Cal SDM, Inc., a custom metal

fabrication shop and steam boiler company, is located to the northeast, across from the railroad tracks.

Site B

Site B is a half-acre site located in the southwestern portion of Vernon, near the intersection of District Boulevard, Fruitland Avenue, and Cudahy Avenue. The site is bounded by 52nd Street to the south, Fruitland Avenue to the north, and Cudahy Avenue to the east. The property shares three of its property boundaries with the City of Maywood. The site includes a dilapidated warehouse structure built in the 1930s that occupies nearly 50 percent of the site. The remaining site includes an asphalt area overgrown with weeds. Site B is surrounded by Pacific Coast Chemical (in Vernon) to the north, a parking area (in Maywood) to the west, residential uses (in Maywood) to the south, a union assembly hall (in Maywood) to the east, and Maywood Elementary School (in Maywood) to the southeast.

Potential Emergency Shelter Sites

Site C

Site C is a 1.6-acre site located on the southeast corner of Alameda Street and 25th Street, immediately east of the Alameda Corridor. The site is primarily vacant and includes the remains of a building foundation. The site is bounded by produce distributors to the south, a pallet storage business to the southeast, a warehouse building to the east, and the Alameda Corridor to the west and north.

Environmental Safety

Environmental conditions in Vernon are generally incompatible with residential uses. However, the sites chosen for potential residential development and emergency shelters are located along the City's periphery. The land uses surrounding the sites listed in Table H-9 include vacant lots, residential uses, a chemical distributor, an upholstery supply warehouse, an assembly hall, and an elementary school.

All of the sites are exposed to truck traffic due to their locations near Alameda Street, Atlantic Boulevard, and District Boulevard. Site B is located near the intersection of 52nd Street and District Boulevard, which are both Collectors. Site C is located at the intersection at Alameda Street, an Arterial, and

25th Street, a Collector. Site C is located along the Alameda Corridor, which includes a below-ground, triple-tracked rail line.

The Noise Contour Map (Figure H-3) shows that 2007 noise levels exceed 70 CNEL all along the Alameda Corridor and I-710 freeway, indicating residential uses are normally incompatible and should be discouraged. This would primarily affect the Site C, a potential location for emergency shelters. Site A and B are exposed to noise levels below 70 CNEL.

Noxious odors are primarily related to numerous industries in Vernon involved in the slaughtering and rendering of animals, geographically concentrated within the General Plan Slaughtering and Rendering Overlay Districts east of Soto Street. All of the potential housing sites (Sites A, B, and C) are located more than one-half mile from these districts, and will not likely be subjected to the odor impacts, depending on prevailing wind conditions.

City records indicate that all three potential housing and emergency shelter sites are exposed to levels of hazardous materials from underground tanks, soil contamination, and chemicals used for operations in the adjacent area. With approximately 570 businesses currently using or storing hazardous materials, over 80 underground storage tanks, and four hazardous waste treatment facilities, the presence of hazardous materials and hazardous waste is evident throughout the City. A total of 37 businesses utilize regulated substances containing highly toxic materials (CALARP). If an accidental release were to occur at any of these 37 facilities, evacuation would be required for a large geographic area. Table H-8 and Table H-9 describe the locational characteristics of each site and the nearby sources of toxic materials.

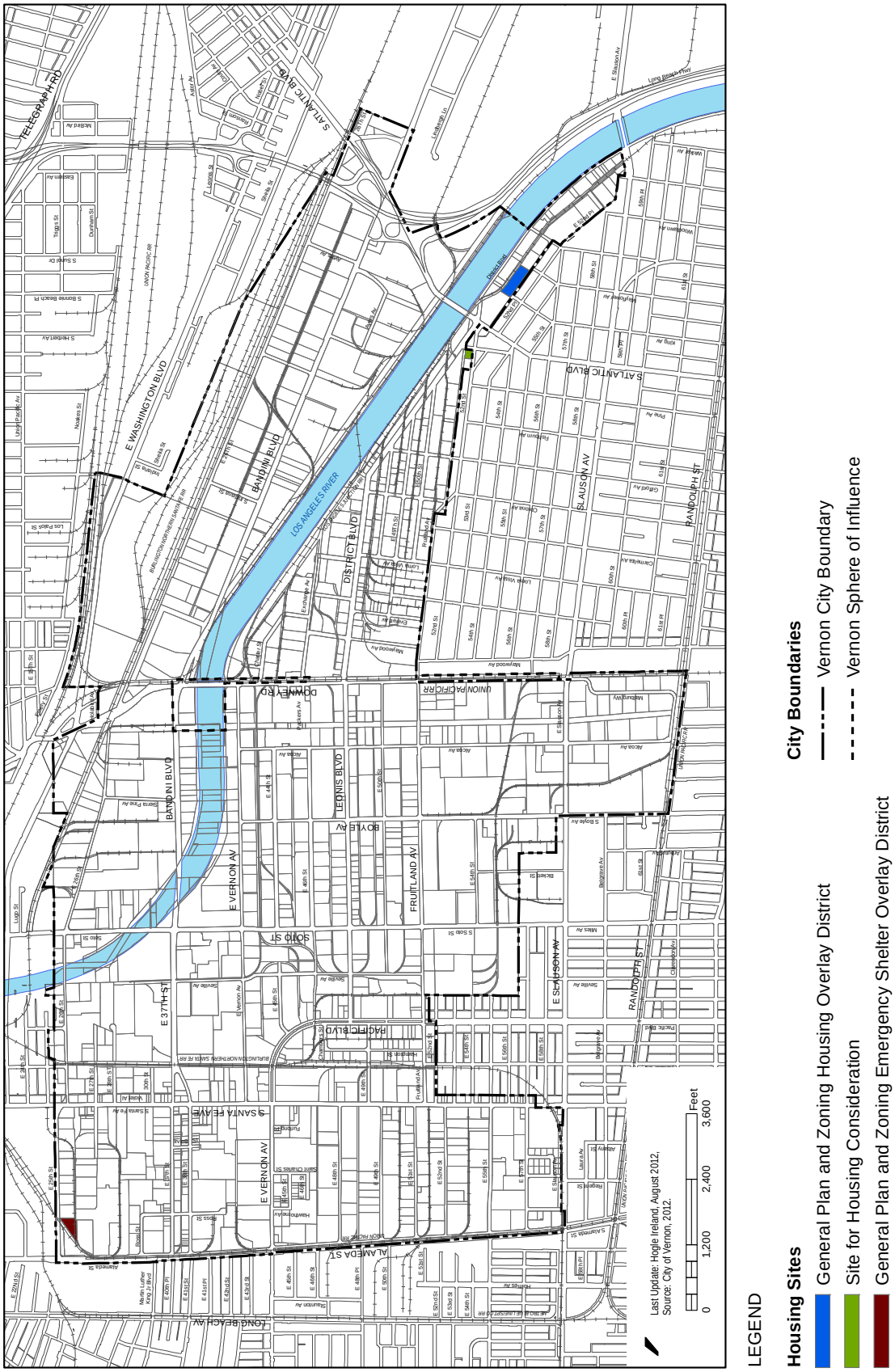

Figure H-5
Housing Sites

Table H-8
Characteristics of Vacant and Underutilized Sites in Commercial/Industrial Zones

Site No.	Assessor Parcel #	Location	Site Size (Acres)	GP Designation and Zone	Current Site Improvements
Potential Sites for Housing					
A	6314-002-900	4675 E. 52nd Drive	2.06	Industrial	Vacant land
B	6313-022-030	4459 E. 52nd Drive	0.52	Industrial	Dilapidated warehouse building (built in the 1930s)
Potential Sites for Emergency Shelters					
C	6302-009-039	25th Street	1.61	Industrial	Vacant land

Source: City of Vernon, Community Services Department.

Table H-9
Characteristics of Vacant and Underutilized Sites in Commercial/Industrial Zones

Site No.	Surrounding Land Uses	Truck Traffic	Noise	Odor	Railroad Hazards	Nearby Sources of Toxic Materials Released into Air (within 1/2 mile)
Potential Sites for Housing						
A	Residential, small assembly hall, Maywood Elementary School, parking lot, chemical distributor	Moderate	Low	Low	Low	Trichloroethane, Certain Glycol Ethers, Copper Compounds, Lead Compounds, Methyl Ethyl Ketone, Methyl Isobutyle Ketone, N-Butyl Alcohol, Toluene, Xylene (Mixed Isomers)
B	Residential, vacant lot, railroad tracks, upholstery supply warehouse	Moderate	Low	Low	Moderate	Ethylene Glycol, Ethylene Oxide, Propylene Oxide
Potential Sites for Emergency Shelters						
C	Alameda Corridor, pallet storage yard, produce distributer, material goods distribution warehouse	Moderate	Moderate	Moderate	High	Lead Compounds

Source: City of Vernon, Community Services Department and Environmental Protection Agency, Toxic Release Inventory, 2012.
http://www.epa.gov/enviro/facts/tri/search.html

Residential Service Adequacy

Existing infrastructure in the City—including water, sewer, and all dry utilities—is sufficient to accommodate existing housing in the City, and could accommodate development on the sites discussed in this inventory. However, new residential development in Vernon would also require that the new residents be provided basic residential services. The services provided at the local level include education, recreation, and grocery shopping. The estimated distances to these facilities from each site are presented in Table H-10. The California Tax Credit Allocation Committee (TCAC) has established criteria for appropriate distances between residential uses and services, and provides the basis for evaluating residential service adequacy in Vernon.

TCAC's distance criteria for public elementary, middle and high schools is a maximum of one-half mile from residential development. The nearest elementary school to potential residential Sites A and B sites is Maywood Elementary in Maywood; the nearest middle school is Nimitz Middle School in Huntington Park; and the nearest high school is Maywood Academy High School in Maywood. As indicated in Table H-9, both Sites A and B meet the one-half mile locational criteria for elementary schools.

The TCAC has established a maximum one-mile distance criteria within inner city areas for the distance between residential development and a full-scale supermarket where grocery staples, fresh meat, and produce are sold. The closest full service grocery store to the potential residential sites in Vernon is a Food 4 Less, located on Slauson Avenue in Maywood. Review of Table H-9 indicates that both Sites A and B meets are located within one-mile of a Food 4 Less in Maywood.

The TCAC's locational criteria for public parks is a maximum of one-half mile from residential development. The nearest park to Sites A and B is Maywood Park at the intersection of 58th Street and Heliotrope Avenue in the City of Maywood. Adjacent to the park is the Maywood Activity Center, which includes a community center, gym, and indoor basketball court. Site A meets the one-half mile locational criteria for parks facility (Maywood Park). Site B is located approximately one mile away from Maywood Park.

Table H-10
Residential Service Characteristics of Unimproved and Underutilized Sites in Commercial/Industrial Zone

Site No.	Nearest Elementary School	Nearest Jr. High School	Nearest High School	Nearest Grocery Store	Nearest Park/Rec. Center
A	½ mile	1 ½ miles	1 mile	¾ mile	½ mile
B	500 feet	1 ½ miles	1 mile	½ mile	1 mile

Source: City of Vernon, Community Services Department.

Both Sites A and B are located across the street from residential uses in the City of Maywood. Both sites are within walking distance to Maywood Elementary School and less than two miles from a junior high school, high school, grocery store, and park and community center. Due to the close proximity to Maywood's residential neighborhoods, it makes if easier for children and adults to walk to residential services and avoid the truck traffic and railroad crossings typically found in the center of Vernon.

Summary of Housing Opportunities

Although future residential development is inappropriate in Vernon due to its pervasive industrial character, the shift in policy to allow for an increase in the City's population to enhance government accountability has led the City to identify two sites for potential housing development and one site for emergency shelters. The potential sites are suited for residential use since they are generally close to schools and groceries stores located in adjacent communities. The number of residential units that would be could be built on these two sites will be able to accommodate the City's RHNA of two future housing units.

The following describes the City's quantified objectives for the 2014-2021 planning period by income group. Since most of the City-owned residential dwelling units have undergone some rehabilitation since 2007, the City anticipates rehabilitating only seven City-owned residential units. As the remaining seven that were not renovated become vacant, the City will consider rehabilitating these units. (New HVAC systems were installed in these units in recent years.) The five privately owned residential units are considered in good condition and not in need of major repair; therefore, for this planning period, no rehabilitation of dwelling units are planned. In quantifying dwelling unit

production goals in Vernon, the City wants to conserve and preserve all existing 31 housing units in the City. The City would like to produce up to 49 dwelling units, where at least two are for low and very low income categories.

Table H-11
Quantified Objectives for 2014-2021

Category	Very Low Income	Low Income	Moderate Income	Above Moderate Income
New Construction	2	47	0	0
Rehabilitated	0	0	7	0
Conserved	0	0	31	0

5.0 HOUSING PLAN

The Housing Plan for the Vernon Housing Element sets forth goals, policies, and implementing programs to address the housing needs particular to the City of Vernon. Prior to presenting the goals, policies, and programs, an evaluation of the programs in the previous Housing Element (2000) is presented as a foundation for developing the Plan for the 2008-2014 Housing Element.

5.1 Evaluation of Previous Accomplishments

State law (California Government Code Section 65588(a)) requires each jurisdiction to review its housing element as frequently as appropriate and evaluate:

- The appropriateness of the housing goals, objectives, and policies in contributing to the attainment of the state housing goal;
- The effectiveness of the housing element in attainment of the community's housing goals and objectives; and
- The progress in implementation of the housing element.

Table H-12 shows the progress the City made in implementing the 2008-2014 Housing Programs. An analysis of the effectiveness and continued appropriateness of these programs is provided, and the goals, policies, and programs from the 2008-2014 Housing Element have been updated to reflect this evaluation.

The major focus of housing policy in Vernon is to preserve the existing housing stock in the City and to ensure that existing housing in the City is well maintained. A secondary goal is to identify a site or sites suitable for new housing pursuant to the City's good governance initiative, and a site that can accommodate emergency shelters pursuant to the requirements of SB2.

The Housing Element addresses the health and safety of residents living on or adjacent to industrial sites. The City actively discourages the occupation or construction of dwelling units on or near industrial sites since activities on industrial sites includes operations potentially hazardous to residents. In addition, all units are required to have adequate insulation, air conditioning, approved air and water filtration systems, and sound insulation to

reduce potentially adverse air quality and noise-related impacts from adjacent industrial uses.[7]

[7] Vernon does not require an adequate sites implementation/rezone program per Government Code Section 65584.09; the City's RHNA of zero required no sites during the previous planning period.

Table H-11
Housing Element Accomplishments for 2008-2014 Planning Period

Policy/Program		Accomplishments
Goal H-1: Ensure that all housing units are maintained in decent, safe, and sanitary condition.		
Policy 1.1	Continue to enforce all relevant building and zoning codes to ensure that all residential units are adequately maintained.	**Progress:** The City's Department of Community Services is responsible for code enforcement activities. Due to the limited number of units in the City, staff can accurately monitor all units and has determined that all are in good repair. **Effectiveness:** The City has been effective in maintaining housing conditions in the City, and responds to complaints as needed. By 2008, the City completed fully renovating 19 City-owned dwelling units and added heating, ventilation, and air conditioning (HVAC) systems and upgraded the insulation in seven other units. **Continued Appropriateness:** Code enforcement is an important component that ensures that the limited number of units in the City remains in good repair.
Program 1	*Maintenance of City-Owned Residences*	**Progress:** The City actively pursues maintenance on City-owned units, providing renovations on vacated units and repairs as needed on occupied units. **Effectiveness:** The City successfully completed the renovation of 19 units in 2008. Renovations included adding HVAC systems, and providing insulation for sound protection and energy conservation purposes. **Continued Appropriateness:** The City owns a majority of residences in Vernon. The City is fully involved with the maintenance and upkeep of the properties, and will continue to provide these services on other units, as they are needed. All remodeled units will be required to provide HVAC systems and sound insulation protection, such as dual paned windows.
Program 2	*Code Enforcement*	
Policy 1.2	Require any remodeled residential units to be equipped with air conditioning and sound insulation to protect residents from exposure to adverse environmental conditions.	
Policy 1.3	Mitigate any residential displacement impacts occurring as a result of residential demolition.	**Progress:** No residential units were demolished during the last planning period. **Effectiveness:** The City is committed to maintaining the existing housing units in the City. **Continued Appropriateness:** The City's primary housing goal is to preserve the existing housing units. The City is committed to mitigating residential displacement impacts, should they occur.

