

SAN DIEGO LOCAL AGENCY FORMATION COMMISSION

**NORTH COUNTY INLAND
MUNICIPAL SERVICE REVIEW
AND
SPHERE OF INFLUENCE UPDATE
STUDY**

**San Diego LAFCO
1600 Pacific Highway, Room 452
San Diego, CA 92101
(619) 531-5400
www.sdlafco.org**

September 2003

Volume 1 of 2

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List of Exhibits and Attachments

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Attachment 1: Sphere of Influence Determinations

- City of Escondido
- Valley Center MWD
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Attachment 2: San Diego LAFCO Service Review Guidelines

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Attachment 4: Request for Information (RFI) Responses

- City of Escondido
- Valley Center MWD
- Rincon del Diablo MWD
- Vallecitos WD
- Vista ID

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

The North County Inland Municipal Service Review and Sphere of Influence Update represents the first combined sphere and service review undertaken by the San Diego Local Agency Formation Commission (LAFCO) under the new provisions of the Cortese-Knox-Hertzberg Local Government Reorganization Act of 2000. This State Law requires the preparation and regular update of service reviews and spheres of influence for all local agencies. Service reviews are important information reports that assist LAFCO, affected agencies, and the public in coordinating the efficient provision of public services to support anticipated growth. Spheres are also important tools that provide guidance for LAFCO in the establishment of physical boundaries and service areas of cities and special districts.

Subject agencies located within the North County Inland Municipal Service Review and Sphere of Influence Update study include the City of Escondido, Valley Center Municipal Water District, Rincon del Diablo Municipal Water District, Vallecitos Water District, and Vista Irrigation District. Located below is a summary of the proposed and recommended spheres for the affected local agencies, plus the relevant service review determinations.

EXPANSION OF ESCONDIDO SPHERE ALONG THE SOUTHEAST

As discussed in this report, LAFCO staff is recommending that the Escondido sphere be updated and expanded to include property along its southeastern border (Rancho Vistamonte and Ferrick, Harwood, et al. properties). The Rancho Vistamonte property includes about 133.1 acres and is proposed to be developed with 80 homes on lot sizes ranging from 10,000 square feet to 37,000 square feet. The Ferrick, Harwood, et al., properties includes eight parcels totaling 75.3 acres - - current lot sizes range from 7.7 acres to 16.8 acres. Although development plans are not proposed for the Ferrick and Harwood, et al., properties, inclusion is necessary to avoid the creation of an unincorporated service island.

RETENTION OF ESCONDIDO'S SPHERE ALONG THE WEST AND NORTH

LAFCO staff and the City of Escondido studied the possible exclusion of the Harmony Grove and Deer Springs areas from the City's sphere. However, there does not appear to be sufficient justification to exclude the communities from the Escondido sphere. As discussed in this report, municipal services are already being provided by Escondido to territory adjacent to Harmony Grove - - future service extensions from Escondido may require upgrades, but could be provided efficiently to the Harmony Grove area. Removing Harmony Grove from Escondido's sphere could potentially create a service island between San Marcos and Escondido. This could result in service inefficiencies and service confusion. In addition, five petitioners that requested to be excluded from Escondido's sphere have rescinded their request because of concern over more intensive development proposed in the County and the associated service inefficiencies. Other petitioners such as the Elfin Forest Harmony Grove Town Council, together with the San Dieguito Planning Group and the County of San Diego, have continued to support the deletion from the sphere of influence.

As discussed in greater detail in the LAFCO staff report, it also is recommended that the Deer Springs area be retained in the Escondido sphere of influence. The Deer Springs area has been in the City of Escondido's sphere for nearly 25 years and local agencies have planned for service provision using the City of Escondido's land use designations. Many residents of Deer

Springs signed petitions requesting to be removed from Escondido's sphere in 2001; however, the chief petitioners have officially rescinded this request for exclusion.

UPDATE OF SPECIAL DISTRICT SPHERES OF INFLUENCE

In addition to the update of the Escondido sphere, it also is recommended that the spheres of influence for two special districts be updated (Valley Center MWD and Rincon del Diablo MWD). Territory recommended for inclusion in the Valley Center MWD's sphere includes San Pasqual Indian Reservation lands, and Paradise Mountain properties. It also is recommended that a special study area be designated along the I-15 and Old 395 Highway corridor to facilitate an examination of the jurisdictional boundaries with the Vallecitos WD and Rainbow WD. Lastly, it is recommended that the sphere for the Rincon del Diablo MWD be updated and reaffirmed. The Rincon del Diablo MWD is not requesting any changes to its existing sphere of influence. The update of the spheres of influence for the Vallecitos WD and Vista ID should be deferred to a subsequent sphere update study that covers the northwest sub-region of San Diego County.

SERVICE REVIEW DETERMINATIONS

Based on the municipal service review conducted in the North County Inland study area, it can be concluded that services are being provided efficiently. The primary service providers in the region include the City of Escondido, Valley Center MWD, Rincon del Diablo MWD, Vallecitos MWD, and the Vista ID. The service review dealt with infrastructure needs and deficiencies; growth and population projections for the affected area; financing constraints and opportunities; cost avoidance opportunities; opportunities for rate restructuring; opportunities for shared facilities; government structure options, including advantages and disadvantages of consolidation or reorganization of service providers; the evaluation of management efficiencies; and local accountability and governance.

The agencies within the service review study generally ascertain infrastructure needs and deficiencies on a regular basis through the budget and master plan process. However, to facilitate better communication among the service providers in the North County Inland region, the agencies should coordinate their budgetary, master and capital facility plan process with each other. While revenues and expenditures for each service provider must be kept separate, service providers should refer related documents to neighboring agencies and conducting joint meetings to comprehensively identify and address infrastructure needs. The agencies in the region should also continue to pursue a similar approach with respect to standardizing the use of growth and population projections in their respective planning and budgetary processes.

With respect to financing constraints and opportunities, the agencies appear to be effectively pursuing opportunities to maximize financial resources. A number of cost avoidance measures are pursued separately by each of the agencies, but additional effort could be expended towards sharing information and resources related to administrative, management, and operational functions. Rate restructuring opportunities are dependent and vary based on many factors including geography and land use. However, some of the special districts in northern San Diego County have formed a study group to examine rate restructuring opportunities and decisions made by the San Diego County Water Authority.

The City of Escondido and the service providers within the service review study area participate in numerous cooperative agreements to ensure that services are provided efficiently. With respect to government structure options, the Vallecitos WD identified a number of possible

reorganizations with other agencies. These reorganization options represent a commendable level of proactive efforts - - the possible reorganizations should be reviewed through the sphere update and master plan process. The local agencies included within the service review study have all received numerous awards for management, administrative, and operational functions. The agencies within the service review study also encourage a high level of public participation. However, the City of Escondido could more extensively involve and notify the public and local agencies within the unincorporated area regarding land use, public facility improvement, and annexation proposals. Of all of the local agencies included in the service review, the special district water agencies appear to have the most extensive and multi-faceted public participation programs. These programs could serve as a model for other agencies.

PUBLIC REVIEW

The draft version of the North County Inland Municipal Service Review and Sphere Update Study was subject to an extended public review period from June 6 to July 18, 2003. Approximately 1,000 individuals, agencies, and organizations either received notification of the availability of the study or received a copy. The study was posted on the San Diego LAFCO's website and was made available to local libraries and subject agencies. LAFCO staff received extensive comments from the Valley Center MWD, Rincon del Diablo MWD, Vista ID, CSA No. 107 - - Law Offices of Everett L. Delano III, the Elfin Forest / Harmony Grove Town Council, Kevin Barnard, and "We the People", by the July 18 public comment deadline. For the most part, the comments were of a technical nature and resulted in the clarification and augmentation of a number of sections of the municipal service review and sphere update study. In addition, representatives from the Valley Center MWD, CSA No. 107, and the Elfin Forest / Harmony Grove Town Council met with LAFCO staff to discuss their comments. Copies of the comment letters are available at the LAFCO office for review. A summary of the comments follows:

Valley Center MWD

The Valley Center MWD indicated that the LAFCO study presented complex data in a well-organized and understandable format. The MWD requested various factual clarifications and revisions to certain recommendations and determinations. Factual clarifications have been made to the sections of the study dealing with infrastructure, service deficiency, retained earnings, rate structure and fee rebates, board compensation, public notification and participation, management efficiencies, local accountability and governance, and community outreach. LAFCO staff is in concurrence with the comments provided by the Valley Center MWD and the study has been revised accordingly.

Rincon del Diablo MWD

The Rincon del Diablo MWD indicated that it concurs with the LAFCO municipal service review and sphere of influence recommendations. The MWD asked that conflicting conclusions be addressed and elaboration provided regarding inter-agency communications, referral of master plans to affected agencies, service need projections, reserve funds, and public participation programs. The Rincon del Diablo MWD also submitted corrected technical information regarding service area descriptions, purchasing policies, Brown Act compliance, public outreach, and a map omission. LAFCO staff is in concurrence with the comments provided by the Rincon del Diablo MWD and the study has been revised accordingly.

Vista ID

The Vista ID views the LAFCO study as complimentary to the participating agencies and requests clarification to the following sections: executive summary, growth projection, inter-

agency coordination, reserve fund management, public participation, master plan description, revenue source description, joint powers discussion, employee turnover data, board elections, and reorganization options. LAFCO staff is in concurrence with the comments provided by the Vista ID and the study has been revised accordingly.

CSA No. 107

On behalf of CSA No. 107, the law offices of Everett L. Delano III requested that the LAFCO study include additional facts regarding the facts about the Elfin Forest community, supplemental reasons for the exclusion of the community from Escondido's sphere, information about the service quality of the CSA, the role of the CSA in serving a rural community, growth limitations in Harmony Grove, and information that should be considered for a re-evaluation of the CSA's zero sphere of influence. LAFCO staff revised the study to incorporate additional information covering the topics requested by CSA No. 107.

Elfin Forest / Harmony Grove Town Council

The Elfin Forest / Harmony Grove Town Council requested that the LAFCO study include additional descriptive information about the town council and its accountability, a summary of recent Escondido annexations and rezoning proposals, clarification about the Harmony Grove petitions submitted requesting exclusion from Escondido's sphere, comparison of city and county general plans, elaboration of CSA No. 107 service information, clarification about the disbanded Harmony Grove Eden Valley Citizen's Group petition drive and current status, elaboration about the reasons to exclude the Harmony Grove area from the Escondido sphere, and corresponding revisions to the executive summary. The additional information and clarification requested by the Elfin Forest / Harmony Grove Town Council has been added to the LAFCO study.

Harmony Grove Eden Valley Citizen's Group (Kevin Barnard, Member)

A member of the disbanded Harmony Grove Eden Valley Citizen's Group (Kevin Barnard) submitted additional information about the status of the Harmony Grove Eden Valley Citizen's Group and its position on proposed development within Harmony Grove. The citizen's group's comments are addressed in the LAFCO study.

We The People

Citizens representing the Deer Springs area (We The People) submitted a letter of support regarding the staff recommendations contained in the LAFCO study. This group originally requested to be excluded from the Escondido sphere, but subsequently rescinded the request. We the People's comments are noted and addressed in the LAFCO study.

ENVIRONMENTAL REVIEW

The California Environmental Quality Act (CEQA) requires that environmental review be conducted for spheres of influence. The determination of a sphere of influence is an administrative act that does not change the authorized land uses in the sphere territory. Until such time as an area is annexed to a city, land use designations assigned by the County remain in effect. San Diego LAFCO requires that before an area can be considered for inclusion in a city's sphere, the area must first be included in the City's general plan and city land use designations assigned to the area. Since inclusion in a city's sphere does not change permitted land uses or densities, environmental impacts associated with the sphere of influence are indirect. Direct impacts would occur when and if an area is annexed to the city for purposes of development.

In conducting environmental review for its sphere of influence update, Escondido assumed the role of lead agency. The City certified the Final EIR in 2002. Potential environmental impacts were either determined to be insignificant or could be reduced to a level of insignificance through the use of mitigation measures. These determinations were based on the environmental analyses included in the Final EIR for Specific Planning Area (SPA) No. 4, Deer Springs and Harmony Grove prepared for the City of Escondido (approved on October 2002) and the Valley View Estates Specific Plan, Rancho Vistamonte Specific Plan, and Citywide Sphere of Influence Update Program (approved on February 2003). Additional background information is contained in the North County Municipal Service Review and Sphere of Influence Update Study prepared by LAFCO staff. It also is recommended that territory be added to the Valley Center MWD sphere that shares a historical service relationship with that agency. The affected territory includes the San Pasqual Indian Reservation and the Paradise Mountain properties. A special study area designation is recommended for territory along Interstate 15 and Old 395 Highway corridor. It also is recommended that the sphere of influence for the Rincon del Diablo MWD be reaffirmed. The environmental documentation prepared by the City of Escondido and the information contained in the LAFCO staff report adequately covers the special district sphere updates.

Pursuant to the San Diego LAFCO's Administrative Procedures for implementation of CEQA, the Municipal Service Review component of the North County Inland Study is subject to CEQA Exemption 15306, because the service review consists of basic data collection and research activities and will not result in any disturbances to environmental resources.

The following sections of this report cover in greater detail the new requirements in State Law regarding municipal service reviews and spheres of influence; service review and sphere update process; agency descriptions; municipal service review data summary; existing, proposed, and recommended spheres for local agencies; city and county sphere consultation discussions; service review and sphere of influence determinations, and environmental review. Therefore, it is

RECOMMENDED: That your Commission

- (1) Certify that the information contained in the EIR prepared by the City of Escondido has been reviewed and considered for the sphere update component of the North County Inland Sphere Update; Adopt the Environmental Summary included in the LAFCO staff report as required by Section 15091 of the State CEQA EIR Guidelines.
- (2) Find in accordance with the Executive Officer's determination, that pursuant to Section 15306 of the State CEQA Guidelines, the municipal service review is not subject to the environmental impact evaluation process because the service review consists of basic data collection and research that will not result in a disturbance to an environmental resource.
- (3) For the reasons set forth in the North County Inland Municipal Service Review and Sphere of Influence Update Study, adopt the recommended (updated) sphere of influence for the City of Escondido, Valley Center MWD, and Rincon del Diablo MWD, as proposed in Exhibits A, C, and D, and adopt the written Statements of Determinations as proposed in Attachment 1.

- (4) For the reasons set forth in the North County Inland Municipal Service Review and Sphere of Influence Update Study, adopt the North County Inland Municipal Service Review Determinations contained in the service review component of the study.

Respectfully submitted,

MICHAEL D. OTT
Executive Officer

List of Exhibits and Attachments

Exhibits A-F: Jurisdictional maps

Attachment 1: Sphere of Influence Determinations

- City of Escondido
- Valley Center MWD
- Rincon del Diablo MWD

Attachment 2: San Diego LAFCO Service Review Guidelines

Attachment 3: San Diego LAFCO Legislative Policy L-106

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- Vallecitos WD
- Vista ID

NEW LAFCO REQUIREMENTS

SPHERE OF INFLUENCE REQUIREMENTS

The Cortese-Knox-Hertzberg Local Government Reorganization Act of 2000 requires LAFCO to review and update, as necessary, spheres of influence for each local agency within LAFCO's jurisdiction. A sphere is a plan for the probable physical boundaries and service area of a local government agency. A sphere is primarily a planning tool that provides guidance in reviewing individual proposals, promotes efficient provision of organized community services, and prevents duplication of services. Inclusion within an agency's sphere does not indicate that an affected area automatically will be annexed; an adopted sphere of influence is only one of several factors the Commission must consider in reviewing individual proposals. In determining a sphere of influence, the Commission is required to consider and make written determinations with respect to the following factors: (1) Present and planned land uses in the area, including agricultural and open space lands; (2) Present and probable need for public facilities and services in the area; (3) Present capacity of public facilities and adequacy of public services that the agency provides or is authorized to provide; and (4) Existence of any social and economic communities of interest in the area.

State Law also requires cities and counties to meet and discuss proposed sphere of influence updates and explore methods to reach agreement on the boundaries, development standards, and zoning requirements within the sphere to ensure that development within the sphere occurs in a manner that reflects the concerns of the affected city and promotes logical and orderly development (Government Code Section 56425 (b-d)). LAFCO must give great weight to any agreements that are reached between cities and counties. If no agreement is reached, then the sphere update may still be submitted to the Commission and will be reviewed consistent with applicable LAFCO policies and procedures.

SAN DIEGO LAFCO SPHERE POLICIES

The San Diego LAFCO has adopted a legislative policy to provide guidance in recognizing and preserving unincorporated communities during city sphere update proceedings (Policy L-103). Through the policy, the San Diego LAFCO acknowledges that special efforts should be made to recognize unincorporated communities, and when appropriate, preserve their cohesive identity. The policy is used to determine whether it is appropriate to exclude territory from a city sphere based on a number of factors: (1) Sphere of any neighboring city, (2) Whether the affected territory is surrounded or substantially surrounded by a city; (3) Present and planned land uses in the area and if public services are adequately provided by special districts, county departments, or private entities; (4) Cohesiveness of a community; whether the community is separated from neighboring jurisdictions by distinct geographic, political, economic or social characteristics or community plan boundaries, service provision, or historical development patterns; and (5) Plans of the affected city to improve or consolidate services.

MUNICIPAL SERVICE REVIEW REQUIREMENTS

The Cortese-Knox-Hertzberg Local Government Reorganization Act of 2000 requires LAFCO to conduct a service review of the municipal services provided in the county before, or in conjunction with, an action to establish or update a sphere of influence. The term "municipal services" generally refers to the full range of services that a public agency provides or is

authorized to provide. The Governor's Office of Planning and Research has concluded that LAFCO is only required to review services provided by agencies that have spheres of influence. In addition, the Governor's Office of Planning and Research have determined that LAFCOs have complete flexibility in identifying which services will be reviewed, when they will be reviewed and what geographic areas will be subject to a service review (OPR Final Draft Guidelines, pages 3 and 9, 2002).

The statewide requirement for service reviews is in response to the identified need for a more coordinated and efficient public service structure, which will support California's anticipated growth. The service review provides LAFCO with a tool to comprehensively study existing and future public service conditions, and to evaluate organizational options for accommodating growth, preventing urban sprawl, and ensuring that critical services are efficiently and cost-effectively provided. LAFCOs are required to prepare a written statement of its determinations with respect to each of the following:

1. Infrastructure needs or deficiencies;
2. Growth and population projections for the affected area;
3. Financing constraints and opportunities;
4. Cost avoidance opportunities;
5. Opportunities for rate restructuring;
6. Opportunities for shared facilities;
7. Government structure options, including advantages and disadvantages of consolidation or reorganization of service providers;
8. Evaluation of management efficiencies; and
9. Local accountability and governance.

The municipal service review process does not require LAFCO to initiate changes of organization based on service review findings; it only requires that LAFCO make determinations regarding the provision of public services per the provisions of Government Code Section 56430. However, LAFCO, local agencies, and the public may subsequently use the determinations as an information tool to consider changes to services, local jurisdictions, or spheres of influence.

SAN DIEGO LAFCO SERVICE REVIEW GUIDELINES

The San Diego LAFCO has adopted guidelines that provide assistance in determining when and how municipal service reviews are to be conducted. According to these local guidelines, service reviews generally will be prepared in conjunction with sphere of influence studies or updates; however, service reviews may also be conducted independent of the sphere of influence process. LAFCO will conduct service reviews independent of the sphere of influence updates based on a number of factors, including but not limited to: concerns of affected agencies, the public, or LAFCO; public demand for a service review; public health, safety or welfare issues; and service provision issues associated with areas of growth and/or development. Amendments to a sphere of influence, as determined by LAFCO, will not require a municipal service review. A list of the relevant factors of analysis that may be considered during the preparation of service reviews is attached. A copy of the guidelines adopted by the San Diego LAFCO is attached to this service review report (Attachments 2 and 3).

According to the San Diego LAFCO's adopted guidelines, municipal service reviews will address identified services within the service review boundary, which are generally associated with growth and development. Target services include, but are not limited to, water, sewer, drainage, libraries, roads, parks, police, and fire protection. General government services such as courts, social services, human resources, treasury, tax collection, and administrative services will generally not be addressed. LAFCO will determine which services will be included in each service review. LAFCO may also defer the review of certain services to subsequent study based on local conditions and circumstances. For example, fire protection agencies will not be comprehensively reviewed as part of the North County Inland Municipal Service Review because fire agencies are being studied as part of a separate countywide LAFCO study.

Generally, service reviews will be conducted for sub-regional areas within the County of San Diego; however, a service review can cover a geographic area that encompasses a single agency or multiple agencies. Agencies that have service provision issues related to a current service review, as identified by LAFCO, may be included in the service review. Service reviews addressing multiple services may have separate geographic boundaries established for each service.

To assist with conducting and using municipal service reviews, the San Diego LAFCO adopted an implementation strategy in 2003. The strategy contains six components dealing with scope of work, requests for information, service review time frame, regional perspective, level of inquiry, and data accuracy. The adopted strategy is based on the goal of fostering a service review process that provides benefits for overall service delivery, service providers, and the public. An important aspect of the strategy is to conduct the service review in a manner that conserves resources while encouraging cooperation and participation of local agencies. A copy of the adopted strategy is attached to the North County Inland Municipal Service Review (Attachment 3: LAFCO Legislative Policy L-106).

SPHERE OF INFLUENCE AND MUNICIPAL SERVICE REVIEW

SERVICE REVIEW AND SPHERE UPDATE PROCESS

The Commission authorized the preparation of a comprehensive sphere update and service review for the North County Inland area on April 2, 2001. The focus of the service review is on water, sewer service, and certain municipal services in this sub-region of the County. Other services, such as law enforcement, fire protection, drainage, libraries, roads, and parks, etc., will either be addressed to a lesser degree or may be deferred to a subsequent review. It is necessary to defer the review of some services, because some service providers may be marginally affected by the North County Inland Service Review and Sphere Update, or share greater linkages to other geographic regions in the County. Table 1 contains a summary the relationship of the service providers to the North County Inland Service Review and Sphere Update.

TABLE 1
Relationship of Service Providers
To the North County Inland Service Review and Sphere Update

AGENCY	SERVICE REVIEW	SPHERE UPDATE
Water		
City of Escondido	Yes	Yes
Valley Center MWD	Yes	Yes
Rincon del Diablo MWD	Yes	Yes
Vallecitos MWD	Yes	No, subject to future study
Vista ID (VID)	Yes	No, subject to future study
Sewer		
City of Escondido	Yes	Yes
Valley Center MWD	Yes	Yes
Vallecitos MWD	Yes	No, subject to future study
Fire Protection		
City of Escondido	No	No, subject to future study
Valley Center FPD	No	No, subject to pending study
San Marcos FPD	No	No, subject to pending study
Rancho Santa Fe FPD	No	No, subject to pending study
Deer Springs FPD	No	No, subject to pending study
Rincon de Diablo MWD	No	No, subject to pending study
CSA No. 113 (San Pasqual)	No	No, subject to pending study
CSA No. 107 (Elfin Forest)	No	No, subject to pending study
Library, Roads, Parks		
Law Enforcement		
City of Escondido	Yes	Yes

AGENCY DESCRIPTION OF SERVICES

The City of Escondido is a general law city with a Council Manager form of government. It was incorporated in 1888 and, as of January 1, 2000, had a population of 133,559. Escondido is one of the fastest growing cities in San Diego County. From 1990 to 2000, the City's population grew by 24,924, or 23%. At build-out, the City anticipates a population of approximately 180,442 (Source: SANDAG 2020 Forecast). Table 2 summarizes the annexations that have been approved since the Escondido sphere was last updated.

TABLE 2
Escondido Annexation History

ANNEXATION NUMBER	NAME	DATE APPROVED	GROSS ACRES
RO93-103	Montruex Reorganization	3/7/94	342.57
RO94-8	Deodar Road Reorganization	7/11/94	2.45
CA94-26	11 th Ave Annexation	2/6/95	0.82
RO94-17	El Norte Parkway Reorganization	11/6/95	1.16
CA94-22	Conway Drive Annexation	12/5/94	1.67
RO99-39	Iris Ln/Rod McLeod Reorganization	5/1/00	74.76
CA97-33	Fire Station #5 Annexation	3/2/98	8.40
CA98-9	Lehner Ave/Conway Drive Annexation	8/3/98	8.40
RO98-16	Loma Lane Reorganization	2/1/99	11.07
RO99-2	Claudan Road Reorganization	5/3/99	9.34
RO98-46	Tobacco Road Reorganization	3/1/99	2.67
RO98-45	Deodar Road Reorganization No. 2	8/2/99	14.33
RO99-13	Lawhorn Reorganization	7/12/99	0.46
RO01-13	Encino Estates Reorganization	12/3/01	39.81
RO01-09	Municipal Firing Range Reorganization	9/10/01	34.86
RO00-21	Ramirez Reorganization	11/6/00	0.35
RO00-12;OAS00-12	Dumas/Stevens Reorganization	8/7/00	0.50
RO02-03	Patterson Reorganization	5/6/02	9.31
RO01-20	Boyle Avenue Reorganization	9/9/02	0.35
RO02-12	South Escondido Blvd. Reorganization	9/9/02	4.89
RO01-27;OAS01-27	Knipstein/Pedregal Reorganization	3/4/02	0.86
RO02-14;OAS02-14	Johnson Reorganization	11/4/02	0.46
RO02-26	Brookside II Reorganization	2/3/03	45.17
RO02-28	Encino Estates II Reorganization	2/3/02	7.62
RO02-34	CMS Dev. Indust. Reorganization	4/7/03	13.53

The City of Escondido is a full-service city providing a wide range of services, including police and fire protection, paramedic services, water and sewer service, road and highway maintenance, library service, park and recreation services, and landscape maintenance. Refer to Maps 1 and 2. Portions of the City receive water from Rincon del Diablo Municipal Water District (MWD), Vista Irrigation District (VID), and Vallecitos Water District (WD). The Escondido Humane Society supplies animal control. The City is also signatory to several joint powers agreements (JPAs), including the San Dieguito River Valley Regional Open Space Park JPA, San Elijo and Encina JPAs (joint sewage systems), and SANDAG JPA for regional planning. The City has approximately 865 employees (Source: Escondido Human Resources, April 2, 2003). In fiscal year 2002-03, the City had an operating and capital budget of \$147 million. The following contains a discussion of some of the major services provided by the City that are subject to the municipal service review.

WATER

Regional Discussion

The demand for water in the Southern California region and in San Diego County is primarily driven by population growth. California's current population of about 35 million is projected to reach 50 million by 2020 with a majority of the growth in Southern California.

The supply of water faces critical issues in meeting projected population growth. Currently Southern California receives approximately 25% of its water from surplus water from the Colorado River. Under the terms of a negotiated agreement with Arizona and Nevada, this supply of surplus Colorado River water to California will decrease over the next 15 years. California's current share of the Colorado River water is 5.2 million acre-feet and will drop to 4.4 million acre-feet, a reduction of 20%.

The decrease in current water supply and in future demand is projected to be replaced by conservation, by additional storage, by water transfer agreements, by recycling, by desalinization and by the increased use of ground-water supplies. However, there are problems with several of these projected sources. Groundwater is limited in Southern California and has been over drafted for years. Desalinization is extremely expensive and requires years of planning. A water transfer agreement between the San Diego County Water Authority and the Imperial Irrigation District has proceeded slowly through the regulatory process.

Another concern with meeting projected water demands is that the state's entire water system is aging and infrastructure replacement may not match future demand. Portions of the infrastructure are being replaced incrementally but the last major expansion of California's water system occurred 40 years ago with the approval of the State Water Project, which provides approximately 25% of Southern California's water.

Locally, the supply of water to San Diego mirrors that of the region. Almost 75% of water used in San Diego County is from the Colorado River, while the remainder is from the State Water Project and local sources. In 2001, San Diego County imported almost 600,000-acre feet (AF) of water with only 13% coming from local sources. Local water sources included surface water (lakes, reservoirs etc), wells, recycled water and desalination. The future demand for water is expected to increase by 35% in 2020.

City of Escondido

Water is supplied to the City of Escondido and its sphere of influence by five water agencies—the City of Escondido Water Department, the Rincon del Diablo Municipal Water District, the Vallecitos Municipal Water District, the Valley Center Municipal Water District and the Vista Irrigation District. The City of Escondido's corporate limits include approximately 33 square miles, of which the City serves 22 square miles. Rincon del Diablo Municipal Water District provides water service to 25 square miles within the Escondido city limits. The balance of the City is divided between Vallecitos Water District, Vista Irrigation District, Valley Center Municipal Water District or is unserved by any water agency.

The City of Escondido's water department supplies retail water service to areas within the City's corporate boundaries and unincorporated areas. Water is provided to approximately 130,000 people. Businesses and residences account for approximately 82 % of the City's water consumption. Agricultural customers use about 18 % of total annual water supply.

Service to unincorporated areas began when the City purchased the Escondido Mutual Water Company, a private water purveyor, and its 80-90 miles of water lines. The Escondido Mutual Water Company provided water to City residents and to citizens living in the unincorporated areas. Upon purchase of the system, the City assumed all the obligations and responsibilities of the Mutual Water Company, which included water service to residents in the unincorporated area. The City also supplies water to the San Diego Wild Animal Park, which is not within the City's Sphere. A map of the City's Water Service area has been provided as an appendix to its response to the LAFCO Request for Information.

Water is imported from the State Water Project and the Colorado River via the San Diego County Water Authority Aqueducts. Water is treated at the Escondido-Vista Treatment Plant adjacent to Lake Dixon Dam. Escondido, similar to most communities, would be unable to meet its own demand solely from local supplies. The City has an active program promoting water conservation and reclamation. The San Diego County Water Authority is actively seeking additional independent supplies of water through transfer agreements with agricultural areas and through desalinization.

The San Diego County Water Authority Aqueduct is the City's source of imported water. Local water comes from the Lake Henshaw/Lake Wohlford systems. Dixon Lake, Lake Wohlford, and Lake Henshaw serve as reservoirs for the City. The City is entitled to all the water from Lake Dixon, a portion of the water of Lake Henshaw and all the water derived from runoff in Lake Wohlford. The City's water department operates Lake Dixon and Lake Wohlford, which are used for recreational purposes as well as water storage and supply.

The total water distribution system consists of approximately 25,000 service meters, 370 miles of pipelines, 50 pressure reducing/regulating stations, 3 pump stations and 10 reservoirs that must be capable of delivering water at the desired flow rates and pressures while maintaining optimal water quality. A detailed description of the City of Escondido's water system is provided in Appendix F, of the City of Escondido's Water Master Plan (2000).

A 90-mgd City water treatment plant is located at Dixon Lake. The Vista Irrigation District owns capacity rights for treatment of 18 mgd; the City owns the remainder. Current City demand on the plant averages approximately 25 mgd, with a peak demand of approximately 40 mgd. During the summer, the instantaneous peak demand can increase to 70 mgd.

The City's adopted Quality of Life Standards requires that:

“The City shall maintain provisions for adequate water supply, pipeline capacity and storage capacity to meet normal and emergency situations and shall have the capacity to provide 600 gpd per household or as established in the City's Water Master Plan. Federal and State drinking water quality standards shall be met. The City shall continue efforts to implement water reclamation and water conservation programs.”

The Community Facilities and Services Element of the General Plan contains a number of policies to ensure the adequate provision of water:

- Throughout the community, the City shall systematically expand the water storage capacities and service line distribution systems to keep pace with growth projections of the adopted General Plan. [Water Policy G1.2]
- New development in unserved areas shall be approved only where adequate storage facilities and distribution systems can be provided prior to occupancy. [Water Policy G 1.4]
- Costs of improvements which are necessary to serve new development, such as extension of lines, pump facilities, storage facilities, and upgrades in the line of capacity shall be financed by the developer. Reimbursement for oversize water lines shall be provided from the funds receiving the benefits. Facilities shall be constructed to City standards and dedicated to the City. This policy does not preclude the use of assessment districts or similar mechanisms to finance improvements; however, existing residents shall not have to pay for improvements necessitated only by new development. [Water Policy G1.61]

Specific recommendations for correcting infrastructure deficiencies in the water system can be found in the 2000 Water Master Plan. However, it should be noted that the ultimate water system boundary did not assess some areas currently served by other water agencies. The ultimate water service area addressed in the 2000 Water Master plan includes primarily areas to the north of the current City boundaries (Vista Verde pressure zone and Hubbard Hill area), to the east (Valley View SPA #4, Northeast Gateway SPA# 5 and East Grove SPA#12) and to the south (Bernardo Mountain SPA #7). The demand in these areas is expected to primarily come from new development. The only deficiency noted in the Master Plan was that the capacity in the Valley View area is nearing the maximum limit at this time and new facilities would have to be constructed to serve additional development. However, as noted in the 1999 Citywide Facilities Plan:

“The water system is far behind in replacement of old water lines both from the “mutual system” and the City system. Immediate financing (bond issue) and more aggressive rate increases in the future may be necessary to develop a revenue structure to support an adequate replacement program... “

The City recently proposed a 7% increase in water rates. During the last fiscal year it approved a 10% increase. The recent rate increase was proposed to fund infrastructure improvements to the city's water distribution system. Escondido estimates it will require \$30 million for capital improvements planned over the next 10 years to fund adequate replacement of existing water lines.