Table H-11
Housing Element Accomplishments for 2008-2014 Planning Period

Policy/Program		Accomplishments
Goal H-2: Maintain all existing dwelling units within the City.		
Policy 2.1	Provide for the retention of existing residential units in the City that are economically and physically sound.	**Progress:** All units in the City were retained during the last planning period. **Effectiveness:** The 31 residential units in the City have all been determined to be in good condition. **Continued Appropriateness:** The major focus of housing policy prior to 2012 in Vernon was to preserve the existing housing stock and maintain safe and viable housing units.
Policy 2.2	The City will accommodate the needs of disabled residents through establishment of a reasonable accommodation ordinance or procedures for existing units.	**Progress:** As of 2012, there are no assisted housing units in the City. The City did not allow new housing prior to 2012. **Effectiveness:** While there are no federally or state-assisted units in Vernon, the City owns 26 of the 31 housing units in Vernon. These units are rented at levels that are affordable to very low-income tenants. City policy focuses on retention and maintenance of the 31 existing housing units, with no plans for removal of any units, City-owned or otherwise. **Continued Appropriateness:** While there is no assisted housing in the City that requires monitoring, the City continued this program in the 2008 Housing Element, discussing assisted housing to address Government Code Section 65583(a)(8).
Program 3	*Preservation of Assisted Housing*	
Goal H-3: Continue to promote the availability of a range in existing unit types and sizes, and equal housing opportunity in the City's housing market on the basis of age, race, sex, marital status, ethnic background, source of income, and other factors.		
Policy 3.1	Prohibit discrimination in the availability of existing housing.	**Progress:** The City has not been advised of any discriminatory practices that have occurred in regards to the availability of housing. The City will take a proactive approach in enforcing antidiscrimination laws. **Effectiveness**: The City has received no complaints regarding any discriminatory actions and will continue to enforce all fair housing law. **Continued Appropriateness:** Prior to 2012, the City's Zoning Ordinance did not allow the development of new housing in the City. As such, housing discrimination related to the siting of housing was not an issue. This program was updated in 2008 to address a range of fair housing concerns related to the existing housing stock, including access for persons with disabilities or special needs, providing greater access to equal housing opportunity.
Program 4	*Housing Opportunities for Residents with Special Needs*	
Program 5	*Equal Housing Opportunity*	

5.2 Goals and Policies

GOAL H-1:
Ensure that all housing units are maintained in decent, safe, and sanitary condition.

POLICY H-1.1: Continue to enforce all relevant building and zoning codes to ensure that all residential units are adequately maintained.

POLICY H-1.2: Require any new or residential units undergoing a major alteration to be equipped with air filtration systems (such as HVAC systems) and sounds insulation (such as dual-paned windows) to protect residents from exposure to adverse environmental conditions.

POLICY H-1.3: Mitigate any residential displacement impacts occurring as a result of residential demolition.

GOAL H-2:
Maintain all existing dwelling units within the City.

POLICY H-2.1: Provide for the retention of existing residential units in the City that are economically and physically sound.

POLICY H-2.2: Continue to accommodate the needs of disabled residents through the adopted reasonable accommodation procedure.

GOAL H-3:
Create opportunities for the development of new housing in areas of the City that have the least potential for adverse impacts associated with established industrial uses and truck routes. Locate such new housing nearby community services.

POLICY H-3.1: Implement the Housing Overlay Zone via the Zoning Ordinance and Zoning map to allow for a limited amount of new housing construction.

POLICY H-3.2: Strategically locate sites for new housing so as to minimize noise, vibration, smoke, noxious gases, glare, heat, dust, odors, air pollution, and other adverse impacts associated with industrial uses, slaughtering and rendering uses, businesses that

release toxic materials, and trucking and railroad facilities and routes.

POLICY H-3.3: Encourage development of residential uses in strategic proximity to schools, recreational facilities, commercial areas, parks and other public spaces, and transit routes.

GOAL H-4:
Continue to promote the availability of a range in existing unit types and sizes, and equal housing opportunity in the City's housing market on the basis of age, race, sex, marital status, ethnic background, source of income, homelessness, physical disabilities, and other factors.

POLICY H-4.1: Prohibit discrimination in the availability of existing and new housing.

POLICY H-4.2: Address the housing needs of special populations and extremely low-income households through emergency shelters, transitional housing, supportive housing, and single-room occupancy units.

5.3 Programs

As discussed in this Element, the Vernon City Council has adopted several good governance reform measures, including a commitment to at least double the housing stock within the City. Residential development is will be permitted at strategic locations in Vernon. SCAG adopted a future housing need of two units in Vernon as part of the 2014-2021 Regional Housing Needs Assessment, recognizing that although incompatibility of locating housing in such a heavy industrial environment may not be appropriate, there may be certain areas in Vernon where housing may be suitable. As such, programs to increase the City's housing stock are included below. As indicated in the goals and policies, the primary goals of the Housing Element is to ensure the maintenance of the City's existing housing stock and to allow for limited new housing opportunities. The following programs will implement these goals.

Program 1: Maintenance of City-Owned Residences

The City owns 26 of the total 31 housing units in Vernon, all of which are rented. The City is responsible for the maintenance and upkeep of these units. As indicated in Section 2.0, Housing Needs Assessment, of this Housing Element, all of the City-owned units

were determined to be in good repair. In addition, in recent years the City initiated an extensive project on all City-owned units to ensure the continued longevity of existing units. In 2007, the City renovated 12 units, and an additional 14 units were renovated between 2008 and 2011. Since 2007, all 26 units have undergone renovations. The City will continue to provide maintenance to these units, thus ensuring upkeep for the majority of Vernon's housing stock.

Responsible Agency: Department of Community Services
Project Funding: Departmental Budget
Timeframe: Ongoing as needed.

Program 2: Code Enforcement

Of the five non-City owned units located in Vernon, none was determined by the City to be in need of substantial rehabilitation. Due to the limited number of privately owned units in the City, a code enforcement program would have limited application. However, it is nonetheless imperative that residential units be adequately maintained for health, safety, and aesthetic concerns. Community Services staff is active in the community and will enforce the City's code to eliminate and prevent unsafe conditions in residential units. Community Services staff responds quickly to code enforcement complaints in Vernon. Community Services staff is active in the community and will actively monitor all residential units in the City to ensure the health and safety of City residents. Staff will respond to reports of code violations within the week that they are reported, and enforce applicable laws to ensure the safety and preservation of all housing units within the City.

Responsible Agency: Department of Community Services
Project Funding: Departmental Budget
Timeframe: Ongoing

Program 3: Preservation of Assisted Housing

State law (Chapter 1451, Statutes of 1989) requires the City to identify, analyze and propose programs within the Housing Element to address the potential conversion of all federal, State and locally assisted housing developments eligible to change to non-low-income use during the next ten-year period (2008-2018).

Government Code Section 65583(8) defines assisted housing developments as the following: "multi-family rental housing that

receives governmental assistance under federal programs listed in subdivision (a) of Section 65863.10, state and local multi-family revenue bond programs, local redevelopment programs, the federal Community Development Block Grant Program, or local in-lieu fees. Assisted housing developments shall also include multi-family rental units that were developed pursuant to a local inclusionary housing program or used to qualify for a density bonus pursuant to Section 65915-65917."

Vernon has no assisted housing in its jurisdiction, as confirmed by City and State HCD staff, and through review of "Inventory of Federally Subsidized Low-Income Rental Units at Risk of Conversion" (California Housing Partnership Corporation), and the "Use of Housing Revenue Bond Proceeds - 1994" (California Debt Advisory Commission). As a result, there is no housing at risk of losing its subsidized status that must be considered in the Housing Element.

Responsible Agency: Department of Community Services
Project Funding: Departmental Budget
Timeframe: Ongoing

Program 4: Housing Opportunities for Residents with Special Needs

The Fair Housing Act, as amended in 1988, requires that cities and counties provide reasonable accommodation to rules, policies, practices, and procedures where such accommodation may be necessary to afford individuals with disabilities equal housing opportunities. The City has adopted procedures in their Zoning Ordinance for housing for persons with disabilities and will provide information to residents through the City's website.

Responsible Agency: Department of Community Services
Project Funding: Departmental Budget
Timeframe: Ongoing

Program 5: Priority Water and Sewer Services

In accordance with Government Code Section 65589.7, after the Vernon Housing Element is adopted by City Council, a copy will be immediately delivered to all public agencies or private entities that provide water or sewer services to properties within Vernon.

Responsible Agency: Department of Community Services
Project Funding: Departmental Budget
Timeframe: 2013

Program 6: Provision of Adequate Sites

The Land Use Element Housing Overlay policy allows up to 60 residential dwelling units citywide, which is more than adequate to meet RHNA objectives for all income levels (two units). According to the sites inventory capacity analysis, the 2.1-acre housing site (Site A) located at 4675 52nd Drive is estimated to accommodate up to 49 units. The 0.5-acre housing site (Site B) located at 4675 52nd Drive can accommodate up to 12 units. Adequate zoning is in place for Site A, via the Housing Overlay. Site B may be considered as a potential housing site in the future. Together, these two sites can accommodate the total dwelling units identified under the Housing Overlay policy, not to exceed 60 units.

As described on pages 37-38, the Housing Overlay allows residential uses with approval of a Development Agreement. This permitting process is applied to all residential applications and is considered necessary given Vernon's unique industrial character. Through a Development Agreement that City can assure that measures will be in place to create the best possible housing solutions. The Development Agreement must at a minimum ensure that adequate emergency access is provided, that the development includes suitable open space amenities, and parking be provided to meet the anticipated needs of residents.

On the two sites where the Housing Overlay applies, Zoning Ordinance regulations will allow for densities of up to 30 units per acre. The overlay exclusively allows for residential uses (no mixed use). Given the size of the largest site, at least 16 units can be constructed, per Section 65583.2(h) and (i) of the Government Code. The Housing Overlay is being adopted in conjunction with adoption of the Housing Element.

The site on 52nd Street is to be developed with units all affordable to lower-income households, with the developer seeking Low Income Housing Tax Credit funding. In the event this development project does not move forward, the City will continue to seek a developer who can provide similar housing. While no density bonus has been deemed necessary to incentivize development of affordable housing, the City recognizes that developers can request a density bonus pursuant to State law. Because land use policy will not allow for additional housing development beyond the two sites identified in this element and given that densities are sufficient to encourage affordable housing

projects, the City does not see the need to adopt specific regulations for density bonuses. Thus, the City Zoning Ordinance will be amended simply to reference State law.

With regard to housing persons in need of emergency shelter, in conjunction with adoption of the Housing Element the City has adopted Zoning Ordinance to establish an Emergency Housing overlay zone. This zone, applied to a large property in the northwest portion of Vernon, allows emergency shelters by right (see Figure H-5). The property is over five acres in size and can accommodate one or more shelters. Like all other properties in Vernon, the site is surrounded by industrial uses. However, this particular site is easily accessible from transit routes along Santa Fe Avenue and Alameda Street. The site is currently vacant and owned by the Alameda Corridor Transportation Agency.

Responsible Agency: Department of Community Services
Project Funding: Departmental Budget
Timeframe: Development of housing to accommodate the RHNA by 2015; amend Zoning Ordinance by May 2013 to include reference to State law regarding density bonus provisions; immediate availability of Emergency Housing Overlay site for any application for such use.

Program 7: Equal Housing Opportunity

The Vernon City Clerk's Department is responsible for referring equal housing opportunity questions. Any questions or concerns raised by residents will be accepted by the City Clerk and brought before City Council for resolution. In order to disseminate information on fair housing resources more broadly, the City will place a link on the City's website that refers to the Housing Rights Center Frequently Asked Questions webpage on housing discrimination.

Also, persons in need of transitional and supportive housing can readily be accommodated within any housing development proposed in the Housing Overlay zone. In conjunction with adoption of this Housing Element, the City has amended the Zoning Ordinance to define transitional and supportive housing as a standard residential uses of property permitted within the Housing Overlay zone. Any proposal for such housing is subject to the same permitting requirements (approval of a Development Agreement to define the site plan and development parameters) as any other type of housing.

Responsible Agency: Department of Community Services; City Clerk
Project Funding: Departmental Budget
Timeframe: June 2013

5.3 Redevelopment Agency Dissolution

On December 29, 2011 the California Supreme Court issued a ruling upholding AB 1X 26, legislation that called for the elimination of hundreds of local redevelopment agencies in the state, including the Redevelopment Agency for the City of Vernon.

The City of Vernon elected to become the Successor Agency of the former Vernon Redevelopment Agency and established an Oversight Board. As the Successor Agency, the Oversight Board oversees certain fiscal management of former Agency fund. This includes carrying out existing projects that are in various stages of development.

The City was not required to set aside 20 percent of the tax increate collected in the Industrial Redevelopment Project Area to be used by the Agency to increase the City's supply of affordable housing, because it determined that were was no housing need in the City. Therefore, there are no existing housing set-aside funds for the Industrial Redevelopment Project Area.

VERNON GENERAL PLAN

SAFETY ELEMENT

SAFETY ELEMENT

1.0 PURPOSE AND FOCUS

1.1 Purpose

The Safety Element identifies the natural and man-made hazards which affect public safety in the City, and establishes policies the City will pursue to minimize associated risks to life and property. Because these hazards can have significant economic consequences, identifying, understanding, and guarding against these hazards greatly benefits those who own property, work, and live in Vernon.

1.2 Focus

Several different types of events could create critical situations affecting public safety in Vernon. Generally, public safety risks can be divided into two categories: environmental events and events arising from human actions. In Vernon, environmental events include earthquakes and flooding. Human-caused hazards such as chemical spills, hazardous materials release, and train, truck or plane accidents have greater potential to cause upset in Vernon given its industrial

nature. Increasingly in all cities in the nation, the threat of terrorist activity represents a new public safety concern requiring special treatment. This Element addresses each of these potential safety risks and discusses how the City will respond to each. Also addressed are evacuation routes necessary to move people away from hazardous conditions.

Vernon Fire Station #3

2.0 IDENTIFYING AND GUARDING AGAINST HAZARDS

Four natural hazards of particular importance that could affect Vernon are identified in the Natural Hazard Mitigation Plan. Earthquakes represent a significant threat, with the associated strong ground shaking and possibility of liquefaction in some areas. Flooding is a concern as well, with Los Angeles River as the major source. Unusual rainfall amounts may also cause flooding if storm drain facilities are inadequate to accommodate the resulting high volume of runoff. Inundation from dam failure is a remote possibility but must nevertheless be addressed. The fourth natural hazard is a significant windstorm event. Southern California is occasionally raked by moderate to severe wind events called "Santa Ana winds" that blow hot, dry air into the Los Angeles Basin from the desert. These winds tend to be most severe downwind of mountain passes, but can affect the urban flatlands as well. Wind speeds of up to 65 miles per hour are not uncommon, and local gusts may substantially exceed these speeds.

Since Vernon and its surrounding areas are completely urbanized, with little natural vegetation, there is almost no risk of damage from wildfires. Urban fire protection is discussed in Section 2.2 of this Element.

Human-caused hazards include the risk of explosion or leaks from stored chemical and petroleum products, or from derailment or collision of railcars or trucks carrying hazardous chemical or materials. Chemical spills are also a concern because of the industrial nature of the uses in Vernon. Fire hazards are prevalent due to the nature of the industrial uses and intensely developed character of properties. A fire during a windstorm, which combines both a natural and a human-caused hazard, can represent a serious threat to public safety.

Some events are particularly difficult to anticipate and prepare a programmed response for. Since the 9/11 attack on New York's World Trade Center, the threat of terrorist activity has been of major concern to the nation and the world. As with both natural and human-caused hazards, a terrorist event could occur outside Vernon yet directly impact the City. Programs to deal with such an event require a cooperative approach with regional agencies.

Activities such as a labor strike or other demonstration usually present a low risk to public safety, but public safety personnel must plan for responses to these situations to maintain public order.

Railcars carrying materials through Vernon

The City's Standardized Emergency Management System (SEMS) Multi-Hazard Functional Plan (MHFP) discusses and contains programs and plans for emergency responses to the safety concerns described above. This document includes pre-emergency preparedness plans and programs for mutual aid between organizations for virtually any emergency situation.

2.1 Natural Hazards

Seismic Event

Southern California is one of the most seismically active regions of the United States, given its location at the edge of the Pacific Plate. Although no major faults have been identified by Alquist-Priolo statewide mapping efforts as crossing through Vernon, the many fault systems that traverse Los Angeles County and the broader region~~–~~, along with unmapped blind thrusts, have the potential to cause damage in the City in the event of an earthquake. Figure S-1 identifies regional fault systems, including major faults within 20 miles of the City. Severe ground shaking can cause damage to buildings with corresponding threats of injury ~~of~~ or loss of life.

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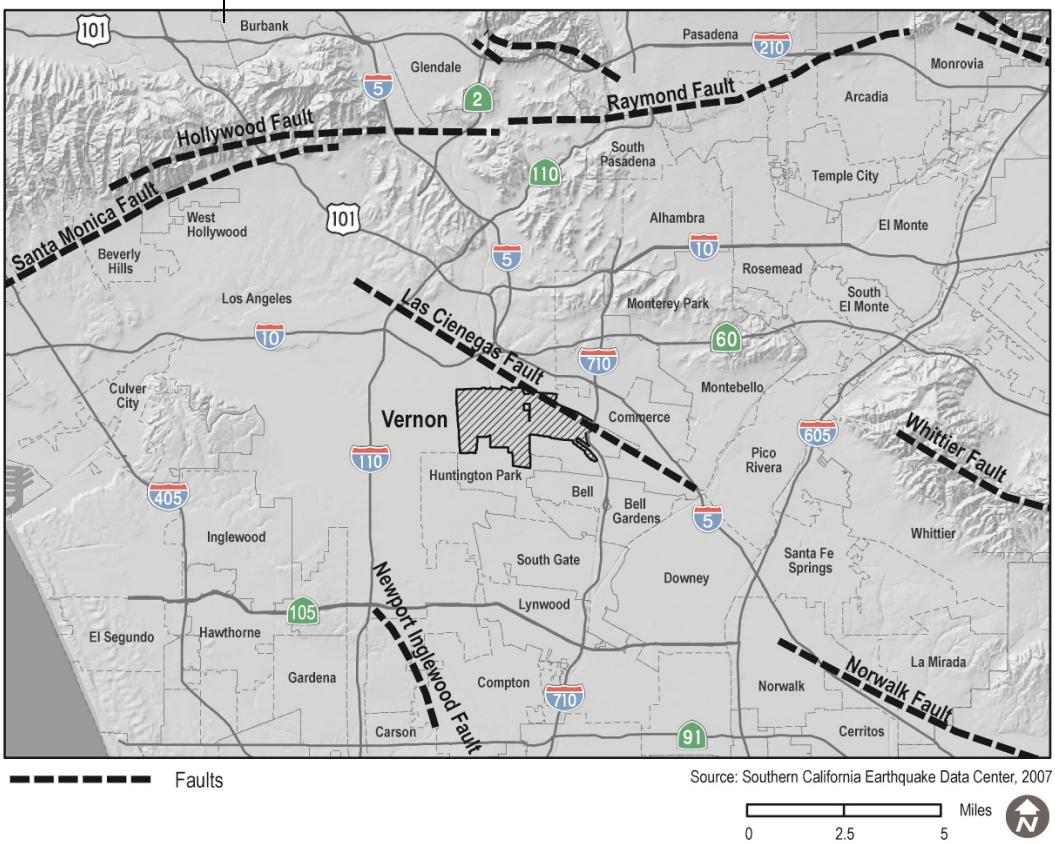
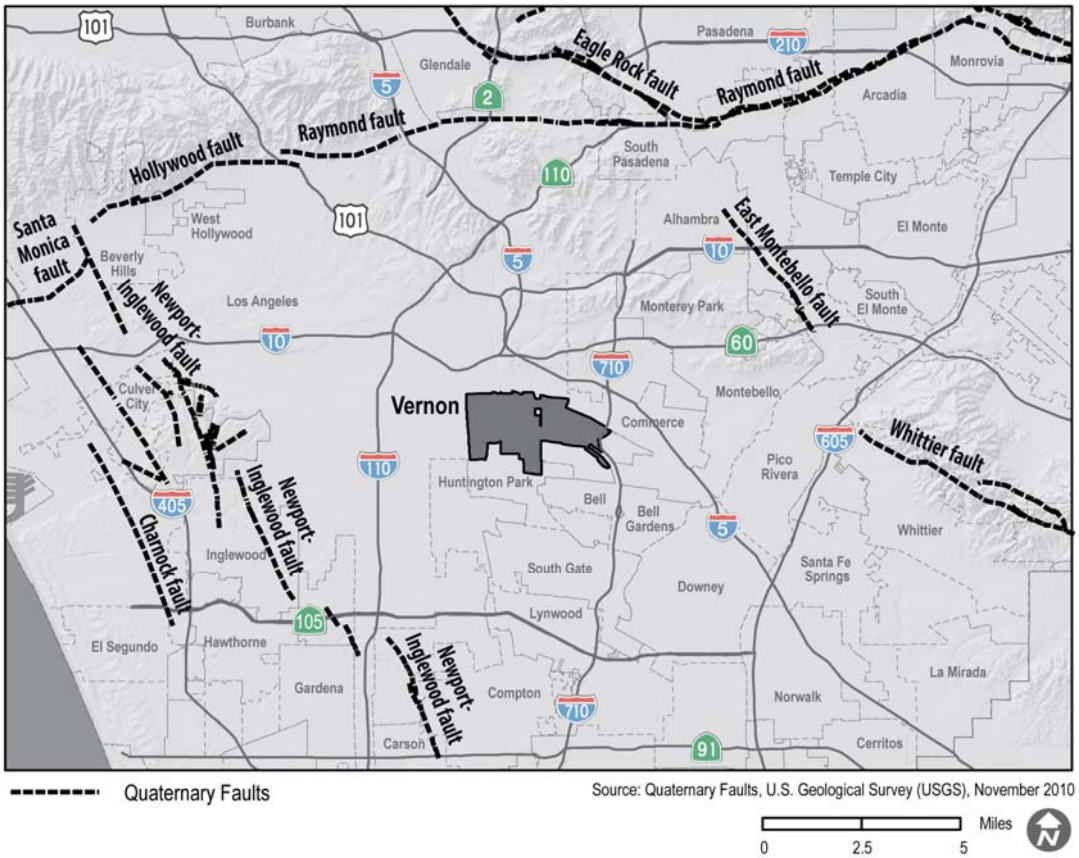
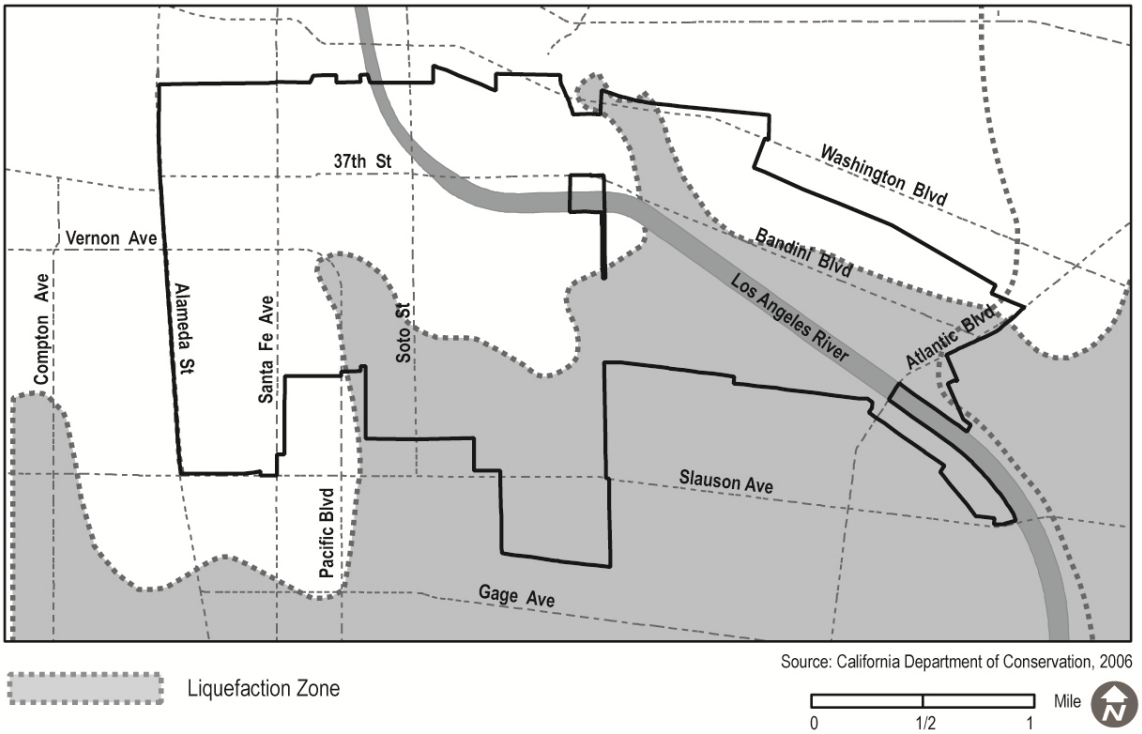
Figure S-1: Regional Faults




Burbank
Glendale
Pasadena
Monrovia
Arcadia
Eagle Rock fault
Raymond fault
Raymond fault
Hollywood fault
South Pasadena
Temple City
Alhambra
East Montebello fault
El Monte
West Hollywood
Santa Monica fault
Beverly Hills
Los Angeles
Newport-Inglewood fault
Monterey Park
South El Monte
Culver City
Vernon
Montebello
Commerce
Whittier fault
Pico Rivera
Huntington Park
Bell
Bell Gardens
Whittier
Newport-Inglewood fault
Charnock fault
Inglewood
South Gate
Downey
Santa Fe Springs
Lynwood
El Segundo
Hawthorne
Gardena
Compton
Norwalk
La Mirada
Newport-Inglewood fault
Carson
Cerritos
Quaternary Faults
Source: Quaternary Faults, U.S. Geological Survey (USGS), November 2010
Miles
0
2.5
5

A secondary effect of ground shaking is soil liquefaction, which can result in building instability or failure. This is not considered a serious threat in Vernon, but some areas of the City could be affected (see Figure S-2). Liquefaction can occur when loose, unconsolidated, water-laden soils lose their structure during strong ground shaking. These hazards can be mitigated at the development stage through the removal and re-compaction of suspect soils. Vernon's standard practice of requiring engineering studies for new development projects reduces the risk of liquefaction hazards in those susceptible areas identified on Figure S-2.



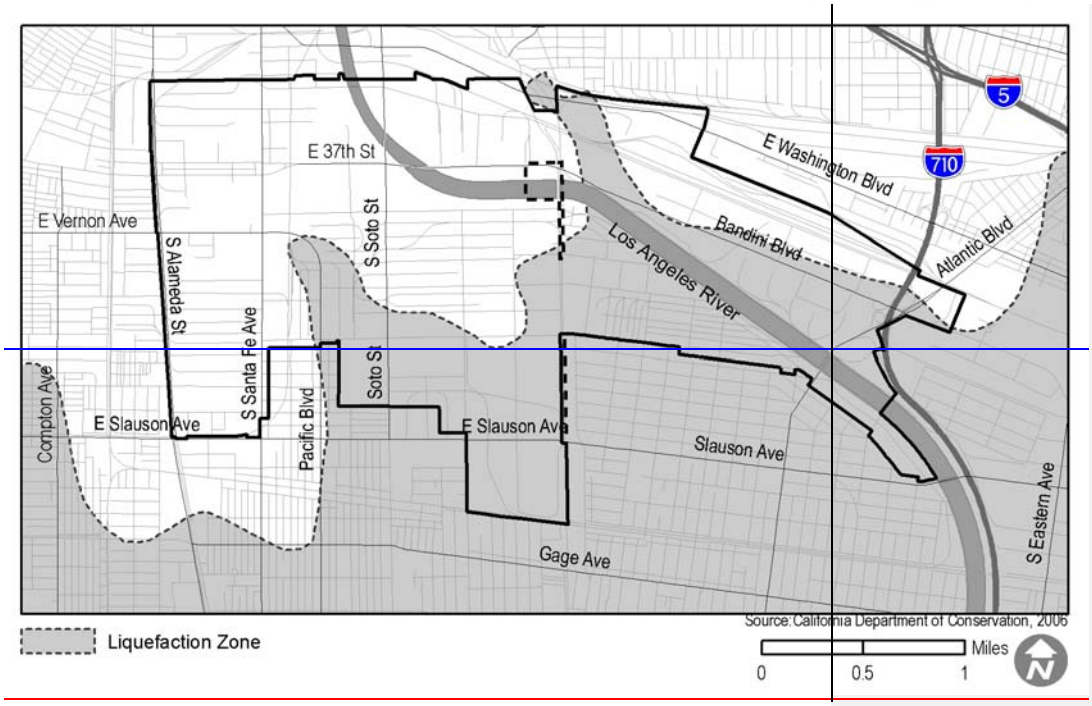
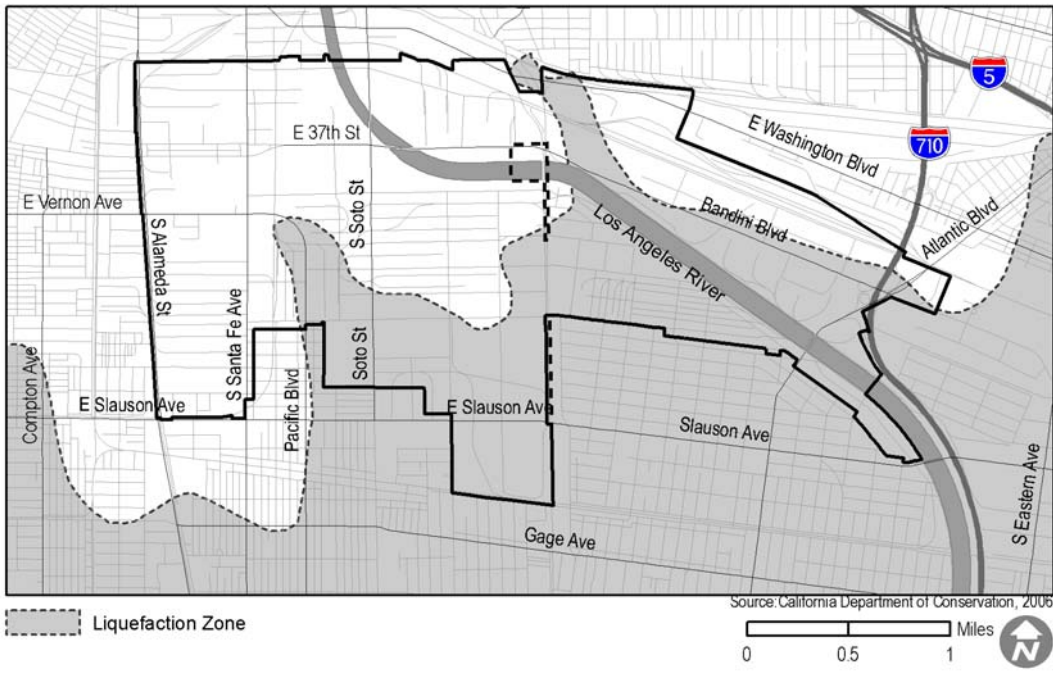


Figure S-2: Liquefaction Zone

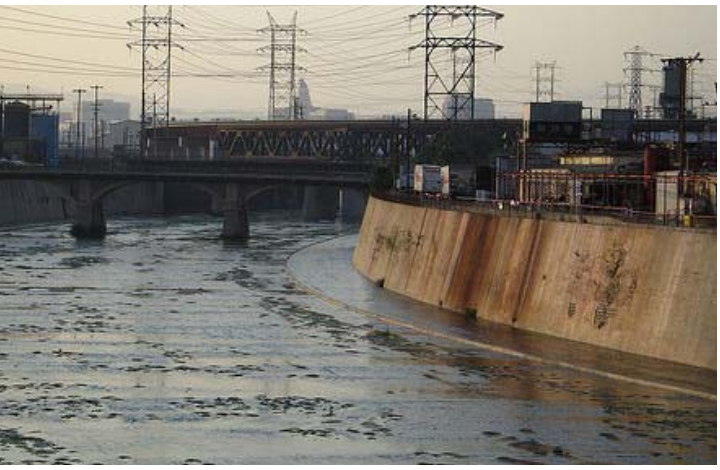


In addition to damage to buildings, earthquakes often result in damage to public and private infrastructure. Ruptured gas or oil lines may result in explosions or leaks, and facilities storing chemicals or flammable materials may also be damaged causing leaks or explosion. Water lines, sewer lines, and reservoirs can also be damaged. Electrical facilities, particularly transformer and power lines, are susceptible to damage resulting in a possible injury or loss of life as well as a power loss.

To reduce the scope of damage in the event of an earthquake, Vernon will continue to require new construction to meet mandated seismic safety codes. Retrofit of older structures will continue pursuant to Municipal Code requirements, and the City will continue ongoing efforts to upgrade infrastructure pursuant to the Capital Improvement Plan. In addition, the programs the City has in place to guard against hazardous materials spills and releases also help to protect these materials from being released during ground-shaking hazards. Through both preventative measures and strong, organized emergency response, Vernon will continue to take steps to minimize risks associated with earthquakes.

Flooding

Although the Los Angeles River flows through Vernon for a distance longer than three miles and would frequently overflow its banks under historic natural conditions, the river was contained within a concrete-lined flood control channel early in the twentieth century, substantially reducing the potential for overflowing of the river banks or overtopping of the dams that could cause flooding of adjacent areas. In the rainy season of 2004-2005, the Los Angeles area received the second highest rainfall ever recorded, approximately three times the normal amount, yet the river channel proved adequate to accommodate this flow.



Los Angeles River

In the past, localized flooding has occurred during heavy rainstorms. However, storm drain improvements have substantially reduced this problem.