Valley Center Municipal Water District

The Valley Center Municipal Water District (MWD) was formed in 1954 and provides both water and sewer service (Map 3). The Valley Center MWD annexed to the San Diego County Water Authority in 1955. The water district's water supply comes entirely from the Metropolitan Water District of Southern California, via the aqueduct system owned and operated by the County Water Authority. Utilizing eight aqueduct connections, over 100 pumps, and approximately 300 miles of pipe, and 39 reservoirs totaling 135 million gallons of storage, the water district delivers from 35,000 to 40,000 acre-feet of water annually to 7,700 metered service connections.

Approximately 85% of the water district's annual deliveries supply the areas extensive agricultural/horticultural industry, including avocado, citrus, persimmon, grapes, flower, nursery crops, as well as poultry and livestock operations. Valley Center MWD is involved in an ongoing process to improve the quality and reliability of its system through the addition of system storage, system redundancy, development of groundwater resources, and maximizing the water reclamation potential from current and future wastewater treatment facilities.

For emergency interruptions of aqueduct supplies, the water district has inter-ties with surrounding agencies including the City of Escondido, Yuima MWD and Rainbow MWD, as well as access to the 1,600 acre-foot Lake Turner Reservoir under the supervision of the California Department of Health Services. As of 2003, the water district's population was approximately 22,498 according to SANDAG (2020 Forecast and latest Census). The water district's projected ultimate population is 45,000. The 102 square mile service area surrounding the unincorporated community of Valley Center and includes Hidden Meadows, Jesmond Dene, Lawrence Welk's and Circle "R" areas and lies generally north of the City of Escondido, south of San Luis Rey River, and east of Interstate 15.

The water capacity of the district is 162 cubic feet per second or 72,900 gallons per minute through 8 aqueduct connections. The water district has approximately, 135 million gallons of covered operational/emergency storage and 1,600 acre feet, or 521 million gallons of emergency supply-only storage capacity.

Rincon del Diablo Municipal Water District

The Rincon del Diablo Municipal Water District was formed and annexed to the San Diego County Water Authority in 1954. The parent district covers a total of 27,031 acres (42 square miles) with 16,074 acres (25 square miles) within the City of Escondido; 39 acres are in the cities of San Marcos and San Diego, and the remainder of the district (10,918 acres or 17 square miles) is in the unincorporated area. Within the parent district, water is served within two improvement districts (ID 1 and ID A). ID 1 is 8,265 acres (13 square miles) and ID A is 1,229 acres (2 square miles). The water district provides wholesale delivery to portions of the City of Escondido as well as retail domestic and agricultural water service to over 7,200-metered connections within two water service improvement districts ("1" and "A"). The water district's water source for Improvement District "1" is the San Diego Water Authority's First Aqueduct, while the City of Escondido supplies water to ID "A." Currently the water district's only bonded indebtedness is a \$4.1 million water revenue-refunding bond. The water district has capacity rights from the water authority for 45.25 mgd, and with the City of Escondido for 4.32 mgd. In addition, the Rincon del Diablo MWD has local storage of 25.74 million gallons with additional planned storage of 6.4 million gallons, for a total of 32.14 million gallons.

The water district provides fire and emergency services in a third improvement district (ID “E”). Population of the two water service improvement districts is 26,000 with an additional 13,000 people in the fire protection area. There is no indebtedness for the fire district. A municipal service review of the fire and emergency services provided by the water district will be conducted in a separate service review. Refer to Maps 4 and 5.

Vallecitos Water District

The Vallecitos Water District, which was formerly the San Marcos County Water District, provides potable water to approximately 45 square miles (28,600 acres) located in the City of San Marcos, portions of the Cities of Carlsbad, Escondido and Vista as well as unincorporated territory. Refer to Map 6. The current population within the District is estimated to be 65,000 with a projected population of 90,000 by 2010.

The San Diego County Water Authority (CWA) supplies the entire district’s potable water. The District has 15,000 service connections with 58% residential, 15% agricultural, 13% landscape irrigation and the rest divided among commercial, industrial and construction customers. The District has an operational capacity of 69 million gallons in 16 storage tanks and reservoirs and operates 290 miles of transmission and distributions lines with 6 pump stations.

Vista Irrigation District

The Vista Irrigation District (VID) provides water to the City of Vista, as well as portions of San Marcos, Oceanside, Escondido and the County of San Diego. Refer to Map 6. The District obtains its water from Lake Henshaw, which it owns and from Northern California and the Colorado River through the Metropolitan Water District and the San Diego County Water Authority. It covers an area of approximately 21,000 acres with approximately 68% of District being currently developed.

The Vista Irrigation District has more than 25,000 service connections with 88% used by residences, 3% by commercial uses, 2% by industrial uses and the remainder for agricultural and other users.

VID has a basic water rate of \$1.56 per hundred cubic feet (748 gallons). VID also collects a monthly service charge to cover fixed costs. The District maintains 419 miles of water mains and 14 reservoirs. Groundwater at Lake Henshaw is used to supplement the local water supply whenever surface runoff is insufficient to produce adequate supplies of local water.

The Escondido/Vista Filtration Plant is owned and operated under a JPA between VID and the City of Escondido. Both jurisdictions also have contracts regarding the rights and transportation of water from the San Luis Rey River. VID has inter-ties with Oceanside the Rincon Del Diablo MWD, the Carlsbad MWD and the Vallecitos WD for emergency and operation adjustments. VID also has a signed agreement with the Vallecitos WD for water delivery to their system.

In 2000, the VID adopted an Updated Water Master Plan which identified facilities required to accommodate future growth as well as areas with pressures higher or lower than desirable, as defined by the design criteria established in the Master Plan. An increase of approximately 18 million gallons of storage will be added upon build out of the District’s service area.

WASTEWATER

The agencies that provide sewer service include the City of Escondido, Rancho Cielo Sanitation District, Vallecitos Water District, and the Valley Center Municipal Water District.

City of Escondido

The primary responsibility of the City of Escondido's Wastewater Utilities Division is to safely collect, treat and dispose of wastewater. In 1990, the City of Escondido completed a Wastewater Master Plan, which provided a comprehensive review and evaluation of the City's wastewater collection, conveyance and disposal facility requirements for the general planning area. Wastewater flows were determined by using the land use element of the General Plan. Full build-out of all areas included within the General Plan was considered. The total average daily flow for the City is currently 11 million gallons per day (mgd), which is projected to increase to 16.5 mgd at build out. The City is in the process of updating the 1990 Master Plan.

Escondido's wastewater is treated at the City-owned Hale Avenue Resource Recovery Facility (HARRF), conveyed by underground pipes and discharged through a land and ocean outfall. The HARRF includes conventional activated sludge units, dissolved air flotation thickening, anaerobic digestion, centrifuge sludge dewatering, odor control facilities, an energy recovery system, and associated operations and maintenance buildings.

For disposal of the secondary effluent, the city presently utilizes a 14.2-mile-long land outfall and shares an ocean outfall with the San Elijo Joint Powers Authority. The ocean outfall is jointly owned and operated by the JPA. The JPA owns 21% of the system capacity and the remaining 79% is owned by the City of Escondido. Plans have been proposed to expand this facility, as the ocean outfall could become a limiting factor for future growth. According to city staff, the ocean outfall should have sufficient capacity to accommodate growth for at least 5-10 years.

The City recently proposed a 7% increase in the wastewater rates, which would result in ratepayers paying approximately \$1.44 more on each bill. The increase is a factor of increased cost of electricity as well as the \$90 million overhaul of the City's Hale Avenue water treatment plant. The city is improving the plant and building 25 miles of new pipeline to process 9 million gallons of recycled water for the City of Escondido and other customers.

The land outfall ranges in diameter from 30 to 36 inches and includes several inverted siphons and numerous manholes in the upper reach. The present rated capacity of the land outfall is about 25.5 mgd; the Hale Avenue treatment facility's capacity is approximately 17.5 mgd.

The collection system consists of major trunk sewers, pump stations, and force mains that collect and transmit wastewater to the HARRF. The City presently owns and operates in excess of 300 miles of collector sewers, ranging in size from 6 inches to 36 inches. Presently there are 14 raw sewage pump stations and force mains operating within the city. The pump stations range in size and age, depending on the specific location. The City also operates seven existing inverted siphons, which are used to convey wastewater under creek beds. These inverted siphons range in size and length, depending on location.

In late 1998, the City began construction of a six-phase recycled water project. Two phases are at the Hale Avenue Resource Recovery Facility to increase reliability and to add facilities to produce tertiary water suitable for general irrigation and industrial uses including secondary

clarifiers, an additional anaerobic digester, new grit removal facilities and sand filtration and ultraviolet disinfections for 9 mgd. The 25 mile distribution system is being built in three phases to provide service to 3 golf courses, 2 high schools, 5 elementary and middle schools, numerous city parks, street medians and parkways and 5 private industrial customers.

The final phase is two-million-gallon balancing reservoir. The Rincon del Diablo MWD will purchase wholesale-recycled water (450 acre-feet per year) for delivery to some of their customers within the City of Escondido's city limits. A total of 3,200 acre-feet of water a year will be diverted from the land and ocean outfall; this will reduce the demand for imported water.

The City participates in a number of other programs designed to promote water conservation. To promote water conservation, the City of Escondido is also offering up to \$100 back when customers replace older toilets with approved ultra-low-flush toilets. Additionally, a Home Water Audit Program is offered that can help residents identify high water uses in and around the home.

As noted above, the City currently generates approximately 11 mgd of wastewater. Escondido also treats about 4.1 mgd of wastewater for the City of San Diego's Rancho Bernardo area. The existing contract with San Diego provides for a maximum allowable average daily flow of 5.3 million gallons in future years. This may change, due to San Diego's plans to construct a new treatment facility in the San Pasqual River Basin to treat all or a portion of their Rancho Bernardo flows for reclamation purposes.

The City's Quality of Life Standard for the sewer system notes:

"The City sewer system shall have adequate trunk lines, pumping facilities, outfall capacities, and secondary treatment to meet both normal and emergency demand and to avoid sewage spills affecting stream courses and reservoirs and shall provide sewage capacity to treat a minimum of 260 gallons per day (gpd) for each residence on said system in urban areas or as established in the City's Sewer Master Plan."

At present, the City does not have a comprehensive monitoring system to assess compliance with this Quality of Life Standard. Generally, the sewage system is considered to be in good condition and has adequate capacity to serve existing residents. However, portions of the City's sphere area, particularly in the unincorporated area of Citrus Avenue, are in a sewer moratorium area. If and when these areas annex to the City of Escondido, they could be accommodated by the City's public wastewater system.

Valley Center Municipal Water District

The Valley Center MWD provides wastewater collection, treatment, and inland disposal within its jurisdictional boundaries. Serving a single ownership development on the east side of the service areas, the Skyline Ranch Country Club Wastewater Treatment Plant has a capacity of .042 million gallons per day, provides secondary treatment, and utilizes spray irrigation disposal. In serving the I-15 corridor area, the .5 million gallons per day Lower Moosa canyon Reclamation Facility also uses extended aeration to achieve secondary treatment standards, and percolation ponds for reclamation in the form of groundwater recharge. The District finalized the first two phases of a long-term upgrade and expansion program to ultimately bring the

Moosa facility up to 1.0 mgd capacity, full title 22 (tertiary) treatment, and direct reclamation on golf courses and landscaping at nearby current and future resort developments.

In August of 1997, the County Board of Supervisors terminated efforts to form an assessment district and construct the Valley Center Sewer Project in the 5,000-acre Central Valley Moratorium Area. Since then, the District has been working with various private development interests to provide sewer service to territory approved for sewer service. These developments have been granted or have applied for Policy I-78 waivers from the County on the basis that the surrounding properties are provided the opportunity to obtain sewer services from privately financed and constructed facilities. The District's role has been to coordinate wastewater planning activities with the goals of: eliminating duplication of effort, minimizing the number of wastewater treatment facilities servicing a given area; reducing overall facility investment and providing reasonable access for smaller, individual property owners to these wastewater facilities. As with the two existing projects, any new treatment plant will be inland discharge facilities with disposal through direct reclamation on existing agriculture and or planned golf course developments.

Vallecitos Water District

The Vallecitos Water District also provides sanitary sewer service in the same service area as it currently provides potable water service. The Vallecitos Water District includes the City of San Marcos, surrounding unincorporated areas, and portions of the Cities of Carlsbad and Escondido.

The District operates the Meadowlark Water Reclamation Facility, a 2.25-mgd water reclamation facility, which supplies recycled water to the City of Carlsbad for landscape and gold course irrigation use. The remainder of the wastewater within the District is collected and conveyed to the Encina Water Pollution Control Facility for treatment, reclamation and disposal in the Pacific Ocean. The District has 13,500 service connections with 3 lift stations and 178 miles of pipeline.

Present sewage treatment capacity is 7.56 mgd and ocean outfall capacity is 7.56 mgd at the Encina Wastewater Authority. The District's sewer system includes the Meadowlark Reclamation Facility, which currently handles 1-1.5 mgd and has the potential capacity for 2 mgd at this time. Meadowlark has a future expansion capacity of 5 mgd. The sewer district is also joint owner of the Encina Water Pollution Control Facility, which handles 7.56 mgd and has the capacity for 36 mgd.

ROAD MAINTENANCE AND DEVELOPMENT

The City of Escondido maintains 290 lane miles of roads. The City Engineering Department maintains and repairs the 290 miles of City streets including signs, street lights, traffic signals, sidewalks, curbs, flood control channels and public buildings in addition to maintaining the City's parks, open spaces, high school athletic fields and street trees. The Department also removes graffiti, provides dispatch services for the department and maintains all the City's communications equipment. Departmental employees are trained to perform a number of duties and provide a variety of services to maximize efficiency. The budget for 2001-02 was \$3,871,495 for maintenance and operations.

The County of San Diego is responsible for ensuring the planning, development and maintenance of transportation facilities located in the unincorporated area. The County also

works closely with other agencies, including the San Diego Association of Governments (SANDAG), the Metropolitan Transit Development Board (MTDB), the North San Diego County Transit Development Board, and the California Department of Transportation (CALTRANS) to aid in the planning of transportation facilities and services throughout the region.

Financing of New Roads

The City of Escondido funds road maintenance and improvement costs through a variety of sources including County TRANSNET funds, gas tax revenues, traffic impact fees, and the street fund and General Fund monies. The City of Escondido finances new roads primarily through the "Traffic Impact Fee" which is a development fee imposed on all new development within the City. The fees collected provide for new traffic and transportation improvements to serve the additional traffic volumes generated by these new development projects. A fee of \$169 per ADT (\$1,690 per dwelling unit) for residential projects and \$42 per ADT for non-residential development was adopted in 1997.

The City staff uses the "Quality of Life" standard of maintaining a Level of Service (LOS) C or better on Circulation Elements Street and intersections. In addition, the City's street improvement projects and maintenance programs are comprehensively reviewed by the City's Traffic and Transportation Task force which includes members of the Planning Commission, Transportation Commission, Chamber of Commerce, Escondido Neighborhood Alliance, Building Industry Association, local school districts and city staff. The Task Force evaluates the condition of the City's circulation system annually and prepares a report to the City Council regarding projects recommended for inclusion in the Street Capital Improvements Program (CIP).

The City of Escondido did not identify any Circulation Element issues. However, the County of San Diego provides road maintenance for some areas within the City's SOI. There are occasionally questions from *residents* regarding the difference in service levels that are referred to the appropriate County department.

Funding for transportation improvements within the City's sphere is becoming increasingly difficult. Hardest hit have been funds for the routine operation and maintenance of existing facilities. In order to meet the County's needs, new and alternate funding sources have been developed. Methods to finance streets and roads funding include:

- State Subventions;
- Fines and Forfeitures;
- Development Exactions;
- Transportation Sales Tax;
- Bridge and Thoroughfare Fees;
- Federal and State Grants; and
- Assessment Districts.

POLICE PROTECTION

Escondido provides police protection to its citizens from the police station located at 700 West Grand Avenue. The department has a staffing level of 200, including both sworn and non-sworn

personnel. This level of staff produces an officer-to-citizen ratio of 1.2 to 1.3 per 1,000 residents, which is higher than the national ratio of 1:1,000. Over the past several years, the department has maintained a Priority 1 response time of approximately four minutes, and a Priority 2 response time of approximately seven minutes. This exceeds the City's Quality of Life Standard of maintaining an initial response time for priority 1 calls of no more than 5 minutes and an initial response time for priority 2 calls of no more than 6 and one-half minutes.

The General Plan Community Protection and Safety Element contains a number of policies designed to allow the City Police Department to achieve their goal of maintaining a sense of personal safety and security.

In addition to traditional law enforcement patrol functions and responding to calls for service from the public, the citizens of the City of Escondido Police Department also provides other services and programs including: Senior Volunteer Patrols, Neighborhood and Downtown Bicycle Patrols, Community Policing, Sector Coordinator Officers, vacation house checks, senior citizen safety patrol and talks, school liaison officers, business liaison officer, mobile storefront activities, National Night Out, Community Awareness Academy, Youth Police Athletic League, Christmas with Santa for underprivileged children, child seat inspection and many other programs offered throughout the year.

The County Sheriff's Department provides law enforcement services to the areas outside of the City's jurisdiction. Services include general patrol, traffic enforcement, criminal investigation, crime prevention, juvenile services, communications dispatch and various management support services. These services are funded through the County's General Fund. The County's goals for law enforcement are:

- A safe living environment for San Diego County residents; and
- Facilities to support a service level of four patrol shifts per day per 10,000 populations, or service area equivalent for commercial/industrial land uses.

The unincorporated areas within the City of Escondido's SOI are serviced from the Valley Center Substation located at 28205 Worth Lake and the San Marcos Substation located at 187 Santar Place in San Marcos.

FIRE PROTECTION

A variety of governmental structures have been established to provide emergency response: a city fire department, a water district which contracts with a city, two county service areas staffed by volunteers, a subsidiary district of a city, two fire protection districts which contract with the State, two independent fire protection districts with paid staff and a State Department that is responsible for wildland fires. Refer to Map 5. These jurisdictions include the following:

- City of Escondido;
- Rincon del Diablo Water District;
- County Service Area 107 (Elfin Forest);
- County Service Area 113 (San Pasqual);
- Deer Springs Fire Protection District;

- Valley Center Fire Protection District;
- San Marcos Fire Protection District (a subsidiary district of the City of San Marcos);
- Rancho Santa Fe Fire Protection District; and
- State of California Department of Forestry.

The Escondido Fire Department provides fire protection and emergency medical services to the City of Escondido and, through a contractual arrangement established in 1984, the Rincon Del Diablo Fire Protection District. A staff of 105 provides services to a population of approximately 139,813 in an area covering 50 square miles in North San Diego County, California. The Fire Department had a FY 2001-2002 budget of \$10.3 million and an authorized staffing of 105 employees. In 2000, the Department responded to more than 9,000 calls with almost 75% of the calls for emergency medical services. The Fire Department currently operates out of 5 stations:

- Station 1 – 310 North Quince;
- Station 2 – 421 North Midway;
- Station 3 – 2165 Village Road;
- Station 4 – 3301 Bear Valley Parkway; and
- Station 5 – 2705 Felicita Road.

The City fire department provides fire protection within Escondido, and provides fire protection by contract to territory within Improvement District (ID) “E” of Rincon Del Diablo MWD. The City also operates a paramedic program with three rescue vehicles. During 1990, the department responded to approximately 7,000 alarms. Approximately 63% of these responses were for emergency medical services. The Department is responsible for the protection of life and property from fire, explosion, hazardous materials incidents, severe weather, earthquakes, transportation disasters, multi-casualty incidents, terrorist acts, and other emergencies and provides trained personnel and public education programs to respond to those needs. It is also responsible for providing pre-hospital emergency medical care within the jurisdictional boundary lines of the City of Escondido and any agency with aid agreements.

The City of Escondido has automatic aid agreements with the City of San Marcos Fire Protection District, Rancho Santa Fe Fire Protection District (FPD), Deer Springs FPD, County Service Area No. 107 (Elfin Forest), and the City of Poway. Separate agreements apply to the Valley Center FPD and CSA No. 113 (San Pasqual) to facilitate special coverage. These agreements generally require an automatic response to designated areas outside of an agency’s service area. The City is also a signatory to the County-wide Mutual Aid Agreement, which provides for assistance in the event an incident exceeds the capabilities of one agency.

The City has adopted “Quality of Life Standards” for many of the services it provides. Within the urbanized area of Escondido, the Quality of Life Standard for fire protection is a response time of 5 minutes for structural fires and emergency medical calls, and a maximum response time of 10 minutes for supporting truck companies and paramedic units. For areas beyond the 5 minute initial response time, or areas more than 3 miles from the nearest fire station, the City requires sprinklers or other approved systems to be installed in all new structures. The initial response in these outlying areas is 10 minutes for structural fires, and a maximum response of 15 minutes for paramedic units. Further information about the City of Escondido’s fire protection and emergency

medical service programs will be provided in a separate and subsequent municipal service review conducted by the San Diego LAFCO.

In February of 1993, the Escondido City Council adopted the Fire Service and Facilities Master Plan. The intent of the Master Plan was to identify station and staffing expansions requirements necessary to maintain Quality of Life standards and service levels through 2010.

In 1998, changes in the Emergency Medical Services (EMS) delivery system as well as changes in long-range planning provided the opportunity for the City of Escondido Fire Department to revise the adopted Fire Service and Facilities Master Plan.

As a result of the SOC study, the Fire Department recommended that the Quality of Life standard be changed as described in previous paragraphs. The SOC study also concluded that there were deficiencies in the area served by existing stations in District 2, 3 and 6. Station 3 was relocated to the north of the previous location and Station 2 was rebuilt in according with the SOC recommendations. In addition the area served by Stations 1 and 6 were realigned to provide more efficient coverage for residents.

Districts 4 and 5 were not meeting Quality of Life standards but the SOC study concluded that it was not cost effective to bring them into compliance with existing standards at the conclusion of the study. The SOC study also recommended the following:

- Completion of Citracado Parkway to improve response times from Station 5,
- Instituting a benchmark study,
- Completion of the computerized travel time model,
- Adoption of a fire sprinkler ordinance, and
- Continuation of City policies limiting traffic calming devices.

LIBRARY SERVICES

Escondido City residents are served by a centrally located, 40,000 square-foot library on Kalmia Street in Escondido. The library offers books, microfilm, movies, videotapes, community programs, and meeting rooms. The library has a book and periodical collection exceeding 190,000 volumes with a circulation over 800,000. A significant number of users are non-city residents; in 1991, over 20,000 unincorporated residents used City library services.

The City's branch library is located at 2247 East Valley Parkway as part of a community center complex. The facility, which opened in 1996, consists of approximately 13,000 square feet.

The library has a book and periodical collection exceeding 380,000 volumes, with a circulation over 900,000. The Escondido Public Library has a \$3.5 million budget and employs 32 full-time and 25.1 part-time and temporary workers to serve the public and conduct library operations. The Library is a member of the Serra Cooperative Library System, headquartered in San Diego and also is a member of the Tierra del Sol Region of the Library of California. The TDS Region encompasses all of Southern California except for Los Angeles and Orange Counties. The library also has a cooperative relationship with the Escondido Center for the Arts Escondido and CSU San Marcos on various projects.

The City of Escondido's Quality of Life Standard for library service is as follows:

“The public library system shall maintain a stock and staffing to meet the minimum standards set by the American Library Association of three (3) volumes per capita which for Quality of Life Standards shall be measured as 8 items per dwelling unit. The City shall provide appropriate library facilities with a minimum of .6 square feet of library facility floor area per dwelling unit of the City of Escondido prior to build out of the General Plan.”

Although Escondido is not currently meeting this Quality of Life Standard, a Master Plan has been prepared to address upgrading the library system to meet build out demand.

To implement the City of Escondido’s General Plan standards for libraries, a Library Facilities Master Plan was developed in 1991. The primary objective of the study was to determine priorities for the location, size and timing of municipal library facilities, as well as prepare a detailed financial analysis addressing maintenance, operations, and capital funding needs for implementation.

To serve the present Escondido population of approximately 110,000 and meet the planning requirements of 0.6 square foot of library space per capita, citizens should have access to 66,000 square feet of public library gross building area. The Main Library, combined with the East Branch Library, currently falls 20% short of the acceptable City standard. At build-out, the study estimated that the City would require 99,000 square feet.

The current total library collection inventory is 346,000 or 2.5 items per capita. The planning objective is 3 items per capita or 495,000 items total at build out. This 43% increase in collection size may require more building floor area for shelving and display than is currently provided for in the library space objective of 0.6 square foot per capita or 99,000 square feet of library space at build out.

In 2001, the City commissioned a study to determine whether the current Main Library site will support the size facility needed to meet General Plan standards for library service at build out.

In December 2001, the City Council approved a plan to expand the Main Library at the current site to approximately 85,000 square feet, retain the Mathes Center to include recreation activities and the Escondido Library Pioneer Room, and add parking up to a total of 375 spaces. The plan includes purchasing the remaining privately owned parcels on the block, demolishing the current library building upon completion of the new facility, and building a parking structure on the northwest corner of Second and Kalmia Streets. Additional funding will be sought from the Library Renovation and Construction Bond Act, passed by voter in California in 2000.

The County of San Diego maintains two branch libraries near the City of Escondido general planning boundaries. One is located north of the City at 29115 Valley Center Road; the other is within the City of San Marcos at 2 Civic Center Drive. Both branches offer a number of services including basic loans of books and other materials, references, intra-library and inter-library loans, and programs for both adults and children.

The Valley Center branch is housed in an approximately 3,000-square-foot building. The County library system broke ground in August 2001 for a new 15,000 square foot library. Circulation is estimated to be approximately 38,000 materials. The second branch, located in San Marcos, is

approximately 15,000 square feet. Circulation for the San Marcos branch is estimated to be 91,000 materials.

Funding for the construction of new libraries comes from external non-operating sources, including redevelopment tax increment financing within cities, contributions from the cities and communities served, private contributions, and federal Library Services Construction Act (LSCA) Title II grants. Funding libraries is not the responsibility of the County General Fund. The County library system is experiencing critical funding problems resulting from Proposition 13 and changes to Special District Augmentation Fund distribution. This funding shortage, and the County Library's inability to fund operations and maintenance costs, has greatly constrained efforts to expand County library facilities. The County has established the following objectives for library services:

- Achieve, through consistent and incremental improvement, the facility levels of 0.35 square feet of branch library floor space and 2.0 books, or the equivalent in automated information sources, per resident served by the County Library;
- Equitable sharing of funding for library facilities by unincorporated communities and all cities in the County Library's service area, and by all new development that will benefit from the facilities; and
- Timely siting of all libraries in the most appropriate locations to serve residents of the County Library District irrespective of jurisdictional boundaries.

PARK AND RECREATION SERVICES

Park and recreation services within the City of Escondido are provided by the City Department of Parks and Recreation. Agencies providing park and recreation services adjacent to the City include the County of San Diego and the Olivenhain MWD. The City has adopted a Master Plan for Parks, Trails, and Open Space. The Master Plan calls for the purchase and/or development of 163 additional acres of parkland and construction of an additional community center.

The City's current park and recreation system includes 216 acres of existing, developed parks, and approximately 82 acres of acquired parkland that is proposed for development. The City has five neighborhood parks ranging in size from 1.1 acres to 2.5 acres. Neighborhood parks generally include playgrounds, tot lots, limited turf areas, and restroom facilities. Two of the neighborhood parks, El Norte and Westside, also have picnic tables and barbecue pits, and Westside and the Youth Activity Center contain recreation buildings. Westside Park also contains basketball and volleyball courts.

The City maintains five community parks ranging in size from 10 to 25 acres. These parks offer a variety of facilities including large turf areas or courts, in addition to the facilities found in neighborhood parks. The City also operates three regional parks that serve Escondido and neighboring communities. Kit Carson, the smallest, encompasses 285 acres; Lake Dixon includes 500 acres and Lake Wohlford includes 1,200 acres. Kit Carson Park is only partially developed, but according to the City's Master Park Plan will be developed over the next 5 to 10 years. Kit Carson Park essentially functions as a large community park at this time. All regional parks contain picnic and barbecue facilities. Boating and fishing activities are available at the two lakes, and the Dixon Lake facilities include a campground as well.

Escondido has one city-owned cultural center (Mathes Cultural Center) with meeting rooms, a dance room, arts and crafts, and an art gallery. The second community facility called for in the City's Master Plan for Parks, Trails, and Open Space is scheduled to open in conjunction with the branch library on East Valley Parkway in Spring 1994.

The City does not currently achieve compliance with the Quality of Life Standards established for parks. Total park requirements at build out of the General Plan are estimated to be approximately 371 acres (5.9 acres of developed neighborhood and community parkland per 1,000 dwelling units). To achieve compliance, the Master Plan for Parks, Trails and Open Space calls for purchase and/or development of approximately 88 additional acres of parkland, improvement of school grounds involved in the joint use program and construction of an additional Community Center.

The County Department of Parks and Recreation has the responsibility for planning, developing, operating and maintaining County parks and recreation facilities to meet the recreational needs of the population outside the sphere. The County also participates in joint powers agreements and other agreements to establish partnerships with other public and private agencies to develop, operate and maintain recreation facilities on land typically owned by those agencies.

The County's goals for parks and recreation are:

- Parks and recreation facilities that meet the recreational, conservation, preservation, cultural, and aesthetic needs of County residents and visitors of all ages, income levels, ethnic groups, and physical abilities.
- Fifteen acres of local parkland per 1,000 unincorporated area residents.
- Fifteen acres of regional parkland per 1,000 residents in the region, exclusive of regional environmental reserves, regional open spaces, and preserve parks.

Existing sources of funding and land for local park development are the Park Lands Dedication Ordinance, state and federal grant funds, and the County General Fund. For regional park development, existing funding sources include state and federal grant funds and the County General Fund.

SOLID WASTE DISPOSAL

The Escondido Disposal Company is responsible for refuse collection for city residents and commercial activities. As part of the franchise agreement, the City directly bills all residential customers. The unincorporated area adjacent to Escondido is served by the Mashburn Disposal Company, which operates from a facility in San Marcos. If areas are annexed to Escondido, service is transferred to the Escondido Disposal Company.

DRAINAGE AND STORMWATER MANAGEMENT

The Public Works Department of the City of Escondido is responsible for the physical structures and facilities that house governmental functions and provide drainage and flood control services. The department manages the construction of new facilities, maintenance of existing facilities, and is dedicated to providing continuously better service to the public. The Maintenance Division maintains approximately 175 miles of the storm drains and drainage channels within the City.

The City of Escondido is responsible for complying with the requirements of the California Regional Water Quality Control Board, San Diego Region, Order No. 2001-01, NPDES No. CAS0108758, Waste Discharge Requirements for Discharges of Urban Runoff from the Municipal Separate Storm Sewer Systems (MS4s) Draining the Watersheds of the County of San Diego, the Incorporated Cities of San Diego County, and the San Diego Unified Port District (The San Diego Municipal Permit).

The City's Grading and Erosion Control Ordinance was created to prohibit the discharge of pollutants into the storm drain system and to assure that development occurs in a manner that protects the natural and topographic character and identity of the environment by regulating grading and providing standards and design criteria implementing Best Management Practices to control stormwater and erosions during all construction activities for all development. The City also adopted the Stormwater Management and Discharge Control Ordinance to control non-stormwater discharges to the stormwater conveyance system, eliminate discharges to the stormwater conveyance system from spills, dumping, or disposal of materials other than stormwater, and by reducing pollutants in urban stormwater discharges to the maximum extent practicable. The City has also established Stormwater Management Requirements to prevent the discharge of pollutants from construction sites. The City of Escondido has additional requirements under the Carlsbad Watershed Urban Runoff Management Plan, the San Dieguito River Watershed Management Plan, and the San Luis Rey River Watershed Management Plan.

The County of San Diego and the other co-permittees assist in the implementation of the San Diego Municipal Permit requirements, including operation of a Regional Storm Water Hotline and a regional public education and participation program (Project Clean Water).

MUNICIPAL SERVICE REVIEW DATA SUMMARY

The following section summarizes agency responses to the data-collection questions contained in a Request for Information (RFI) issued by LAFCO staff. The RFI was used to establish a uniform data reporting system for the service review. Each section concludes with a section of determinations.