Flood hazards related to storm events generally are described in terms of a 100-year or 500-year flood. A 100-year flood is defined as a major flood event that has a one percent or greater chance of occurring during any one year. Flood hazard planning practices address such storms, as well as 500-year events. These floods are considered severe; however, these floods can be reasonably predicted and therefore reasonably mitigated. With the flood control system of the Los Angeles River in place, the Federal Emergency Management Agency does not identify any 100-year floodplain areas in the City of Vernon. FEMA maps identify a small portion of southeast Vernon within the 500-year flood zone (Figure S-3). The existing flood control system appears to be adequate to serve the City's needs.

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Figure S-3: FEMA Flood Hazard Zones

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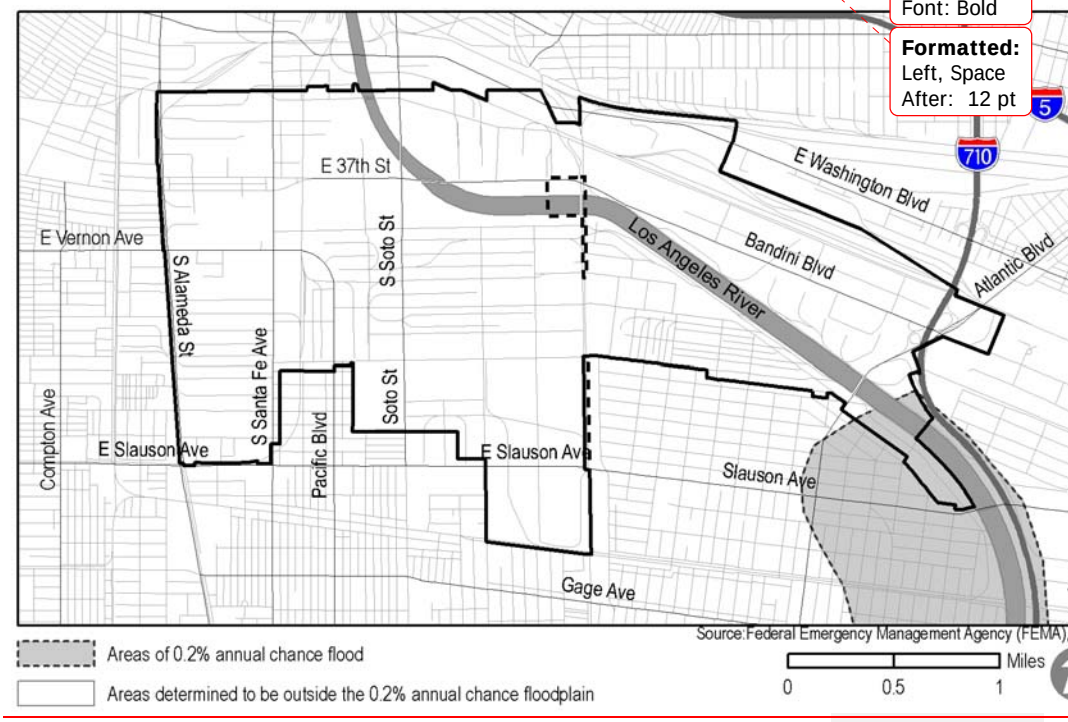


Dam Inundation

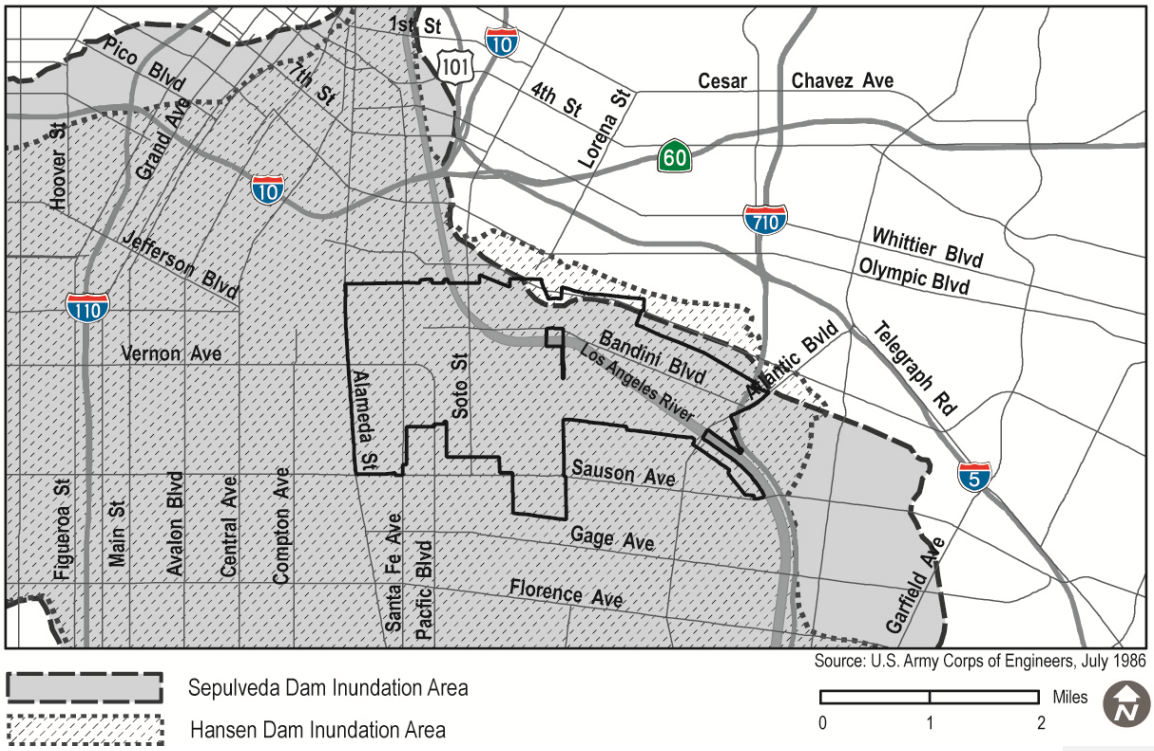
Dam inundation occurs when structural damage to a dam results in a flood. Dam failure can occur due to an earthquake, erosion, design flaw, or water overflow during storms. Dam inundation maps represent the best estimate of where water would flow in if a dam with a full reservoir suddenly failed completely. Figure S-~~3~~ 4 shows areas that would be affected in the event of dam failure.

Nearly all of the land in Vernon lies within the potential inundation areas for both Hansen Dam and Sepulveda Dam, which are located in separate areas of the San Fernando Valley, more than 20 miles northwest of the City. In the unlikely event that a catastrophic earthquake causes the collapse of either of these dams, water and debris would flow to and then generally along the Los Angeles River in a fairly narrow stream before spreading out over a swath of the coastal plain several miles wide, including Vernon.

The official map from the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers predicts that the flow from Sepulveda Dam, 24 miles away from Vernon, would take more than eight hours to reach the City. Flow from Hansen Dam, also 24 miles away, is predicted to take more than 19 hours to reach Vernon. The flow from

either dam would probably peak at a depth of 2 feet in the vicinity of Vernon. The expected long delay between dam breach and the arrival of the flow should give ample time for emergency services to respond, as outlined in the City's SEMS Multi-Hazard Functional Plan (MHFP).

Figure S-~~3~~4: Dam Inundation Areas



Windstorms

Windstorms present a potential hazard through their ability to damage buildings and public facilities such as street traffic control lights and public signs. In addition to the damage to buildings, the most significant threat to public safety is from flying debris. While this problem is not usually as severe as that experienced in hurricanes or tornados, maintaining public awareness of the hazard is important.

Regionally, the hot, dry Santa Ana winds can create severe brushfire dangers, but this is not a particularly severe problem in Vernon, as there is little vegetation.

2.2 Human-caused Hazards

Risk of Explosion and Hazardous Materials Spills

Many varied materials of an explosive or hazardous nature are stored and used by many businesses in Vernon. Because of the industrial nature of the City, the geographic scope is citywide. In addition, the presence of major rail lines and transfer yards, together with the Long Beach Freeway (I-710) and Alameda Corridor, which carry high volumes of truck and train traffic to and from the ports, pose real threats in the event of a spill.

To address local storage issues, the City Environmental Health Department maintains a complete inventory of the locations where hazardous materials are stored and used. A detailed response program defines the actions to be taken by the Fire Department and Environmental Health Department in the event of a problem involving a spill or explosion. This program focuses on the evacuation of persons, as well as containment and cleanup.

**Hazardous Materia
Emergency Respo
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Hazardous Materia**

With regard to terrorism concerns, possible targets in Vernon include the major rail yards, power generation facilities, and any business with significant volumes of hazardous materials. Federal agencies are responsible for safe-guarding transportation facilities, and Vernon will cooperate with these agencies in these efforts. With regard to protection of local businesses, routine patrol activities of the Police Department and heightened training and vigilance are undertaken in order to address these concerns. The City will provide Police personnel with appropriate training to minimize such threats.

Fire Department

The Vernon Fire Department is rated as Class I by Insurance Services Office, Inc., one of only ten cities in California and 35 nationwide to earn this distinction. The Department provides a variety of emergency services, including fire protection, emergency medical services, urban search and rescue, and hazardous materials control.

Staff at e~~E~~ach of Vernon's four fire stations ~~' staff~~ is fully trained for fighting fires. Each station ~~and~~ is equipped with three to six response vehicles, but also has its own specialization. Fire Station 1 at 3375 Fruitland Avenue serves both as Fire Department headquarters and training center. The personnel at Fire Station 2, rebuilt in 2007 at 4301 Santa Fe Avenue, adjacent to City Hall, are all trained as hazardous materials specialists. Paramedics trained in advanced life support at Fire Station 3, at 2800 Soto Street, respond to all emergency situations, and this station is also home to a squad trained in all manners of urban search and rescue techniques. Despite being in a completely urbanized area, Fire Station 4 sends specialized personnel to respond to wildfires through the statewide mutual aid system.

3.0 GOALS AND POLICIES

Vernon has fewer than ~~100~~200 permanent residents, but the employment population approaches 45,000 during a typical 24-hour period. Police, fire, and paramedic facilities and personnel must be adequate to provide services to this larger community of workers. Public safety personnel must be prepared to handle potential emergency situations of all kinds: hazardous materials spills, explosions, earthquakes, and train accidents. Additionally, as an industrial city, Vernon must be prepared for the possibility of labor issues such as strikes disrupting the City and requiring responses from public safety personnel.

GOAL S-1
Minimize the risk to public health, safety, and welfare associated with the presence of natural and human-caused hazards.

> **POLICY S-1.1:** Periodically update and maintain the Multi-hazard Functional Plan in an effort to identify potential contingencies and emergency

conditions and define the necessary response by public safety and other personnel.

POLICY S-1.2: Cooperate with other jurisdictions in the southeast area of Los Angeles County to maintain an up-to-date emergency response system for the region.

POLICY S-1.3: Prepare and disseminate information to residents and businesses on preparing for and responding to a major earthquake or potential terrorist threat.

POLICY S-1.4: Maintain the public water distribution and supply system facilities to provide adequate capacity to meet both everyday and emergency fire-flow needs.

POLICY S-1.5: Coordinate with the Los Angeles Unified School District for protection and or evacuation of school children in the event of an emergency condition, which could affect the schools in or near Vernon.

GOAL S-2
Provide a high degree of protection for all residents and workers from hazardous materials and the hazards associated with transport of such materials.

POLICY S-2.1: Continue to support and encourage State efforts to identify existing or previously existing hazardous waste generators or disposal sites in the City of Vernon.

POLICY S-2.2: Continue to require every business to maintain a list of the chemicals and other hazardous materials used or stored on site in accordance with~~on~~ appropriate material safety data sheets and otherwise in accordance with law, and to provide that list to the Fire Department and Environmental Health Department. Require that the Fire Department and Environmental Health Department to maintain a list of such materials and the location where they are stored or used to permit emergency personnel to respond appropriately, if required.

POLICY S-2.3: Permit new residential uses only within the Housing Overlay District. Strategically identify sites for new housing in areas determined to be most compatible for housing with limited hazard impacts.

GOAL S-3
Maintain high standards for the provision of City emergency services.

POLICY S-3.1: Establish and implement plans for continuity of government for Vernon in the event of a catastrophe.

POLICY S-3.2: Require businesses handling, transporting, or producing materials considered acutely hazardous to prepare contingency plans for accidents involving these chemicals.

POLICY S-3.3: Support the development and continued updating of public safety education programs.

POLICY S-3.4: Undertake steps to inform all residents and businesses of the importance of visible and clearly legible signs and street numbers in shortening the response time of emergency personnel.

POLICY S-3.5: Periodically review the City's emergency service equipment to determine if it is adequate to meet the needs of changing land uses and development types.

POLICY S-3.6: Require new development projects that necessitate the purchase of public safety equipment to underwrite or share in purchase costs.

POLICY S-3.7: Develop a new Emergency Operations Center (EOC) with adequate space and facilities to respond to any emergency situation which may arise.

POLICY S-3.8: Continue to support the Vernon Fire Department in its effort to maintain its ~~Class I~~high rating.

GOAL S-4
Provide a high degree of protection for all workers and residents in the event of any disaster.

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POLICY S-4.1: Review the risks related to a possible train derailment or collision, and develop appropriate response programs.

POLICY S-4.2: Review the design of new development projects to consider public safety and issues such as emergency access, defensible space, and overall ~~worker~~ safety.

POLICY S-4.3: Design and maintain an effective plan for the prompt evacuation of the City in the event of a dam inundation or other major disaster requiring the removal of workers or residents from Vernon.

POLICY S-4.4: Identify facilities for use as emergency/disaster shelters for those unable to leave or required to stay within the City in the event of a major disaster or emergency event.

VERNON GENERAL PLAN

RESOURCES ELEMENT

RESOURCES ELEMENT

1.0 PURPOSE AND FOCUS

1.1 Purpose

As a fully developed city, Vernon has few remaining natural resources in the conventional sense of undeveloped land, native vegetation, and wildlife habitat. The two natural resources that are present and important are groundwater and the air. Both have been affected by urban development, but both sustain development in the City and respresent critical regional resources. Vernon's groundwater serves as a portion of the City's water supply. Clean air, of course, provides a healthier environment and may help minimize some aspects of global warming.

The open spaces that exist in Vernon are limited to privately owned landscaping around buildings, utility easements, rail yards, and the Los Angeles River.

Given the industrial nature of Vernon, expanses of open space are not needed for recreational purposes. However, open space does provide visual relief from hard urban surfaces.

This Element establishes City policies intended to best manage the limited available natural resources in Vernon and to encourage continued participation in broader efforts to protect the environment from harmful human activities.

1.2 Focus

This Resources Element combines two elements required by the California Government Code--the Conservation Element and the Open Space Element--and focuses on the protection and preservation of resources within the City. In addition to groundwater and air resources, additional resource issues addressed are local open space, historic/cultural resources, and the national issue of energy use.

2.0 IDENTIFYING AND PROTECTING LOCAL RESOURCES

2.1 Water Quality and Supply

Potable ~~W~~water resources in Vernon are limited to the groundwater basins that underlie the City (and surrounding lands) and recycled water. Local groundwater is contained within the Los Angeles River and Gaspar aquifers, which supply a significant portion of the water used by businesses in Vernon. Because these basins extend beneath surrounding jurisdictions, activities both in Vernon and other cities affect the quantity and quality of groundwater. Potential contamination and depletion of the underground basins have been historic concerns, and conditions are continuously monitored to guard against possible interruption of supply.

Water quality standards established by federal and State agencies and requirements for water quality monitoring protect industrial users from contamination and ensure sage drinking water supplies. In particular, National Pollution Discharge Elimination Systems (NPDES) requirements enforced by the State Regional Water Quality Control Board require the control and clean up of surface runoff prior to its discharge into storm drain systems and ultimately, into groundwater basins or surface waters. State agencies continue to press for percolation as a means of reclaiming stormwater runoff, both as a mechanism to replenish aquifers and to allow for continued natural cleaning processes. Given Vernon's built-out condition and the severe lack of open space, clean-up and recharge via percolation proves difficult.

As described in the Circulation and Infrastructure Element, three water agencies supply water within Vernon (see Figure CI-3). Most of the geographical are of Vernon is supplied by the City's Water Department. The California Water Service Company (Cal Water), East Los Angeles District, Commerce System serves some of the northeast portion of Vernon, and a small portion of southeast Vernon is serviced by Maywood Mutual Water Company Number 3.

Many of the food processing and other industries common in Vernon are water-intensive uses. Analysis of water resources for the City of Vernon Water Department, including supply sources, is contained in the ~~2005~~ *2010 Urban Water Management Plan* (which is periodically updated). In 2005, water use in Vernon's service area was approximately 12,000 acre-feet per year (AFY).[1] By 2010, water use had decreased to approximately 9,000 AFY. Of that, a~~A~~pproximately ~~63~~84 percent of the water supply was obtained from groundwater sources. ~~An acre-foot of water equals 325,851 gallons, or about the amount of water a family of four consumes in a year. Twenty-six~~Less than eight percent was purchased from the Central Basin Municipal Water District (CBMWD), and ~~11~~ slightly more than eight percent came from recycled water supplies.

As reported in the City's *2010 Urban Water Management Plan*, water demand in 2025 is projected to increase to approximately 13,800 AFY (which assumed construction of a new power plant). As stated in the plan, Vernon's infrastructure is designed to meet a high level of demand from the commercial and industrial sectors; associated water demand may shift over time depending on current businesses and industrial practices. By planning for this high level of demand, sufficient flexibility is provided over the long term to maintain the City's business plan.

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Water conservation programs are in place, and internal water recycling by specific businesses helps reduce overall demand. Because Vernon is built out, new businesses will simply replace those that exist today, and water consumption over time normally would not be expected to increase significantly. ~~However, because of the existence of two power plants and the planned construction of a new large power generation~~

[1] An acre-foot of water equals 325,851 gallons, or about the amount of water a family of four consumes in a year.

~~plant, water usage is expected to more than double relative to year 2005 conditions. The requirements of these power plants will be met with recycled water, the use of which is expected to increase more than one and a half times — from 10,438 acre-feet in 2005 to 16,012 acre-feet in 2025.~~

By ~~2025~~2035, water supply is anticipated to increase substantially (by approximately 145 percent) due largely to the increase in supply from recycled water sources. ~~the~~ The number of acre-feet produced from the City Water Department's wells is not expected to substantially increase, and the amount purchased from CBMWD is expected ~~to increase from 3,350 acre-feet to 4,350 acre-feet~~to approximately double. By ~~2025~~2035, Vernon's water supply profile is projected to be ~~28~~ 37 percent from groundwater, ~~15~~ 10 percent from CBMWD, and ~~56~~ 53 percent from recycled sources. The majority of ~~the~~ any new demand will be served throught the use of recycled water, indicating the City's commitment to conservation of its water resources, good water management practices, and sustainability of resources.

Parts of northeastern Vernon are within California Water Service Company's (Cal Water's) District. Since the area is completely urbanized, annual growth is very slow; since 1980 the amount of water used in the service area has never increased by more than 0.5 percent from year to year.

Only 30 of Maywood Mutual Water Company #3's 2,000 service connections are in the City of Vernon; the rest are in the Cities of Maywood and Bell. In 2006, Vernon's connections totaled 34.5 acre-feet of water usage. Early in 2007 a new Matheson Tri-Gas plant opened in this area, which had been projected to add 150 annual acre-feet of usage, but has instead shown to only use water commensurate with a 30 acre-feet per year increase in water usage.

Maywood Mutual #3 currently derives all of its water supplies from its own groundwater wells. Its three wells are capable of producing approximately 4,500 acre-feet per year, and have historically produced between 1,400 and 1,750 acre-feet per year. Agreements are in place with the Metropolitan Water District that would allow Maywood Mutual #3 to purchase 2,500 acre-feet of water per year if necessary, for a total possible supply of 7,000 acre-feet per year. This would be more than four times the current usage within Maywood Mutual #3's service area. Maywood Mutual #3 reports that

groundwater production is adequate for current and any foreseen future demand.

2.2 Air Quality

The quality of the air in Southern California is determined by many regional factors: prevailing winds, persistent inversion conditions, the commute habits of 10 million-plus people within the air basin, and the presence of major ports and industry. Vernon lies within the South Coast Air Basin, a geographic area that extends from the Pacific Ocean to the San Gabriel Mountains, and from the Ventura County boundary east to the San Bernardino and San Jacinto Mountains. The air basin is a non-attainment area for federal and State air quality standards for ozone ~~and State standards for~~, particulate matter less than 10 microns in diameter (PM_{10}), particulate matter less than 2.5 microns in diameter ($PM_{2.5}$), and lead. The basin is a non-attainment area for State standards with regard to nitrogen dioxide (NO_2). The South Coast Air Quality Management District (SCAQMD) regulates air quality improvement programs within the basin and works to improve regional air quality to achieve federal and State standards.

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At the local level, emissions from stationary sources (industry, power plants, etc.) and from vehicles discharge chemicals and particulate matter into the air, and these emissions are further transformed in the atmosphere by photochemical action into ozone and other health-threatening pollutants. As heavy industry is prevalent in Vernon, most local businesses are heavily regulated by SCAQMD. Emissions from trucks, cars, and trains are regulated by State and federal agencies, meaning the Vernon City Council and City staff have little ability to affect those factors that most significantly contribute to regional air quality conditions.

However, the City recognizes its responsibility to participate in regional efforts to continue to improve air quality. City programs in this regard include City purchase and use of alternative fuel vehicles and fuel-efficient vehicles. In 2006, about 3.5 percent of the vehicles owned by the City used alternative fuels. As the City replaces its fleet of vehicles, consideration and priority will be given to the purchase of more vehicles using hybrid or electric engines or other emerging technologies that replace fossil fuels.

Because motor vehicles represent a significant source of pollutant emissions, one key approach to reducing emissions is to reduce vehicle miles traveled. In 2006, businesses in Vernon employed 44,225 workers locally. Many employers have large workforces, offering opportunities for carpooling and other ride-sharing arrangements. Also, many Metro bus lines serve the City, and Blue Line light rail has stops that readily serve Vernon businesses (provided one is willing to walk or take bus connections from the train stations). The City is in a position to encourage transit use and ride sharing by serving as an information hub and clearinghouse for local businesses. Reducing the volume of cars on local streets can help reduce regional emissions and allow Vernon to contribute to regional air quality improvements.

2.3 Global Warming

In 2006, the California Legislature adopted AB 32, the Global Warming Solutions Act of 2006, to address concerns regarding the potential impact of climate change on the State's economy and the environment. The legislation requires the California Air Resources Board to determine the level of greenhouse gases produced in 1990 and outline strategies to ensure that the level of emissions in 2020 do not exceed the 1990 level. The overall goal is to establish a comprehensive program of regulatory and market mechanisms to achieve real, quantifiable, cost-effective reductions of greenhouse gas emissions. Specifically, AB 32 (as codified in the California Health and Safety Code) requires the California Air Resources Board to:

- Establish a statewide greenhouse gas emissions cap for 2020, based on 1990 emissions
- Adopt mandatory reporting rules for significant sources of greenhouse gases
- Adopt a plan indicating how emission reductions will be achieved from significant greenhouse gas sources via regulations, market mechanisms, and other actions
- Adopt regulations to achieve the maximum technologically feasible and cost-effective reductions in greenhouse gas, including provisions for using both market mechanisms and alternative compliance mechanisms

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SB 375, passed into law in 2008, has the goal of fostering development patterns—and more compact patterns in particular—that reduce the need to drive, thereby reducing air pollution from car exhaust, conserving water, and protecting habitat, among other benefits. This law is designed to align regional land use, housing, and transportation plans with greenhouse gas reduction targets.

In Vernon, emissions are regulated by the Southern California Air Quality District, as well as State and federal agencies. The agencies have imposed regulations to reduce emissions from both stationary and vehicular sources. These actions have led to a substantial improvement in air quality in the Southern California air basin and presumably have had a concurrent effect on greenhouse gas emissions. Further reductions are anticipated as new requirements are imposed by current legislation and regulations.

The City of Vernon is a built out city, and the General Plan does not provide for ~~envision~~ any substantive increase in either square footage in industrial development ~~(basically the only type of development permitted in the City)~~ or substantive increases in employment~~-~~ (see Table~~s~~ LU-1 in the Land Use Element). Future residential development is limited pursuant to the Land Use Element. This limited residential development will provide a new housing opportunity for local workers to live near places of employment in Vernon, furthering SB 375 goals. Given the limited changes anticipated as part of this General Plan, t~~T~~he issue of increased emissions resulting from growth is not ~~expected to be~~ a significant concern ~~as a resulting of growth of change in the City~~.

2.4 Energy Supplies

Industrial businesses in Vernon require reliable energy supplies for industrial processes and refrigeration. In 1932, the citizens of Vernon supported a bond measure that authorized the City to construct a power plant. This enabled the City to build its own electric power generating plant—to meet the needs of this "exclusively industrial city". Since then, the City has been able to provide reliable and comparatively low-cost electric power to its customers. In 2005, the City completed construction of the Malburg Generating Station, a new natural-gas-powered power plant that provides electricity to many businesses in Vernon. ~~The City is working on plans to construct a new natural-gas-powered 914 megawatt plant~~

~~that would boost the City's capabilities and enhances supplies in the region, as excess power could probably be put on the grid for users throughout Southern California.~~

The City recognizes that energy conservation benefits consumers in the form of lower energy costs. Conservation also reduces the need for construction of costly new energy production facilities. Finally, conservation helps efforts to improve regional air quality by reducing pollutant emissions from older power generation plants in Southern California. Vernon. The City is committed to working with local businesses to help them be energy efficient and help keep rates low.

2.5 Open Space

The major open space resources in Vernon consist of the Los Angeles River Channel and utility easements. No riparian habitat exists, as the Los Angeles River channel is concrete lined along this portion of the river. Given the City's industrial character, Vernon does not contain and does not have a need for public parks. Private open spaces on industrial properties are limited as well, as most buildings are built to the sidewalk line, leaving limited area for on-site landscaping. Over time, requirements for site-specific runoff control may result in property owners devoting portions of setback or parking areas to green space.

Additional green space may also be added through the middle of Vernon if plans progress for the "re-greening" of the Los Angeles River. The Los Angeles River Master Plan, adopted by the Los Angeles County Board of Supervisors in 1996, calls for a greenway along the bank, a trail and murals along the west levee, an interpretive exhibit near the Bandini Avenue crossing, and a passive park area near Atlantic Avenue. As of 2007, no funding source or preliminary plan for creation of additional open space within the City of Vernon currently exists.

2.6 Cultural Resources

In 1847, the Mexican militia fought U.S. troops under the command of U.S. Army General Stephen Watts Kearny and U.S. Navy Captain Robert F. Stockton along the San Gabriel River. The battle of La Mesa, in present-day Vernon, occurred on January 9, 1847 and ended with the Mexicans overwhelmed by a strong American advance. On January 10, Mexican

leaders surrendered peacefully to the Americans, who promptly occupied the city of Los Angeles.

Between 1847 and the early years of the twentieth century, the lands that now comprise Vernon were dedicated largely to agriculture, with John B. Leonis representing one of the key ranchers/landholders in the area. Vernon incorporated in 1905 as an "exclusively industrial" city and was named after a dirt road, Vernon Avenue, crossing its center. In the following years, many diverse industries established major facilities in the City, taking advantage of the rail access and, with the construction in 1932 of a City-owned power plant, low-cost electricity.

The industrial buildings that house these diverse industries well serve their industrial functions, but also display architecture representative of distinct periods and styles. The busy building period of the 1920s and '30s produced several Streamline Moderne structures, and wonderful brick buildings can be found throughout the City. A notable landmark is the Farmer John mural surrounding the company's meat processing facility on Vernon Avenue.

Vernon will assist in the effort to preserve the memory of early Los Angeles, and tell the story of its growth and development, through taking and retaining photographs of buildings and structures that may have architectural or historic interest.

3.0 GOALS AND POLICIES

GOAL R-1
Conserve and protect the region's water and energy resources.

POLICY R-1.1: Encourage water conservation and the use of recycled water in new developments and by all industries.

POLICY R-1.2: Support the use of energy-saving designs and equipment in all new development and reconstruction projects.

POLICY R-1.3: Seek and pursue the most practicable and cost-effective means of implementing National Pollutant Discharge Elimination Systems requirements.

GOAL R-2
Contribute to the continued gradual improvement of air quality in the South Coast Air Basin.

POLICY R-2.1: Coordinate and cooperate with the South Coast Air Quality Management District and Southern California Association of Governments in efforts to implement the regional Air Quality Management Plan.

POLICY R-2.2: Encourage and facilitate the use of public transportation to reduce emissions associated with automobile use.

POLICY R-2.3: Continue to expand the number of City-owned alternative fuels vehicles, hybrid vehicles, and other energy-efficient vehicles as they may be available.

POLICY R-2.4: Maximize the amount of clean electrical power produced while minimizing emissions from power production plants.

POLICY R-2.5: Consult with the Gateway Cities Council of Governments, regional planning agencies, and surrounding municipalities to coordinate land use, circulation, and infrastructure improvement efforts.

GOAL R-3
Preserve established open spaces, and look for opportunities to create new open space areas that can benefit the health and welfare of workers and residents in Vernon.

POLICY R-3.1: Continue to maintain landscaped areas at City facilities as appropriate.

POLICY R-3.2: Cooperate with regional efforts to upgrade the appearance and open space value of the Los Angeles River Channel.

POLICY R-3.3: Encourage private property owners and industries to establish and maintain private landscaped areas for the benefit of employees.

POLICY R-3.4: Continue the City's street tree planting and tree maintenance programs.

GOAL R-4
Recognize and preserve Vernon's contributions to the industrial and architectural history of Los Angeles.

POLICY R-4.1: Expand available cultural resource information by establishing a City-maintained database of historic sites and facilities.

POLICY R-4.2: Support the efforts of interested agencies or private organizations to undertake surveys or other research efforts to document buildings and places in Vernon of historic and/or architectural significance.

POLICY R-4.3: Ensure compliance with CEQA provisions regarding cultural resources at the time buildings or places of identified or potential historic or architectural merit are proposed for demolition.

POLICY R-4.4: Establish local programs and practices that recognize places of local or other historic significance.

VERNON GENERAL PLAN

NOISE ELEMENT

NOISE ELEMENT

1.0 PURPOSE AND FOCUS

1.1 Purpose

The purpose of the Noise Element is to identify significant sources of noise in Vernon and to identify ways to protect people living and working in Vernon from extensive exposure to excessive or unhealthy noise levels. Per the California Administrative Code, all general plans must include a Noise Element. The Noise Element sets the framework for working toward and maintaining environmental noise control appropriate to individual communities. The Element establishes goals, policies, and programs that identify possible approaches to protecting the business community and the few people living in Vernon from excessive noise.

1.2 Focus

In recognition of the adverse health effects associated with excessive noise, the California Government Code, Section 65302(f), identifies the types of community noise to be addressed in the General Plan. The Noise Element is to identify noise sources from:

- Freeways and street systems;
- Freight on-line railroad operations;

- Local industrial plants, including, but not limited to, railroad classification yards; and

- Other stationary ground noise sources identified by local agencies as contributing to the community noise environment.

Vernon is unique in that its status as an all-industrial community establishes different sensitivities regarding noise than those present in typical suburban or even mixed-use urban areas. Local businesses are not significantly impacted by higher noise levels that would not be appropriate in a residential neighborhood or near schools, parks, or hospitals.

2.0 ABOUT NOISE

Noise is often defined as unwanted, excessive, or irksome sound. Sound – and noise – consists of waves of energy that we receive and interpret. To describe the character of a particular noise, acousticians must have information about:

- The amplitude and amplitude variation of the acoustical wave,
- The frequency (pitch) content of the noise, and
- The duration of the noise.

2.1 Noise Metrics

Definitions of the most commonly used terms encountered in community noise assessments and noise control are provided in the General Plan Glossary. Of these terms, the A-weighted sound pressure level, or dB(A), is the scale of measurement that is most useful in community noise measurement. This sound level is measured in decibels to provide a scale with the range and characteristics most consistent with that of peoples' sensitivity to sounds, as described below.

Since decibels are logarithmic units, sound pressure levels cannot be added or subtracted by ordinary arithmetic means. For example, if one automobile produces a sound pressure level of 70 dB when it passes an observer, two cars passing simultaneously would not produce 140 dB. In fact, they would combine to produce 73 dB. This same principle can be applied to other traffic quantities as well. In other words, doubling the traffic volume on a street or the speed of the traffic will increase the traffic noise level by 3 dB. Conversely, halving the

traffic volume or speed will reduce the traffic noise level by 3 dB.

Sound pressure level alone is not a reliable indicator of loudness. The frequency or pitch of a sound also has a substantial effect on how humans will respond. While the intensity of the sound is a purely physical quantity, the loudness or human response depends on the characteristics of the human ear.

Human hearing is limited not only to the range of audible frequencies, but also in the way it perceives the sound pressure level in that range. In general, the healthy human ear is most sensitive to sounds between 1,000 hertz (Hz) and 5,000 Hz, and perceives both higher and lower frequency sounds of the same magnitude with less intensity. To approximate the frequency response of the human ear, a series of sound pressure level adjustments is usually applied to the sound measured by a sound level meter. The adjustments, or weighting network, are frequency dependent.