The Cortese-Knox-Hertzberg Local Government Reorganization Act of 2000 requires LAFCOs to conduct reviews of municipal services and make nine written determinations. Determinations may be one or more declaratory statements or conclusions, based on the service review data. The determinations may be used by LAFCO, other agencies, and/or the public to better understand service delivery and service conditions. While the service review determinations will not have immediate implementation value, the determinations and the overall service review process may have future value and use. For example, the service review process will result in opening up dialogue between agencies, sharing of data, communication, and services among local agencies, organizations, and stakeholders.

MUNICIPAL SERVICE REVIEW DATA SUMMARY – INFRASTRUCTURE

Determination of Infrastructure Needs

Infrastructure needs vary among the service providers within the North County Inland region. Located below is a summary of how infrastructure needs and deficiencies are ascertained, funded, studied, and dealt with by the local agencies responsible for service provision in the region.

The **City of Escondido** is a full-service municipality. The City's General Plan establishes target levels of services or "Quality of Life" standards for the different services. The specific City departments use these "Quality of Life" standards to evaluate the provision of services provided and to help determine related infrastructure needs. Some departments also prepare master plans addressing the long-term infrastructure needs. In addition, each year the various departments prepare a proposed budget and capital improvements list which is forwarded to the City Manager's office and ultimately to the City Council. The City Council uses the information prepared by the departments to set priorities for funding through the budget and the capital improvement program. It is not clear from the information provided how the City coordinates its infrastructure planning process with neighboring agencies within the region.

Copies of the 2000 Water Master Plan (Appendix F), Wastewater Master Plan (Appendix G, 1997 Eagle Crest), the Five-Year Capital Improvement Program (Appendix H), Annual Operating Budget (Appendix B), the Citywide Facilities Plan (Appendix I) and other documents related to the provision of development related services and infrastructure have been submitted to LAFCO for inclusion in this municipal service review.

The **Valley Center MWD** determines water infrastructure needs through its master planning process. The water district has an adopted 1994 Master Plan that is currently being updated. Infrastructure needs for the District's current sewer facilities are determined through its Master Plan (Moosa Canyon) and through evaluation of the facility serving Skyline Ranch. Future sewer needs are generally related to the needs of specific development. The **Rincon del Diablo MWD** uses the master plan process to determine infrastructure needs. The water district adopted a

master plan in 1998 and is scheduled to prepare another one in 2003. Other projects are included in the CIP and budget process. The Rincon del Diablo MWD maintains a close working relationship with the City of Escondido (as well as other affected agencies) both formally and informally. This applies to long-range planning and technical aspects of service provision.

The **Vallecitos WD** reviews the general plans and zoning of the jurisdictions it serves and that data is compared to SANDAG estimates to determine infrastructure needs. The District also uses historic water demand and sewer generation rates as part of developing their water and wastewater master plans, which are updated every five years. The District adopted a Master Plan in 1997 and is in the process of preparing an updated document. The **Vista ID** has prepared studies since the 1970's to determine peaking factors and water use patterns using a computerized model. This historical data, along with SANDAG's land use coverages were used to prepare the previous water master plan (1995) and the December 2000 Water Master Plan (attached). The upgraded and new facilities recommended are then folded into the District's annual Capital Improvement program.

Funding of Infrastructure Upgrades

The **City Of Escondido** uses a variety of financing mechanisms allowed under current government regulations. Detailed information about revenue sources can be found in the City's "Annual Operating Budget-2001-2002".

The City's Five Year Capital Improvement Program proposes a total expenditure over the next five years of \$122.7 million for infrastructure improvements and upgrades. Revenues of \$119.3 million are projected to fund the improvements with \$3.4 million in existing funds:

TABLE 3
City of Escondido
Capital Improvement Revenue Sources

TYPES OF REVENUE	REVENUE AMOUNTS
Developer Fees	8% or \$9.5 million
TRANSNET	15% or \$17.8 million
Library Bond Act	13% or \$15.5 million
Utilities	28% or \$33.4 million
Police Facility Bonds	13% or \$15.5 million
Gas Tax	11% or \$13.1 million
Operating Transfers	9% or \$ 10.7 million
Other Revenue	3% or \$ 3.5 million

The City is also proposing bond issues of approximately \$30 million over ten years to fund infrastructure improvements to the City's existing water system.

The **Valley Center MWD** finances infrastructure through taxes, investment income, standby fees, water commodity revenue, capacity fees and direct contributions from developers. The

Rincon del Diablo Municipal Water District is primarily built-out; however, additional reservoir and backbone construction is planned to accommodate growth mainly in the southeast portion of its water improvement district. The rest of the District's infrastructure plans are for system enhancement rather than growth accommodation. The Master Plan update will re-address infrastructure needs according to current demand, new population figures, land-use designations, and projected development. The **Vallecitos Water District** funds water and wastewater facilities through conditions of development and the collection of capacity fees. The developer of projects provides funding for improvements for specific developments. If the developer funds facilities of a regional nature, a reimbursement program is established. The **Vista ID** uses a combination of capacity fees, available grants and long term financing. Developers of projects provide the funding and system improvements for each project.

Infrastructure Update Schedules

The **City of Escondido** has established goals and objectives included in the General Plan as well as a series of "Quality of Life" standards to ensure a minimum threshold for various public services, improvements and facilities. The City also prepared a Citywide Facilities Plan in 1999 consistent with the policies set forth in the General Plan. City staff evaluates existing facilities and initiate measures to ensure that adequate service levels are maintained. The timing of development in the Tiers 2 and 3 areas, or urbanizing areas, is dependent upon the concurrent provision of facilities and services and is based upon "Quality of Life" standards. Although development is not restricted by the Quality of Life Standards, those standards are used as the basis for capital improvement programs, impact fees and other financing mechanisms established to provide facilities and services concurrent with need. During each budget cycle, departments prepare a five-year capital improvements program for services their department provides. After approval, the funds for the first year's improvements are appropriated while the last four years of proposed capital improvement needs are used as planning tools. In addition, several municipal departments prepare long-range master plans to guide infrastructure schedules for their services and facilities and for inclusion in the capital improvements program.

The **Valley Center MWD** uses its master plan for both water and sewer facilities to provide a comprehensive list of upgrades or replacements for infrastructure. The timing of the individual upgrades or replacements is determined by the rate of service growth, development process of the county roadway upgrade system, and the financial capacity of the water district. Each year, the water district allocates money for the CIP program to finance improvements. The **Rincon del Diablo MWD** is currently preparing a definitive schedule for infrastructure upgrades and replacements. The water district uses its corrosion control program and a master plan process to determine a schedule for upgrades and replacements. In 2001, the board began implementing programs to enhance the life of the distribution system and commissioned an infrastructure study. The **Vallecitos WD** establishes and reviews Infrastructure schedules annually. If certain criteria are met, facility upgrades and replacements are included in a capital budget. A copy of the water district's master plan was supplied to LAFCO staff. The **Vista ID's** upgrade and replacement schedules for infrastructure are budgeted each fiscal year based on a needs assessment and through the Water Master Plan recommendations; an ongoing water main replacement program, and an annual assessment by district personnel of current needs and the CIP program. A replacement priority system is used based on facility age, material, leak history, location number of services on a main, etc.

Infrastructure Deficiencies

The **City of Escondido** has areas of the City, which do not meet existing Quality of Life standards. City staff prepared a Citywide Facilities Plan to analyze the provision of services as related to the projected build-out of the General Plan. The Citywide Facilities Plan and annual updates provide information to the city staff and City Council regarding areas of deficiencies and appropriate remedies. In addition, the various master plans for specific services also identify areas needing specific upgrades or improvements.

The Regional Water Quality Control Board requires all 48 cities and special districts in Region 9 to report sewer overflows pursuant to Order 96-04. During the 1999-2000 reporting year, the City of Escondido reported 34 spills or overflows in the local system (48 spills through May 31, 2003), the majority of which were from private systems not under the City's jurisdiction or control. The City had previously evaluated alternative means to avoid discharges from the Hale Avenue Recovery Facility which generally occur during periods of extremely wet weather, and has begun modifications of the plant. No other permit or regulatory violations have occurred due to City of Escondido controlled infrastructure deficiencies.

The **Valley Center MWD** has identified some areas with low pressure during peak usage; improvements have been noted in information supplied to LAFCO staff. The water district has had no permit or regulatory citations due to infrastructure deficiencies. The **Rincon del Diablo MWD** identifies infrastructure deficiencies during operations. The water district's system operations are designed to handle multiple contingencies that allow the redirection of water flows during periods of extreme demands. Detailed records are maintained to predict system deficiencies before problems occur. A close working relationship with regulatory officials minimize the occurrence of permit violations. The water district noted no permit or regulatory citations. The **Vallecitos WD** has addressed infrastructure deficiencies through adherence to its Master Plan. There have been no permit or regulatory citations due to infrastructure deficiencies. The **Vista ID** addressed infrastructure deficiencies through its water master plan process. Projects are prioritized and scheduled for correction in upcoming budgets. There have been no permit or regulatory citations due to infrastructure deficiencies.

Underutilized Capital Facilities

The **City of Escondido** has no facilities that are underutilized but does participate in numerous interagency agreements with neighboring agencies to ensure the efficient provision of services. The **Valley Center MWD**, **Rincon del Diablo MWD**, **Vallecitos WD**, and **Vista ID** did not identify any underutilized facilities. The Valley Center MWD identified interagency agreements, primarily for emergency purposes, with neighboring agencies. Valley Center MWD noted that it serves a portion of a neighboring agency through an agreement (Rincon del Diablo MWD). The Rincon del Diablo MWD noted that it has a water interconnection with Vista ID and several with the City of Escondido. The water district has also shared its facilities with the Registrar of Voters (polling), San Diego County Sheriff and Escondido Police, and the San Diego County Department of Health Services. The Vallecitos WD noted that it has emergency connections with other agencies for limited service that were not considered in the sizing of the facilities in the Master Plan. The Vallecitos WD also noted that it is common to have some facilities that may be underutilized on a short-term basis until development achieves a built-out status. This avoids parallel facilities and achieves cost effectiveness.

DETERMINATIONS FOR INFRASTRUCTURE NEEDS AND DEFICIENCIES

In authorizing the preparation of municipal service reviews, the State Legislature has focused on one of LAFCO's core missions—encouraging the efficient provision of public services. Infrastructure needs or deficiencies, which refers to the adequacy of existing and planned public facilities in relation to how public services are, and will be, provided to citizens, impacts the efficient delivery of public services. Infrastructure can be evaluated in terms of capacity, condition, availability, quality, and correlations among operational, capital improvement, and finance plans. It is recognized that there may be unmet infrastructure needs due to budget constraints or other factors; however, identification of deficiencies may promote public understanding and support for needed improvements.

Determination 1.0: Some areas within the City of Escondido do not meet the “Quality of Life” standards. These areas are addressed through the preparation of the Citywide Facilities Plan. Annual updates of this plan inform the city staff and the City Council of deficiencies and appropriate remedies.

Determination 1.1: The Valley Center MWD has some areas with low pressure during peak usage times. Corrective measures have been identified in the Water Master Plan and are being implemented through the ongoing capital improvement program. However, no permit or regulatory citations were noted.

Determination 1.2 Rincon Del Diablo, Vallecitos WD, and Vista ID noted no permit or regulatory citations.

Determination 1.3: Special district service providers should adopt guidelines to refer draft and final master plans to the City of Escondido for comment. This would ensure that the special district service providers' master plans are coordinated with the City's capital facility and land use planning process. This referral system should also apply to Escondido so that city infrastructure plans can be coordinated with special district service providers.

Determination 1.4: The City of Escondido meets or exceeds its Quality of Life Standard for police protection by maintaining a Priority 1 response time of approximately 4 minutes, and Priority 2 response time of approximately 7 minutes.

Determination 1.5: The City of Escondido revised the adopted Fire Service and Facilities Master Plan to change the City's Quality of Life Standard in 1998 that included various recommendations to improve service.

Determination 1.6: The City of Escondido is not currently meeting its Quality of Life Standard for library services. A Master Plan was commissioned and in 2001, a plan to expand the Main Library was approved. Additional funding will also be sought from the Library Renovation and Construction Bond Act to ensure that the Standard is met.

Determination 1.7: The City of Escondido does not currently meet the Quality of Life Standards established for parks. The total park acreage at build-out is estimated at 371 acres (5.9 acres of developed neighborhood and community parkland per 1,00 dwelling units). To achieve compliance, the Master Plan for Parks, Trails, and Open Space calls for the purchase and/or development of approximately 88 additional acres of parkland, improvement of school grounds involved in the joint use program and construction of an additional Community Center.

MUNICIPAL SERVICE REVIEW DATA SUMMARY – SERVICE NEEDS, GROWTH, AND PROJECTIONS

The efficient provision of public services is linked to the ability to plan for future need. The following summary addresses both existing and future needs for public services and whether projections for future growth and population patterns are integrated into the service planning functions of the region.

Service Need Projections

The **City of Escondido's** General Plan, budgetary, capital improvements and master plan process provide a comprehensive analysis of existing and future needs for services based on land use designations and development. This information is used to plan for upgrades or the construction of facilities concurrent with need and with policies adopted by the City Council.

The City relies on population forecasts from SANDAG as well as information from the various city departments regarding future service needs. Each year the City also prepares an annual report on the status of the General Plan and progress in its implementation pursuant to Government Code Section 65400(b). The report notes the General Plan Amendments that have been approved or are being processed since the adoption of the General Plan and the resulting change in the projected General Plan build out population. The City staff uses the population figures to monitor current service needs through reports to the City Manager.

The City is also a member of regional agencies, such as the North County Transit Districts, the San Diego County Water Authority, the San Dieguito River Regional Park JPA, the Encina JPA and other regional agencies. The City works with the regional providers or coordinators of services to ensure that services are supplied concurrent with demand and changes in projected population growth.

The **Valley Center MWD** uses the master planning process, past and current land uses, and SANDAG population projections to determine service needs. The **Rincon del Diablo MWD** uses County Water Authority regional need forecasts and SANDAG population projections to determine service needs. The water district is also a signatory with the MOU regarding urban water conservation and uses best management practices for the efficient use of water in urban areas. The district also monitors past, current, and projected water use, population trends, and available water supplies on an annual basis (urban water management plan). The **Vallecitos WD** and **Vista ID** use their master plan process and GIS system, existing district boundaries and Sphere of Influence, planning documents adopted by the agencies with land use authority and SANDAG data to project service needs. The data is compiled and utilized in the water district's GIS to form the basis of all facility needs, assessment and tracking of facilities. The data is incorporated into the Master Plan process.

Geographic Area of Service Provision

The agencies within the North County Inland Service Review region (**City of Escondido, Valley Center MWD, Rincon del Diablo MWD, Vallecitos WD, and Vista ID**) provided maps showing their respective service areas. Jurisdictional maps are attached to this report.

Variations in Service Levels and Areas that Could Be More Efficiently Served By Another Agency

The **City of Escondido** notes that there are no inequities in service levels within its corporate limits. However, city departments serve portions of the City of Escondido and its sphere; special districts serve other areas. While all the agencies work cooperatively to ensure the most efficient provision of service to citizens, differences in the level of service may exist due to differences among the agencies. For example, there are areas within the unincorporated area of the City of Escondido's sphere that are served by septic systems and not public sanitary sewer systems. In addition, some of the City's sphere is served by volunteer fire protection agencies. These variations in service levels are generally a result of the service provider, the nature of the development, and the preferences of residents.

Some areas served water by the City of Escondido are not within the existing municipal boundaries. These areas were once part of the water system of the Escondido Mutual Water Company, a private water purveyor that the City acquired in 1970. The City makes no distinction in the provision of water service between City residents and non-city residents. However, the water fund, as an enterprise fund, allocates monies each year to other City services such as fire and police protection. The City relies on property owners to initiate annexation but some residents have not been amenable to proposed changes in jurisdictional boundaries.

The City of Escondido indicates that it works cooperatively with service providers to ensure that all services are efficiently provided. The City participates in a variety of mutual and automatic aid agreements (fire, police and EMS), exchange agreements for water and sewer service and other service agreements which ensure that services are provided in the most efficient manner and concurrent with need.

The **Valley Center MWD** and **Rincon del Diablo MWD** both indicated that there are no areas within their respective districts that could be provided service more efficiently by another agency. The **Vallecitos WD** did not note any variations in service levels, except for variations due to water pressure / elevations. The **Vista ID** noted that two areas within the eastern portion of the District—Twin Oaks Valley and Bennet Acres—were removed from the District's sphere but the most efficient service provider has not been identified.

Areas Outside of Agency that Could Be Served Efficiently

The **City of Escondido** has an approved sphere of influence depicting its probable future boundaries. This sphere was adopted in 1993 and is in the process of being updated. The current and proposed sphere includes territories that are outside the current city boundaries but are expected to be best served by city services when development occurs or when annexation is appropriate.

The City's sphere study analyzes the proposed inclusion of areas within the sphere and for annexation to the City. These areas are addressed in the City's General Plan but are not included within the current sphere. In addition, the City's sphere study examines the possible deletion of two communities, Deer Springs and Harmony Grove, from the City's sphere. However, the City of Escondido does not intend to study or process any annexation and/or reorganization of service providers unless requested by other agencies, by the Escondido City Council, by residents or by LAFCO.

The **Valley Center MWD** noted that there are rural residential and Indian reservation lands outside its eastern boundary that could be served efficiently by the water district. The **Rincon del Diablo MWD** noted that it uses exchange agreements with surrounding agencies to ensure that the most efficient service is provided to a territory. The **Vallecitos WD** noted that an area east of Nordahl Road, which might be more efficiently served by the City of Escondido. Preliminary discussions have occurred between Vallecitos and Escondido regarding the provision of sewer service (by Vallecitos) to the Country Club Basin area. This would avoid the need for Escondido to utilize a lift station. The **Vista ID** did not note any areas outside its current boundaries that could be provided service more efficiently.

Planned Developments Requiring Service

The **City of Escondido** is in the process of completing a comprehensive sphere of influence update that lists the probable boundaries of the City including areas proposed for annexation and/or detachment. The sphere study and accompanying EIR is available at the City of Escondido for review. The **Valley Center MWD** noted the two areas in question in the previous item that are adjacent to a Valley Center MWD water main and may require annexation due to well failure. The **Rincon del Diablo MWD** provided a list of pending developments requiring service: Escondido Research and Technology Center (186 acres); Escondido Tract No. 811 (9 residential lots); County of San Diego Tract Nos. 4266, 4922, and 4824 (13, 4, 9 lots, respectively); and Montreux subdivision in Escondido (84 residential lots). The **Vallecitos WD** and the **Vista ID** did not identify any pending developments requiring service.

Joint Power Agreements

The **City of Escondido** submitted an extensive list of Joint Powers Agreements in an attachment to the LAFCO Request for Information. The **Valley Center MWD** is currently a participating member of the San Diego County Water Authority (CWA) and a signatory to the Countywide Mutual Aid Agreement in which the water authority and its members agree to assist each other with personnel, equipment, and materials in times of disaster. The water district indicated that through its membership in the water authority, it has shared in the financing, construction, operation and maintenance of the aqueduct system, which supplies water to 23 member agencies. The **Rincon del Diablo MWD** has an agreement with the City of Escondido for the purchase of potable and recycled water. The agreement also stipulates that the City agrees to allow the district to purchase water in times of water shortages. Rincon also has the capability to serve the community of Del Dios and has emergency interconnections with Vista ID and the City of Escondido. Rincon del Diablo MWD also participates in an agricultural rebate program, whereby agricultural customers agree to mandatory reductions in emergency situations. Rincon is a member of the San Diego County Water Authority for the finance, construction, operation and maintenance of the aqueduct system and Emergency Storage Project. The **Vallecitos WD** has agreements with the Carlsbad MWD and the Olivenhain MWD for the Questhaven Pipeline; the Land Outfall Pipeline providing collection and conveyance of

untreated wastewater for the City of Vista, Buena SD (County), and City of Carlsbad; the City of Vista and the County of San Diego for the reclaimed water failsafe pipeline from the Meadowlark and Shadowridge Reclamation Facilities; and the Encina Wastewater Authority which is a six-agency owned facility responsible for sewer treatment. The **Vista ID** is a co-owner/operator of the Escondido/Vista Filtration Plant; the City of Escondido and VID also have signed a series of contracts for water from the San Luis Rey River.

Properties Outside Agency’s Jurisdictional Boundaries Receiving Agency Services

In 1970, the **City of Escondido** purchased the Escondido Mutual Water Company, a private water purveyor. The Mutual Water Company served areas both within the City’s boundaries and unincorporated territory; the City continues to provide water service to portions of the unincorporated areas. The City submitted a map of Escondido’s water service area. In addition, the City of Escondido has numerous properties that receive water service through a 1994 exchange agreement with the Rincon del Diablo Municipal Water District. Rincon del Diablo MWD, in turn, serves residents of the City who can receive service most efficiently from their system. The exchange agreements are designed to provide the most efficient service to all the residents within the city boundaries and sphere. The **Valley Center MWD** provides supplemental and emergency water to the San Pasqual Band of Mission Indians, and serves an area in the Rincon del Diablo MWD service area; the water district provided a list of affected parcels. The **Rincon del Diablo MWD** has a 1994 agreement with the City of Escondido for the provision of water service to 735 parcels outside the boundaries of the Rincon del Diablo MWD and inside the City of Escondido. The agreement ensures that customers receive water service in the most efficient manner. The 1994 agreement was provided with the water district’s response. **Vallecitos WD**, and **Vista ID** provided lists of agreements with their response.

DETERMINATIONS FOR GROWTH AND POPULATION PROJECTIONS

Efficient provision of public services is linked to an agency’s ability to plan for future need. For example, a water purveyor must be prepared to supply water for existing **and** future levels of demand, and also be able to determine **where** future demand will occur. Municipal service reviews will give LAFCO, affected agencies, and the public the means to examine both the existing and future need for public services and will evaluate whether projections for future growth and population patterns are integrated into an agency’s planning function.

Determination 2.0: The City of Escondido works with regional providers to ensure that services are supplied concurrent with demand and changes in projected population growth.

Determination 2.1: The projected number of people in the City of Escondido over the next 10, 20, and 30 years is shown in Table 4. This information is from the San Diego Association of Governments:

**TABLE 4
 City of Escondido Population**

	2000	2010	2020	2030	% CHANGE 2000-2030
Escondido	133,559	144,644	159,560	166,119	24%

Determination 2.2: All of the service providers' projections for needed services are based on varying methodologies, including: land use designations, projected development, and SANDAG population projections.

Determination 2.4: Local agencies employ similar methodologies in the projection of future service needs. Agencies should continue to coordinate their projection processes to reach a "best practices" methodology that all agencies can employ. The methodology should be reflective of unique differences within the service area of each agency, such as climate, usage patterns, topography, operational constraints, etc.

MUNICIPAL SERVICE REVIEW DATA SUMMARY – FISCAL

The following fiscal summary evaluates public service needs in relation to the resources available to fund the services. Among the topics discussed in this section of the report are revenue sources, staff expenditure procedures, legal expenditure summaries, bond ratings, investment and reserve policies, rate and fee characteristics, infrastructure replacement methods, and opportunities to avoid unnecessary costs, restructure rates, and share facilities.

Revenue Sources

The **City of Escondido** derives its revenues from a variety of sources. All revenues sources and amounts are listed in detail in a copy of the City's 2001-2002 budget, which was supplied to LAFCO staff. The **Valley Center Municipal Water District's** revenue sources include fees and charges, property taxes, water availability charges, annexation charges, investment income, service charges for administrative and billing matters and lease of facilities. The District provided detailed information about each revenue source as well as copies of the budget. The water district noted that it bills and collects sewer charges for the City of Escondido for a subdivision that receives water from Valley Center MWD. This arrangement includes a nominal surcharge to compensate for additional costs; duplicate infrastructure is avoided. The **Rincon del Diablo MWD's** revenue sources include: water sales, service charges, interest income, operating, property taxes, connection fees, grants, loans and other sources (e.g., engineering fees and charges). A budget was attached to the water district's response. The **Vallecitos WD** revenue sources include water sales, wastewater service charges, reclaimed water sales, pumping charges, engineering services, administrative billing, investment income, property taxes, annexation fees and capital contributions (facility fees assessed on new development). The **Vista ID** revenues sources include interest income, property taxes, connection fees, annexation fees, grants, loans, and engineering services.

Revenue Constraints

The **City of Escondido's** ability to generate revenue is constrained by existing government codes and by past voter approved initiatives such as Prop 13, 218 and 62. The City Council must balance competing priorities as advocated by constituents and by the needs of the City. The City's Annual Operating Budget contains a description of all available financing constraints. The **Valley Center Municipal Water District** indicated that it has no revenue constraints. Agricultural usage accounts for over 80% of the water district's sales and the district is very sensitive the effect water rates can have on agricultural activities. The **Rincon del Diablo MWD** noted existing legislative, political and governmental constraints on the ability to generate

revenues. The **Vallecitos WD** and **Vista ID** indicated that they have no revenue constraints beyond existing legislative, political and governmental constraints. The water districts noted that they are fiscally sound and able to generate revenues to properly provide services to residents.

Allowable Staff Expenditures

According to the **City of Escondido** Municipal Code, contracts for services of estimated amounts of less than fifty thousand dollars (\$50,000.00) shall be executed by the city manager. Contracts for services of estimated amounts of less than twenty-five thousand dollars (\$25,000.00) may be executed by heads of city departments when so authorized in writing by the manager. The **Valley Center MWD** provided information about the amount, process and approval level for general purchasing and professional/consulting services. The water district has a structured system for restricting purchases. In addition, the water district provided information about a local ordinance enacted by district residents that limits the expenditure of district funds for capital improvements. The limitation is adjusted annually and is the 2002 amount was \$1,623,310 (\$2,434,971 for water storage projects). This limitation does not apply to funds expended by property owners, developers, or other capital projects dedicated to the district. The **Rincon del Diablo MWD** provided a copy of its Purchasing Policy, which generally requires Board approval for expenditures in excess of \$15,000. In addition, the MWD board has given certain powers and authority to the General Manager in the event of an emergency; one of which is to enter into contracts and / or agreements and to expend funds on behalf of the District with provisions to notify the MWD board within 72 hours. The **Vallecitos WD** adopted a resolution (#1133) which allows staff to make purchases under \$25,000 for materials and supplies, construction contracts under \$50,000 and other purchases under \$10,000 without board approval. The **Vista ID** provided the District's purchasing procedures, which generally limit expenditures by the general manager to \$25,000 without Board approval.

Legal Expenditures

The **City of Escondido** relies on its City Attorney's Office for legal services. The City Attorney has, for the past four fiscal years, remained constant in terms of the number of full-time employees and has remained relatively constant in terms of budget (\$1,161,075 in FY 2001-2002 as opposed to \$1,004,220 in FY 1998-1999). Special, outside counsel is only retained for highly specialized matters or when there is the potential for a conflict of interest.

A summary of the legal expenditures for the Rincon del Diablo MWD, Valley Center MWD, Vallecitos WD, and Vista ID is provided in Table 5. Detailed (supplemental) information was submitted by most of these agencies

TABLE 5
Special District Legal Expenditures

LEGAL EXPENSES	1999	2000	2001
RDDMWD	\$114,481	\$79,054	\$40,423
VWD	\$145,659	\$241,598	\$210,295
VCMWD	\$75,702	\$33,750	\$107,052
VID	\$173,341	\$225,452	\$176,503

Bond Ratings

The **City of Escondido** has a bond rating of “A”. The **Valley Center MWD** has not issued any general obligation bonds since 1968 and is, therefore, not rated. The **Rincon del Diablo MWD** has a bond rating of AAA from Standard and Poor’s and Aaa from Moody’s Investor Services, which are the highest ratings available. The **Vallecitos WD** investment policy is more restrictive than provisions contained in California law (Government Code Section 53600-53686) and has a bond rating of Aa1/VMIG-1 by Moody’s and AA+/A-1 by Standard and Poor’s. The water district has 70% of its portfolio in LAIF and 28% in federal agency obligation. The **Vista ID** has a bond rating of AAA from Standard and Poor’s.

Agency Investment Policies

The **City of Escondido’s** investment policies and practices are developed in accordance with the requirements in California State Law. The City’s Municipal Code states that all funds belonging to or in the custody of the city, and which have been collected by or paid to the director of finance or which are under the control of such director, shall be deposited in such state or national banks in the state as he shall select, according to the terms of Government Code, Section 53630 et seq. The City’s investment policy manual has been provided to LAFCO staff. The **Rincon del Diablo MWD**, **Valley Center MWD**, **Vallecitos WD**, and **Vista ID** provided supplemental information regarding investment policies.

Reserves

The **City of Escondido** has an adopted policy of ensuring that reserves are at a level equal to 15% of its operating revenues. The **Valley Center MWD** has an Operating Reserve equal to 12 months of operating expenditures (excluding water and power) and maintains other reserve accounts as explained in the District’s response to the LAFCO Request for Information. The **Rincon del Diablo MWD** has thirteen reserve funds established which are listed in the budget (working capital, insurance-liability, workers comp, medical retirement, revenue bond reserve, equipment replacement, facility replacement, reclamation, capacity fees, rate stabilization, and general fund). The District is currently completing a reserve study to reevaluate the types, funding levels and designations of reserves. The **Vallecitos WD** noted the new requirements of GASB 34 pertaining to reserves, which eliminates reservations and designations. The district informally designates all unrestricted net assets for replacement of existing facilities and equipment and costs of accommodating growth through the expansion of capital facilities. The **Vista ID** maintains a level of capital reserves at 20% of its annual water sales while the reserve for emergency and contingency reserves are set at 10% of the depreciated costs of net assets.

Variations in Rates, Fees, Taxes, Charges

There are no variations for residents of the **City of Escondido**. Rates, fees, taxes and charges are applied equally to those receiving the services provided by the City of Escondido and residing within the City boundaries. The **Valley Center MWD** has variations in rates for pump charges (depending on elevation of the reservoir) and has a different fee structure for agricultural users. The location of the Water Authority infrastructure necessitates pumping to 80% of the water district’s customers due to gravity gradient. The **Rincon del Diablo MWD** has variations in rates according to the classification and/or services provided. The District also places a \$72 parcel fee on property receiving fire services within ID “E”. The **Vallecitos WD** has variations in rates according to the classification (residential, commercial, industrial, agricultural, etc.). Customers in higher elevations may pay special pumping charges. The Capital Facility

Fee is assessed according to needed facilities. Other rates and fees for administrative, engineering, and operational services are consistent for all customers. The **Vista ID** did not indicate any variations in its rate structure.

Fee Rebates, Tax Credits, Other Relief

The **City of Escondido** adjusts fees according to the cost of service and the level of the service provided. Fees and charges are set during the public hearing process. Rebates and tax credits occur when there is a corresponding decrease in the cost of providing service and in the level of service provided. The **Valley Center MWD** basic rate structure has been in existence since 1991. The Valley Center MWD participates in and provides the full range of conservation credits and rebates, including the Ultra-Low Flush Toilet and Horizontal Axis Washer Rebate Programs. In addition to these programs, the District allows qualifying property owners to defer payment of Stand-by Fees. Finally, the District offers growers participation in the Fruit Fly Financial Assistance Payment Deferral Program, to assist growers impacted by the local fruit-fly infestation quarantine. The **Rincon del Diablo MWD** offers credits/discounts to customers: Frugal User Discount: 30%; Agricultural Rebate: available for one of more acres of planted land; Lead and Copper Testing: \$10 credit; Ultra-Low Flush Toilet: \$75; high-efficiency washer (HEW), \$125 voucher; Newsletter Promotion: contests, awards, and incentives to encourage direct payment. The **Vallecitos WD** offers credits/discounts to customers but did not note any rebates or refunds. The district noted that rates have been restructured and refined over the years to reflect fair and equitable charges to customers, while recovering district costs and preserving sufficient reserves. The **Vista ID** retired its general obligation bonds early and reduced ratepayer property taxes accordingly. The District also has incentive programs for water conservation (low flush toilets, high efficiency clothes washer vouchers, homeowner landscape classes, residential water use survey, professional assistance for landscape management, and commercial industrial and institutional vouchers. Fees have been adjusted based upon detailed cost studies.

Rate, Fee, Tax Changes

The **City of Escondido** has increased storm water and sewer rates annually for the previous four years to reflect rising costs. The **Valley Center MWD** rate structure has been in place since 1991. The **Rincon del Diablo MWD** commissioned a study in 2000-2001 to study rates and in December of 2001 adopted modifications to the District's rates. Those modifications are described in supplemental material provided to LAFCO staff. The **Vallecitos WD** provided a three-year history of changes in rates. The **Vista ID** adjusts rates to reflect increased costs from other agencies such as SDCWA and MET. The Vista ID administers a district agricultural rebate program that is applied to agricultural water sales, separate from the MET agricultural rebate.