The A-scale approximates the frequency response of the average young ear when listening to most ordinary everyday sounds. When people make relative judgments of the loudness or annoyance of a sound, their judgments correlate well with the A-scale sound levels of those sounds. A range of noise levels associated with common indoor and outdoor activities is shown in Figure N-1.

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Figure N-1: Examples of Noise Levels

Noise Source	dB(A) Noise Levels	Response
	120	Threshold of pain
Disco	115	
Textile mill	110	Maximum Vocal Effort Physical Discomfort
Textile plant	105	
Printing plant	100	Very Annoying Hearing Damage (Steady 8-Hour Exposure)
Jackhammer at 50 ft.	95	
Power lawn mower at 5 ft.	90	
Heavy mixer at 50 ft.	85	
Concrete mixer at 50 ft.	80	Annoying
Inside car at 40 mph	75	
Vacuum cleaner at 10 ft.	70	Telephone use very difficult
Car, 60 mph at 100 ft.	65	
Conversational speech	60	Intrusive
Large transformer at 50 ft.	55	
Urban residence	50	Quiet
Small town residence	45	
	40	
Soft whisper at 6 ft.	35	
	30	Very Quiet
	25	
	20	
	15	
	10	Audible
	5	
	0	Threshold of hearing

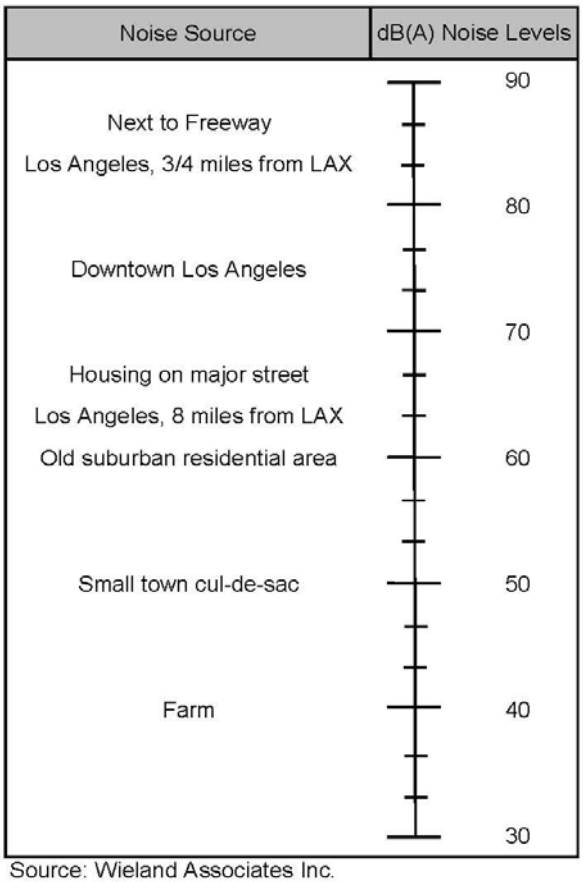
Source: Wieland Associates Inc. and Melville C. Branch and R. Dale Beland.

The A-weighted sound level of traffic and other long-term noise-producing activities within and around a community varies considerably with time. Measurements of this varying noise level are accomplished by recording values of the A-weighted level during representative periods within a specified portion of the day.

It is recognized that a given level of noise may be more or less tolerable depending on the duration of exposure experienced by an individual. There are numerous measures of noise

exposure that consider not only the A-level variation of noise but also the duration of the disturbance. The State Department of Aeronautics and the California Commission on Housing and Community Development have adopted the community noise equivalent level (CNEL). This measure weights the average noise levels for the evening hours (7:00 P.M. to 10:00 P.M.), increasing them by 5 dB, and weights the late evening and morning hour noise levels (10:00 P.M. to 7:00 A.M.) by 10 dB. The daytime noise levels are combined with these weighted levels and are averaged to obtain a CNEL value. Figure N-2 indicates the outdoor CNEL at typical locations throughout the Southern California area.

Figure N-2: Examples of Noise at Southern California Locations



Source: Wieland Associates Inc.

2.2 Noise and Health Effects

Sound levels which exceed 85 dB(A), when experienced for long durations during each working day, may result in severe temporary or even permanent hearing loss. State and federal safety and health regulations currently protect workers at levels of exposure that exceed 90 dB(A) for each eight-hour workday.

Speech intelligibility is impaired when sound levels exceed 60 dB(A). The level of interference increases with sound level and the distance between speaker and listener. Sound levels that exceed 40 to 45 dB(A) are generally considered to be excessive for sleeping areas within a residence.

2.3 Community Noise Standards

Vernon has established community noise standards to help guide land use decisions and protect sensitive uses from excessive noise levels, as shown in Figure N-3. Because the City consists almost exclusively of industrial uses and policy set forth in the Housing Element ~~prohibits~~ limits the construction of any new housing to only a few specifically identified sites in recognition of the hazards – including high noise levels – associated with widespread industrial activity,

these standards discourage any new noise-sensitive use that would be incompatible with the City's industrial focus. Similarly, zoning regulations prohibit community facilities such as schools, day care centers, and hospitals.

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Figure N-3: Community Noise Standards

Land Use Category	CNEL, dB						
	50	55	60	65	70	75	80
Residential - Multi-family, Duplex	A	A	B	B	B	C	C
Schools, Churches	A	A	B	C	C	C	D
Office Building, Research & Development, Professional Offices, City Office Building	A	A	A	B	B	C	C
Commercial Retail, Banks, Restaurants	A	A	A	A	B	B	C
Service Station, Auto Dealership, Manufacturing, Warehousing, Wholesale, Utilities	A	A	A	A	B	B	B
Agriculture	A	A	A	A	A	A	A

A — **CLEARLY COMPATIBLE**

Specified land use is satisfactory, based upon the assumption that any buildings involved are of normal conventional contruction without any special noise insulation requirements.

B — **NORMALLY COMPATIBLE**

New construction or development should be undertaken only after detailed analysis of the noise reduction requirements is made and needed noise insulation features in the design are determined. Conventional construction, with closed windows and fresh air supply systems or air conditioning, will normally suffice.

C — **NORMALLY INCOMPATIBLE**

New construction or development should generally be discouraged. If new construction or development does proceed, a detailed analysis of noise reduction requirements must be made and needed noise insulation features included in the design.

D — **CLEARLY INCOMPATIBLE**

New construction or development should generally not be undertaken.

~~gure N-3: Community Noise Standards~~

Land Use Category	CNEL, dB						
	50	55	60	65	70	75	80
Residential - Multi-family, Duplex	A	A	B	B	B	C	C
Schools, Churches	A	A	B	C	C	C	D
Office Building, Research & Development, Professional Offices, City Office Building	A	A	A	B	B	C	C
Commercial Retail, Banks, Restaurants	A	A	A	A	B	B	C
Service Station, Auto Dealership, Manufacturing, Warehousing, Wholesale, Utilities	A	A	A	A	B	B	B
Agriculture	A	A	A	A	A	A	A

A

CLEARLY COMPATIBLE

Specified land use is satisfactory, based upon the assumption that any buildings involved are of normal conventional contruction without any special noise insulation requirements.

B

NORMALLY COMPATIBLE

New construction or development should be undertaken only after detailed analysis of the noise reduction requirements is made and needed noise insulation features in the design are determined. Conventional construction, with closed windows and fresh air supply systems or air conditioning, will normally suffice.

C

NORMALLY INCOMPATIBLE

New construction or development should generally be discouraged. If new construction or development does proceed, a detailed analysis of noise reduction requirements must be made and needed noise insulation features included in the design.

D

CLEARLY INCOMPATIBLE

New construction or development should generally not be undertaken.

3.0 NOISE ENVIRONMENT IN 2007

In 2007, the City conducted a comprehensive noise survey of the community to document the noise environment. Measurements were taken at eleven locations, including two border locations in adjacent communities. Three measurements consisted of 24-hour recordings of the sound environment, and the balance were limited duration measurements at representative locations throughout Vernon and, as noted above, on the border of neighboring communities. In conjunction with an update to the Land Use and Housing Elements in 201~~2~~3, focused noise measurements were taken near locations considered for permanent and emergency housing.

The most significant noise-producing activity within Vernon involves the transportation systems: the arterial roadways and train movements along regional rail lines. In addition, many major manufacturing businesses create high noise levels.

The only noise-sensitive land uses within the City are scattered residential units and the Vernon City Elementary School. Residences~~, most of which are owned by the City,~~ largely are ~~primarily~~ clustered in ~~three~~ four areas: on Vernon Avenue at Furlong Place, on Vernon Avenue between Downey Road and Alcoa Avenue, ~~and~~ on Fruitland Avenue west of Downey Road, and on 52nd Place east of Atlantic Boulevard. The Emergency Shelter Overlay, which applies to a parcel in the northwest corner of the City, could accommodate emergency housing. Vernon City Elementary School is located at the southwest corner of Vernon Avenue and Santa Fe Avenue.

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The adjacent communities of Huntington Park and Maywood have residential neighborhoods and schools along and near their boundaries with Vernon. Vernon has long practiced good neighbor policies with respect to these uses, cooperating with adjacent cities to minimize noise impacts on sensitive uses.

3.1 2007 CNEL Contours

The noise measurements were modeled to create a community-wide "picture" of noise conditions. The CNEL contours for major arterial roadways and the I-710 freeway within the City were developed utilizing the Federal Highway Administration's Traffic Noise Model and traffic data obtained from Caltrans and citywide traffic count data (2004-2007). The railroad contours were developed based on Wyle Laboratories' computational procedures and on a computer model developed by the Federal Transit Administration. Operational data for the railroads was obtained from Amtrak and Metrolink schedules, the Southern California Regional Rail Authority, the Alameda Corridor Transit Authority, the Union Pacific Company, and the Federal Railroad Administration Office of Safety Analysis.

These noise measurements and modeling results collectively can be represented by noise contour lines. Similar to the way topographic maps show contours indicated elevation change, the noise contour maps indicate decreasing noise levels as you move away from the noise source. Figure N-4 illustrates the noise contours for year 2007.

3.2 Transportation Noise Sources

Noise along Arterial Roadways

Figure N-4 shows that noise levels associated with truck and automobile traffic along Vernon's arterial roadways are 70 CNEL along the roadway frontages. With regard to the gradual diminishment of noise as the receiver moves away from the street, the modeling does not take into account the mitigating effect of buildings that front the street.

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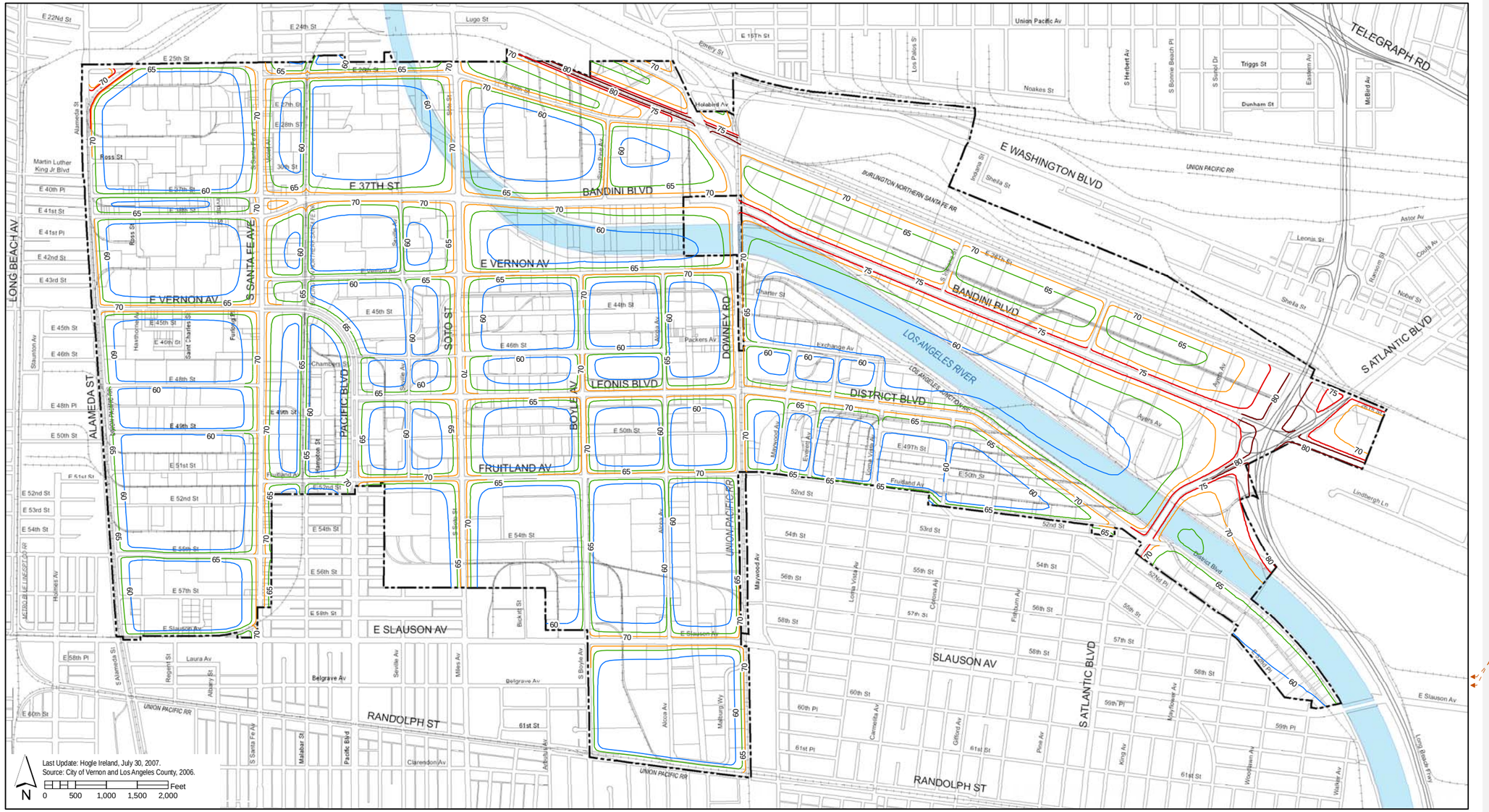

LEGEND

- City Boundary
- Freeway
- Railroad

EXISTING (2007) NOISE CONTOURS

- 80 CNEL
- 75 CNEL
- 70 CNEL
- 65 CNEL
- 60 CNEL

Figure N-4
2007 Noise Contours

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Freeway Noise

The CNEL generated in Vernon by traffic on the I-710 freeway is as high as 80 dB. However, the land uses affected by the traffic noise are largely industrial in nature and are not noise sensitive.

Train Noise

The City is impacted by noise from train movements on six primary rail lines, numerous spur lines, and activities at the Burlington, Northern & Santa Fe (BNSF) rail yard, as well as at the Union Pacific (UPRR) rail yard in the City of Commerce.

The CNEL associated with train movements in and through Vernon is as high as 80 dB. However, the land uses affected by the traffic noise are largely industrial in nature and are not noise sensitive. The primary source of annoyance to residents in the vicinity of the UPRR line adjacent to Downey Road is train horn soundings at crossings.

3.3 Industrial Noise Sources

In general, industrial noise within the City is not considered excessive because Vernon is a predominantly industrial city with few noise-sensitive properties. However, at the few scattered residences within the City, as well as at the Vernon City Elementary School, noise levels can exceed generally acceptable standards for these noise-sensitive uses. The impact is primarily related to noise generated by loading dock operations, trucks entering and leaving the area, and mechanical equipment located both inside and outside building.

Adjacent to the City of Vernon are residential neighborhoods in the cities of Huntington Park and Maywood. Noise measurements taken in 2006 indicated that while average noise levels ranged up to 66.7 dB(A) and noise spikes registered 87.6 dB(A) during daytime hours, the measured CNELs of 61.5 dB in Huntington Park and 64 dB in Maywood were less than the exterior CNEL standard of 70 dB for residential properties in Vernon.

4.0 FUTURE NOISE ENVIRONMENT

Figure N-5 indicates projected noise contours for year 2030, assuming growth in regional traffic volumes through Vernon and anticipated activity along rail lines, the Alameda Corridor, and the regional rail lines.

Land use policy provides for continued industrial use throughout the community, with provision for ~~some~~ commercial uses within the Commercial Overlay ~~along Santa Fe Avenue and limited portions of Soto Street~~ to meet the needs of the daytime employee population and allow for a broader mix of uses on aging industrial sites~~industrial businesses to prosper~~. As indicated above, land use policy ~~prohibits~~ limits the introduction of any new noise-sensitive uses to specifically identified sites~~,~~ along the edges of the City. Thus, the City does not anticipate any new noise conflicts will arise in Vernon over the life of this General Plan.

With regard to existing conditions where established residences and Vernon City Elementary School sometimes experience high noise levels, the City works with surrounding businesses to achieve noise standards established in the Zoning Ordinance.