Depreciation and Replacement of Infrastructure

The **City of Escondido** is currently developing a policy for depreciation of infrastructure due to the new GASB 34 financial reporting requirements. The **Valley Center MWD** uses a straight-line method of depreciation at rates recommended by the State Controller. New and upgraded facilities are funded by capacity fees, standby fees and capital reserves on a "pay-go" basis. Large replacement projects may require debt financing. The water district is preparing an RFP for a long term financing plan for projects within its master plan. The **Rincon del Diablo MWD** maintains a detailed list of depreciable assets that include capital outlay, capital projects, and utility plant categories. These items are depreciated on an annual basis and reported in the

District's fiscal year-end reports. The water district has engaged the services of an engineering firm to study and develop an infrastructure replacement program utilizing depreciation in the final replacement calculations. The **Vallecitos WD** uses a straight-line method of depreciation based on the expected useful life for different types of infrastructure (e.g., water transmission and distribution system, wastewater system, buildings, transportation equipment, field and shop equipment, and office equipment). Approximately 9% of water service revenue and 8% of sewer service revenue is set-aside in capital facility and equipment replacement reserves. The District's master plan identifies specific projects. The **Vista ID** follows generally accepted accounting practices for depreciation of assets.

DETERMINATIONS FOR FINANCING CONSTRAINTS AND OPPORTUNITIES

PURPOSE: To evaluate factors that affect the financing of needed improvements.

LAFCO must weigh a community's public service needs against the resources available to fund the services. During the municipal service review, the financing constraints and opportunities, which have an impact on the delivery of services, will be identified and enable LAFCO, local agencies, and the public to assess whether service providers are capitalizing on financing opportunities. For example, a service review could reveal that two or more water agencies that are each deficient in storage capacity and, which individually lack financial resources to construct additional facilities, may benefit from creating a joint venture to finance and construct regional storage facilities. Service reviews may also disclose innovations for contending with financing constraints, which may be of considerable value to numerous agencies.

Determination 3.0: The local agencies noted existing statewide legislative, political and government constraints that affect the ability to generate revenues.

Determination 3.1: No major fiscal constraints were identified by the local agencies within the North County Inland Municipal Service Review boundaries.

Determination 3.2: The City has in place financial regulations that are codified in its municipal codes, ordinances and resolutions. This allows for the documentation of the maintenance of public infrastructure and services, which is then available for public inspection and scrutiny.

Determination 3.3: Overall, the local agencies within the study area appear to be effectively pursuing opportunities to maximize financial resources.

DETERMINATIONS FOR COST AVOIDANCE OPPORTUNITIES

PURPOSE: To identify practices or opportunities that may help eliminate unnecessary costs.

LAFCO's role in encouraging efficiently provided public services depends, in part, on helping service providers explore cost avoidance opportunities. The municipal service review will explore cost avoidance opportunities including, but not limited to: (1) eliminating duplicative services; (2) reducing high administration to operation cost ratios; (3) replacing outdated or deteriorating infrastructure and equipment; (4) reducing inventories of underutilized equipment, buildings, or facilities; (5) redrawing overlapping or inefficient service boundaries; (6) replacing

inefficient purchasing or budgeting practices; (7) implementing economies of scale; and (8) increasing profitable outsourcing.

Determination 4.0: The Valley Center MWD noted it reduces costs by sharing information and resources related to administrative, management, and operational functions.

Determination 4.1: The Valley Center MWD, Rincon del Diablo MWD, and Vista ID noted a number of Joint Power Agreements arrangements for vehicle, liability, property, workers' compensation, employee assistance, and health benefits.

Determination 4.2: The Vista ID has an agreement with the City of Vista for joint operation of the Shadowridge Waste Water Facility to distribute recycled water and multiple agreements with the City of Escondido to store and treat water from Lake Henshaw and the Vista FPD and Vista Fire Department for fire hydrant maintenance.

Determination 4.3: The Encina Water Pollution Control Facility was noted as a major cooperative effort among multiple jurisdictions to produce regional costs savings. The Vallecitos WD noted that it has a 20% ownership in the facility and has agreements with the Cities of Carlsbad and Vista to build and operate a portion of a land outfall that carries wastewater to the Encina Wastewater Facility.

Determination 4.4: The Vista ID noted that it has inter-ties with Oceanside, Rincon del Diablo MWD, Carlsbad MWD, and Vallecitos WD to move water to and from each agency during emergencies.

Determination 4.5 The City of Escondido has a well-established budget process that is used to avoid unnecessary costs.

Determination 4.6: The City of Escondido used the benchmark of comparing administrative and operating costs with two other cities. Since there are other public agencies providing development related services within the City of Escondido's boundaries and SOI, a comparison of other benchmarks could be used to compare the City's provision of services with that of special districts.

Determination 4.7: The City of Escondido participates in cost-sharing programs with the State of California, the California League of Cities, and other organizations to reduce costs such as insurance, purchasing and other efforts. The City is also a signatory to multiple agreements including joint powers agencies, regional authorities, mutual and automatic aid agreements for fire protection, exchange agreements for water service and has emergency inter-ties with many agencies.

DETERMINATIONS OF OPPORTUNITIES FOR RATE RESTRUCTURING

PURPOSE: To identify opportunities to positively impact rates without decreasing service levels.

When applicable, the municipal service review may include an evaluation of rate structures, which are charged for public services, to examine opportunities for rate restructuring. Rates will be reviewed for: (1) rate setting methodologies; (2) conditions that could impact future rates; and (3) variances among rates, fees, taxes, charges, etc., within an agency and region. Service reviews will identify strategies for rate restructuring, which would further the LAFCO mission of ensuring efficiency in providing public services.

Determination 5.0: All local agencies have increased rates and / rate structures over the past five years. The reasons for the rate increases are generally based on rising costs.

Determination 5.1: The local agencies within the service review study area noted variations in rate structures within their agencies primarily due to geographic and land use factors.

Determination 5.2: The Valley Center MWD, Fallbrook Public Utility District, Rainbow MWD, Rincon del Diablo MWD, Vallecitos WD, Vista ID, and the Yuima MWD are members of the Economic Study Group of North San Diego County. The study group was formed to examine the rate structures and decisions made by the San Diego County Water Authority.

Determination 5.3: The City's fees and charges are set through an annual budget process that involves the entire City staff. The City's budget process ensures that fees and charges are adequate to costs expenditures and meet the legal requirements for a clear nexus between the fee and uses.

DETERMINATIONS OF OPPORTUNITIES FOR SHARED FACILITIES

(The data supporting these determinations can be found in the Municipal Service Review Data Summary – Service Needs, Growth, And Projections Section)

PURPOSE: To evaluate the opportunities for a jurisdiction to share facilities and resources to develop more efficient service delivery systems.

Public service costs may be reduced and service efficiencies increased, if service providers develop strategies for sharing resources. For example, service providers in San Diego County currently share communication centers, wastewater treatment facilities, and distribution lines. Sharing facilities and excess system capacity decreases duplicative efforts, may lower costs, and minimizes unnecessary resource consumption. The service review will inventory facilities within the study area to determine if facilities are currently being utilized to capacity and whether efficiencies can be achieved by accommodating the facility needs of adjacent agencies. Options for planning for future shared facilities and services will also be considered.

Determination 6.0: The City of Escondido and the service providers within the region participate in cooperative agreements to provide services efficiently.

Determination 6.1: The water districts have inter-tie agreements to ensure system redundancy in supply and as well as agreements through the CWA for sharing capital-intensive equipment and other regional facilities.

MUNICIPAL SERVICE REVIEW DATA SUMMARY – ADMINISTRATION, MANAGEMENT, OPERATIONS, AND GOVERNANCE

Efficient service delivery is correlated to effective administration, management, operations, and governance of the local agencies responsible for service provision in the region. This section of the report contains a data summary of the major indicators of service delivery effectiveness and efficiency. Among the subjects addressed in the data summary include special recognition and awards applicable to service providers, employee characteristics, staff reorganization and turnover histories, regulations regarding communication and involvement between elected officials and employees, privatization of functions, cooperative arrangements for service delivery, employee and contractor performance incentives, bidding procedures, composition of decision making bodies, election summaries, compensation provided to elected officials, frequency and accessibility of meetings, notification and public participation programs, agency violation histories, and jurisdictional and function reorganization options.

Recognition and Awards

During 2001, the **City of Escondido** was named by Money Magazine as the Best Place in the West in which to retire and was named as a Kid-Friendly City for their broad range of youth programs. Ladies Home Journal also ranked Escondido number eight among the Top Ten Cities for Government.

The **Valley Center MWD** has received awards from ACWA for water; energy and safety management, from ACWA – JPIA for safety; from the San Diego Business Journal for energy management, and the California Society of Municipal Finance Officers for financial reporting and operational budgeting. The **Rincon del Diablo MWD** has received awards from the California Special Districts Association (CSDA) for General Manager of the Year; from ACWA – JPIA for both safety and low ratio of paid claims, and from ACWA for safety and water management excellence, and workers compensation. The Rincon del Diablo MWD also provided information on grants and low interest loans with respect to special recognition. The **Vallecitos WD** has received awards from the ASCE and APWA for the Twin Oaks Reservoir Project; San Diego Engineering Council; CELSC for the Twin Oaks Reservoir Project; from the ACWA-JPIA for a liability and property program. The **Vista ID** has received awards from the San Diego Business Journal for efficient electrical management; ACWA-JPIA recognition for low paid injury claims; ACWA recognition for efficient water management practices, water management and service to the industry.

Number of Employees

The **City of Escondido** provided a copy of its budget for a comprehensive list of employees by department in FY 2000-2001 and 2001-2002.

The **Valley Center MWD, Rincon MWD, Vallecitos WD, and Vista ID** submitted detailed lists of employees. A summary is provided in Table 6. In addition, the Valley Center MWD noted that it had one vacant position during the last three years and 13 new hires; the Rincon del Diablo

MWD had one position eliminated during the previous three years and 14 new hires; the Vallecitos WD had three vacancies and 10 new hires in 1999, two vacancies and six new hires in 2000, and seven vacancies and 13 new hires in 2001; the Vista ID noted 7 vacancies and 7 new hires in 1999, 10 vacancies and 4 new positions and 14 new hires in 2000, and 8 vacancies and 8 new hires in 2001.

TABLE 6
Number of Employees

CATEGORY OF EMPLOYEE	VCMWD	VID*	RDDMWD	VWD**
Executive	1	1	1	2
Management	4	5	4	3
Administrative	20	13	4	40***
Operations	37	76	9	37
Other				

* *Some combination of categories*

** *Includes volunteer, part-time and reserve part-time firefighters*

*** *Includes engineering*

Staff Reorganizations

The **City of Escondido** indicated that there have been no major reorganizations within the last three years. The **Valley Center MWD** had one reorganization during the previous three years to improve the Pump and Motor Division. Additional details were provided in supplemental materials. The **Rincon del Diablo MWD** has completed three reorganizations during the last three years—a public information officer position was created, a human resource position was reclassified, and two accounting positions were reclassified. All reorganizations are described in detail in supplemental materials provided to LAFCO staff. The **Vallecitos WD** had no reported staff reorganizations. The **Vista ID** had one reorganization during the preceding three years in response to regulatory changes in the water utility industry. Under the new Clean Water Act requirements, employees engaged in water quality and quantity activities were involved in a reorganization to assure proper supervision. New pay ranges (primarily promotional) were granted to 30 state certified individuals. Supplemental information was provided to LAFCO staff on the matter.

Employee Termination, Resignation, and Retirement History

The **City of Escondido's** Annual Operating Budget 2001-2002 provides the number of full-time and part-time employees for each city department for the past four years and a total count for the last two budget years. The **Rincon del Diablo MWD, Valley Center MWD, Vallecitos WD, and Vista ID** provided supplemental information regarding employee turnover in Table 7.

TABLE 7
Employee Turnover (1999-01)

CATEGORY OF EMPLOYEE	VCMWD	VID	RDDMWD	VWD
Executive	0	0	1	0
Management	0	2	2	3
Administrative	1	5	2	10
Operations	4	8	6	8
Other		6	1	1

Regulations Regarding Communications Between Elected Officials and Employees

The **City of Escondido’s** Municipal Code establishes procedures for the interaction between the city council and the city staff. It states: “The council and its members shall deal with the administrative service of the city only through the city manager, except for the purpose of inquiry; and neither the council nor any member thereof shall give orders to any subordinates of the manager. (Code 1957, § 1321).”

The **Valley Center MWD** has adopted a resolution (1008) establishing the responsibility of the board and the general manager and provides a process for contact between the board members and the general manager. Notice must be given to the general manager prior to members of the board of directors contacting district employees. The **Rincon del Diablo MWD** has adopted legislative procedures regarding communication between elected officials and staff.

The **Vallecitos WD** provided information regarding the orientation for all new board members which includes briefings by the general manager and counsel, The role of board members is clearly defined and board members are counseled on the inappropriateness of directing or micro-managing employees. Newly elected directors are encouraged to attend public agency seminars and educational programs to assist in the understanding of elected official roles. Copies of “A User’s Guide to the Ralph M. Brown Act”, “Conflicts of Interest” pamphlet published by the State of California Attorney General’s office, and the “Handbook for Public Agency Officials” are provided to board members. The District also referenced the County Water District Act as it related to the role of general managers and the District Board. The **Vista ID** adopted a resolution guiding the interaction of the board and staff. Generally, contacts are permitted between the board and staff when on district business and when reported to the general manager.

Involvement of Elected Officials in Administrative, Management and Personnel Matters

The **City of Escondido** stated that elected officials are not involved in administration, management and personnel matters, except in a nominal and incidental manner. The **Valley Center MWD** indicated that board members involvement with administrative, management, and personnel matters is typically restricted to the budget process, special committees, employee relations, and labor contracts. Board involvement in administrative, management, and personnel matters is at a policy level, and not on a day-to-day basis. All personnel issues are the

responsibility of the general manager, unless the issue is related to the general Manager or appeal. No appeal (e.g., grievance) has occurred during the tenure of the current general manager (13+ years). The **Rincon del Diablo MWD** indicated that the board participates in policy and committee matters, with no day-to-day involvement. There are three standing committees that board members are affiliated with: finance & personnel; public information & intergovernmental relations; and engineering and long-range planning. The **Vallecitos WD** board participates in establishing policy and in some committees. Specifically, board members establish policy, mission, and priorities of the water district and the general manager is responsible for implementation. The **Vista ID** board sets policy and has delegated responsibility for implementation to the general manager and staff. The board provides direction and authority to negotiators and staff in matters pertaining to wages, and salaries, terms and conditions of employment. The board also provides policy direction on staffing levels, accountability standards and organizational structures, but generally delegates the accomplishment of board directives to the General Manager.

Administrative, Management, and Operational Functions Provided by Private Companies or Public Agencies

The **City of Escondido** indicated that administrative, management, and operational functions are provided by the City. The City participates in numerous cooperative and exchange agreements to ensure that services are provided in the most efficient manner.

The **Valley Center MWD** uses outside expertise for legal service, auditing, engineering and laboratory services. The water district participates in both local and statewide cooperative efforts among water agencies, such as joint insurance and health benefit plans. The water district noted that utilization of an outside auditor provides a high degree of independence. Also indicated by the district was that professional engineering services are obtained when engineering, project management, inspection, surveying, mapping, and drafting needs exceed the capacity of in-house staff. The water district is able to expand and contract its engineering capacity without taking on the added obligations of hiring additional staff.

The **Rincon del Diablo MWD** has performed cost-of-service studies to determine personnel costs, required space, and time and efficiency requirements to ascertain the viability of using outside services. Accordingly, the water district uses outside contractors when the work level does not justify the cost of an employee. These services include: Administrative: legal, records management, gardening and janitorial, bill printing and mailing, and computer programming; Operational: engineering, pump testing reservoir maintenance, weed abatement, fire services laboratory services; financial: auditing and rate and reserve studies. The water district has provided a list of their cooperative/exchanges agreements with other agencies which includes, but is not limited to, the following: Agreements with the City of Escondido for water exchanges, for purchase of recycled water and for fire protection services.

The **Vallecitos WD** uses private companies for legal services, engineering services, computers/information technology, and financial advice. Other services provided by private companies include security, billing, office equipment and for repair, replacement and improvement projects. The costs avoided by contracting out for these services include salaries and benefits, office or workspace, and general overhead. The water district outsources certain functions to avoid retaining staff that would not always be needed. The Vallecitos WD also supplied detailed information about cooperative arrangements with other agencies that produce efficiencies.

The **Vista ID** uses outside companies for auditing, legal services, billing, grounds maintenance and janitorial services. The Vista ID noted that it has inter-ties with other surrounding water agencies as well as formal agreements with the Vallecitos WD.

Cooperative Arrangements that Produce Service Efficiencies

The **City of Escondido** participates in numerous cooperative agreements to ensure that services are provided efficiently.

The **Valley Center MWD** shares information and resources related to administrative, management and operational functions and efficiencies for all agencies. Examples include a joint powers authority for insurance and health benefits. The JPA reduces costs and increases the collective purchasing power of member agencies with respect to liability, property, workers' compensation, employee assistance programs and health benefits. In addition, it was noted that partnerships help provide cost-effective risk management, recruiting, retention, personnel safety and supervisory training opportunities. Specific programs that benefit from the water district's membership with the county water authority include public information, public education, and water conservation.

The **Rincon del Diablo MWD** has cooperative arrangements for fire and water related services with several agencies: emergency water connections with Del Dios Mutual Water Company, Vista ID and the City of Vista, Valley Center MWD and Escondido; administrative agreement with Escondido to operate the Rincon Fire Improvement District; agreement with Escondido to purchase recycled water and to share water during a water shortage; property leasing for telecommunications; agreement with ACWA and JPIA for pooled workers' compensation coverage, property, vehicle, and liability insurance; agreement with the California Urban Water Conservation Council to implement Best Management Practices for efficient water use in urban areas; and agreements with the County Water Authority and MWD for cost-share of ultra-low flush toilets and high-efficiency washing machine vouchers, plus other customer-oriented conservation incentives.

The **Vallecitos WD** has cooperative arrangements with the Encina Water Pollution Control Facility (20% ownership); this arrangement is more cost effective than operating a smaller local treatment plant. The water district has an agreement to provide laboratory services to the Encina Wastewater Authority and an agreement with the Cities of Carlsbad and Vista to share in the cost to build and operate a portion of the District's land outfall, which carries wastewater to the Encina Wastewater Authority. The water district has avoided the cost of constructing and maintaining two pump stations by sending wastewater (by agreement) from two service areas through Carlsbad and Vista. The Vallecitos WD also participates in a mutual aid agreement with the County Water Authority for emergency assistance. This agreement avoids the cost to acquire and maintain equipment, materials, and personnel associated with a major interruption of water service. Lastly, Vallecitos and Vista ID have a water operations and maintenance agreement to provide more efficient services through and interconnection agreement.

The **Vista ID** has inter-ties with Oceanside, Rincon del Diablo, Carlsbad MWD, and Vallecitos WD to move water to and from each agency during emergencies. The Vista ID also notes exchange agreements with Vallecitos WD and participates in the same programs noted under the Valley Center MWD entry. The Vista ID also leases multiple properties for telecommunications and is an original signatory to the State of California's Urban Water

Conservation Council's Best Management Practices MOU. Vista ID participates in the CWA's and MWD's costs sharing programs for high efficiency washing machines and ultra low flush toilet installations.

Employee and Contractor Performance Incentives

Chapter 19 of the **City of Escondido** Municipal Code addresses all matters related to personnel issues. It was adopted by the City of Escondido, pursuant to the provisions of Government Code, Section 45000 et seq., to ensure reasonable, equitable and uniform standards for the administration of personnel affairs. (Code 1957, § 1511) The City of Escondido also provides a personnel handbook for all employees.

The **Valley Center MWD** imposes penalties on contractors for some delays in projects. The **Rincon Del Diablo MWD** has a formal program for employee and contractor performance, called: Performance, Appraisal, Compensation and Evaluation Program. This program is designed to reward excellence, retain valued employees and promote a team environment. The components include merit pay, team-based bonuses and a variety of other benefits. The **Vallecitos WD** provides merit increases for district employees. The water district does not have a program for contractor performance incentives. The **Vista ID** uses merit increases for employees and employee recognition awards and incentives for safety.

Competitive Bidding

The **City of Escondido's** purchasing system established in the Escondido Municipal Code was adopted in order to establish efficient procedures for the purchase of all supplies and equipment, to secure quality supplies and equipment at the lowest possible cost, to exercise positive financial control over purchases, to clearly define authority for the purchasing function, and to assure the quality of purchases. The City of Escondido also complies with all bidding requirements set forth in the California Public Contract Code.

The **Valley Center MWD** generally follows a competitive bidding procedure and provided copies of their competitive bidding procedures and sole source contracts. The **Rincon del Diablo MWD** has adopted local policies for regulation of competitive bidding and sole source procurement. The policies were provided to LAFCO staff. In the last three years, the District has had sole source services provided for programming, legal counsel, and annual auditing. Supporting documentation was provided. The **Vallecitos WD** is exempt from California competitive bidding statutes as a County Water District. However, the District uses the competitive bidding process for projects exceeding \$50,000. The District also provide a copy of its purchasing policies and procedures adopted by the Board. The water district noted that sole source procurement is rarely used. The **Vista ID** provided copies of its competitive bidding procedures and a list of sole source contracts.

Governing Board Composition

The **City of Escondido** is a full-service, general-law city with five council members elected at large. Escondido operates under the Council-Manager form of government. This system of local government combines the political leadership of elected officials in the form of a council with the strong managerial experience of an appointed local government manager. The Mayor presides at the City Council and Community Development Commission Board meetings.

A five-member board elected by divisions governs the Valley Center MWD. A history of the Board's election results has been provided to LAFCO staff. In 1998, three candidates sought three positions on the board. In 2000, the water district appointed a new member to fill a vacancy caused by a resignation. No election was held in 2000 because there were an insufficient number of candidates; the Board of Supervisors made the necessary appointment. In 2001, the water district filled a vacancy caused by a resignation. A five-member board elected by divisions governs the **Rincon del Diablo MWD**. It appears that a sufficient number of candidates sought positions on the water district during the past three years. No resignations were reported. A five member Board governs the **Vallecitos WD**. Election of Board members by division began in 2000. It appears that a sufficient number of candidates sought positions on the water district during the past three years. One appointment was made to fill a position caused by vacancy. A five-member board elected by divisions governs the **Vista ID**. A history of the Board's election results has been provided to LAFCO staff. Within a three-year period, it appears that two incumbent directors ran unopposed during recent elections.

Elected / Appointed Official Resignations

The **City of Escondido** has had no changes in elected officials except through the election process. The City has a variety of appointed committees and groups, which provide assistance and input to the various municipal departments and to the City Council. Appointments are made on a regular schedule as determined by the terms of the appointments. As citizen volunteers to these committees and boards resign, they are appointed by the City Council or by the appointing authority. Boards and Commissions which citizens of Escondido are encouraged to serve as volunteers on include: Building; Community Safety Committee; Community Services Commission; Design Review Board; Environmental Advisory Board; Historic Preservation Commission; Housing Advisory Commission Trustees; Personnel; Planning Commission; Public Art Commission; Senior Advisory Board; and, Transportation Commission.

The **Valley Center MWD** had two Board members resign in 2000 and 2001 due to health problems. The **Rincon del Diablo MWD** did not have any resignations elected or appointed official resignations during the time period under evaluation. The **Vallecitos WD** noted that there has only been one director resignation in three years, following a newspaper report and DA investigation into campaign statement issues and City of San Diego employment related matters. The **Vista ID** did not have any resignations elected or appointed official resignations during the time period under evaluation.

Compensation Provided to Governing Body

Council members from the **City of Escondido** receive a total, maximum salary of \$1,616.70 per month and participate in the City's health care and retirement packages, at the City's expense, as long as they remained elected officials. The **Valley Center MWD** receive \$50 for meetings/day of board business, other than regular board meetings, which are under four hours in duration, and \$100 per regular board meeting (irrespective of duration) and other meetings of more than 4 hours in duration, up to 10 meetings or days of board business in a one month period. Board members may participate in benefit packages (health, dental, life) offered by the District at their own expense. The **Rincon del Diablo MWD** board members receive \$136 per meeting up to a maximum of 10 meetings per month and may participate in the District benefit package at their own expense. The **Vallecitos WD** board members receive \$150 per day for District meetings up to a maximum of 10 per month and receive the same benefit package provided to employees. The directors are considered quasi-employees and are extended the

same benefits package as district employees (with exception to two board members who took office after 1994 and cannot participate in PERS). Benefits include medical, dental, optical, and life insurance. The **Vista ID** board members receive \$135 per meeting up to a maximum of 10 per month and may participate in a district benefit package.

Frequency of Governing Board Meetings

The **City of Escondido** city council meets in regularly scheduled meetings every Wednesday except for the fifth Wednesday of each month. Special meetings are called meetings as needed.

The **Valley Center MWD** board meets the first and third Mondays of the month. A monthly summary of the number of meetings for the past three years was attached to the water district's response to the Request for Information. The **Rincon Del Diablo MWD** board meets the second Tuesday of each month. A monthly summary of the number of meetings for the past three years is attached. The **Vallecitos WD** board meets on the first and third Wednesdays of each month at 4:00 pm. The District provided a three-year history of the number of meetings per month. The **Vista ID** board meets on the first and third Wednesday of each month. A meeting summary follows.

TABLE 8
Annual Meeting Summary

NUMBER OF BOARD MEETINGS	1999	2000	2001
VCMWD	16	16	20
RDDMWD	33	30	27
VWD	26	26	27
VID	23	26	25

Agenda Availability and Meeting Accessibility

The **City of Escondido** city council convenes regular meetings every Wednesday each month (except the fifth Wednesday) at 4:00 p.m. and 7:30 p.m. in the City Council Chambers, 201 North Broadway. Escondido City Council meetings are aired live on Wednesdays at 4:00 and 7:30 p.m. Re-broadcasts of the meetings are also aired on Sunday and Monday nights at 6:00 p.m., and on Tuesday mornings at 9:00 a.m., on Cox Communications Channel 19. The City convenes all meetings in accordance with the requirements and regulations of the Brown Act. This includes, but is not limited to, posting of agendas, open public meetings and notices in the various manner prescribed by State law. The **Valley Center MWD** noted that board agendas are available to the public at least 72 hours before meetings; however agendas are usually made available 4 days prior to a regular meeting (approx. 96 hours). Agendas are mailed, posted and placed on a web site. Meetings are accessible to the public. The **Rincon del Diablo MWD** noted that agendas are made available to the public in compliance with the Brown Act, are posed on the district's website, bulletin board, and by mail to anyone requesting such information. Meetings are accessible to the public. The **Vallecitos WD** noted that agendas are

made available to the public in compliance with the Brown Act and are posted on the district's website and bulletin boards. The boardroom is accessible to the public and can accommodate up to 125 people. The **Vista ID** noted that agendas are made available to the public in compliance with the Brown Act and board members receive agendas 5 days prior to meeting dates. Agendas are also available on the District's web site and are provided to the press and citizens. Complete agendas including board reports are forwarded to the City of Escondido. All meetings are accessible to the public.

Public Notification and Public Participation

The **City of Escondido** adheres to all Government Code Sections for the notice of all public hearings and to the Brown Act. Meeting agendas are made available in excess of the 72-hour requirement in the California Opening Meeting Law (Brown Act). In addition, the City posts extensive information on its web page relating to all departments. The City also publishes newsletters, bill inserts, media and press releases and other information regularly. The City staff works extensively with community groups, schools and nonprofits to encourage public participation.

The **Valley Center MWD** uses a wide range of methods to inform and encourage the participation of the public, including: a quarterly newsletter, "Water News;" an Annual Customer Confidence Report mailed directly to all customers, an annual Comprehensive Financial Report (CAFR), Message areas on water bills, District Website with links to many statewide, regional and local related websites; a "Welcome to Valley Center Municipal Water District" package for all new customers; Customer Comment Card survey program; participation in local and regional Community Events; conducting of Community Forums on an as-needed basis for critical water supply issues; using Customer Focus Groups on specific District policy issues; frequent appearances in print media, radio and television on a wide range of water related issues; formation and sponsorship of the Valley Center Coordinating Council, a community based organization comprised of all public service, public safety and land-use agencies serving Valley Center; local media present at all regular meetings, with continuous comprehensive coverage of all District programs; District Employee of the Year and Employees of the Quarter recognitions in the local media; staff participation in local service clubs and groups; regular speaking appearances at local community organizations; active promotion of Water Conservation Programs; maintain and promote Water Conservation, Xeriscape and General District information displays in the lobby of the District office, and maintain a 24 hour answering service and Phone Hot-lines as needed for special issues (eve of Y2K).

The **Rincon del Diablo MWD** uses their website, newsletters, direct mailings, bill inserts, press releases, new customer packets and participation in local civic groups to communicate with customers. Other tools for communication include recycled water hotline; bulletin boards; consumer confidence reports; coordination with other agencies; oral communications at board meetings; door hangers; public hearings; board workshops; installation of officers by the Mayor of Escondido; web-site partnerships (links) with other agencies and water-related web pages; conservation messages in high-school calendars, high-school essay contests, elementary school classroom presentations, production of water awareness calendars distributed to elementary school students; lobby display and give-away promotional items; telephone on-hold announcements; notification to all customers of water shut-off due to planned maintenance; personal letters (after the fact) to any customer who has experienced water interruptions; letters (not notices) to all customers (district-wide: 8,500+) when appropriate for change in rate methodology; official cool zone status (relief for citizens in hot weather); polling booths; training

sites for Escondido police canine units; meeting locale for various community groups and interagency meetings as requested; open house events; bill inserts, media releases, new customer packets, essay and poster contests, participation in Chamber of Commerce activities and other local organizations.

The **Vallecitos WD** uses their website, bulletin boards, coordination with other agencies, oral communications at Board meetings, door hangers, inserts, flyers, newsletters, brochures, lending library, annual reports, telephone hotline, citizen advisory committee (as needed), and workshops to increase communication with customers. The district maintains an open door atmosphere and willingness to provide information and education. Some of the vehicles the District uses for public information include: public notification (door hangers, flyers, major project flyers, water bill messages); district newsletter (distributed quarterly, special publications for breaking/important issues); district brochure (mailed to all new customers and distributed at speakers bureau and customer service counter); website; displays; lending library; miscellaneous brochures; annual reports (budget, water quality, master plan update, urban water management); telephone hotlines(emergencies, conservation, weather); video and book lending; public hearings and workshops; open houses; tours; citizen advisory committees, speakers bureau; special community events participation; conservation projects; wall of fame (employee and district recognition); recognition before board of directors. The **Vista ID** uses their annual consumer confidence report, press releases, its annual report and messages on bills and bill inserts to communicate with ratepayers. During emergencies the District also uses press releases, telephone calls and door-to-door canvassing. The District maintains a website with staff information, agendas and other material of interest. The Vista ID also maintains a speakers bureau that makes regular presentations to service clubs, homeowners associations and other groups on a regular basis. The Vista ID is an active member of the Vista Chamber of Commerce and the Vista Economic Development Agency. The water district maintains an “on hold” telephone message system with current information. The Vista ID operates and provides facility tours of district facilities and organizes tours of MET facilities. Vista ID participates in holiday parades and community revitalization programs.

Agency Violations and Investigations

During the past three years, there have been two occasions when the District Attorney was asked to investigate potential violations of the Brown Act by a City Council member of the **City of Escondido**. In both cases, no legal action was taken. The **Rincon del Diablo MWD, Valley Center MWD, Vallecitos WD, and Vista ID** indicate that they have not had any agency violations (Brown Act or FPPC) or other investigations.

Reorganizations

The **City of Escondido** was incorporated in 1888 and is not the product of any reorganization. The City routinely evaluates the functioning of all employees and departments and makes appropriate recommendations for changes to the departments heads and City Council as appropriate. There have been no major reorganizations of the City in the last three years. The **Valley Center MWD** is not a product of reorganization. The **Rincon del Diablo MWD** is not a product of a previous reorganization, but it has functionally consolidated with the City of Escondido in terms of the agreement it has for the provision of fire services. The **Vallecitos WD** absorbed two private water companies since 1955 and has engaged in on-going discussion with surrounding agencies regarding the opportunities and constraints of reorganizations. Consolidation discussions have taken place over the years with Vista ID, but the discussions did

not lead to any steps initiating a merger. Discussions have also occurred with Rainbow MWD, Rincon del Diablo MWD, and Leucadia CWD. Discussions have also occurred regarding the practicality of making the Encina Wastewater Authority a single wholesale/retail agency, but this concept is strongly opposed by the coastal cities. The Vallecitos WD is also working towards incorporation of facilities and certain areas into the Vallecitos service area that are within the Vista ID. The Vallecitos Master Plan update will address a reorganization of this area (i.e., Boot area in the Twin Oaks Valley and the Bennett Acres area). There also is ongoing analysis related to exchanging equivalent sewer flows from gravity areas between Escondido and Vallecitos WD to maximize gravity efficiencies. This could result in closing two existing lift stations and one additional future pumping area. The **Vista ID** was reorganized with Bueno Colorado MWD in 1993. Bueno ceased to exist and was dissolved in the process. Vista ID is not aware of any opportunities for future reorganizations.

DETERMINATIONS FOR GOVERNMENT STRUCTURE OPTIONS

PURPOSE: To consider the advantages and disadvantages of various government structures that could provide public services.

The municipal service review provides a tool to comprehensively study existing and future public service conditions and to evaluate organizational options for accommodating growth, preventing urban sprawl, and ensuring that critical services are efficiently and cost-effectively provided. While the service review does not require LAFCO to initiate changes of organization based on service review finding, LAFCO, local agencies, and the public may subsequently use service reviews to pursue changes to services, local jurisdictions, or spheres of influence. LAFCO may examine efficiencies that could be gained through: (1) functional reorganizations within existing agencies; (2) amending or updating spheres-of-influence; (3) annexations or detachments from cities or special districts; (4) formation of new special districts; (5) special district dissolutions; (6) mergers of special districts with cities; (7) establishment of subsidiary districts; or (8) any additional reorganization options found in Government Code § 56000 et. seq.

Determination 7.0: The City of Escondido routinely evaluates the functioning of all employees and departments and makes changes, as appropriate.

Determination 7.1: The City of Escondido functionally consolidated fire protection responsibility with the Rincon del Diablo MWD.

Determination 7.2: The City of Escondido has not instituted any major city reorganizations within the past three years, but examines potential reorganizations through the annual budget process.

Determination 7.3: The Vista ID was reorganized with the Bueno Colorado MWD in 1993; Bueno Colorado MWD was dissolved in the process. The Vista ID is not aware of any future opportunities to pursue reorganization.

Determination 7.4: The Vallecitos WD has expressed considerable interest in the reorganization and consolidation potential for providing water and sewer services in the North County region.

- Determination 7.5:** The Vallecitos WD absorbed two private water companies in 1955 and has engaged in on-going discussions with surrounding agencies regarding the opportunities of reorganization.
- Determination 7.6:** The Vallecitos WD is currently working towards incorporation of facilities and certain areas into the Vallecitos service areas that are currently within the Vista ID.
- Determination 7.7:** The Vallecitos WD has also initiated discussions with the City of Escondido to maximize gravity efficiencies; this could result in closing existing lift stations and avoiding the need to an additional future pumping area.
- Determination 7.8:** The Vallecitos WD and the Vista ID should continue to study the possible reorganization of their boundaries in specific areas (Boot area in Twin Oaks Valley and the Bennett Acres area).
- Determination 7.9:** The reorganization potential should be studied as part of a Vallecitos WD and Vista ID sphere update or amendment proposal and/or respective master plan processes of the agencies.
- Determination 7.10:** The Vallecitos WD and the City of Escondido should pursue a study to maximize the gravity efficiency between their respective wastewater systems, thereby reducing costs associated with lift stations.
- Determination 7.11:** Territory along the I-15 and Old 395 Highway corridor should be the subject of a subsequent sphere of influence study. Affected agencies include Valley Center MWD, Vallecitos WD, and the Rainbow WD.
- Determination 7.12:** The spheres of influence of the Vallecitos WD and Vista ID should be updated as part of a subsequent sphere study that includes other agencies that have a greater relationship to their respective service areas (e.g., Rainbow MWD, Cities of San Marcos and Vista, etc.).

DETERMINATIONS FOR MANAGEMENT EFFICIENCIES

PURPOSE: To evaluate the management capabilities of the organization.

Management efficiency refers to the effectiveness of the internal and external aspects of service delivery and the ability to provide efficient, quality public services in the region. Efficiently managed agencies consistently implement plans to improve service delivery, reduce waste, eliminate duplications of effort, contain costs, maintain qualified employees, build and maintain adequate contingency reserves, and encourage and maintain open dialogues with the public and other public and private agencies. The service review will evaluate management efficiency by analyzing agency functions, operations, and practices—as well as the agency’s ability to meet current and future service demands in a designated region. Services will be evaluated in relation to available resources and consideration of service provision constraints.

Determination 8.0: The local agencies within the service review study area are recipients of management, administrative, and operational recognition awards. Of

particular relevance to the service review is Valley Center MWD's recognition for safety, energy management, and financial reporting; the Rincon del Diablo's recognition for safety, claims pay out level, management excellence; the Vallecitos WD's engineering management and liability program awards; and the Vista ID's safety and water management practices awards.

- Determination 8.1:** The Valley Center MWD, Rincon del Diablo MWD, and Vista ID have completed various reorganizations during the past three years to achieve management and operational efficiencies.
- Determination 8.2:** The local agencies within the service review study area use varying levels of private sector assistance to contain costs and improve management efficiency.
- Determination 8.3:** The Valley Center MWD uses outside expertise for legal service, auditing, engineering, and laboratory services.
- Determination 8.4:** The Rincon del Diablo MWD uses outside contractors for certain administrative, operational, and financial services.
- Determination 8.5:** The Vallecitos WD uses private companies for legal, engineering, information technology, and financial services.
- Determination 8.6:** The Vista ID uses outside companies for auditing, legal, billing and maintenance services.
- Determination 8.7:** The local agencies within the service review study area appear to satisfactorily build and maintain adequate reserves. While agencies in the study review service area seem to be able to build and retain reserves, there does not seem to be a uniform approach or policy to determine an adequate level of reserves. This is likely a function of the differences in the size of the agency, services provided, and type of community served, with agencies ranging from a small urban district (Rincon) serving primarily residential areas with relatively stable water demands and revenue generation to a large district serving primarily a rural-agricultural area with broad weather/market driven swings in water demand and revenue generation. However, while a standard policy may not be practical, it is recommended that each agency develop, adopt and then review on a regular basis, a policy for the accumulation and use of reserves to fit its specific circumstances.
- Determination 8.8:** The affected agencies within this study area or in a larger region (entire county or sub-region thereof) should explore the development of a standardized method for reserve fund management based on local policies, budgetary practices and programs, and legal requirements.

Determination 8.9: The City of Escondido's General Plan establishes community goals and objectives to guide future growth and provide certainty in implementation. City staff monitors progress towards meeting all the goals and policies in annual reports to the City Council in open, public hearings in their progress.

Determination 8.10: The City of Escondido has established a system of internal accounting controls to provide against loss of assets, for the reliability of financial records and for accountability of assets. This system is regularly reviewed by an independent, certified public accountant during the City's annual audit.

DETERMINATIONS FOR LOCAL ACCOUNTABILITY AND GOVERNANCE

PURPOSE: To evaluate the accessibility and levels of public participation with the agency's decision-making and management processes.

In making a determination of local accountability and governance, LAFCO will consider the degree to which local accountability exists with respect to service provision. *Local accountability and governance* refers to public agency decision making and operational and management processes that: (1) include an accessible and accountable elected or appointed decision making body and agency staff; (2) encourage and value public participation; (3) disclose budgets, programs, and plans; (4) solicit public input when considering rate changes and work and infrastructure plans; and (5) evaluate outcomes of plans, programs, and operations, and disclose results to the public.

Determination 9.0: The City of Escondido is governed by five council members elected at large; council meeting are scheduled every week.

Determination 9.1: The City of Escondido has a variety of committees and groups that provide assistance and input to municipal departments.

Determination 9.2: The local agencies serving the North County Inland area have not experienced an unusually high amount of elected official resignations.

Determination 9.3: The special district service providers within the study area consist of boards of directors that are elected by division; board of directors meetings are held on a bi-weekly basis.

Determination 9.4: The service review study only covered the prior three-year period regarding the number of candidates for positions on special districts. A wide variation in the number of candidates for elected office was noted among the agencies studied. The variation could be tied to relative satisfaction with the agency and its service levels or a function of the level of public awareness of the agency. All agencies in the service review should evaluate the effectiveness of their public information, outreach and access efforts to ensure that the public served is fully aware of its role in the community, and the opportunity to participate as member of the governing board.

- Determination 9.5:** The City of Escondido complies with Brown Act provisions for conduct of meetings and uses cable television broadcasts, direct mail, and a website to achieve public accessibility. The City was recently investigated by the District Attorney for alleged Brown Act violations, but no legal action was taken.
- Determination 9.6:** The special districts within the study area comply to the Brown Act, have publicly accessible meeting facilities, and some of the agencies use their websites to notify the public about district activities. The special districts have indicated that there have been no Brown Act or FPPC violations, or other investigations.
- Determination 9.7:** The City of Escondido encourages public participation through publishing newsletters, bill inserts, and media releases. City staff also work extensively with community groups, schools, and nonprofit organizations.
- Determination 9.8:** The City of Escondido should more extensively involve and notify the public and local agencies within the unincorporated area regarding land use and public facility improvement proposals.
- Determination 9.9:** The special districts serving the study area have a broad base of public participation tools, ranging from workshops, newsletters, direct mailings, and customer information packets. In addition, the districts participate in local civic affairs and professional associations.
- Determination 9.10:** While all of the agencies in the service review study area do a reasonably good job conducting programs to foster an increased understanding of local government services and interest in local governmental matters, some agencies, primarily the special district water agencies, stand out in their respective efforts. All agencies should evaluate the programs of the other agencies to determine if certain components could be implemented in their respective service areas."
- Determination 9.11:** Among the areas of improvement, local service providers could do a better job communicating with each other and coordinating overall service plans through bi-annual meetings between service providers to confer on development and service provisions in general, and more specifically, for common boundary areas where the potential is high for service overlap, conflict and, conversely, inter-agency cooperation.

SPHERE OF INFLUENCE UPDATE

This portion of the report describes the existing and proposed spheres of influence for the City of Escondido, Valley Center MWD, and the Rincon del Diablo MWD. Please note that the Vallecitos WD and Vista ID serve small portions of the Escondido sphere area; therefore, a sphere update for these two districts will be conducted in a subsequent sphere update proposal involving a different geographic region of San Diego County.

CITY OF ESCONDIDO – EXISTING SPHERE

Escondido's existing sphere of influence includes all incorporated territory within the City, and approximately 33 square miles outside its corporate limits. Territory within Escondido's existing city limits includes the downtown commercial area, which is surrounded by medium and high-density residential neighborhoods. Residential densities generally decrease as the distance from the downtown core increases, with agriculture and estate-type development predominating on the urban fringe. Industrial areas are located west of downtown and Interstate 15. Commercial areas are also located along East Valley Parkway, near Interstate 15.

Residential development is the predominant land use within the existing city limits, and its sphere and planning area. According to SANDAG, there is also a large amount of vacant, developable land within Escondido's existing sphere -- approximately 5,600 acres. Vacant undevelopable land with slopes in excess of 35% or other constraints account for approximately 9,530 acres within Escondido's existing sphere. The following describes in more detail the unincorporated territory within Escondido's existing sphere.

North

Escondido's existing sphere extends north of its city limits, and includes about 7,000 acres of unincorporated territory in the Jesmond Dene/Lehner Valley area, which is defined by Interstate 15 to the west, Deer Springs Road to the north, Daley Ranch to the east, and Vista Drive to the south. This area is characterized by a variety of land uses, primarily large-lot residential uses and agriculture.

Northwest

The sphere also extends to the northwest, and includes about 600 acres in the unincorporated Nordahl Road area. Nordahl Road is located north of Harmony Grove, and is essentially an island surrounded by Escondido on the north, east, and south, and San Marcos on the west. The area is fully developed with residential uses on one-quarter to one-half acre lots.

East

The sphere extends east, and includes about 3,500 acres of unincorporated territory in the Lake Wohlford area. Approximately 35% of this area is owned by the City of Escondido and is undeveloped. The remainder of the area consists of undeveloped territory and large-lot residential uses.

Southeast

The sphere extends southeast of the Escondido city limits, and includes about 4,500 acres of undeveloped territory in San Pasqual. The San Pasqual area is defined by Mountain View Drive to the north, Bear Valley Parkway to the west, and San Pasqual Road to the south and east. Scattered residential-estate land uses on one-half to larger-than-acre lots characterize the San Pasqual area.

West

The sphere extends west of the Escondido city limits, and includes about 1,600 acres in the unincorporated Harmony Grove area. This area is defined by Harmony Grove and Country Club Roads to the east and south, a ridgeline to the west, and Hill Valley Drive to the north. A variety of uses currently exist in this area. Agricultural uses are located in the southern portion, and include a dairy, egg ranch, and citrus groves. The eastern and northern portions of Harmony Grove consist of residential uses on one-half to one-acre lots. Approximately 60% of this area is developed.

PROPOSED SPHERE

The City of Escondido has requested the Commission to reaffirm its existing sphere and add approximately 208.4 acres located southeast of the current corporate limits of the City. Refer to Maps 1 and 2. Among the factors that Escondido considered in making this request are: Land Use Ownership; Present and Planned Land Uses; Present and Planned Services; Physical/ Visual Orientation; Provision/ Consolidation of Public Services; Drainage Patterns; Access; Public Comment; Community Identity; Existence of Prime Agriculture/ Open Space. Per direction provided by LAFCO staff, the City has provided a balanced discussion of factors that support the inclusion and exclusion of territory from its sphere. In addition, the City of Escondido has also provided a discussion of factors that are boundary neutral.

Historically, LAFCO has not required cities to justify the retention of existing territory within their adopted spheres of influence. However, a large number of residents within the northern (Deer Springs) and western (Harmony Grove) unincorporated portions of the Escondido sphere expressed interest to LAFCO in 2001 to be removed from the Escondido sphere. Accordingly, the San Diego LAFCO has required the City of Escondido to provide justification for both its existing and proposed sphere boundaries. A summary of the City's justification follows:

SUB-AREA 1A: VALLEY VIEW ESTATES

Description

The City of Escondido recently denied a specific plan, pre-zoning, and tentative map for Sub-Area 1A. Therefore, the City of Escondido is not proposing that Sub-Area 1A be included within its sphere of influence.

Over the years, much of Sub-Area 1A (Valley View Estates) has been used for cattle grazing; the remainder, while exhibiting some disturbance from off-road vehicle and equestrian use, has retained much of its native and visual character. In 1993, several sheds and buildings were destroyed during a major brushfire. Circulation within Sub-Area 1A consists of jeep trails and service roads.

Land uses surrounding the sub-area include single-family residential use, undeveloped land, agriculture associated with San Pasqual Valley and the adjacent San Diego Wild Animal Park. Immediately west is the residential and golf community known as Rancho San Pasqual. Further west, an extension of unincorporated mixed residential, estate, and agricultural land intervenes between the eastern section of Escondido and the central portion of the City. The San Dieguito River Park is located approximately 1.5 miles to the south.

Planning and Land Use

The property owner within Sub-Area 1a had been processing development plans, which would have allowed the development of 403 residential units, a hotel and associated casitas, open space areas including passive and natural areas, and active areas encompassing a golf course, club house, parks, and tennis courts, and approximately 7.5 acres dedicated for civic uses, an equestrian facility, commercial uses, apartments, or a fire station. As stated previously, the City of Escondido is not requesting that Sub-Area 1A be included in its sphere of influence.

Sub-Area 1A is considered a Rural Development Area by the County's Regional Land Use Map. The property is designated (18) Multiple Rural Use (1du per 408-20 acres) by the North County Metropolitan Subregional Plan. The vast majority of the sub-area is zoned S-92 (General Rural) except for about 20 acres zoned A-72 (General Agriculture) and approximately 20 acres zoned A-70 (Limited Agriculture). The existing county land use designations would permit a maximum of approximately 194 dwelling units. The County's current proposal for the General Plan 2020 would significantly reduce the yield by re-designing the property as Rural Lands (1du per 40 acres). It is estimated that under the unadopted county land use distribution map, 29 dwelling units would be allowed within Sub-Area 1A.

Public Services

Sub-area No. 1A is within a Fire Hazard Area (City of Escondido General Plan) and is currently within the boundaries of CSA No. 113 (San Pasqual) for structural fire protection; the northern portion is not within any district. The closest City of Escondido fire station is located on Bear Valley Parkway; another city fire station on North Midway provides the nearest EMS service. Both stations are beyond the 3mile/5minute and 10-minute response criteria for fire, basic life support, advanced life support. Project mitigation in the form of a new fire station would be required if Sub-area No 1A was included in Escondido's sphere and annexed to the City. The City has indicated that operating a new fire station to essentially serve Sub-Area 1A would be inefficient. Sewer service is not presently available to the sub-area. The City of Escondido offers the only potential for extending sewer service. Connection to the Eagle Crest system within Escondido would require upsizing approximately 3,500 feet of existing 8-inch sewer line along Rockwood Road to a 12-inch replacement or 10-inch parallel sewer would be required, among other improvements. Sub-area No 1A is not currently within the boundaries of a water district, Metropolitan Water District of Southern California, or the San Diego County Water Authority. New waterlines, pressure zones, storage tanks, and pump stations would be needed. The project could potentially produce a 20% drop of existing water pressure within the Reed Zone at Rockwood Road; a second and parallel pipeline from Reed Reservoir would therefore need to be installed.

Located below is a summary of the reasons that should be considered by LAFCO in updating the City of Escondido's sphere.

Reasons to Include Within the City Sphere

- 1) The owner of Sub-Area 1A is supportive of being included within the sphere. Support of the property owner is not mandatory for the inclusion of property in a sphere of influence. However, according to the Cortese-Knox-Hertzberg Act property must be within an agency's adopted sphere of influence prior to annexation. Concurrence of the property owner is a factor in determining sphere boundaries.
- 2) The City has applied an SPA designation to the property that requires preparation of a regulatory document with criteria beyond the level customarily included in County zoning. Impacts from the development would primarily affect the City of Escondido and the City's SPA designation would ensure a more detailed analysis and mitigation of all impacts to existing City of Escondido residents.
- 3) Future residents of Valley View Estates would likely identify with the City of Escondido, because of mailing addresses and shopping patterns. Access to most services and facilities (hospitals, libraries, professional services, shopping etc) would be through the City of Escondido.
- 4) Response times for law enforcement would be improved with the City of Escondido Police Department. The City is able to maintain a lower ratio of sworn officers to population than the County Sheriff's Department. The level and number of ancillary law enforcement services (Senior Volunteer Patrols, Neighborhood and Downtown Bicycle Patrols, Community Policing, Sector Coordinator Officers, vacation house checks, senior citizen safety patrol and talks, school liaison officers, business liaison officer, mobile storefront activities, National Night Out, Community Awareness Academy, Youth Police Athletic League, etc) would also be increased with service provided by the City of Escondido.
- 5) The southern portion of Sub-Area 1A is located within CSA 113 (San Pasqual Fire Protection District) which is an all-volunteer District. The northern portion is not within the boundaries of any agency providing similar fire protection services. Eventual annexation of the property to the City of Escondido would increase the level of both fire protection and paramedic service through the City's Fire Department.
- 6) The City's trail system includes a 2.75-mile trail within the property that is linked with a system of trails throughout the City of Escondido.
- 7) Sub-Area 1A drains into the Eagle Crest drainage basin, which flows south through the City into Lake Hodges. Drainage facilities and impacts would be coordinated through one agency upon eventual annexation of Sub-Area 1A to the City of Escondido.
- 8) Traffic from Sub-Area 1A would use major city streets in South Escondido. Inclusion within the City of Escondido's sphere would ensure that the City staff could comprehensively address existing and future traffic impacts to City residents.
- 9) Future residents would likely use City facilities, such as the library and parks/recreation facilities and services.
- 10) The City of Escondido has the capacity to provide municipal services (building inspection, fire protection, flood control, landscape maintenance, library services, park and recreation services, planning and land use, police protection, road and highway maintenance, sewer

service, street lighting, traffic control and water service). State laws governing LAFCOs encourage the inclusion of urban level development within the boundaries of multipurpose agencies such as a full-service city. The City of Escondido is the only municipality in the area that could provide services. The City of San Diego is isolated from this Sub-Area and did not include it within its facility planning or sphere of influence. Development within the County would require a fragmented delivery of public services from a variety of agencies. Fire protection would come from a County Service Area with a volunteer program. Sewer service would require either use of septic systems or formation of a new County Sanitation District. It is unclear which agency would provide water service, as the property is not within a water district, Metropolitan or CWA.

Neutrals

- 1) Approximately one-third of the Sub-Area was beyond the planning boundaries historically used by the City for its General Plan until 1990.
- 2) Access to the site is from Rockwood Road, which originates in the unincorporated County within the existing City sphere and runs east west through the City of San Diego and the City of Escondido. Emergency access for the southern portion of the proposed development is via Zoo Drive in the City of San Diego. Development of the site would require close coordination among the agencies for access.
- 3) Valley View Estates is within the Escondido Union High School District and the Valley Center Union School District.

Reasons to Not Include Sub-Area 1A in the City of Escondido's Sphere

- 1) The owner of Valley View Estates has been actively and unsuccessfully seeking approval of a project from the City for over a decade. According to the draft EIR, the proposed project could result in numerous significant and unmitigable impacts. If the draft EIR were approved by the City Council, a statement of overriding social and economic considerations would have to be adopted to approve the project.
- 2) Although the City has the capability to provide public services, the location of the project on the eastern edge of the City and intensity of land uses being proposed requires a major commitment from both the City and the master developer. A number of key issues have yet to be resolved. The applicant has not ensured funding for critical aspects of the project such as the construction of a fire station or found a secondary access that is acceptable to the City. Until the requisite service and funding commitments are obtained, development is uncertain and it may be inappropriate to include the area within the sphere of influence until those issues are resolved.
- 3) The City of Escondido's Fire Department has indicated that a new fire station would be required primarily to serve proposed development within Valley View Estates. It would offer only limited benefit to the rest of the City. The need for a second new fire station has also been identified in East Escondido. One of the characteristics of urban sprawl is the inefficient location of public facilities along the outer reaches of a community. Concerns have also been raised regarding the possible financial implications of constructing and operating two additional fire stations.

- 4) City policies would allow a substantial increase in permitted dwelling units beyond the number allowed by the County. The current County planning designation of Multiple Rural Use (1 dwelling unit per 4, 8 and 20 acres) is typically used when full public services are not available. The current proposal for land use designation under the draft of the County's General Plan 2020 would only allow 1 dwelling unit per 40 acres because the area is not currently entitled to imported water. The City of Escondido's existing land use designations would indicate intensification in density that may not be able to be supported by the efficient extension and provision of services and facilities.
- 5) A significant amount of unincorporated land (both inhabited and uninhabited) is located in southeast Escondido, beyond the City's existing boundaries but within the existing sphere. Several major annexation proposals within the area failed during the mid-1980s, primarily because of resident opposition. The prevention of sprawl and the development of orderly governmental boundaries would indicate that the City should concentrate on the annexation of unincorporated areas closer to its existing corporate boundaries.
- 6) County Service Area No. 113 (San Pasqual), an all-volunteer fire company, would suffer a loss of revenue from deletion of the area from its service boundaries. The loss of income might reduce its ability to provide fire protection services to the residents and homes remaining in the District.
- 7) A substantial topographic separation exists between the existing urban area and locations appropriate for development within Sub-Area 1A. Extending access from the west to serve Valley View Estates will require substantial grading for roads and public utilities. According to the draft EIR, there will be aesthetic impacts for existing residents of the City.
- 8) The property is outside of the boundaries of the San Diego County Water Authority and the Metropolitan Water District of Southern California (MET).

City of Escondido's Recommendation Sub-Area 1A (Valley View Estates)

The addition of the Valley View Estates would represent a significant addition to the City of Escondido. The scope of the proposed project and location poses a number of difficult obstacles. The property-owner and City have been unable to resolve many project-related issues for over a decade. In consideration of the numerous significant unmitigable environmental impacts cited by the Draft EIR, the City of Escondido has proposed:

- 1) Exclude Sub-Area 1A (Valley View Estates) from the City of Escondido Sphere of Influence proposal until the City of Escondido has approved a proposed project signifying that all land use and service issues have been adequately addressed.
- 2) Prior to/or concurrent with the submittal of an application to annex Sub-Area 1A, the City of Escondido should survey those unincorporated residents and properties located within the existing sphere on the southeast boundary of the City. The goal of the survey would be to determine if this area would consider annexing to the City of Escondido. If sufficient support for the annexation is present, a separate application should be initiated, concurrent with Valley View Estates, to encourage a more efficient provision of public services.
- 3) Encourage LAFCO to initiate discussions with the County of San Diego, the City of San Diego and CSA 113 to determine the most efficient and cost effective means of providing

fire and emergency medical services to both incorporated and unincorporated territory in the region.

LAFCO Staff Recommendation Sub-Area 1A (Valley View Estates)

LAFCO staff concurs with the City of Escondido regarding the exclusion of Sub-Area 1A from the City's sphere update proposal.

SUB-AREA 1B: RANCHO VISTAMONTE

Description

Sub-Area 1B: Rancho Vistamonte includes approximately 133.1 acres and is located in the unincorporated area south east of Escondido. In conjunction with a development agreement submitted as part of the Rancho Vistamonte project, the applicant and the City of Escondido have proposed exchanging 2.6 acres within Sub-Area No. 3 to allow for ownership and land uses to be contiguous on both sides of the planned extension of Rockwood Road. The Eagle Crest Golf Course and the Rancho San Pasqual master planned residential community are to the northwest within Escondido. The San Pasqual Valley Agricultural Preserve and rural residential uses are located in the City of San Diego to the west and south.

The Brower Dairy operated within the sub-area for over 30 years. Remnants of the dairy including a milking barn, feeding trough and pens and assorted equipment can be found throughout the northwest and central portions of the site. The property still contains an approximately six acre avocado orchard, located in the southeast corner of the property. As a result of livestock activity, the majority of the natural habitats on-site can be found on the hillsides, leaving the flatter portions of the site in non-native grasslands.

Cloverdale Road is the primary circulation street closest to the project, one mile west of the site. Access to the property is from Rockwood Road, which begins at its intersection with Cloverdale Road. Old Battlefield Road via Zoo Road, a private easement used as access to the Wild Animal Park facilities, provides access from the south of the site to State Route 78.

Planning and Land Use

The current property owner (New Urban West) has requested approval for 80 homes with proposed lot sizes ranging from approximately 10,000 square feet to 37,000 square feet. The overall density that is proposed is 0.6 dwelling units per acre. The proposed community is intended to offer a rural oriented atmosphere and a variety of traditional architectural styles. Two gated entries are proposed for access from Rockwood Road. Approximately 60% of the site will be preserved as open space.

The County of San Diego considers Rancho Vistamonte a Rural Development Area (RDA). RDAs include all privately owned land outside the service boundaries of the County Water Authority. The County's existing North County Metropolitan Planning Area designation for the sub-area is Multiple Rural Use 18 (1 dwelling unit per 4, 8, 20 acres). A majority of the site is zoned A72 (General Agriculture), A70 (Limited Agriculture) or S 92 (General Rural). All three zoning classifications have an 8-acre minimum parcel size. It is estimated that build-out consistent with county land use designations would yield a maximum of approximately 15 dwelling units. The County's General Plan 2020 Land Use Distribution Map (May 2002), designates the sub-area as Rural Lands 40 (1dwelling unit per 40 acres). Development in the

County would be based on the use of private septic systems and wells, rather than public water and sewer services. Emergency services would be from a volunteer fire department and the County Sheriff.

Public Services

Development of Sub-Area 1B within the City of Escondido would shift many service responsibilities from special districts to the City. The primary fire station for the sub-area would be Escondido Fire Station No. 4, located at 3301 Bear Valley Parkway, approximately 6.5 miles from the property. The sub-area is beyond the City's five-minute response time and three-mile distance; therefore, all structures would need to be protected by fire sprinkler systems. Service to Sub-Area 1B would improve with the addition of a new city fire station in East Escondido. The City Police Department would be responsible for law enforcement after annexation of the area to Escondido. It is anticipated that the city police response times for both priority one and two call would be quicker than the response times of the County Sheriff. Sewage generated by the proposed project in Sub-Area 1B can be accommodated by the City of Escondido without upgrading the existing Eagle Crest gravity system or the Eagle Crest Lift Station. A 12-inch sewer line is already located along Rockwood Road and extends under San Pasqual Valley Road (Highway 78) to Old Pasqual Road. Prior to finalization of development plans, the Rancho Vistamonte project will need to be included in both the San Diego County Water Authority and the Metropolitan Water District of Southern California. Existing City of Escondido facilities are readily available to serve Rancho Vistamonte.

Located below is a summary of the reasons that should be considered by LAFCO in determining whether this sub-area should be added to the City's sphere. Also included in the discussion are reasons that could be considered for not including the sub-area in Escondido's sphere and boundary neutral items.

Reasons to Include Within the City Sphere.

- 1) All of the Rancho Vistamonte property has historically been part of the City of Escondido Planning boundary.
- 2) The northern property line of Sub-Area 1B is contiguous to the City's corporate boundaries, a pre-requisite of annexation. This ensures that all services including roads, water, sewer and other municipal level services can be readily provided.
- 3) The area topographically relates to the City as part of the valley that includes the Eagle Crest golf course and Rancho San Pasqual. It is located in the same drainage basin and views, drainage and access are closely tied to the City of Escondido.
- 4) The build-out of SPA 3 (Rancho San Pasqual), since adoption of the 1993 sphere of influence, has extended development within the City to the edge of Sub-Area 1B.
- 5) Future residents would likely use city facilities, such as the library and parks/recreation services and facilities. The inclusion and eventual annexation of the area would ensure that the City of Escondido receives some revenue to support the residents' use of city facilities.

- 6) The City has applied an SPA designation to the sub-Area. A Specific Plan document has been prepared that addresses design criteria beyond the level customarily regulated by the current County zoning. The application of the City's regulations would ensure a thorough analysis of impacts and concurrent mitigation of impacts to the City.
- 7) The City of Escondido and the applicant for Rancho Vistamonte are considering entering into a development agreement. One of the provisions provides for an exchange of land involving City property.
- 8) Future residents of Rancho Vistamonte would likely identify with the City of Escondido, because of mailing addresses and shopping patterns and would use existing and future City roads.
- 9) Increased levels of fire protection and paramedic service would be available to the area and to its future residents.
- 10) The City of Escondido has existing sewer and water lines directly adjacent to the site. Both lines are adequately sized and have the capacity to provide service for the proposed residential subdivision. Valley View is in the Eagle Crest drainage basin, which flows south through the City into Lake Hodges.
- 11) The City of Escondido can provide a full range of municipal services (building inspection, fire protection, flood control, landscape maintenance, library services, paramedic services, park and recreation services, planning and land use, police protection, road and highway maintenance, sewer service, street lighting, traffic control and water service). State laws governing LAFCOs encourage the consolidation of services that results from full-service cities. The City of Escondido is the most logical municipality to serve the development. The City of San Diego is isolated from this Sub-Area and did not consider including Rancho Vistamonte within its sphere. Development within the County would require fragmented delivery of public services from several special districts and service levels might be higher with City services. Fire protection would come from a County Service Area with a volunteer program. Sewer service would require either use of septic systems or formation of a new County Sanitation District. It is unclear which agency would provide water service, as the property is not currently within a water district, CWA or Metropolitan. Studies have not been prepared which support the use of septic systems and/or wells.
- 12) Support within the community appears to exist for including Rancho Vistamonte within the City's Sphere of Influence. The Friends of New Urban West has over 600 members who live and/or work in Escondido and support inclusion in the City sphere and annexation.

Neutrals

- 1) Access to the site is from Rockwood Road, which originates in the unincorporated County within the existing City sphere and runs east/west through the City of San Diego and the City of Escondido. Emergency access for the southern portion of the proposed development is via Old Battlefield/Zoo Drive in the City of San Diego.
- 2) Students from Rancho Vistamonte will attend elementary school in the City of San Diego. The school's attendance boundary includes areas within the City of Escondido, City of San Diego and County of San Diego.

Reasons to Exclude from the City of Escondido's Proposed Sphere

- 1) The property is outside of the boundaries of the San Diego County Water Authority and the Metropolitan Water District of Southern California.
- 2) County Service Area No.113 (San Pasqual), a volunteer fire department with limited funding would suffer a loss of tax revenue.
- 3) A significant amount of unincorporated land (both inhabited and uninhabited) is located in the southeast Escondido, beyond the City's existing boundaries but within the existing sphere. Several major annexation proposals within the area have failed in the past. However, it would be more logical for the City of Escondido to annex unincorporated territory within its existing sphere of influence, which is located closer to the City's core areas.

City of Escondido's Recommendations For Sub-Area 1B (Rancho Vistamonte)

- 1) Sub-Area 1B, Rancho Vistamonte, is adjacent to the current City of Escondido corporate boundaries and to existing services and facilities. Inclusion within the City of Escondido's sphere of influence would represent a logical and orderly extension of both the City's boundaries and of services. Therefore, the City of Escondido has included Sub-Area 1B within the its proposed sphere of influence.