5.0 GOALS AND POLICIES

As an industrial city, the aim of the Noise Element is to address compatibility among neighboring businesses and industries, and to work with adjacent communities to resolve any conflicts that may be associated with individual businesses along Vernon's municipal boundary.

GOAL ~~Goal~~ N-1
Reduce impacts from transportation noise sources to the extent they may affect industrial businesses.

POLICY~~olicy~~ N-1.1: Encourage the effective enforcement of local, state, and federal noise levels by all appropriate City divisions.

POLICY~~olicy~~ N-1.2: Review noise impacts when rail corridors are consolidated, and review ways to reduce impacts on adjacent businesses.

POLICY~~olicy~~ N-1.3: ~~Require~~ Minimize adverse noise effects on ~~that any new~~ new residential developments

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through~~ include~~ carefully planned ~~construction approaches~~site design and construction approaches that limit noise intrusion, wherever practical~~ that minimize adverse noise and vibration effects on residents~~.

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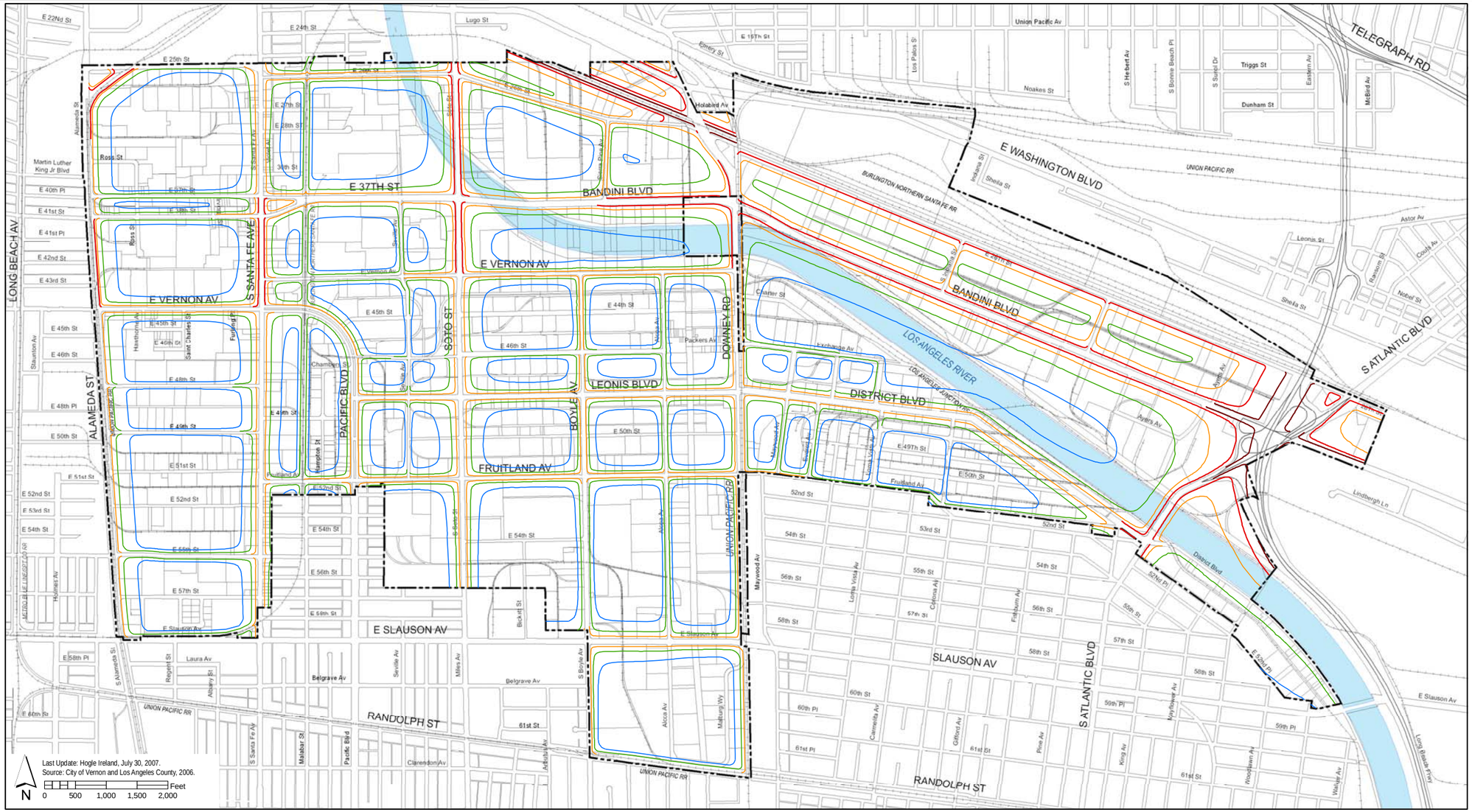

LEGEND

- City Boundary
- Freeway
- Railroad

FUTURE (2030) NOISE CONTOURS

- 80 CNEL
- 75 CNEL
- 70 CNEL
- 65 CNEL
- 60 CNEL

Figure N-5
Projected 2030 Noise Contours

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GOAL~~oal~~ N-2
Incorporate noise and vibration considerations into land use planning decisions.

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POLICY~~olicy~~ N-2.1: Consider the noise levels likely to be produced by any new businesses or substantially expanded business activities locating near existing noise-sensitive uses such as schools, community facilities, and residences, as well as adjacent to established businesses involving vibration-sensitive activities.

POLICY~~olicy~~ N-2.2: Encourage acoustical design in all new construction.

POLICY~~olicy~~ N-2.3: Prohibit the establishment of ~~any~~ new noise-sensitive land uses in Vernon, including but not limited to ~~residences,~~ schools, day-care facilities, and community facilities. Permit~~Restrict~~ new residential uses ~~to~~ only within ~~sites~~ the Housing Overlay District,~~specifically identified to have limited noise and hazard impact~~ and require new developments to incorporate appropriate noise attenuation to achieve City noise standards.~~s.~~

GOAL~~oal~~ N-3
Develop measures to control non-transportation noise and similar impacts.

POLICY~~olicy~~ N-3.1: Continue to enforce the noise and vibration performance standards in the City Code to mitigate conflicts among neighboring uses.

POLICY~~olicy~~ N-3.2: Establish and maintain coordination among City agencies involved in noise abatement.

POLICY~~olicy~~ N-3.3: City departments will comply with all state and federal OSHA noise standards, and all new City equipment purchases shall comply with state and federal noise standards.

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Appendix A: Implementation Plan

This Implementation Plan ~~will~~ guides City elected officials and staff in the overall effort to carry out adopted General Plan goals and policies. The purpose of the implementation programs is to enable the overall direction set forth in the General Plan to be translated from general terms to specific actions.

Each implementation program is a procedure, program, or technique that requires City action, either alone or in collaboration with non-governmental or quasi-governmental organizations or state and federal agencies. Some of the implementation programs are processes or procedures the City currently administers on a day-to-day basis (such as development project review), while others identify new programs or projects. Completion of the identified programs will be subject to funding constraints.

The implementation programs are organized into the following six subsections corresponding to the General Plan elements:

- Land Use Element
- Circulation and Infrastructure Element
- Housing Element
- Safety Element
- Natural Resources Element
- Noise Element

Each implementation program relates directly to one or more General Plan policies, drawn from the various General Plan elements. For each program, the related General Plan policies are listed, along with the responsible City departments or other governmental agencies, the recommended time frame, and likely funding source or sources.

The implementation programs are intended for use as the basis for preparing the Annual Report to the City Council on the status of the City's progress in implementing the General Plan, as described in Section 65400 of the Government Code. Because many of the individual actions and programs act as mitigation for environmental impacts resulting from planned

development pursuant to the General Plan, the annual report can also provide a means of monitoring application of the mitigation measures as required by Public Resources Code Section 21081.6. The programs should be updated annually concurrent with the budget process and whenever the City's General Plan is amended or updated to ensure continued consistency and usefulness.

LAND USE ELEMENT

This section includes actions that will assist City officials, staff, and the public to implement the goals and policies of the Land Use Element.

Action LU-1: **Annual Review of General Plan.** Annually review implementation of the General Plan to identify the effect of land development and use on City revenues and costs of providing public facilities and services.

Agency/Department: Community Services and Water Department ~~Community Services Department, Planning Division~~
Funding Source: General Fund
Time Frame: Annually
Related Policies: All

Action LU-2: **CEQA Compliance and Site Development Review.** Comply with the California Environmental Quality Act (CEQA) in the review of proposed development projects. Use the review process to require projects to address environmental concerns, fund needed public facilities, recognize groundwater resources and water quality, minimize traffic impacts, be compatible with surrounding development, and comply with all use and development standards of the City.

Agency/Department: Community Services and Water Department ~~Community Services Department, Planning Division~~
Funding Source: Development Fees
Time Frame: Ongoing
Related Policies: All

Action LU-3: **Capital Improvement Program.** Continue to implement and update the Capital Improvement Program (CIP) to address phasing and construction of roadway and infrastructure improvements throughout the City. Use the five-year CIP process to prioritize, finance, and complete projects identified in the CIP. Update the CIP every two years to respond to changes in local priorities and available funding sources.

Agency/Department: All departments associated with the CIP
Funding Source: Identified funding sources in the CIP
Time Frame: Annually
Related Policies: LU-2.6, CI-1.1, CI-1.6, CI-1.11, CI-1.12, R-2.3

Action LU-4: Operating Budget. Continue to adopt and update the City's Operating Budget to maintain desired levels of City services and infrastructure.

Agency/Department: Finance Department
Funding Source: General Fund
Time Frame: Annually
Related Policies: LU-3.2, LU-3.3, LU-3.4, CI-2.4, CI-6.3, S-3.8, R-2.1

Action LU-5: Promote Manufacturing. Through zoning regulations and economic development strategies and programs, promote manufacturing uses in the City.

Agency/Department: Community Services and Water Department~~Department, Planning Division~~~~Redevelopment Agency~~
Funding Source: General Fund~~, Redevelopment Fund~~
Time Frame: Ongoing
Related Policies: LU-1.1, LU-1.2, LU-1.4

Action LU-6: Lot Consolidation. Coordinate with property owners in consolidating and merging properties for redevelopment of older and underutilized properties. ~~Look for opportunities for City purchase of properties for assemblage and resale.~~

Agency/Department: Community Services and Water Department ~~Community Services Department, Planning Division~~~~Redevelopment Agency~~
Funding Source: General Fund~~, Redevelopment Fund~~
Time Frame: Ongoing
Related Policies: LU-2.2, LU-2.4, LU-2.7~~,~~

~~**Action LU-7: Redevelopment Plans.** Continue to implement the Redevelopment Plan for the Vernon Redevelopment Area in an effort to revitalize blighted properties and improve overall development conditions within the redevelopment plan area.~~

~~Agency/Department: Redevelopment Agency~~
~~Funding Source: Redevelopment Fund~~
~~Time Frame: Ongoing~~
~~Related Policies: LU-2.1, LU-2.2, LU-2.3, LU-2.4, LU-3.5~~

Action LU-~~8~~7: Code Enforcement. Continue to enforce property maintenance standards, noise regulations, and other property related regulatory standards in the Zoning Code, City Code, and other City ordinances, in efforts to keep properties throughout the City well maintained, and to prevent blight by neglect.

Agency/Department: Community Services and Water Department ~~Community Services Department~~

Funding Source: General Funds
Time Frame: Ongoing
Related Policies: LU-2.3, LU-3.1, H-1.1, S-3.4

Action LU-8: Zoning Ordinance. Review and amend the Zoning Ordinance to ensure that the purpose and intent of zoning classifications, overlays, and standards clearly implement the description of relevant General Plan land use designations.

Agency/Department: Community Services and Water Department ~~Community Services Department, Planning Division~~
Funding Source: General Fund
Time Frame: Ongoing
Related Policies: LU-1.1, LU-1.2, LU-1.3, LU-1.4, LU-1.5

~~**Action LU-9: Energy Production.** Promote the ability of the City to accommodate industries and public/private partnerships engaged in energy production.~~

~~Agency/Department: Community Services and Water Department~~
~~Funding Source: General Fund~~
~~Time Frame: Ongoing~~
~~Related Policies: LU-3.3, LU-3.4~~

CIRCULATION AND INFRASTRUCTURE ELEMENT

This section includes actions that will assist City officials, staff, and the public to implement the goals and policies of the Circulation and Infrastructure Element.

Action CI-1: **Automated Traffic Surveillance and Control System (ATSAC).** Conduct a study to determine if ATSAC would be a beneficial and cost-effective system for the City to operate and maintain.

Agency/Department:	Community Services Department, Public Works Division
Funding Source:	General Fund, State Gas Tax; grants
Time Frame:	Complete by 2008
Related Policies:	CI-1.12

Action CI-2: **Traffic Control, Safety, and Maintenance.** Complete intersection capacity improvements, provide for the widening of Soto Street, and improve striping and signage as set forth in the Circulation and Infrastructure Element and General Plan Program EIR.

Agency/Department:	Community Services Department, Public Works Division
Funding Source:	State Gas Tax; grants; General Fund
Time Frame:	Ongoing
Related Policies:	CI-1.6, CI-1.7, CI-1.8, CI-1.13

Action CI-3: **Soto Street Widening.** At the time properties along Soto Street are redeveloped or as otherwise dictated by City plans for the widening of Soto Street, require the dedication of right-of-way to achieve the road standard for Soto Street established in the Circulation and Infrastructure Element. Complete the road widening project at the time adequate right-of-way has been acquired and/or dedicated.

Agency/Department:	Community Services Department, Planning and Public Works Divisions
Funding Source:	State Gas Tax; grants; General Fund
Time Frame:	Ongoing for dedication; complete widening by 2015
Related Policies:	CI-1.6, CI-1.7, CI-1.8, CI-1.13

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Action CI-4: **Coordinate with Adjacent Jurisdictions.** Continue to coordinate intersection maintenance and improvements with adjacent jurisdictions so that intersections along Soto Street, Pacific Boulevard, Slauson Avenue, Alameda Street, Atlantic Boulevard, Bandini Boulevard, and Downey Road operate at an acceptable Level of Service.

Agency/Department: Community Services Department, Public Works Division
Funding Source: General Fund
Time Frame: Ongoing
Related Policies: CI-1.9, CI-1.11

Action CI-5: **Coordinate with Rail Companies.** Coordinate with railroad companies in removing obsolete rail spurs. Work to minimize traffic impacts to City streets from trucks using Hobart Yard facilities and other multi-modal transportation yards.

Agency/Department: Community Services Department, Planning and Public Works Divisions
Funding Source: General Fund
Time Frame: Ongoing
Related Policies: CI-1.2, CI-1.4, CI-1.12

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Action CI-6: **Interstate 710 Freeway Improvements.** Work with Caltrans on all plans, activities, and projects regarding Interstate 710 that may directly impact Vernon's roadway facilities and traffic patterns. Coordinate with the Gateway Cities Council of Governments and Southern California Association of Governments with studies and programs regarding the improvements to the I-710 freeway.

Agency/Department: Community Services Department, Planning and Public Works Divisions
Funding Source: General Funds; Redevelopment Fund
Time Frame: Ongoing
Related Policies: CI-1.11

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Action CI-7: **Minimize Parking Impacts.** Work with businesses to develop creative strategies and solutions to address parking shortages. Require new development projects to meet the minimum parking standards in the Zoning Ordinance for both trucks and automobiles, including truck trailer storage, employee parking, and visitor parking.

Agency/Department: Community Services Department, Planning Division
Funding Source: Development Fees
Time Frame: Ongoing
Related Policies: CI-2.1, CI-2.2, CI-2.3, CI-2.4

Action CI-8: **Metropolitan Transportation Authority**. Work with the Metropolitan Transportation Authority (Metro) to achieve the following:

- Implement the Metro's Congestion Management Plan (CMP) within the City.
- Continue to provide local and regional connections through Metro local and rapid bus lines.
- Improve access to local Metro stations.

Agency/Department: Community Services Department, Public Works Division
Funding Source: General Fund
Time Frame: Ongoing
Related Policies: CI-1.9, CI-1.10, CI-1.13

Action CI-9: **Water Services and Supplies.** As needed, require studies to determine water infrastructure requirements for future development projects, and determine which recommendations should be incorporated into the design of projects. As permitted by law, require the dedication of necessary rights-of-way and construction of water infrastructure improvements for all new development projects.

Agency/Department: Community Services Department, Water Department
Funding Source: Water Rates
Time Frame: Ongoing
Related Policies: CI-3.1, CI-3.2, CI-3.3, CI-3.4

Action CI-10: **Urban Water Management Plan.** Continue to implement and update Vernon's Urban Water Management Plan in an effort to provide long-term planning and visioning for managing its water resources and providing a reliable supply of water.