LAFCO staff Recommendation for Sub-Area 1B (Rancho Vistamonte)

LAFCO staff concurs with the City of Escondido regarding Sub-Area 1B and recommends that Sub-Area 1B be included in the City's sphere.

SUB-AREA 1C FERRICK/HARWOOD/BRILL/ALBRIGHT PROPERTIES

Description

Sub-Area 1c includes eight parcels, ranging in size from 7.7 to 16.8 acres. Limited scattered single-family estate development characterizes the approximately 75.3 acre sub-area. Although plans to develop this area have not been proposed, approval of the annexation of the Rancho Vistamonte property to Escondido would leave Sub-Area 1C as a service island of unincorporated territory between the Cities of Escondido and San Diego.

Planning and Land Use

Assuming annexation, any future development within the sub-area would be subject to Escondido's General Plan policies. The City's General Plan would permit development at rural densities without preparation of a specific plan. Based on slope features, it is estimated that a maximum of 16-18 dwelling units could be built within Escondido. This dwelling unit yield could be increased through the use of a development agreement, but it is not possible to determine a specific density at this time. The County's existing North County Metropolitan Planning Area designation for the sub-area is Multiple Rural Use 18 (1 dwelling unit per 4, 8, 20 acres). County zoning for the site is A72 (General Agriculture) and A70 (Limited Agriculture). Based on slope criteria, the site could potentially yield a maximum of 12 dwelling units. The Draft County General Plan 2020 would designate the sub-area the sub-area as Rural Lands 40 (1dwelling unit per 40 acres).

Public Services

Development of Sub-Area 1C within the City of Escondido would shift many service responsibilities from special districts to the City. The primary fire station for the sub-area would be Escondido Fire Station No. 4, located at 3301 Bear Valley Parkway, approximately 6.5 miles from the property. The sub-area is beyond the City's five-minute response time and three-mile distance; therefore, all structures would need to be protected by fire sprinkler systems. Service to Sub-Area 1B would improve with the addition of a new city fire station in East Escondido. The City Police Department (Patrol Area No. 54) would be responsible for law enforcement after annexation of the area to Escondido. It is anticipated that the city police response times for both priority one and two call would be quicker than the response times of the County Sheriff. Sewage generated by the proposed project in sub-area could rely on individual septic systems or a public sewer system. If development is proposed, Escondido could accommodate the sewage needs without upgrading the existing Eagle Crest gravity system or the Eagle Crest Lift Station. A 12-inch sewer line is already located along Rockwood Road and extends under San Pasqual Valley Road (Highway 78) to Old Pasqual Road. On-site wells are the only source of water for the sub-area and the site is outside the boundaries of the San Diego County Water Authority and the Metropolitan Water District of Southern California.

Located below is a summary of the reasons that Escondido feels should be considered by LAFCO in determining whether this sub-area should be added to the City's sphere. Also included in the discussion are reasons that could be considered for not including the sub-area in Escondido's sphere, plus boundary neutral items.

Reasons to Include Within the City Sphere

- 1) If Rancho Vistamonte is annexed to the City, Sub-Area 1C would be left as a small unincorporated service island between the Cities of Escondido and San Diego. The City of Escondido can provide a full-range of municipal services to the area.
- 2) The developable portions of Sub-Area 1C topographically relate to the City as part of the valley that includes the Eagle Crest Golf Course and Rancho San Pasqual.
- 3) The City has applied an SPA designation to the Sub-Area. Any further development of the area would be coordinated with the guidelines of the City of Escondido's Specific Planning Area No. 4 (Valley View).
- 4) The build-out of SPA No. 3 (Rancho San Pasqual) since adoption of the 1993 sphere of influence has extended development closer to Sub-Area 1C.
- 5) Residents generally are expected to use City facilities, such as the library and park and recreational services and facilities.
- 6) Residents would likely identify with the City of Escondido due to mailing addresses and shopping patterns.
- 7) Emergency response (law enforcement and fire service) would improve if the area annexes to the City of Escondido. Residents would have access to paramedic service.

Neutrals

- 1) County Service Area No.113 (San Pasqual), a volunteer fire department with limited funding would suffer a loss of tax revenue.

Reasons to exclude from the City's Proposed Sphere

- 1) No development plans are currently being proposed for the sub-area. The various properties within the sub-area are sparsely developed and rely on septic systems, private wells, the County Sheriff and a volunteer fire company. This level of service is considered adequate unless or until further development is proposed.
- 2) The property is outside of the boundaries of the San Diego County Water Authority and the Metropolitan Water District of Southern California.

City of Escondido's Recommendations: Sub-Area 1C

Since LAFCO discourages creating islands due to inefficient patterns of public services development, the City of Escondido has recommended:

- 1) Include Sub-Area 1C within the City Sphere of Influence. However, if Sub-Area 1B is not included in the sphere, then Sub-Area 1C should also be excluded. The overriding consideration for inclusion of this sub-area within the sphere of influence is that Sub-Area 1C would become a small unincorporated service island with the proposed annexation of Sub-Area 1B.

LAFCO Staff Recommendation: Sub-Area 1C

LAFCO staff concurs with the City of Escondido regarding Sub-Area 1C and recommends that it be included within the City's sphere of influence.

SUB-AREA 2 HARMONY GROVE

On April 2, 2001, the San Diego LAFCO requested the City of Escondido to review the possible exclusion of a portion of Harmony Grove (Sub-Area 2) from its sphere of influence as a part of the City's comprehensive sphere update. Harmony Grove is a 100-year-old rural unincorporated community that has been recognized as an independent entity since 1947 on the United States Geologic Survey maps and by the United States Postal Service, Federal Express, and UPS and the County of San Diego. The County has provided a sign welcoming visitors that is posted and maintained by the County Public Works Department. Community representation is provided by the Elfin Forest Harmony Grove Town Council, an organization established in 1980. The Town Council is a state-registered, not-for-profit community organization with elected representatives. The Town Council believes it maintains accountability with public through publishing minutes and agendas, holding regular meetings, and following adopted bylaws.

The particular geographic area that was identified for review included about 930 acres and was the subject of several Escondido General Plan update proposals. Sub-Area 2 has been part of the City of Escondido Sphere of Influence since the initial adoption by LAFCO in 1979. The sub-area is located south of Mount Whitney Road in the vicinity of Harmony Grove Road, at the western perimeter of the City of Escondido's General Plan boundary. There is additional

unincorporated territory in Escondido's existing sphere to the north of Sub-Area 2 (517 acres) and to the south (276 acres). Sub-Area 2 is part of a larger unincorporated territory between the corporate boundaries of the City of Escondido and City of San Marcos. When LAFCO established the original sphere boundary, the area was primarily devoted to open space and agriculture. The City of Escondido estimated that by 1999, approximately 163 dwelling units had been developed within the sub-area.

Planning and Land Use

Currently, there are approximately 117 properties within the sub-area ranging in size from .15 to 45.8 acres. Existing land uses include dairy, egg ranch, quarry, pipe manufacturing, single family residential, and a recycling facility. The central portion of the sub area includes very steep terrain. A water reservoir is situated on a peak south and west of Harmony Grove Road. Relatively level land is found in the eastern, west central and southern valley portions of the area. The sub-area includes a broad valley 1.5 miles wide and three miles long. Constrained land including steep hillsides and creek habitat represent a total of 421 acres or about 45% of the sub area. The Escondido Creek, and smaller tributary flows from the north to south and bisects the area.

There have been a total of five proposals for land use changes in Harmony Grove/Eden Valley:

In the years before 1983, the City of Escondido annexed and rezoned for industrial use the 200+ acres of residential property called Quail Hills, now known as the Escondido Research and Technology Center, a business park with limited manufacturing uses (SPA No. 8).

Also before 1983, the City of Escondido annexed and rezoned for industrial and manufacturing uses ~100 acres of residential property in Eden Valley now called the Nordahl Business Park.

In 1990, the City of Escondido proposed that portions of Harmony Grove be designated "Campus Industrial"¹; residential areas would be rezoned industrial.

In 1996-7, the City of Escondido revisited this proposal to rezone portions of Harmony Grove as industrial. The City later decided to "take no further action on the Harmony Grove and Deer Springs/I-15 areas." (City of Escondido Sphere of Influence Study, City of Escondido, Aug. 09, 2002. p. 2-74).

In 1999, the San Diego Association of Governments (SANDAG) completed a region-wide employment lands study; the study revealed a number of trends that the City of Escondido found distressing. Among these trends were that available lands for industrial uses within Escondido had been depleted to five acres; local companies would be inclined to leave Escondido if expansion needs cannot be met; a number of Escondido residents commute outside of the City for employment; and demand for land and facilities remains high due to Escondido's strategic location. In response to the SANDAG study, the City of Escondido proposed a general plan amendment that offered two alternatives for Harmony Grove. One alternative proposed an increase of 37 dwelling units and 5.2 million square feet of industrial/commercial development; the other alternative proposed the same increase in dwelling units and 2.6 million square feet of industrial/commercial development. Existing,

occupied residential homes were to be rezoned either industrial or mixed use. This was a city-initiated GP amendment; Harmony Grove residents would have no vote in this rezoning.

The proposed general plan amendment for Harmony Grove was highly controversial. LAFCO staff and the City of Escondido received an inundation of letters and petitions in opposition to the annexation of the affected areas. In total, LAFCO staff received about 100 letters (140 signatures concerning an area of ~117 properties) from residents and property owners in the Harmony Grove areas requesting to be removed from the City's sphere, along with letters from the Harmony Grove Eden Valley Citizen's Group, the Elfin Forest Harmony Grove Town Council, The San Dieguito Planning Group, and the County of San Diego. In preparing the environmental impact report for the general plan update, the City determined that significant unmitigable impacts would occur as a result of the general plan amendment proposal. In light of those concerns, the City removed the affected areas from the general plan amendment proposal, so that other amendment areas could be submitted to a citywide vote (Proposition S in Escondido requires a citywide vote in any instance where the general plan densities would be increased). All of the proposed general plan amendments included in the first Proposition S election were rejected; the second Proposition S ballot measure showed that Escondido voters favored a density increase from residential to commercial on a 6.8-acre parcel within the City of Escondido (North County Times, Escondido voters say yea to Prop. J, Nov. 6, 2002).

The City of Escondido's existing general plan designations and the County's North County Metropolitan Planning Area designations provide for comparable residential land use categories. City-generated studies have identified the build-out per Escondido's General Plan as approximately 600 dwelling units and 369,388 square feet of industrial/office use. One difference between the two jurisdictions' plans is that the City's Specific Planning Area for the Quail Hills area (SPA No. 8), which includes portions of Harmony Grove, would allow the development of a business park. If the sub-area remains unincorporated, a maximum yield of 612 dwelling units could potentially result under adopted policies. The number of dwelling units allowed by the County could potentially increase if current proposals for General Plan 2020 are adopted. The primary differences between the two jurisdictions concern the nature of the allowed uses in the proposed residential areas. The county plan provides a structured rural town that may preserve the unique Harmony Grove identity and offer residents a range of housing options, allowing people to stay in the community throughout all stages of life. It is believed that the density distribution pattern proposed by the County may prevent urban sprawl. Along with the zoning ordinance and design standards, the Community Plan Text (CPT),³ not an option in Escondido's GP, allows for goals and policies designed to preserve the rural character of the area, such as allowing the keeping of livestock on more than 50% of properties within the village (Community Plan Text, Harmony Grove and Eden Valley, GP 2020, Department of Planning and Land Use, County of San Diego). In addition, there are mile of multi-use recreational trails planned by the county for the area; in contrast, Escondido has planned for no trails in the area.

On February 21, 2001, the Escondido City Council reconsidered whether to pursue industrial land use changes for the Harmony Grove (and Deer Springs) areas. By a vote of three to two, the city council decided not to pursue the general plan amendments. Following the council action, LAFCO staff contacted Harmony Grove representatives and were informed that the community still wished to be removed from Escondido's sphere of influence. This was the fifth time that the City had brought plans to industrialize the area, the City had already annexed and created two business parks, and most residents believed the City would continue to

pursue plans to industrialize. In the 24 years that Harmony Grove has been within Escondido's sphere, there has been no proposal to develop any parcel for residential land uses. On April 2, 2001, the San Diego LAFCO accordingly requested the City of Escondido to review the possible exclusion of a portion of Harmony Grove (Sub-Area 2) from its sphere of influence as a part of the City's comprehensive sphere update proposal.

In February 2003, the Mayor of Escondido and Councilwoman Waldron voted to release Harmony Grove from the SOI so that it could develop independently. The other three city council members voted to retain the area in the SOI.

Public Services

Structural fire protection responsibilities for this area are split between the Rancho Santa Fe FPD and CSA No. 107. Response time from Rancho Santa Fe FPD and CSA 107 is approximately 11-13 minutes. Response time from the Felicita Road fire station in Escondido is estimated at about six minutes; however, these times may be reduced by 30 seconds to a minute if projected road improvements to the area are made. CSA 107 has received funding through a bond issue approved by voters in Harmony Grove and Elfin Forest to increase the number of paid staff and build a second fire station in the Harmony Grove area, among other improvements that are expected to reduce response time to better than that possible from the Felicita Fire Station. CSA 107 officials have indicated that the CSA has been recognized by affected agencies for outstanding performance and response times in fire and emergency medical services. The recently passed bond measure includes a 15-year equipment replacement program and operating plan. Planned future expenditures within the CSA include a paid staff, additional fire trucks and gear, and facilities, including a new fire station. A portion of the sub-area also is within the San Marcos FPD. All of this sub-area is within the boundaries of Rincon Del Diablo MWD. The City's existing sphere includes territory within Rincon Del Diablo MWD current boundaries. The water district has master planned a series of water transmission main facilities throughout the sub-area. Projected water demand is based on the City of Escondido's General Plan. This area is not within the boundaries of an agency that provides sewer service. The City of Escondido has a sewer line located in Harmony Grove Road, northeast of the sub-area. The City of Escondido has a policy of discouraging the extension of sewer service outside municipal boundaries. Residences in this area are currently served by septic systems. The City of Escondido has prepared a wastewater study addressing sewer system needs (for industrial needs) in the Harmony Grove area.

The county's current GP 2020 proposal for the village concept for Harmony Grove does not require connection to a city sewer system, and is based on a package plant for waste disposal services; however, it is not clear what local agency would operate the plant. Annexation to Escondido is thus not required to realize the village concept.

Located below are possible reasons to justify the retention and exclusion of Sub-Area 2 from Escondido's sphere. Also discussed are boundary neutral issues.

Reasons to Retain Within Escondido's Sphere

- 1) Sub-Area 2 has been part of the City of Escondido Sphere of Influence since the initial adoption by LAFCO in 1979. Although residents have not petitioned for annexation, being within the City's sphere provides the opportunity for residents and the City to work together cooperatively to preserve the existing character of the community while promoting the efficient provision of services.

- 2) The northern and eastern boundaries of the sub-area are contiguous to the City of Escondido. City services are being provided adjacent to the sub-area and could be efficiently extended. Removing Harmony Grove from the City Sphere could potentially create a service island between the Cities of Escondido and San Marcos. However, service islands already exist within the SOI for fire protection, which is currently split between four different service providers.
- 3) Harmony Grove has historically been part of the City of Escondido's Planning Area, although it could remain so even if removed from the SOI (as is the case with the community of Del Dios).
- 4) Both the existing City and County land use designations generally provide for comparable residential uses except for a limited area that has been planned as industrial by the City of Escondido. The City's General Plan encourages rural residential communities on the periphery of their planning area. Any proposed revision to the City's General Plan for increasing densities or intensifying uses would require approval of the electorate. The inclusion of Harmony Grove within the City's sphere since 1979 has not interfered with the community achieving its objectives.
- 5) On March 14, 2003, one of the petitioners from the now-disbanded Harmony Grove Eden Valley Citizen's Group (one of several groups requesting that Harmony Grove be removed from the Escondido sphere) notified LAFCO staff (3/14/03 request made by Kevin Barnard) that five members of his group wished to rescind their request to be removed from the Escondido sphere. They are concerned that the land uses proposed by the County of San Diego will be more dense and out-of-character with their community than the land use designations adopted by Escondido for the sphere area. However, the citizen's group that has been representing the area for over 20 years, the Elfin Forest Harmony Grove Town Council, together with the San Dieguito Planning Group and the County of San Diego, has maintained its position that the best way to maintain a rural character and prevent industrialization of Harmony Grove is to stay in the county jurisdiction and avoid urban annexation.
- 6) County Service Area No. 107 (Elfin Forest Harmony Grove Fire Department), a volunteer group, provides primary fire protection and ambulance services to Sub-Area 2 with portions of the sub-area also being within the Rancho Santa Fe Fire Protection District and San Marcos Fire Protection District, with some areas under first-call service contracts (automatic aid) with the Escondido Fire Department. LAFCO has adopted a zero sphere of influence for the CSA. For CSA 107, a zero sphere is an indication that LAFCO envisions the eventual transfer of service responsibilities to other jurisdictions including the City of Escondido, which provides full-time firefighters and emergency personnel. A zero sphere does not assume a certain timeframe for the transfer of service responsibility. CSA 107 officials believe that the zero sphere should be re-evaluated, because the community has grown to over 350 residences since the zero sphere was originally adopted and has fended off Escondido and San Marcos annexation attempts, and the Trash to Energy Plant.

- 7) It is anticipated the City could improve response times for law enforcement over that of the County Sheriff's Department, although a sheriff's office is one of the hoped-for additions to the village civic area.

Neutrals

- 1) Harmony Grove, which includes Sub-Area 2, has a distinct identity, history, and environment. While an affiliation with the unincorporated areas of Eden Valley and Elfin Forest is evident, the area is also recognized as part of the greater Escondido community.
- 2) Rincon del Diablo Municipal Water District would continue to provide water service, regardless of the area's jurisdictional status.
- 3) The future need for City of Escondido sewer service is unknown.
- 4) Residents appear satisfied with the level of public services currently being provided, and have approved a bond issue to increase funding over the next 15 years to augment services offered by the Elfin Forest Harmony Grove Fire Department.
- 5) CSA No. 107 believes that the Elfin Forest / Harmony Grove Fire Department plays a critical service role, and that LAFCO should recognize the role per Government Code Section 56001.

Reasons to Delete from the City Sphere

- 1) The resident's motivating factor for removing the area from the sphere is a concern that City land use and service policies will significantly alter the rural lifestyle that is enjoyed by the residents of Harmony Grove. The City's possible interest in the area to date has been to designate the area for employment lands. A significant number of residents within the community expressed the opinion that Harmony Grove should be removed from the City of Escondido's Sphere of Influence. The residents supporting the deletion of the approximately 922 acres identified as Sub-Area 2 maintained that the territory within the City of Escondido's sphere only represents the central portion of their community. The residents see Harmony Grove as a cohesive unincorporated community with its own identity that should be encouraged and maintained. Over 140 residents signed letters requesting that Sub-Area 2 be removed from the City's Sphere. Although five individuals have subsequently rescinded the request to be removed from Escondido's sphere of influence, letters from the Town Council, the San Dieguito Planning Group, and the County of San Diego support removal from the SOI.
- 2) Although the area has been within the City Sphere of Influence for 24 years, it is unlikely the area will be annexed in the foreseeable future. Under the Cortese-Knox-Hertzberg Act, if a specified number of residents or landowners oppose an annexation, the proposal can be terminated. It is anticipated residents would continue to oppose any annexations of territory perceived to be within their community. However, only residents within the proposed annexation territory can vote to terminate the annexation. The last city-initiated GP amendment to rezone over 930 acres for industrial uses excluded most of the community, thus denying the majority of the community the ability to vote in any annexation ballot.
- 3) Unless adequate financial arrangements are reached, future annexations could potentially impact the fiscal health of County Service Area No. 107 (Elfin Forest Harmony Grove Fire

Department) and jeopardize the continued provision of fire protection service to the remaining areas of the District.

- 4) Residents are concerned that city land use policies could jeopardize the rural atmosphere of Sub-Area 2. Although preliminary land use designations under the County of San Diego's General Plan 2020 are, in some instances, more intensive than current designations in both the County and the City of Escondido, these plans were developed co-operatively with the residents and represent the only residential development proposal ever brought to this 100-year-old community.
- 5) The county has a record of public outreach with the citizens of this area, holding three workshops within the community and co-operatively developing the GP 2020 plan for the area. The Elfin Forest Harmony Grove Town Council believes the City of Escondido has a poor history of formal outreach and has shown an effort to contact the Town Council or San Dieguito Planning Group concerning plans for the area. The Elfin Forest Harmony Grove Town Council believes the Escondido planning commission has been particularly reluctant to recognize local elected citizen's groups.
- 6) The Draft Land Use Distribution Map prepared for the County's General Plan 2020 includes some residential densities that may seem to be inconsistent with a rural environment in that they allow smaller lot sizes, but are unique in that they preserve true rural characteristics such as livestock keeping and a country architecture, yet allow a town center with much-needed civic uses such as a fire station, village meeting area, sheriff's office, town square park, and trails linking the old and new neighborhoods. (County of San Diego Draft Land Use Distribution Map, Working Copy, GP 2020, Department of Planning and Land Use, County of San Diego).
- 7) The Elfin Forest and Harmony Grove communities share many attributes. The communities represent islands of open space between the cities of San Marcos, Escondido, Encinitas, and Carlsbad. While Harmony Grove is physically separated from neighboring cities, with the exception of a small border with the City of Escondido, the CSA No. 107 believes the community shares a strong cohesiveness with Elfin Forest. The communities share a common town council and fire department.
- 8) The Elfin Forest Fire Department (CSA No. 107) has reported to LAFCO that it plays an important role in the community and serves as a community gathering place, including the Elfin Forest / Harmony Grove Town Council.

City of Escondido's Recommendations for Sub-Area 2 (Harmony Grove)

Sub-Area 2, Harmony Grove, has been historically included within the City of Escondido's sphere of influence and Planning Area. The community is adjacent to the existing City of Escondido boundaries and to existing services and facilities. Inclusion within the City of Escondido's sphere of influence would represent a logical and orderly extension of both the City's boundaries and services. Annexation would occur only with the approval of the majority of residents within the annexed area. Therefore, the City of Escondido has recommended that:

- 1) Sub-Area 2 be retained within the City of Escondido Sphere of Influence.

- 2) Language should be added to the City's General Plan to create a policy for notifying and coordinating future City land use studies affecting their area with the residents of Harmony Grove and other unincorporated communities. The policy could also address establishing a formalized on-going dialogue with the County of San Diego regarding General Plan 2020 land use designations for the community.

LAFCO staff Recommendation: Sub-Area 2

LAFCO staff concurs with the City of Escondido regarding the retention of Sub-Area 2 within the City's sphere of influence.

SUB-AREA 3: DEER SPRINGS

Description

On April 2, 2001, the San Diego LAFCO requested the City of Escondido to review the possible exclusion of a portion of Deer Springs (Sub-Area 3) from its sphere of influence as a part of the City's comprehensive sphere update. The particular area that was identified for review includes about 237 acres and like Sub-Area 2 was the subject of several Escondido General Plan update proposals. Reaction from residents to the City's proposal was similar to Harmony Grove. In March 2000, a group known as "We the People" submitted signatures on documents opposing the City's general plan amendment proposal. The organization indicated that 70 signers were within the study areas, with only five signatures in favor of the proposal. Sub-Area 3 has been part of the City of Escondido Sphere of Influence since the initial adoption by LAFCO in 1979.

Planning and Land Use

The sub area is located north of the City of Escondido adjacent to Interstate 15. There are 60 properties in the sub-area ranging in size from 1-23 acres. Existing land uses include a gas station and a mini-mart west of Interstate 15 and north of Deer Springs Road. A mobile home park, plant nursery, and the Deer Springs Fire Protection District's Station No. 2 can be found south of Deer Springs Road. East of I-15 and south of Mountain Meadow Road are single-family residences on large lots, a driving range and a plant nursery. It is estimated that the sub-area is developed with approximately 69 single-family dwellings and approximately 100,000 square feet of non-residential uses.

Areas to the north, east and west of the sub-area consist of steep lands covered with native vegetation that are generally undeveloped and designated for low- density residential use. Low-density residential and agricultural land is located east and south of Sub-Area 3. Regional access to Deer Springs is provided by Interstate 15, which bisects the site. Deer Springs Road, Centre City Parkway, Mountain Meadows Road and Champagne Boulevard provide local access.

The existing City of Escondido General plan designates Sub-Area 3 as Estate I (1 dwelling unit per 1, 2,4, 20 acres); Rural I (1dwelling unit per 4,8,20 acres); and Rural II (1dwelling unit per 2,4,20 acres). As with Sub-Area 2 (Harmony Grove), Sub-Area 3 was the subject of the City of Escondido's Employment Land Study. The City had studied the feasibility of developing 120 acres of Deer Springs with approximately 2.1 million square feet of employment generating uses. Reaction from affected residents to the City's proposal was similar to Harmony Grove. In March 2000, 550 signatures on documents opposing the City's proposed general plan amendment were submitted. Seventy of the signatures were from residents within Sub-Area 3.

The Twin oaks Community Sponsor Group reviewed the issue in March 2001, because a portion of the sub-area is within the Twin Oaks Planning Areas. The sponsor group approved a request for the withdrawal of the Deer Springs /I-15 sub-area from the City of Escondido's sphere because of a concern about the industrialization of the area. As discussed in the Harmony Grove section of this report, the proposal to redevelop Deer Springs with industrial uses was abandoned for numerous reasons.

Public Services

The Deer Springs FPD can provide response to the sub-area. A new station is under construction in the Hidden Meadows area. Consideration is being given to adding a third station in Jesmond Dene. The realignment of the stations may result in the ultimate closure of the Deer Springs Fire Station. There are no sewer connections available in the sub-area. The eastern side of Interstate 15 is in the sewer service area of the Valley Center Municipal Water District. The nearest transmission main is located approximately 1.5 miles north of the sub-area. The area is divided between the Vallecitos WD and the Valley Center MWD. The Vallecitos WD provides water service to the portion of Deer Springs west of Interstate 15, while the Valley Center MWD serves the eastern portion. It is anticipated that both districts would continue to provide water service regardless if the area remains unincorporated or is annexed to Escondido.

Reasons to Retain in the City Sphere

- 1) Sub-Area 3 has been part of the City of Escondido's Sphere of Influence since its initial adoption by LAFCO in 1979.
- 2) The City's General Plan has included the area for many years and agencies have planned for service provision using the City of Escondido's land use designations.
- 3) Sub-Area 3 is a gateway to the northern part of the City.
- 4) The primary reason residents have requested removal from the sphere is related to the City's attempt to increase employment uses in the area. However, it would appear that the effort to change land use designations has been stopped by several events. First, the City of Escondido City Council has directed staff to abandon planning efforts to re-designate land for industrial/employment uses. While some Deer Springs residents have expressed concern regarding the ability to bind actions of future City Council to the existing General Plan, the voters of Escondido approved Proposition S, which requires voter approval of changes in residential land use designations. It is evident that residents of Deer Springs, similar to those in Harmony Grove, want to preserve the existing character of their community. It should be noted, however, that adopted City land use designations, which are anticipated to remain in place, currently provide for low-density residential uses and are far less intensive than the County adopted sub-regional plan. If residents want to maintain the existing character of their community, it would appear that the City of Escondido's land use designations are more compatible with that desire than those of the County of San Diego.
- 5) On March 3, 2003, residents belonging to the "We the People" group notified LAFCO that they officially rescinded their request to be removed from the Escondido sphere. The request was rescinded because the City of Escondido removed the industrial land use designation from their community. "We the People" have stated that their decision

to rescind their request will be reinstated if Escondido re-designates their community for industrial development, or if any land use proposal is proposed by the City that is inconsistent with the wishes of the community.

- 6) The Deer Springs Fire Protection District currently has two existing stations and is studying and/or building two others. It may be possible to improve the efficiency of both the District and the City's Fire Department by a realignment of service areas and stations. Keeping the Deer Springs area within the sphere of influence would help facilitate the potential transfer.
- 7) The adopted sphere of influence for the Deer Springs Fire Protection District anticipates that service will ultimately be transferred to the City of Escondido. As a district that purchases contract services, Deer Springs FPD is dependent on other agencies providing staff at an affordable cost.
- 8) If the area between the existing city boundaries and the sub-area is annexed, it is anticipated that response times for law enforcement would improve.

Neutral

- 1) Although Deer Springs is part of the greater Escondido community, residents are affiliated with the Twin Oaks Sponsor Group on the west side of the sub-area and Hidden Meadows on the east side of the freeway. There is not a clear sense of identification with the City of Escondido.
- 2) It is assumed water service will continue to be provided by the Vallecitos Water District and Valley Center Municipal Water District, regardless if the area remains unincorporated or is annexed to the City.
- 3) Sewer service is not readily available from either the City or existing special districts.

Reasons to Delete from City Sphere

- 1) A significant number of residents within the community originally requested the removal of Sub-Area 3 from the City of Escondido Sphere of Influence.
- 2) Sub-Area 3 (Deer Springs) is approximately four miles from the City's current municipal boundary. Support of intervening property-owners for annexation has not been demonstrated.
- 3) Annexation to the City of Escondido does not appear likely in the foreseeable future. The opposition of residents to inclusion in the City of Escondido's sphere of influence would most likely result in those same residents successfully terminating future annexation efforts.

City of Escondido's Recommendations for Sub-Area 3 (Deer Springs)

Sub-Area 3, Deer Springs, has been included within the City of Escondido's sphere of influence and Planning Area. Retention of the area within the City of Escondido's sphere of influence would represent a logical and orderly extension of both the City's boundaries and services. Annexation would be approved only with the concurrence of residents. Therefore, the City of Escondido has recommended that:

- 1) Sub-Area 3 should be retained within the City of Escondido Sphere of Influence.
- 2) Add language to the City's General Plan to create a policy for notifying and coordinating future City land use studies affecting their area with the residents of Deer Springs and other unincorporated communities. The policy could also address establishing a formalized on-going dialogue with the County of San Diego regarding General Plan 2020 land use designations for the community.

LAFCO staff recommendation: Sub-Area 3

LAFCO staff concurs with the City of Escondido regarding the retention of Sub-Area 3 within the City's sphere of influence.

CITY AND COUNTY SPHERE CONSULTATION

State Law requires cities and counties to meet and discuss proposed sphere of influence updates and explore methods to reach agreement on the boundaries, development standards, and zoning requirements within the sphere to ensure that development within the sphere occurs in a manner that reflects the concerns of the affected city and promotes logical and orderly development (Government Code Section 56425 (b-d)). LAFCO must give great weight to any agreements that are reached between cities and counties. If no agreement is reached, then the sphere update may still be submitted to the Commission and will be reviewed consistent with applicable LAFCO policies and procedures. City officials met with the County Planning Director on May 7, 2002 and again in August 2002. At those meetings the development proposals within the Rancho Vistamonte and Valley View Estates areas were discussed. The meeting did not result in a formal agreement between city and county officials regarding the sphere boundary, development standards, and zoning requirements. Subsequent correspondence from the County indicated that there was little concern regarding adding the Rancho Vistamonte property to the Escondido sphere. The County did express concern regarding the Valley View Estates impacts to the adopted Multiple Species Conservation Program. As discussed in the sphere report, the applicant has since withdrawn the Valley View Estates proposal. County officials also support the deletion of the Harmony Grove and Deer Springs areas from the current Escondido sphere. At this time, the City believes that removing the Harmony Grove and Deer Springs areas from Escondido's sphere would be premature given that insufficient justification exists regarding the impacts on the County's plan to intensify the land uses in the areas.

Conformity with LAFCO Sphere of Influence Policies

The relevant LAFCO policies that should be considered in reviewing a possible expansion and update of the Escondido special district spheres include, the Commission's Open Space and Agricultural Lands Preservation Policy (L-101), Sphere Update Policy (L-102), and Unincorporated Communities Recognition Policy (L-103). A discussion of these policies in relation to the sphere update sub-areas follows.

As previously discussed, the sub-areas of the Escondido component of the sphere update include:

- Sub-Area 1A (Valley View)
- Sub-Area 1B (Rancho Vistamonte)
- Sub-Area 1C (Ferrick/Harwood/Brill/Albright)
- Sub-Area 2 (Harmony Grove)
- Sub-Area 3 (Deersprings)

Open Space and Agricultural Lands Preservation

LAFCO's Open Space and Agricultural Lands Preservation Policy is used to designate spheres of influence in close cooperation with affected local agencies. The primary purpose of the policy is to discourage proposals that would convert prime agricultural or open space lands to other uses, unless the action would not promote orderly development or if the affected jurisdiction has adopted measures that effectively preserve prime agricultural lands.