Agency/Department: Community Services Department, Water Department
Funding Source: Water Rates
Time Frame: Ongoing
Related Policies: CI-3.1, CI-3.3, S-1.4

Action CI-11: **Water Quality.** Continue to maintain the quality of Vernon's drinking water by inspecting water well installations and monitoring general water quality. Continue to take routine water samples at various locations in the City and submit them to a water quality laboratory for analysis. Promote working with water agencies that supply water to Vernon to ensure adequate water quality.

Agency/Department: Community Services Department, Water Department
Funding Source: Water Rates
Time Frame: Ongoing
Related Policies: CI-3.3

Action CI-12: Cross Connection Control Program. Continue to implement the Cross Connection Control Program, which provides additional protection for the drinking water system. The function of the program is to prevent the water supply from being contaminated by the backflow of industrial fluids through the inspection of water piping systems, and the permitting and installation of specific plumbing devices at locations where there is a potential for backflow resulting in contamination. Backflow prevention devices are required to be tested annually by certified testers.

Agency/Department: Community Services Department, Water Department and Environmental Health Department
Funding Source: Water Rates and Health Permit Fees
Time Frame: Ongoing
Related Policies: CI-3.1

Action CI-13: Energy. Continue to provide high quality electric and gas services to Vernon businesses at competitive rates.

Agency/Department: Light and Power Department; Gas Department
Funding Source: Electric and Gas Rates
Time Frame: Ongoing
Related Policies: CI-6.1, CI-6.2, CI-6.3, CI-6.4, CI-6.5, R-1.2

Action CI-14: National Pollutant Discharge and Elimination System (NPDES) Compliance. Prior to making land use decisions, the City will utilize available methods to estimate increases in pollutant loads and flows resulting from projected future development. In addition, applicants for new development and redevelopment projects shall be required to demonstrate accomplishment of the following NPDES objectives:

- Use of Best Management Practices (BMPs) to mitigate projected increases in pollutant loads and flows.
- Minimized pollutant loading during and after construction.
- Limited disturbance of natural water bodies and natural drainage systems.
- Pollution prevention methods, source controls and treatment using small collection strategies located at, or as close as possible to, the source.

Agency/Department:	Environmental Health Department; ~~and~~ Community Services and Water Department
Funding Source:	Development Fees
Time Frame:	Ongoing
Related Policies:	CI-5.4, R-1.3

Action CI-15: Wastewater Treatment Services and Sewer Maintenance and Upgrades. As needed, require studies to determine sewer infrastructure requirements for future development projects, and determine which recommendations should be incorporated into the design of projects. As permitted by law, require the dedication of necessary right-of-way and construction of sewer infrastructure improvements for all new development projects. Continue to provide funding to repair, maintain, and upgrade the City's wastewater collection system.

Agency/Department:	Community Services and Water Department, Public Works Division
Funding Source:	Development Fees, General Fund
Time Frame:	Ongoing
Related Policies:	CI-4.1, CI-4.2, CI-4.3

Action CI-16: Storm Drain Maintenance and Quality. As needed, prepare studies to determine the adequacy of the storm drain infrastructure for development proposals and/or to prevent localized flooding. Require developers to incorporate necessary improvements into the design of the project. Continue to monitor storm drains and water quality in an ongoing effort to prevent pollution of the storm drain system which leads directly to the Los Angeles River. Continue to monitor storm water control activities through hazardous materials inspections and continue to provide educational materials for businesses regarding storm water pollution.

Agency/Department:	Community Services and Water Department, Public Works Division; Environmental Health Department
Funding Source:	Health Permit Fees; development fees; General Fund
Time Frame:	Ongoing
Related Policies:	CI-5.1, CI-5.2, CI-5.3, CI-5.4

Action CI-17: Community Information. Continue to use communications services, such as the City's website, to inform interested parties of information regarding announcements and upcoming events, as well as information about City departments, business permitting requirements, etc. ~~.~~

Agency/Department:	Information Technology Department
Funding Source:	General Fund
Time Frame:	Ongoing
Related Policies:	CI-7.1

Action CI-18: High Technology Services. Continue to offer fiber-optic cabling and other state-of-the-art communication services to Vernon businesses. Encourage data centers to locate in Vernon. Consider ways to provide wireless communications services to all areas of the City.

Agency/Department:	Information Technology Department
Funding Source:	General Fund and Fiber Optic Rates
Time Frame:	Ongoing
Related Policies:	CI-7.1

Action CI-19: New Sidewalks and Ramps. Provide funding for new sidewalks and ramps throughout the City. Place priority on replacing sidewalks that have been identified as deficient and a hazard to the public safety.

Agency/Department:	Community Services and Water Department, Public Works Division
Funding Source:	City Parcel Tax; General Fund
Time Frame:	Ongoing
Related Policies:	CI-1.1

HOUSING ELEMENT

Housing Element Implementation Programs are included in the Housing Element chapter.~~The specific action programs contained in the Housing Element will assist City officials, staff, and the public to implement the goals and policies of the Housing Element, consistent with State law. These action programs are summarized here.~~

~~**Action H-1: Maintenance of City-Owned Residences.** The City owns 26 of the total 31 housing units in Vernon, all of which are rented. The City is responsible for the maintenance and upkeep of these units. The City has initiated an extensive renovation project on all City-owned units to ensure the continued longevity of existing units, recently completing renovations on 12 units. An additional 6 units are currently undergoing rehabilitation (anticipated completion by July 2008). The City plans to renovate the remaining 8 units by the end of 2011. The City will continue to provide maintenance to these units, thus ensuring upkeep for the majority of Vernon's housing stock.~~

~~Agency/Department: Community Services Department~~
~~Funding Source: Departmental Budget~~
~~Time Frame: Complete current renovations (6 units) by July 2008. Complete remaining renovations (8 units) by December 2011.~~
~~Related Policies: H-1.1, H-1.2, H-1.3, H-2.1~~

~~**Action H-2: Code Enforcement.** Of the five non-City owned units located in Vernon, none was determined by the City to be in need of substantial rehabilitation. Community Services staff will actively monitor all residential units in the City to ensure the health and safety of City residents. Staff will respond to reports of code violations within the week that they are reported, and enforce applicable laws to ensure the safety and preservation of all housing units within the City.~~

~~Agency/Department: Community Services Department, Planning and Building Divisions~~
~~Funding Source: Departmental Budget~~
~~Time Frame: Ongoing~~
~~Related Policies: H-1.1, H-1.2, H-1.3, H-2.1~~

~~**Action H-3: Preservation of Assisted Housing.** State law (Chapter 1451, Statutes of 1989) requires the City to identify, analyze and propose programs within the Housing Element to address the potential conversion of all federal, State and locally assisted housing developments eligible to change to non-low-income use during the next ten-year period (2008-2018). There is no housing at risk of losing its subsidized status that must be considered in the Housing Element.~~

~~Agency/Department: Community Services Department~~
~~Funding Source: Departmental Budget~~
~~Time Frame: Ongoing~~
~~Related Policies: H 1.1, H 1.3, H 2.1~~

~~**Action H-4: Housing Opportunities for Residents with Special Needs.** The Fair Housing Act, as amended in 1988, requires that cities and counties provide reasonable accommodation to rules, policies, practices, and procedures where such accommodation may be necessary to afford individuals with disabilities equal housing opportunities. To create a process for making requests for reasonable accommodation, the City will draft and adopt procedures to provide exceptions in zoning and building codes for housing for persons with disabilities and provide information to residents via public counters and the City's website. This procedure will be a ministerial process, with minimal or no processing fee, subject to approval by the Director of Community Services applying the following decision making criteria:~~

- ~~The request for reasonable accommodation will be used by an individual with a disability protected under fair housing laws.~~
- ~~The requested accommodation is necessary to make housing available to an individual with a disability protected under fair housing laws.~~
- ~~The requested accommodation would not impose an undue financial or administrative burden on the City.~~
- ~~The requested accommodation would not require a fundamental alteration in the nature of the City's land use and zoning program.~~

~~Agency/Department: Community Services Department~~
~~Funding Source: Departmental Budget~~
~~Time Frame: June 2009~~
~~Related Policies: H 2.2, H 3.1~~

~~**Action H-5: Priority Water and Sewer Services.** In accordance with Government Code Section 65589.7 as revised in 2005, after the Vernon Housing Element is adopted by City Council, a copy will be immediately delivered to all public agencies or private entities that provide water or sewer services to properties within Vernon.~~

~~Agency/Department: Community Services Department~~
~~Funding Source: Departmental Budget~~
~~Time Frame: 2008~~
~~Related Policies: H 1.1, H 2.1~~

~~**Action H-6: Equal Housing Opportunity.** The Vernon City Clerk's Department is responsible for referring equal housing opportunity questions. Any questions or concerns raised by residents will be accepted by the City Clerk and brought before City Council for resolution. In order to disseminate information on fair~~

~~housing resources more broadly throughout the City, a Frequently Asked Questions brochure on fair housing (FAQ) will be drafted by the City and be made available on the City's website and at public counters. The FAQ will include a listing of fair housing resources, in addition to briefly explaining existing fair housing laws and resident rights.~~

~~Agency/Department: Community Services Department, City Clerk~~
~~Funding Source: Departmental Budget~~
~~Time Frame: June 2009~~
~~Related Policies: H-3.1~~

SAFETY ELEMENT

This section includes actions that will assist City officials, staff, and the public to implement the goals and policies of the Safety Element.

Action S-1: **Los Angeles County Flood Control District.** Encourage the Los Angeles County Flood Control District to regularly maintain flood control channels and structures within its jurisdiction to protect properties from flood hazard, and to complete necessary repairs in a timely manner.

Agency/Department: Community Services and Water Department, Public Works Division
Funding Source: Los Angeles County
Time Frame: Ongoing
Related Policies: S-4.3

Action S-2: **Geologic Hazard Assessments.** Pursuant to state law, geologic and/or geotechnical studies are required for proposed new development projects located in areas identified as susceptible to liquefaction. Compliance with the recommendations set forth in site specific geologic and/or geotechnical studies will be made a condition of the site development permit for all new development projects.

Agency/Department: Community Services and Water Department, Building Division
Funding Source: Development Fees
Time Frame: Ongoing
Related Policies: S-1.1

Action S-3: **Standardized Emergency Management System (SEMS) Multi-Hazard Functional Plan.** Continue to implement the City's SEMS Multi-Hazard Functional Plan according to requirements and provisions of the State's Standardized Emergency Management system. Establish community evacuation routes and when necessary, provide emergency/disaster shelter facilities.

Agency/Department: Police and Fire Departments
Funding Source: General Fund
Time Frame: Ongoing
Related Policies: S-1.1, S-1.5, S-3.1, S-3.7, S-4.1, S-4.3, S-4.4

Action S-4: **Water Department's Emergency Response and Recovery Plan.** Implement the Emergency Response and Recovery Plan in the event of natural disasters, technological incidents, and national securities emergencies to safeguard the City's water supply and service area.

Agency/Department: Community Services and Water Department~~; Water Department~~
Funding Source: Water Rates
Time Frame: Ongoing
Related Policies: S-1.4

Action S-5: **Adequate Public Safety and Emergency Response.** Evaluate the need for additional fire and police facilities and resources. Require adequate street widths and clearance for emergency access.

Agency/Department: Vernon Police and Fire Departments; Community Services and Water Department
Funding Source: General Funds; state and federal grants
Time Frame: Ongoing
Related Policies: S-1.2, S-1.3, S-1.5, S-3.3

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Action S-6: **City of Vernon Fire Department.** Provide emergency response services to Vernon businesses covering fire protection, medical emergencies, urban search and rescue, and hazardous materials control. If the City budget permits, continue to maintain the Class I rating for the Fire Department by the Insurance Services Office and provide Vernon's fire personnel with the most advanced fire and rescue training and with state-of the-art equipment and apparatus.

Agency/Department: Fire Department
Funding Source: General Fund; State and federal grants
Time Frame: Ongoing
Related Policies: S-3.3, S-3.4, S-3.5, S-3.6, S-3.8, S-4.2

Action S-7: **Hazardous Materials Monitoring Program (Ordinance 961).** Continue to implement the Hazardous Materials Monitoring Program that monitors establishments where hazardous materials are produced, stored, handled, disposed of, treated, emitted, discharged, or recycled. The Program also directs and coordinates emergency response in the event of releases of hazardous materials.

Agency/Department: Environmental Health and Fire Department
Funding Source: General Fund
Time Frame: Ongoing
Related Policies: S-2.1, S-2.2, S-3.2

Action S-8: **Hazardous Waste.** Continue to implement activities so that hazardous wastes generated by Vernon businesses are handled and disposed according to federal, state, and local regulations. Assist businesses and consultants in the preparation and oversight of site assessments and mitigation activities. To minimize present and future threats to human health and the environment, the program actively promotes waste reduction options for hazardous waste generators.

Agency/Department:	Environmental Health Department
Funding Source:	Permit Fees
Time Frame:	Ongoing
Related Policies:	S-2.1, S-2.2, S-3.2

Action S-9: **Underground Storage of Hazardous Substances (Ordinance 944).** Continue to implement the Underground Storage of Hazardous Substances program to regulate the permitting, inspection, installation, and removal of underground tanks. Operating permits are issued following the proper installation and testing of tank systems with appropriate leak detection equipment.

Agency/Department:	Environmental Health Department
Funding Source:	Permit Fees
Time Frame:	Ongoing
Related Policies:	S-2.1, S-2.2, S-3.2

RESOURCES ELEMENT

This section includes actions that will assist City officials, staff, and the public to implement the goals and policies of the Resources Element.

Action R-1: **Support Water Conservation.** Conduct public education to raise business and property owner awareness about the need for water conservation. Use the City's website to promote and encourage the use of water conservation activities and water-conserving fixtures for industrial businesses.

Agency/Department:	Community Services and Water Department; Public Works Department~~; Water Department~~
Funding Source:	General Fund
Time Frame:	Ongoing
Related Policies:	CI-3.4, R-1.1

Action R-2: **Promote Energy Conservation.** Continue to promote energy conservation by the public and private sector. Continue to implement Title 24 standards in building codes and work with energy providers to encourage energy conservation activities and promote energy conservation programs. Use the City website and City events to educate the public about the availability of energy conservation programs.

Agency/Department:	Community Services and Water Department, Building Division; Light and Power Department; Gas Department
Funding Source:	General Fund
Time Frame:	Ongoing
Related Policies:	R-1.2

Action R-3: **Enforce Title 24 ~~Energy~~ Building Codes.** Update building code as needed to adhere to the most recent California's State Title 24 ~~Energy~~ Building Codes, including the Energy and the California Green Building Standards Code, to ensure more energy-efficient development.

Agency/Department:	Community Services and Water Department, Building Division
Funding Source:	General Fund
Time Frame:	Ongoing
Related Policies:	R-1.2

Action R-4: **Coordinate with Other Agencies.** Continue to participate and coordinate with the South Coast Air Quality Management District (SCAQMD) and neighboring jurisdictions to identify and encourage projects that improve mobility and reduce congestion on major roadways. Implement and interpret the General Plan in a manner consistent with SCAQMD's Air Quality Management Plan.

Agency/Department:	Community Services and Water Department
Funding Source:	General Fund
Time Frame:	Ongoing
Related Policies:	R-2.1. R-2.2. R-2.3, R-2.4

NOISE ELEMENT

This section includes actions that will assist City officials, staff, and the public to implement the goals and policies of the Noise Element.

Action N-1: **Noise Regulations.**
Continue to enforce City noise regulations contained in the Zoning Ordinance to protect residents and school children from excessive noise levels associated with stationary noise sources. Periodically evaluate regulations for adequacy and revise, as needed, to address community needs and changes in legislation and technology. ~~(Implementation Measure N-1)~~

Agency/Department:	Community Services and Water Department; Environmental Health Department
Funding Source:	General Fund
Time Frame:	Ongoing
Related Policies:	N-1.1, N-1.2, N-1.3, N-2.1, N-2.2, N-3.1, N-3.2, N-3.3

Action N-2: **Siting of New Businesses near Noise-sensitive Land Uses.**
Review development proposals at properties to determine whether the proposed use has the potential to exceed City one-hour noise standards. As appropriate, require acoustical analyses for all proposed activities that have the potential to exceed the standards, and require mitigation measures if noise analyses show an increase in noise levels beyond the City standards.

Agency/Department:	Community Services and Water Department; Environmental Health Department
Funding Source:	General Fund
Time Frame:	Ongoing
Related Policies:	N-1.1, N-1.2, N-1.3, N-2.1, N-2.2, N-3.1, N-3.2, N-3.3

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Action N-3: **Noise Insulation Standards.**
Implement provisions of the California Noise Insulation Standards (Title 24) that specify that indoor noise levels for multi-family residential living spaces shall not exceed 45 dB CNEL.

Agency/Department:	Community Services and Water Department
Funding Source:	Development Fees
Time Frame:	Ongoing
Related Policies:	N-1.1, N-1.2, N-1.3, N-2.1, N-2.2, N-3.1, N-3.2