Sub-Area 1A is not recommended for inclusion in Escondido's sphere of influence; therefore, an evaluation of this LAFCO's Open Space and Agricultural land Preservation policy is not applicable.

Sub-Area 1B meets two of the qualifications for prime agricultural land, subject to the definition in Government Code Section 56064 and LAFCO Policy L-101. The Class II soil (VaC, Visalia sand loam), 5-9 percent slopes, and the grove usages are valued at a minimum of at least \$400. Though some of the territory within Sub-Area 1B consists of agricultural land, none of the territory within the sub-area is subject to Williamson Act Agricultural Preserve contracts. The location of the Class II soils (northwest corner of proposed project) is unsuitable for viable commercial agricultural production. In addition, Sub-Area 1B does not contain a sufficient quantity of prime agricultural soils to support crop production, including livestock forage. The operator of the former dairy needed to import livestock feed to maintain operations due to the soil types being ill suited for quality grazing. The grove usage of the land is also infeasible for continued commercial use. The amount of production of the affected 5.5 acre site will not be sufficient to offset operational costs, including water, fuel, and fertilizer.

Sub-Area 1C meets one of the qualifications of prime agricultural land. The Class II soil, VaC, Visalia sandy loam, 5-9 percent slopes along the northern boundary. The prime agricultural lands cover approximately 1.1 acres; however, commercial agricultural operations in the sub-area are not viable.

Sub-Area 2 contains prime agricultural land and prime soils generally along major drainage courses. In the western and central portions of the sub-area, prime agricultural soils are generally used for agriculture or contain grasslands and meadows. In the eastern areas, the agricultural soils are typically in riparian and bottomlands, plus oak woodlands. Both the County and City's land use designations provide for agriculture or rural transitional uses compatible with agriculture. While the County and City land use designations do not follow exact boundaries or precisely the same slope category breakdown for allowed density, the overall density impacts would not significantly impact the preservation of agricultural lands. Therefore, there significant impacts to agriculture, either beneficial or detrimental, would be associated with the removal or retention of the sub-area from Escondido's sphere of influence.

Sub-Area 3 contains prime agricultural land within a linear area, generally following a drainage course crossing east to west through the center of the area. This area consists of about 29 acres and is generally disturbed. As with Sub-Area 2, neither the removal nor continued retention of Sub-Area 3 from Escondido's sphere will result in significant impacts to existing and potential future agricultural uses.

Sphere Update Policy and Preservation of Unincorporated Communities

Among the purposes of The San Diego LAFCO's Sphere Update Policy is to establish the manner in which spheres are updated. Other policy provisions pertain to evaluating the duplication of services by local agencies, determining the need for specific governmental reorganization studies, preserving community identity, encouraging consolidation of local agencies that cross-cut communities, establishing annexation timing priorities, and encouraging compatible land use plans between city and county agencies. The sphere update policy is used in conjunction with another LAFCO policy to provide guidance in recognizing and preserving unincorporated communities. The unincorporated community policy guides the removal of territory from city spheres after reviewing the spheres of neighboring cities; whether the affected territory is surrounded by a city; present and planned land uses and if public services are adequately provided by local agencies; cohesiveness of the community and geographic separations; and the affected city's plans to improve or consolidate services. A discussion of these policies in relation to Sub-Areas 1-3 follows.

Sub-Area 1A is not recommended for inclusion in Escondido's sphere of influence; therefore, an evaluation of this LAFCO policy in relation to the sub-area is not applicable.

As discussed in the following section, the City of Escondido can provide a full range of municipal services to Sub-Area 1B. Accordingly, the City of Escondido is the most logical municipality to serve the development. The City of San Diego is isolated from the sub-area and the area is not within San Diego's sphere. Development within the County would require fragmented delivery of public services from several special districts. Fire protection would come from a County Service Area with a volunteer program. Sewer service would require either use of septic systems or formation of a new County Sanitation District. All of the Rancho Vistamonte property has historically been part of the City of Escondido Planning boundary. The northern property line of Sub-Area 1B is contiguous to the City's corporate boundaries, a pre-requisite of annexation. This ensures that all services including roads, water, sewer and other municipal level services can be readily provided. The area topographically relates to the City as part of the valley that includes the Eagle Crest golf course and Rancho San Pasqual. It is located in the same drainage basin and views, drainage and access are closely tied to the City of Escondido. Accordingly the area shares community identify with Escondido. The County of San Diego has not expressed concern regarding the proposed land uses for the Rancho Vistamonte project and the inclusion of the adjacent 75 acres in an annexation proposal to Escondido.

Sub-Area 1C shares the same characteristics with Sub-Area 1B and is recommended to be included in Escondido's sphere conditioned on the inclusion of Sub-Area 1B. Inclusion of Sub-Area 1C in the Escondido sphere would avoid the creation of an unincorporated island.

Sub-Area 2 is contiguous to the City of Escondido. City services are being provided adjacent to the sub-area and could be efficiently extended. Removing Harmony Grove from the City Sphere could potentially create a service island between the Cities of Escondido and San Marcos. Both the existing City and County land use designations generally provide for comparable residential uses except for a limited area that has been planned as industrial by the City of Escondido. The City's General Plan encourages rural residential communities on the periphery of their planning area. Any proposed revision to the City's General Plan for increasing densities or intensifying uses would require approval of the electorate. The inclusion of Harmony Grove within the City's sphere since 1979 has not interfered with the community achieving its objectives. The Draft Land Use Distribution Map prepared for the County's General Plan 2020 includes some

residential densities that may seem to be inconsistent with a rural environment in that they allow smaller lot sizes, but are unique in that they may possibly preserve rural characteristics such as livestock keeping and a country architecture. The proposed land use plan also allows a town center with civic uses such as a fire station, village meeting area, sheriff's office, town square park, and trails linking the old and new neighborhoods. These types of land uses are not included in the Escondido General Plan for the area. Although residents in this area have not petitioned for annexation, being within the City's sphere provides the opportunity for residents and the City to work together cooperatively to preserve the existing character of the community while promoting the efficient provision of services.

County Service Area No. 107 (Elfin Forest Harmony Grove Fire Department), a volunteer group, provides primary fire protection and emergency medical services to Sub-Area 2 with portions of the sub-area also being within the Rancho Santa Fe Fire Protection District and San Marcos Fire Protection District. LAFCO has adopted a zero sphere of influence for the CSA. For CSA 107, a zero sphere is an indication that LAFCO envisions the eventual transfer of service responsibilities to other jurisdictions including the City of Escondido, which provides full-time firefighters and emergency personnel. A zero sphere does not assume a certain timeframe for the transfer of service responsibility. The voters of CSA 107 have recently approved a bond issue that increases funding over the next 15 years to augment the services provided by the Elfin Forest Harmony Grove Fire Department, including the provision of paid, full time staff and a second fire station in Harmony Grove. Representatives from CSA 107 have requested that the CSA's sphere of influence be upgraded to a sphere designation that includes territory. It is anticipated the City could improve response times for law enforcement over that of the County Sheriff's Department.

Sub-Area 2 is contiguous to the City of Escondido. City services are being provided adjacent to the sub-area and could be efficiently extended. Removing Harmony Grove from the City Sphere could potentially create a service island between the Cities of Escondido and San Marcos. Both the existing City and County land use designations generally provide for comparable rural residential uses except for a limited area that has been planned for many years as industrial by the City of Escondido. The City's General Plan encourages rural residential communities on the periphery of their planning area. Any proposed revision to the City's General Plan for increasing densities or intensifying uses would require approval of the electorate. The inclusion of Harmony Grove within the City's sphere since 1979 has not interfered with the community achieving its objectives. The Draft Land Use Distribution Map prepared for the County's General Plan 2020 includes some residential densities which would not be consistent with a rural environment. Although residents in this area have not petitioned for annexation, being within the City's sphere preserves the opportunity for residents and the City to work together cooperatively to preserve the existing character of the community while promoting the efficient provision of services.

Sub-Area 3 has been part of the City of Escondido's Sphere of Influence since its initial adoption by LAFCO in 1979. The City's General Plan has included the area for many years and agencies have planned for service provision using the City of Escondido's land use designations. Adopted city land use designations, which are anticipated to remain in place, currently provide for low-density residential uses and are far less intensive than the County adopted sub-regional plan. If residents want to maintain the existing character of their community, it would appear that the City of Escondido's land use designations are more compatible with that desire than those of the County of San Diego. The Deer Springs

Fire Protection District currently has two existing stations and is studying and/or building two others. It may be possible to improve the efficiency of both the District and the City's Fire Department by a realignment of service areas and stations. Keeping the Deer Springs area within the sphere of influence would help facilitate the potential transfer. The adopted sphere of influence for the Deer Springs Fire Protection District anticipates that service will ultimately be transferred to the City of Escondido. As a district that purchases contract services, Deer Springs FPD is dependent on other agencies providing staff at an affordable cost. It is assumed water service will continue to be provided by the Vallecitos Water District and Valley Center Municipal Water District, regardless if the area remains unincorporated or is annexed to the City. Sewer service is not readily available from either the City or existing special districts.

SPECIAL DISTRICT SPHERES OF INFLUENCE UPDATE

VALLEY CENTER MUNICIPAL WATER DISTRICT

The Valley Center MWD's sphere of influence is currently coterminous with its jurisdictional boundaries. Refer to Map 3. Approximately 1,200 acres within northern Escondido are also located within the southern most part of the Valley Center MWD. Since 1993, LAFCO approved one annexation to the water district consisting of approximately six acres (Padrasky/Ohlson, April 7, 2003). The Valley Center MWD has indicated that LAFCO should consider including the following areas within the sphere of the district:

San Pasqual Indian Reservation Lands – Portions of the San Pasqual Indian Reservation lands are currently within and served by the Valley Center MWD. In addition, a portion of the Reservation is outside the water district, but is served through an emergency connection. Over the last several years, the Valley Center MWD has indicated that tribal representatives have discussed a possible annexation of tribal lands to the water district. Accordingly, the Valley Center MWD believes that it would be logical for LAFCO to consider adding the potential annexation area to the water district's sphere. The area totals 577 acres.

Paradise Mountain Properties – These properties total 575 acres and are generally located south of Paradise Mountain and east of North Lake Wohlford Road. Much of the area is vacant, but there is some existing single-family residential use, supported by private wells. The Valley Center MWD is currently processing the annexation of two parcels through the Metropolitan Water District and County Water Authority, which are located in this area. These parcels are experiencing well failures and need public water service. Given the relationship of this area to the water district's boundaries and facilities, the Valley Center MWD believes that it may be logical to include this area in the District's sphere.

Miscellaneous Areas – The Valley Center MWD has identified several additional areas that should be considered for possible inclusion / exclusion from the water district's sphere. These areas total 162 acres and are located along the I-15 and Old 395 corridor. The parcels are situated within both the Vallecitos WD and the Rainbow MWD, but are separated from the main portions of those respective service areas by I-15. One area is located at the intersection of West Lilac Road and Old 395, west of I-15. The Valley Center MWD through a water line, which spans the Lilac Road Bridge over I-15, serves this area. The Valley Center MWD suggests that LAFCO may want to consider various sphere amendments to the respective district spheres at this time or when the sphere updates are done for the other agencies. Vallecitos WD also indicates that the sphere amendments should only be approached if all affected districts are in agreement.

RECOMMENDED SPHERE OF INFLUENCE

LAFCO staff concurs with the Valley Center MWD regarding the inclusion of the San Pasqual Indian Reservation lands and the Paradise Mountain properties within its sphere of influence. These areas have a historical service relationship would be a logical extension of the jurisdictional boundaries of the water districts. To facilitate potential jurisdictional changes along the Interstate 15 and Old 395 corridor, it is recommended that a special study area designation be applied to the corridor. The study area would be resolved upon the update of the Vallecitos WD and Rainbow MWD spheres of influence.

RINCON DEL DIABLO MUNICIPAL WATER DISTRICT

The Commission established the Rincon del Diablo MWD's sphere of influence in 1985. In 1985, the sphere included all territory within the water district (27,000 acres) and additional acreage (200 acres) located adjacent to the southwest corner of the District. In 1994, the 200 acres were annexed into the District. A special study area was designated for the Del Dios community, but was subsequently resolved. Territory to the north east of the water district was added to the water district's sphere in 1993 by LAFCO. This area includes 642 acres; approximately 368 acres are owned by the City of San Diego. The area is not developed and public service needs are minimal. The City had been studying the possibility of constructing a sludge composting facility at this site. Since 1985, Rincon del Diablo MWD's sphere has been amended three times. The sphere amendments were in response to development projects and reorganizations with other service providers. The water district identified several areas that could potentially be added to its sphere of influence, but would require extensive improvements. Accordingly, the Rincon del Diablo MWD does not anticipate amending its sphere in the foreseeable future and requests that its current sphere be reaffirmed. A ten-year annexation and detachment summary for the Rincon del Diablo MWD follows:

TABLE 9
Rincon del Diablo Municipal Water District
Annexation History

ANNEXATION NUMBER	NAME	DATE APPROVED	GROSS ACRES
RO93-103	Montreux Reorganization (Annexation)	03/07/94	342.57
RO99-02	Claudan Road Reorganization (Detachment from I.D. "E")	05/03/99	9.34
RO99-13	Lawhorn Reorganization (Detachment from I.D. "E")	07/12/99	0.46
RO00-12	Dumas/Stevens Reorganization (Detachment from I.D. "E")	08/07/00	0.50
RO00-21	Ramirez Reorganization (Detachment from (I.D. "E")	11/06/00	0.35
RO01-13	Encino Estates Reorganization (Detachment from I.D. "E")	12/03/01	39.81
RO01-20	Boyle Avenue Reorganization (Detachment from I.D. "E")	09/09/02	0.35
RO01-27	Knipstein/Pedegral Reorganization (Detachment from I.D. "E")	03/04/02	0.86
RO02-03	Patterson Reorganization (Detachment from I.D. "E")	05/06/02	9.31
RO02-12	South Escondido Boulevard Reorganization (Detachment from I.D. "E")	09/09/02	4.89
RO02-14	Johnson Reorganization (Detachment from I.D. "E")	11/04/02	0.46
RO02-28	Encino Estates II Reorganization (Detachment from I.D. "E")	02/03/03	7.62

RECOMMENDED SPHERE OF INFLUENCE

LAFCO staff concurs with the Rincon del Diablo MWD regarding the reaffirmation of its adopted sphere of influence.

MUNICIPAL SERVICE REVIEW AND SPHERE OF INFLUENCE CONCLUSIONS AND RECOMMENDATIONS

MUNICIPAL SERVICE REVIEW

As discussed in this report, the municipal service review conducted in the North County Inland study area represented the first combined service review and sphere update project undertaken by the San Diego LAFCO. The service review was commenced prior to the establishment of statewide and local guidelines, but is in conformance with the State's draft procedures and the local procedures approved by the San Diego LAFCO. In terms of service review conclusions, it can be concluded that services are being provided efficiently in the North County Inland region of the County. However, there is room for improvement. Among the areas of improvement, local service providers could do a better job communicating with each other and coordinating overall service plans through bi-annual meetings between service providers to confer on development and service provisions in general, and more specifically, for common boundary areas where the potential is high for service overlap, conflict and, conversely, inter-agency cooperation.

Community outreach and participation could also be improved to foster an increased understanding of local governmental services and interest in local governmental matters. Specific service review determinations have been made subject to the requirements of Government Code Section 56430. These determinations deal with infrastructure needs and deficiencies; growth and population projections for the affected area; financing constraints and opportunities; cost avoidance opportunities; opportunities for rate restructuring; opportunities for shared facilities; government structure options, including advantages and disadvantages of consolidation or reorganization of service providers; the evaluation of management efficiencies; and local accountability and governance.

SPHERE OF INFLUENCE

LAFCO staff is recommending that the spheres of influence be updated for the City of Escondido, Valley Center MWD, and Rincon del Diablo MWD. It is recommended that the existing Escondido sphere be reaffirmed and an additional 208.4 acres consisting of the Rancho Vistamonte Reorganization and surrounding territory be added to the sphere. LAFCO staff also evaluated the possible exclusion of the Harmony Grove and Deer Springs communities from the sphere per the request of some property owners residing in these communities. Five of the Harmony Grove petitioners that originally requested to be excluded from the Escondido sphere rescinded the request after becoming concerned about the more intensive land uses proposed in the area by the County of San Diego. However, other original petitioners such as the community organization that has serves the area (Elfin Forest Harmony Grove Town Council), together with the San Dieguito Planning Group and the County of San Diego, have continued to support deletion from the sphere. LAFCO staff concluded that there is not compelling justification for the removal of the territory from Escondido's sphere and development within the County would result in the establishment of illogical service delivery patterns.

In 2003, residents belonging to a group representing the Deer Springs area notified LAFCO that they officially rescinded their request to be removed from the Escondido sphere. The request was rescinded because the City of Escondido removed the industrial land use designation from their community. The Deer Springs group have stated that their decision

to rescind their request will be reinstated if Escondido re-designates their community for industrial development, or if any land use proposal is proposed by the City is inconsistent with the wishes of the community.

It also is recommended that territory be added to the Valley Center MWD sphere that shares a historical service relationship with that agency. The affected territory includes the San Pasqual Indian Reservation and the Paradise Mountain properties. A special study area should also be designated for a portion of the Interstate 15 corridor that would facilitate jurisdictional issues between the Valley Center MWD, Vallecitos WD, and the Rainbow MWD. Lastly, it is recommended that Rincon del Diablo MWD's be reaffirmed.

ENVIRONMENTAL REVIEW SUMMARY

INTRODUCTION

The City of Escondido has proposed a citywide sphere of influence update including an expansion of the current sphere for the Rancho Vistamonte Specific Plan (and adjacent 75 acres). The Rancho Vistamonte Specific Plan (SP) allows for the development of 80 clustered single-family detached residences. The proposal involves the following jurisdictional actions:

- Expansion of the Escondido sphere of influence to include the Rancho Vistamonte SP property. If the sphere of influence is expanded by LAFCO, then the following jurisdictional boundary changes will be proposed:
 - Annexation of the Rancho Vistamonte SP property into the City of Escondido;
 - Pre-zoning of the Rancho Vistamonte SP property to the category of Specific Plan (S-P) Zone, compatible with the City's General Plan SPA designation;
 - Inclusion of the Rancho Vistamonte SP property into the Metropolitan Water District of Southern California (MWD) and the San Diego County Water Authority (CWA);
 - Detachment from County Service Area No. 135 (San Diego Regional Communications); and
 - Detachment from County Service Area (CSA) No. 113 (San Pasqual Fire Protection).

The Rancho Vistamonte SP property is located within the San Pasqual Valley of San Diego County, primarily on unincorporated land between the City of Escondido and the City of San Diego (Exhibit A). A small portion of the Rancho Vistamonte SP property is currently within the City of Escondido. The proposed Rancho Vistamonte SP is located approximately 700 feet east of the current terminus of Rockwood Road. The property will be accessed from State Route (SR) 78 via Cloverdale Road to Rockwood Road extended through Rancho Vistamonte SP site (Exhibits A and B).

The reaffirmation of Escondido's sphere is proposed in two areas:

- Harmony Grove Area involving 922 acres on both sides of Escondido Creek, south of Mount Whitney Road, west of Citracado Parkway; and
- Deer Springs Area involving 240 acres at the Mountain Meadow Road/Deer Springs Road and Interstate 15 interchange.

In addition to the update of the Escondido sphere, two special districts are also being considered for sphere updates (Valley Center Municipal Water District and Rincon del Diablo Municipal Water District). Territory recommended for inclusion within the sphere of the Valley Center Municipal Water District (MWD) includes San Pasqual Indian Reservation lands, and Paradise Mountain properties. A special study area is recommended for territory along the I-15 and Old 395 Highway corridor to facilitate an examination of the jurisdictional boundaries of the Valley Center MWD with the Vallecitos Water District and Rainbow Municipal Water District. Additionally, a reaffirmation of the sphere for the Rincon del Diablo MWD is being proposed. The Rincon del Diablo MWD is not proposing any changes to its existing sphere of influence.

Figures A, C, D, and F show the boundaries of the agencies involved in the sphere of influence update.

The municipal service review component of the North County Inland study resulted in an informational report and is subject to CEQA Exemption 15306, because the service review consisted of basic data collection and research activities. LAFCO approval of the service review will not result in any disturbances to environmental resources.

ENVIRONMENTAL SETTING

The site proposed for inclusion in the Escondido Sphere of Influence is characterized by rolling topography of the San Pasqual Valley floor in the western portion and steeper hillsides on the eastern portion. Approximately 50 percent of the site is under the 25 percent slope category. Two intermittent stream channels are located within the project's limits that are tributaries to Cloverdale Creek.

Over the last 30 years, the property was used as a dairy operation, known as the Brower Dairy. As a consequence of these agricultural activities, the majority of the site is disturbed with natural habitats confined to the hillsides and non-native grassland on the flatter portions. The slope areas include several large rock outcrops.

Surrounding land uses include a golf course and residential development of the Rancho San Pasqual Community (formerly known as Eagle Crest Specific Plan) to the north, the San Diego Wild Animal Park to the south, and undeveloped areas of native and non-native vegetation with scattered rural residences to the east and west. The related Valley View Estates Specific Plan project proposes development of the 1,150 acres to the northwest of the Rancho Vistamonte Specific Planning Area.

Located in northern San Diego County, the Valley Center MWD provides service to its domestic, agricultural, and commercial customers. The Valley Center MWD's sphere of influence is currently coterminous with its jurisdictional boundaries. Approximately 1,200 acres within northern Escondido is also located within the southern most part of the Valley Center MWD (Exhibit C).

Also located in northern San Diego County, the Rincon del Diablo MWD provides fire protection and water services to domestic, agricultural, and commercial customers. The district contains nearly 26,000 acres, located partially within the City's Escondido, and partially within the unincorporated area (Exhibit D).

PROJECT DESCRIPTION

The Rancho Vistamonte reorganization involves the annexation of 208 acres to the City of Escondido. Concurrent annexation of the property into the San Diego County Water Authority and the Metropolitan Water District of Southern California is also proposed.

The primary focus of this evaluation is the expansion of the Escondido Sphere of Influence to include the Rancho Vistamonte Specific Planning Area and the annexation of the Rancho Vistamonte Specific Planning Area in the City of Escondido. These actions will also involve the following:

- Inclusion of the Rancho Vistamonte Specific Planning Area into the Metropolitan Water District of Southern California (MWD) and the San Diego County Water Authority (CWA);
- Detachment from County Service Area No. 135 (San Diego Regional Communications); and
- Detachment from County Service Area (CSA) No. 113 (San Pasqual Fire Protection District).

The County of San Diego considers Rancho Vistamonte a Rural Development Area (RDA). RDAs include all privately owned land outside the service boundaries of the San Diego County Water Authority. The County's existing North County Metropolitan Planning Area designation for the subarea is Multiple Rural Use 18 (1 dwelling unit per 4, 8, 20 acres). A majority of the site is zoned A72 (General Agriculture), A70 (Limited Agriculture) and S92 (General Rural). The City of Escondido proposes a prezone of the Rancho Vistamonte SP property to the category of Specific Plan (S-P) Zone, compatible with the City's General Plan SPA designation.

Approximately 133 acres of the reorganization site is subject to a city approved General Plan Amendment, Specific Plan, rezoning, development agreement, and Tentative Subdivision Map. The approved subdivision allows for 80 single-family, detached units in a gated development, natural open space, and public trails. Lot sizes will range from 10,000 to 36,970 square feet.

The adjacent 75 acres are not covered by development plans, but have been included within the reorganization to avoid the creation of an unincorporated island between the City of Escondido and San Diego. This territory consists of 3 to 4 single-family residences on large lots and will continue to function as private homes and vacant parcels.

The following areas are proposed for inclusion in the sphere of the Valley Center MWD:

San Pasqual Indian Reservation Lands – Portions of the San Pasqual Indian Reservation lands are currently within and served by the Valley Center MWD. A portion of the Reservation is outside the water district, but is served through an emergency connection. Over the last several years, the Valley Center MWD has indicated that tribal representatives have discussed the possible annexation of tribal lands to the water district. The total area to be included is 577 acres.

Paradise Mountain Properties – These properties total 575 acres and are generally located south of Paradise Mountain and east of North Lake Wohlford Road. Much of the area is vacant, but there is some existing single-family residential use, supported by private wells. The Valley Center MWD is currently processing the annexation of two parcels through the MWD and County Water Authority, which are located in this area. These parcels are experiencing well failures and need public water service. Given the relationship of this area to the water district's boundaries and facilities, the Valley Center MWD believes that it may be logical to include this area in the District's sphere.

Special Study Area – The Valley Center MWD has identified several additional areas that they believe should be considered for possible future inclusion/exclusion from the water district's sphere. These areas total 162 acres and are located along the I-15 and Old 395 corridor. The parcels are situated within both the Vallecitos WD and the Rainbow MWD, but are separated from the main portions of those respective service areas by I-15.

As of 2000, the Rincon del Diablo MWD's population was approximately 27,385. The district contains approximately 27,000 acres, located partially within the City of Escondido, and partially within unincorporated land. LAFCO established the Rincon del Diablo MWD's sphere of influence in 1985. The sphere included all territory within the water district (27,000 acres) and additional acreage (200 acres) located in the southwest. A special study area was designated for the Del Dios community, but was subsequently resolved. Territory to the north, east of the water district, was added to the water district's sphere in 1993 by LAFCO. This area includes 642 acres; the City owns approximately 368 acres. The area is not developed and public service needs are minimal. The City had been studying the possibility of constructing a sludge composting facility in this site. Since establishing the Rincon del Diablo MWD's sphere, the sphere has been amended three times. The sphere amendments were in response to development projects and reorganizations with other service providers. The water district identified several areas that could potentially be added to its sphere of influence, but would require extensive improvements. Accordingly, the Rincon del Diablo MWD does not anticipate amending its sphere in the foreseeable future and requests that its current sphere be reaffirmed.

No land use modifications or site plans are not available at this time for the San Pasqual Indian Reservation Lands, Paradise Mountain Properties, or for the several additional areas that are being considered for the Valley Center MWD. Thus, analysis of site specific environmental issues area speculative at this time. When development plans are set forth, all discretionary actions required by a special district, a City, or State entity will be required to undergo project specific environmental review.

ENVIRONMENTAL ANALYSIS

An EIR was prepared and certified by the City of Escondido in October 2002 for the Specific Planning Area (SPA) No. 4, Deer Springs & Harmony Grove Sphere of Influence Modifications. This document provided supplemental information in order to provide this analysis.

Aesthetics (Visual Resources)

No significant aesthetic (visual quality) impacts will result since the project will not impact identified viewshed protected resources such as ridgelines or view corridors. The Rancho Vistamonte SP proposes architectural styles, construction materials, and landscaping that will blend with the environment. Highly visible slopes will be commonly maintained with a Homeowner's Association to ensure plant material remains viable.

Agricultural Resources

Rancho Visatmonte SP is mapped as Grazing Land and Other Land on the map of Important Farmlands of San Diego County. These categories do not meet the 10 criteria needed to qualify as a State Important Farmland. Therefore, no significant impacts to Prime Farmland, Farmland of Statewide Importance or Unique Farmland will occur with the implementation of the Rancho Vistamonte SP proposed development. No significant agricultural resources will be impacted as a result of the implementation of the Rancho Vistamonte SP because the SP proposes to preserve the existing avocado grove in open space and no impacts to the City's Agricultural Policies are identified.

Air Quality

Environmental Science Associates conducted an Air Quality Study for the Rancho Vistamonte SP in March 2002. It was determined that construction related air quality impacts would occur over an estimated period of 350 days. Construction dust, including manure, soil/manure mixture, and possibly residual pesticides could be a nuisance to local sensitive receptors and could have a potentially significant, direct air quality impact. Implementation of mitigation measures will be required to reduce the nuisance dust impacts to sensitive receptors by reducing the generation of dust, particulate matter with potential pesticide residues, and manure particles during grading with water suppression. Transported materials will be covered or protected by freeboard from blowing off. Special care will be required during excavation and removal of manure and predominantly manure mixtures. Grading and construction stockpiles will be treated to reduce exposure of loss material to air disturbances. Dust controls will reduce potential impacts to less than significant because the dust level will be controlled at the source.

Biological Resources

The following impacts will result from the implementation of the Rancho Vistamonte SP; however, mitigation will be implemented to reduce impacts to a level below significance:

1. Rancho Vistamonte SP will result in direct and potentially significant impacts to a total of 40.96 acres of sensitive habitats, including coastal sage scrub (1.54 acres), mule fat scrub (0.49 acre), and non-native grassland (38.93 acres).
2. Direct, potentially significant impacts from construction will occur to two individuals of the sensitive plant species Engelmann oak. The delicate Clarkia is located outside of the proposed developed area of the Rancho Vistamonte SP and will not be impacted. No other sensitive species were identified in the rare plants surveys.
3. Removal of 1.54 acres of coastal sage scrub will result in direct impacts to one sensitive wildlife species (coastal California gnatcatcher). Impacts to other sensitive animal species are not considered significant because the SP Natural Open Space will include 69.98 acres of the existing native habitats used by the other sensitive wildlife species.
4. Indirect short-term impacts from construction that decreased water quality and long-term edge-effect impacts on adjacent open space habitat and wildlife will be potentially significant.
5. There will be potentially significant secondary impacts to sensitive habitats within the Rancho Vistamonte SP from the concurrently proposed Valley View Estates SP access routes, including 0.09 acre of mule fat scrub, 1.34 acres of Diegan coastal sage scrub, and 0.27 acre of non-native grassland. Without the establishment of the appropriate upland habitat on the slope between the road and the wetland as a 50-foot buffer, Rockwood Road within the Valley View Estates SP alignment will not be in conformance with the City's Draft MHCP Subarea Plan and will be a potentially significant secondary impact. There will not be significant secondary impacts to sensitive plant and wildlife species because implementation of the proposed Valley View Estates SP will provide for 4.13 acres of road right-of-way to be incorporated into the Rancho Vistamonte SP natural open space land use. There will not be any significant secondary impacts from retention of the private road access to the Ferrick/Harwood/Brill/Albright properties as the road is existing or from future development of these properties because Rockwood Road can be extended without additional improvements within the Rancho Vistamonte SP site.

Implementation of mitigation measures will reduce impacts to below a level of significance. The on-site preservation within a Biological Open Space Easement of 40.09 acres of coastal sage scrub found to coastal sage scrub habitat and the federally endangered coastal California gnatcatcher. Conducting gnatcatcher surveys in all suitable habitat within 500 feet of the open space boundary, if grading occurs adjacent to the proposed Biological Open Space during the gnatcatcher breeding season (February 15 to August 31), and implementation mitigation measures to reduce noise levels to below 60 dBA hourly L_{eq} at the edge of the open space boundary will reduce potential impacts to gnatcatchers.

The on-site creation of 0.98 acre of mule fat scrub/wetland habitat will reduce impacts to 0.49 acre of mule fat scrub to below a level of significance.

Preservation of Engelmann oak trees on site within a Biological Open Space Easement will reduce impacts to the individual Engelmann oaks to below a level of significance.

The implementation of mitigation measures will control erosion, sedimentation, and pollution of water resources both on- and off-site, in compliance with Section 33-1062 of Article 55 (Grading and Excavation Ordinance) of the City of Escondido Zoning Code. A Notice of Intent will be filed with the SWRCB for a NDPES General Construction Storm Water Permit that includes the requirement for implementation of an approved Storm Water Pollution Prevention Plan. Potential water quality impacts to wetland habitats will be reduced to below a level of significance.

The use of non-invasive plant species within the developed areas of the proposed site plan will be prohibited. Residents will be notified of habitat sensitivity. Lighting along the perimeter of development areas will be downcast luminaries and will be shielded and oriented in a manner that will prevent glare into the open space areas. The indirect impacts will be reduced to below a level of significance.

The Rancho Vistamonte SP will provide for on-site native habitats to be available within the area of the existing right-of-way reservation to mitigate for a portion of the secondary biological impacts from the construction of the proposed Valley View Estates SP alignment of Rockwood Road. However, with the combined permanent on-site preservation of Diegan coastal sage scrub and creation of sensitive wetland habitat off-site and installation of viable buffer between road and wetland, the secondary impacts will be reduced to less than significant.

Cultural Resources

The Rancho Vistamonte SP development will not directly impact any cultural resources. The two identified cultural resources sites are located within the area designated as Natural Open Space. The sites are located in an area of steep terrain. The closest construction and residential activity to nearest site will be approximately 600 feet down slope. No trails are proposed in this area. Indirect impacts to these sites during construction or from residential activities associated with Rancho Vistamonte SP are not anticipated.

The indirect impact from development of Rancho Vistamonte SP is reduced to below a level of significance because any future construction project for the Rockwood Road within the County Circulation Element Alignment will be required under the Specific Plan review process to design a mitigation plan for the cultural resources before any disturbance of the sites is permitted.

Geology and Soils

All identified significant geotechnical impacts can be reduced to below the level of significance with the implementation of mitigation measures. The impacts on future residents and structures from strong ground motion in the event of regional seismic activity or from unknown on-site fault activity will be mitigated by the implementation of corrective grading and structural design. Soils subject to liquefaction and settlement during a seismic event shall be removed and/or recompacted. Unstable soils, rocks and boulders will be identified and stabilized or removed. Organize materials and remnants of prior human use of the site will be removed to provide proper foundation and pavement subgrade support characteristics for development of the proposed residential community. BMPs will be used to reduce erosion and to control sediment levels in water discharged from the proposed Rancho Vistamonte SP construction site. Rock crushing activities during grading will be set back from the Rancho Vistamonte SP boundaries to lessen the secondary impacts of vibrations and noise on adjacent land uses.

Hazards and Hazardous Materials

Impacts associated with hazards and hazardous materials were identified in the EIR as follows:

- The presence of concentrated manure waste on the site is a potentially significant hazardous materials impact because methane gas may be produced.
- The presence of asbestos in the remnant dairy structure may be encountered during demolition and will have a potentially significant impact.
- While the proposed dwelling units will be protected through a combination of on-site road widths, turning radii, fire hydrant locations, minimum 1,500 gallon per minute fire flow, on-site water storage reservoir, other fire safety features, emergency ingress/egress improvements, and fire services response from existing stations, without adequate fuel breaks between structures there will be a potentially significant impact.

Implementation of mitigation measures will reduce impacts associated with hazards and hazardous materials to below a level of significance. Pure and concentrated manure will be removed from the Rancho Vistamonte SP and will be disposed of at approved facilities. The standard practices used by experts in handling hazardous materials encountered during demolition will result in safe removal of remnant dairy structures. A minimum of 100 feet of fuel

break between the residential area and the wildlands to the east within the natural open space will be maintained.

Hydrology and Water Quality

Implementation of the proposed Rancho Vistamonte SP will result in direct water quality impacts associated with construction. This impact will be temporary and will be mitigated. With grading and construction compliance, the implementation of BMPs and the project design considerations, the hydrology and water quality impacts will be less than significant. Additionally, BMPs will be used to reduce erosion and to control sediment levels in water discharged from the proposed project. The reorganization of the sphere of influence and detachment from existing water services, communication facilities, and public services will not impact hydrology and water quality.

Land Use and Planning

The EIR identified that without standards for the use of native species in landscaping, there may be conflicts with the General Plan design consideration for SPA #4 development. A conflict with a policy adopted for the purpose of avoiding or mitigating an environmental effect will be potentially significant, direct impact. However, implementation of a Conceptual Landscape Plan was determined to reduce impacts to less than significant. Furthermore, the proposed project would not physically divide any established community, nor conflict with any applicable conservation plan. With the application of mitigation, the Rancho Vistamonte SP will not result in a conflict with any applicable land use plan, policy, or regulation. The annexation of the Rancho Vistamonte SP into the City of Escondido and detachment of existing County services will not result in conflict with the City's General Plan.

Noise

Implementation of the Rancho Vistamonte SP will result in the following noise impacts:

1. The temporary increase in ambient noise levels from construction will be a direct, short-term significant impact for the residents located to the north in the Rancho San Pasqual development.
2. Any rock crushing operations located on the Rancho Vistamonte SP closer than 800 feet to existing residences will potentially exceed the 75 dBA threshold adopted in the City's Noise Ordinance for construction sound level limits and will have a short-term, but direct and potentially significant noise impact.
3. Limited rock drilling adjacent to residence will have a temporary and potentially significant impact.
4. Intermittent, unexpected blasting could be a nuisance or cause alarm in nearby communities that will have short-term, direct and potentially significant noise impacts.
5. Controlled detonation for blasting associated with Rancho Vistamonte SP construction will have temporary and intermittent earthborn vibration impacts that will be direct and potentially significant.

Implementation of the required mitigation measure indicated in the EIR will reduce construction equipment, rock crushing, and blasting noise to less than significant by reducing construction noise levels to below the 75 dBA threshold at sensitive receptor locations. The limited potential

for rock drilling within 800 feet of existing residences will be minimized and the impact reduced to below a significant level. Notice will be provided to residents in the vicinity when blasting will occur to lessen annoyance that could occur from an unannounced sudden loud noise event. Vibrations will be monitored during blasting and detonation. Suspended where the detonation design exceeds standards.

Open Space

No significant impacts to open space will result because the SP and TM are in compliance with the General Plan open space objectives. Rancho Vistamonte SP open space will encompass approximately 60 percent of the site or 81 acres. The 6.6 acres of avocado and orange groves will be preserved as agricultural open space. The open space will maintain the rural residential and open space environment around the perimeter of Escondido to serve as a buffer from urbanizing surrounding areas. The Rancho Vistamonte SP development will provide trail linkages and a trailhead for public use.

Public Services and Utilities

Water

The proposed project would require annexation into the MWD in order for the City to serve the site. Currently the MWD has a Water Treatment Plant that treats a capacity of 90 million gallons per day (mgd) of water. The City requires that MWD maintain provisions for adequate water supply and storage capacity to meet normal and emergency situations and have the capacity to provide a minimum of 600 gallons per day per household or as established in the City's Water Master Plan. Although the water demand will be increased for MWD, no significant water impacts will result because the existing reservoir storage capacity is adequate to provide the water demand. No additional entitlements will be required for the City to service the site and the City's existing underground piping infrastructure will not require any improvements.

Sewer Service

The Escondido Water Utilities Department handles disposal through the Hale Avenue Resource Recovery Facility that has a capacity of 17.5 mgd and has existing daily flows of 15.6 mgd. The Rancho Vistamonte SP will generate approximately 20,000 gpd of sewage. No significant sewer service impacts will result because flows from the proposed Rancho Vistamonte will not exceed the existing pipeline capacity and will not require any expansion of existing sewer facilities.

Law Enforcement

Annexation of the Rancho Vistamonte SP into the City of Escondido will not result in impacts to law enforcement because the Quality of Life Standards will continue to be met. Currently law enforcement in the project vicinity, but outside the City boundary, is provided by the County Sheriff's Department that provides services throughout the unincorporated area. Law enforcement within the City boundary is provided by the Escondido Police Department, which operates from a police station located at 700 West Grand Avenue, Escondido. The City is currently divided into 12 patrol beats with six traffic units (including two motorcycle units), five bicycle units, five K-9 handlers, two school liaisons officers and approximately 100 patrol

vehicles. Future staffing increases and additional support equipment will be offset by the additional project-related property taxes.

Fire Services

As indicated under impacts associated with hazards and hazardous materials, fire breaks will be implemented into the SP as well and the incorporation of fire safety standards. Rancho Vistamonte SP is currently located outside of the City's service area but within the boundaries of the volunteer-staff CSA No. 113 (San Pasqual Fire Protection District). The estimated response time for CSA No. 113 is 10 to 12 minutes. Wildland fire protection falls within the California Division of Forestry and Fire Protection (CDF) responsibility. While there will not be a new fire station in operation concurrent with the occupancy of Rancho Vistamonte SP, the addition of only 80 dwelling units will be protected at acceptable standards through the combination of project design features, emergency ingress/egress improvements, and fire service response from existing stations. No significant fire services impacts will result from the annexation into the City of Escondido because emergency access will be improved. Additionally, paramedic response time will be monitored to be within acceptable limits.

Schools

No significant school impacts will result in implementation of the SP because the new San Pasqual Elementary School will have capacity for elementary and middle school students generated by the proposed development and school fees will be controlled to benefit both the elementary and high school districts.

Library Service

A need for additional libraries will not result from implementation of the proposed project. The current level of achievement toward the Quality of Life Standard for minimum floor space, number of volumes, staffing ratios per resident population, and distance to library facilities will not deteriorate with the addition of 80 dwelling units.

Parks and Recreation

The adopted General Plan anticipates that future residents of the Rancho Vistamonte SP will use a 5-acre neighborhood park site in the Rancho San Pasqual Community. The Rancho Vistamonte SP development includes improvements to the City's open space involving construction of off-site walks accessing San Pasqual Union Elementary School as well as the recreational trail and parking/staging area. There are no planned parks on the Rancho Vistamonte SP property.

All new residential development is assessed Park and Recreation Facilities fee of \$1,098.00 per dwelling unit. Consistent with the goals of the Master Plan, fees are expected to generate more than \$87,000 for the acquisition of additional open space. Approximately 74.4 acres of open space will be provided on site and 0.55 acre of active park space will be provided offsite, and public trails and a trailhead will be installed as part of the Development Agreement. The Rancho Vistamonte SP will be in conformance with the Quality of Life Standard and implementation will not result in significant impacts.

Solid Waste

Approval of 80 new residences as proposed by the Rancho Vistamonte SP will generate an estimated 444 tons of waste per year, adjusted for recycling. No significant solid waste impacts were identified in the EIR because the existing and planned waste disposal capacity is adequate to serve buildout of the City of Escondido under the adopted General Plan. Therefore, annexation into the City will not result exceed the capacity of landfills or create the need for the identification of a new landfill location.

Transportation/Traffic Circulation

Based on a review of the EIR addressing impacts associated with the implementation of the proposed project, it was determined that with the increase of traffic from Rancho Vistamonte SP development will cause an indirect significant impact to San Pasqual Road, between Zermatt Lane and Old Pasqual Road with a volume per capacity increase of 0.03 on a roadway that will be operating at LOS D. Additionally, peak AM hours will experience an indirect impact created by an increased delay. Safety hazards were identified as well as the degradation of the LOS during PM peak hours. The effective preclusion of development of either the County Circulation Element alignment and/or the proposed valley View Estate SP alignment for Rockwood Road to provide adequate access to lands east of Rancho Vistamonte SP will have a direct significant traffic circulation impact.

Implementation of the Rancho Vistamonte SP will result in significant impacts. However, these impacts to transportation/traffic will be reduced to a level below significance with the incorporation of mitigation measures.

ALTERNATIVES

A total of four alternatives have been identified to meet the State CEQA Guidelines § 15126.6(a) requirements. The following alternatives were considered to be most feasible in attaining most of the project's basic objectives but would avoid or substantially lessen any significant effects.

No Development Alternative – Retain the Rancho Vistamonte SP site in the existing condition for an unknown period of time. Agricultural uses could continue by right. Otherwise, it is assumed that no physical changes will occur to the site outside the previously established limits of the farm operations.

No Project Alternative – Assumes that the four existing parcels are legal lots that can be developed by right. A single residence with accessory structures typical of estate lots will be constructed on each parcel. It is assumed that potable groundwater is available and the soil conditions support the installation of septic systems.

Existing County of San Diego Land Use/Zoning Alternative – Will result in an estimated 15 lots, developed with a County subdivision map. The density is based on slopes and the zoning minimum of 8-acre lots. With clustering, approximately 53 acres will be required to be placed in open space. Approval of residential building sites under this alternative assumes that potable groundwater is available and that soil conditions support the installation of septic systems.

Existing City of Escondido General Plan Estate Lots Only (without a SP) Alternative –

Under this alternative development of an estimated 39 single-family lots without an adopted specific plan. The number of proposed lots to be developed is based on a slope density formula of Rural I category for areas over 25 percent slope, and Rural II for areas under 25 percent slope as allowed by the existing City General Plan. The development is required to satisfy all public facility impacts and may, therefore, require a subarea public facilities plan to determine specific mitigation measures which address impacts.

Development within the City of Escondido will assure that public services will be available, particularly water and sewer long-term. Development through the specific plan process will provide greater ability to avoid areas of sensitive biological and cultural resources and to place sensitive resources in larger and managed open space easements. Development through the exchange of lands between the City and the Rancho Vistamonte SP owner will provide facilities for public benefit. While there are tradeoffs for the greater density of a specific plan, particularly due to increased traffic, the proposed Rancho Vistamonte SP will be the environmentally superior alternative.

ENVIRONMENTAL EFFECTS FOUND NOT TO BE SIGNIFICANT

The EIR provided an analysis of the potential environmental impacts from implementation of the proposed Rancho Vistamonte SP. During the initial environmental assessment, the City of Escondido determined that the EIR would address the following environmental issues:

- Aesthetics;
- Agricultural Resources;
- Air Quality;
- Biological Resources;
- Cultural Resources;
- Geology and Soils;
- Hazards and Hazardous Materials;
- Hydrology and Water Quality;
- Land Use and Planning;
- Noise;
- Open Space;
- Public Services and Utilities; and
- Transportation/Traffic.

Based on the findings of the analysis provided in Chapter 3.3 of the Final Environmental Impact Report prepared for the Specific Planning Area (SPA) #4, Deer Springs & Harmony Grove, the proposed Rancho Vistamonte SP will not result in significant environmental impacts for the issues of aesthetics (visual quality), agriculture, open space, and public services and utilities.

GROWTH-INDUCING EFFECTS

The proposed Rancho Vistamonte SP is within the City of Escondido Growth Management designation of Urbanizing Tier 3C, which is anticipated “to eventually contain urban development” (Escondido General Plan 1990). The proposed project is annexation of 208 acres to the City of Escondido, detachment from CSA No. 113 (San Pasqual), and CSA No. 135 (San

Diego County Regional Communications). Concurrent annexation of the property into the San Diego County Water Authority and the Metropolitan Water District of Southern California is also proposed. Approximately 133 acres of the reorganization site is subject to a city approved General Plan Amendment, Specific Plan, rezoning, development agreement, and Tentative Subdivision Map. The approved subdivision allows for 80 single-family, detached units in a gated development, natural open space, and public rails. The adjacent 75 acres are not covered by development plans, but have been included within the reorganization to avoid the creation of an unincorporated island between the City of Escondido and San Diego.

The inclusion of the San Pasqual Indian Reservation Lands within the Valley Center MWD sphere of influence will not change the area in which the MWD currently provides services. The MWD currently services the affected area through an emergency connection. The Paradise Mountain Properties are experiencing well failures and the inclusion of the area in the Valley Center MWD sphere will resolve a health, safety and welfare issue.

UNAVOIDABLE ADVERSE ENVIRONMENTAL IMPACTS

Approval of the proposed Rancho Vistamonte SP will commit the site to an expanded development area of urban uses. The proposed project will require the commitment of nonrenewable resources associated with construction and long-term operation, including, but not limited to, lumber and other related forest products, concrete, asphalt, petrochemical construction materials, steel, copper, lead, and other metals, water, fuels, and energy. Uses of these resources will represent an incremental effect on the regional consumption of these commodities.

The Rancho Vistamonte SP will not require off-site improvements, other than those shown as proposed to bring services less than one-quarter mile from Rockwood Road to the project boundary. All improvements made within or adjacent to existing rights-of-way and easements will not open up previously inaccessible areas. Therefore, such improvements will not commit future generations to a change in use. Facilities to serve the Rancho Vistamonte SP will not require construction of road improvements or pipelines along alignments that are not already in use.

MUNICIPAL SERVICE REVIEW

The municipal service review component of the study produced an information level report that dealt with infrastructure needs and deficiencies; growth and population projections for the affected area; financing constraints and opportunities; cost avoidance opportunities; opportunities for rate restructuring; opportunities for shared facilities; government structure options, including advantages and disadvantages of consolidation or reorganization of service providers; the evaluation of management efficiencies; and local accountability and governance. Pursuant to the San Diego LAFCO's Administrative Procedures for implementation of CEQA, the Municipal Service Review is subject to CEQA Exemption 15306, because the service review consists of basic data collection and research activities and will not result in any disturbances to environmental resources.

LIST OF EXHIBITS
NORTH COUNTY INLAND
MUNICIPAL SERVICE REVIEW
AND
SPHERE OF INFLUENCE UPDATE

- Exhibit A: Map of Escondido Sphere of Influence
- Exhibit B: Map of Escondido Sphere of Influence (aerial view)
- Exhibit C: Map of Valley Center MWD Sphere of Influence
- Exhibit D: Map of Rincon de Diablo MWD Sphere of Influence
- Exhibit E: Map of Fire Protection Agencies
- Exhibit F: Map of Water Agencies

SPHERE OF INFLUENCE DETERMINATIONS

The Cortese-Knox-Hertzberg Local Government Reorganization Act of 2000 requires LAFCO to review and update, as necessary, spheres of influence for each local agency within LAFCO's jurisdiction. A sphere is a plan for the probable physical boundaries and service area of a local government agency. A sphere is primarily a planning tool that provides guidance in reviewing individual proposals, promotes efficient provision of organized community services, and prevents duplication of services. Inclusion within an agency's sphere does not indicate that an affected area automatically will be annexed; an adopted sphere of influence is only one of several factors the Commission must consider in reviewing individual proposals. In determining a sphere of influence, the Commission is required to consider and make written determinations with respect to the following factors: (1) Present and planned land uses in the area, including agricultural and open space lands; (2) Present and probable need for public facilities and services in the area; (3) Present capacity of public facilities and adequacy of public services that the agency provides or is authorized to provide; and (4) Existence of any social and economic communities of interest in the area.

State Law also requires cities and counties to meet and discuss proposed sphere of influence updates and explore methods to reach agreement on the boundaries, development standards, and zoning requirements within the sphere to ensure that development within the sphere occurs in a manner that reflects the concerns of the affected city and promotes logical and orderly development (Government Code Section 56425 (b-d)). LAFCO must give great weight to any agreements that are reached between cities and counties. If no agreement is reached, then the sphere update may still be submitted to the Commission and will be reviewed consistent with applicable LAFCO policies and procedures.

Attachment 1 covers the update of the spheres of influence for the City of Escondido, Valley Center Municipal Water District, and Rincon del Diablo Municipal Water District.

RECOMMENDED STATEMENT OF DETERMINATIONS
PROPOSED AMENDMENT AND UPDATE OF THE SPHERE OF INFLUENCE
FOR THE CITY OF ESCONDIDO

The following Statement of Determinations is prepared pursuant to Government Code Section 56425 for the amendment and update of the City of Escondido.

- (1) The present and planned land uses in the area, including agricultural and open space.

Located in northern San Diego County, the City of Escondido's sphere of influence was first adopted on July 2, 1979. The sphere was amended five times since the original adoption date. In 1993, the San Diego LAFCO comprehensively updated and added 1,332 acres to the sphere. Approximately 30 square miles of unincorporated territory lies outside the City's existing sphere, as described below:

North

Escondido's existing sphere extends north of its city limits and includes about 7,000 acres of unincorporated territory in the Jesmond Dene/Lehner Valley area, which is defined by Interstate 15 to the west, Deer Springs to the north, Daley Ranch to the east, and Vista Drive to the south. The area is characterized by a variety of land uses, primarily large-lot residential uses and agriculture

Northwest

The sphere extends to the northwest and includes about 600 acres in the unincorporated Nordhal Road area. Nordhal Road is located north of Harmony Grove and is essentially an island surrounded by Escondido on the north, east and south, and San Marcos on the west. The area is fully developed with residential uses on .25 to .50 acre lots.

East

The sphere extends east and includes about 7,200 acres of unincorporated territory in the Lake Wohlford Area. A significant portion of this area is owned by the City of Escondido and is undeveloped or within the San Pasqual Indian Reservation. The remainder of the area consists of undeveloped territory and large-lot residential uses.

Two areas are proposed for inclusion in the Escondido sphere of influence (Sub-Area 1B: Rancho Vistamonte and Sub-area 1C: Ferrick/Harwood/Brill/Albright Properties). Sub-area 1B includes approximately 133.1 acres and is located in the unincorporated area south east of Escondido. The property still contains an approximately six acre avocado orchard, located in the southeast corner of the property. As a result of livestock activity, the majority of the natural habitats on-site can be found on the hillsides, leaving the flatter portions of the site in non-native grasslands.

The current property owner (New Urban West) of Sub-area 1B has requested approval for 80 homes with proposed lot sizes ranging from approximately 10,000 square feet to 37,000 square feet. The overall density that is proposed is 0.6 dwelling units per acre. The proposed community is intended to offer a rural oriented atmosphere and a variety of traditional architectural styles. Two gated entries are proposed for access from Rockwood Road. Approximately 60% of the site will be preserved as open space.

The County of San Diego considers Rancho Vistamonte a Rural Development Area (RDA). RDAs include all privately owned land outside the service boundaries of the County Water Authority. The County's existing North County Metropolitan Planning Area designation for the sub-area is Multiple Rural Use 18 (1 dwelling unit per 4, 8, 20 acres). A majority of the site is zoned A72 (General Agriculture), A70 (Limited Agriculture) or S 92 (General Rural). All three zoning classifications have an 8-acre minimum parcel size. It is estimated that build-out consistent with county land use designations would yield a maximum of approximately 15 dwelling units. The County's General Plan 2020 Land Use Distribution Map (May 2002), designates the sub-area as Rural Lands 40 (1 dwelling unit per 40 acres). Development in the County would be based on the use of private septic systems and wells, rather than public water and sewer services. Emergency services would be from a volunteer fire department and the County Sheriff.

Cloverdale Road is the primary circulation street closest to the project, one mile west of the site. Access to the property is from Rockwood Road, which begins at its intersection with Cloverdale Road. Old Battlefield Road via Zoo Road, a private easement used as access to the Wild Animal Park facilities, provides access from the south of the site to State Route 78.

Sub-Area 1C includes eight parcels, ranging in size from 7.7 to 16.8 acres. Limited scattered single-family estate development characterizes the approximately 75.3 acre sub-area. Although plans to develop this area have not been proposed, approval of the annexation of the Rancho Vistamonte property to Escondido would leave Sub-Area 1C as a service island of unincorporated territory between the Cities of Escondido and San Diego.

Assuming annexation, any future development within Sub-area 1C would be subject to Escondido's General Plan policies. The City's General Plan would permit development at rural densities without preparation of a specific plan. Based on slope features, it is estimated that a maximum of 16-18 dwelling units could be built within Escondido. This dwelling unit yield could be increased through the use of a development agreement, but it is not possible to determine a specific density at this time. The County's existing North County Metropolitan Planning Area designation for the sub-area is Multiple Rural Use 18 (1 dwelling unit per 4, 8, 20 acres). County zoning for the site is A72 (General Agriculture) and A70 (Limited Agriculture). Based on slope criteria, the site could potentially yield a maximum of 12 dwelling units. The Draft County General Plan 2020

would designate the sub-area the sub-area as Rural Lands 40 (1dwelling unit per 40 acres).

Southeast

The sphere extends southeast of the Escondido city limits and includes about 4,500 acres of unincorporated territory in San Pasqual. The San Pasqual area is defined by Mountain View Drive to the north, Bear Valley Parkway to the west, and San Pasqual Road to the south and east. Scattered residential estate land uses on .50 to 1-acre lots characterize the San Pasqual area.

Southwest

The sphere extends southwest of the Escondido city limits and includes the unincorporated 1,800 acre Felicita area. The area is defined by Interstate 15 to the north and east, Lake Hodges to the south, and Bernardo Avenue to the east. The Felicita area is nearly built out, with residences on .50 to 1-acre lots.

West

The sphere extends west of the Escondido city limits and includes about 2,000 acres in the unincorporated Harmony Grove area. The area is defined by Harmony Grove and Country Club Road and the Montreux property east and south, a ridgeline to the west, and Hill Valley Drive to the north. A variety of uses currently exist in this area. Agricultural uses are located in the southern portions and include a dairy, egg ranch, and citrus groves. The eastern and northern portions of Harmony Grove consist of residential uses on .50 to 1-acre lots.

(2) The present and probable need for public facilities and services in the area.

(3) The present capacity of public facilities and adequacy of public services that the agency provides or is authorized to provide.

The City of Escondido is a full-service city operating from a civic complex located at 201 North Broadway. Services provided by the City include: building inspection, fire protection, flood control, landscape maintenance, library service, paramedic service, park and recreation services, planning and land use, police protection, road and highway maintenance, sewer service, street lighting, traffic control, and water service. Portions of the City also receive services from the Rincon del Diablo MWD, Vista ID, Vallecitos WD. The Escondido Humane Society supplies animal control. Trash disposal is provided through a private operator licensed by Escondido. To further regional planning and services, the City of Escondido participates on the San Dieguito River Valley Regional Open Space Park Joint Powers Authority, San Elijo Join Powers Authority, Encina Joint Powers Agreement, a and the San Diego Association of Governments for regional planning. The City of Escondido has sufficient capacity to provide services within its existing sphere of influence, consistent with adopted master plans and the city budget.

Inclusion of Sub-Areas 1B and 1C within the City of Escondido's sphere and annexation to the City would shift many service responsibilities from special districts to the City. The primary fire station for the sub-area would be Escondido Fire Station No. 4, located at 3301 Bear Valley Parkway, approximately 6.5 miles from the property. The sub-area is beyond the City's five-minute response time and three-mile distance; therefore, all structures would need to be protected by fire sprinkler systems. Service to the sub-areas would improve with the addition of a new city fire station in East Escondido. The City Police Department would be responsible for law enforcement after annexation of the area to Escondido. It is anticipated that the city police response times for both priority one and two call would be quicker than the response times of the County Sheriff. Sewage generated by the proposed project in Sub-Area 1B can be accommodated by the City of Escondido without upgrading the existing Eagle Crest gravity system or the Eagle Crest Lift Station. A 12-inch sewer line is already located along Rockwood Road and extends under San Pasqual Valley Road (Highway 78) to Old Pasqual Road. Prior to finalization of development plans, the Rancho Vistamonte project will need to be annexed to both the San Diego County Water Authority and the Metropolitan Water District of Southern California. Existing City of Escondido facilities are readily available to serve Rancho Vistamonte.

Sewage generated within Sub-area 1C could rely on individual septic systems or a public sewer system. If development is proposed, Escondido could accommodate the sewage needs without upgrading the existing Eagle Crest gravity system or the Eagle Crest Lift Station. A 12-inch sewer line is already located along Rockwood Road and extends under San Pasqual Valley Road (Highway 78) to Old Pasqual Road. On-site wells are the only source of water for the sub-area and the site is outside the boundaries of the San Diego County Water Authority and the Metropolitan Water District of Southern California.

- (4) The existence of any social and economic communities of interest in the area if the Commission determines they are relevant to the agency.

Social and economic communities of interest are not applicable to this sphere amendment and update.

RECOMMENDED STATEMENT OF DETERMINATIONS
PROPOSED AMENDMENT AND UPDATE TO THE SPHERE OF INFLUENCE
FOR THE VALLEY CENTER MUNICIPAL WATER DISTRICT

(Associated with the Escondido Sphere of Influence Update)

The following Statement of Determinations is prepared pursuant to Government Code Section 56425 for the amendment and update of the Valley Center Municipal Water District (MWD)

- (2) The present and planned land uses in the area, including agricultural and open space.

Located in northern San Diego County, the Valley Center MWD provides and sewer services to its domestic, agricultural, and commercial customers. As of 2001, the Valley Center MWD's population was approximately 23,000 (Valley Center MWD Annual FY 2001-02 Budget). The water district's projected ultimate population is 45,000. The 102 square mile service area surrounds the unincorporated community of Valley Center and includes Hidden Meadows, Jesmond Dene, Welk's and Circle "R" areas and lies generally north of the City of Escondido, south of San Luis Rey River, and east of Interstate 15. Historically, 75-90% of water sold has been used to irrigate avocado and citrus groves as well as for other agricultural purposes. The Valley Center MWD's sphere of influence is currently coterminous with its jurisdictional boundaries. Approximately 1,200 acres within northern Escondido is also located within the southern most part of the Valley Center MWD.

The following areas are proposed for inclusion in the sphere of the Valley Center MWD:

- **San Pasqual Indian Reservation Lands** – Portions of the San Pasqual Indian Reservation lands are currently within and served by the Valley Center MWD. A portion of the Reservation is outside the water district, but is served through an emergency connection. Over the last several years, the Valley Center MWD has indicated that tribal representatives have discussed a possible annexation of tribal lands to the water district. The area total 577 acres.
- **Paradise Mountain Properties** – These properties total 575 acres and are generally located south of Paradise Mountain and east of North Lake Wohlford Road. Much of the area is vacant, but there is some existing single-family residential use, supported by private wells. The Valley Center MWD is currently processing the annexation of two parcels through the Metropolitan Water District and County Water Authority, which are located in this area. These parcels are experiencing well failures and

need public water service. Given the relationship of this area to the water district's boundaries and facilities, the Valley Center MWD believes that it may be logical to include this area in the District's sphere.

- **Special Study Area** – The Valley Center MWD has identified several additional areas that they believe should be considered for possible future inclusion / exclusion from the water district's sphere. These areas total 162 acres and are located along the I-15 and Old 395 corridor. The parcels are situated within both the Vallecitos WD and the Rainbow MWD, but are separated from the main portions of those respective service areas by I-15. One area is located at the intersection of West Lilac Road and Old 395, west of I-15. This area is served by the Valley Center MWD through a water line that spans the Lilac Road Bridge over I-15. The Valley Center MWD suggests that LAFCO may want to consider various sphere amendments to the respective district spheres at this time or when the sphere updates are done for the other agencies. Vallecitos MWD also indicates that the sphere amendments should only be approached if all affected districts are in agreement. The I-15 area identified by the Valley Center is proposed to be designated as a special study area and the respective sphere boundaries should be resolved when the Vallecitos WD and Rainbow MWD spheres are updated in the future.

(2) The present and probable need for public facilities and services in the area.

(3) The present capacity of public facilities and adequacy of public services that the agency provides or is authorized to provide.

The Valley Center MWD has sufficient capacity to extend water and sewer service to areas within its existing and proposed sphere of influence, consistent with its adopted master plan and budget.

- (5) The existence of any social and economic communities of interest in the area if the Commission determines they are relevant to the agency.

Social and economic communities of interest are not applicable to this sphere amendment and update.

RECOMMENDED STATEMENT OF DETERMINATIONS
PROPOSED UPDATE TO THE SPHERE OF INFLUENCE
FOR THE RINCON DEL DIABLO MUNICIPAL WATER DISTRICT

(Associated with the Escondido Sphere of Influence Update)

The following Statement of Determinations is prepared pursuant to Government Code Section 56425 for the amendment and update of the Rincon del Diablo Municipal Water District (MWD)

- (3) The present and planned land uses in the area, including agricultural and open space.

Located in northern San Diego County, the Rincon del Diablo MWD provides water and fire protection services to its domestic, agricultural, and commercial customers. As of 2000, the Rincon del Diablo MWD's population was approximately 27,385 (Rincon del Diablo MWD Urban Water Management Plan, 2000). The district contains nearly 26,000 acres, located partially within the City Escondido, and partially within the unincorporated area. The water district's service area contains relatively little vacant land; consequently, the anticipated growth rate will be slow over the next twenty years. The 2020 projected population is 32,348. Currently water supplies are distributed among the following sectors: 56% to residential accounts, 13% to agricultural accounts, 10% to commercial accounts, 9% to multifamily accounts, 9% to dedicated landscape irrigation accounts, 1% to industrial accounts and, less than 1% to institutional accounts. The water district does not anticipate amending its sphere in the foreseeable future and requests that its current sphere be reaffirmed (January 16, 2003 correspondence).

- (2) The present and probable need for public facilities and services in the area.

- (3) The present capacity of public facilities and adequacy of public services that the agency provides or is authorized to provide.

The Rincon del Diablo MWD has sufficient capacity to provide water and fire protection service to areas within its existing sphere of influence, consistent with its adopted master plan and budget.

- (6) The existence of any social and economic communities of interest in the area if the Commission determines they are relevant to the agency.

Social and economic communities of interest are not applicable to this sphere amendment and update.

SAN DIEGO LAFCO
MUNICIPAL SERVICE REVIEW GUIDELINES

I. PURPOSE

To provide guidance to the San Diego Local Agency Formation Commission (LAFCO) in preparing and conducting municipal service reviews.

II. BACKGROUND

The Cortese-Knox-Hertzberg Local Government Reorganization Act of 2000 requires LAFCO to review municipal services. The requirement for service reviews is in response to the identified need for a more coordinated and efficient public service structure, which will support California's anticipated growth. The service review provides LAFCO with a tool to comprehensively study existing and future public service conditions, and to evaluate organizational options for accommodating growth, preventing urban sprawl, and ensuring that critical services are efficiently and cost-effectively provided.

III. GOALS and OBJECTIVES

Effective January 1, 2001, Government Code Section 56430 requires LAFCO to conduct municipal service reviews and prepare a written statement of determination with respect to each of the following:

- A. Infrastructure needs or deficiencies;
- B. Growth and population projections for the affected area;
- C. Financing constraints and opportunities;
- D. Cost avoidance opportunities;
- E. Opportunities for rate restructuring;
- F. Opportunities for shared facilities;
- G. Government structure options, including advantages and disadvantages of consolidation or reorganization of service providers;
- H. Evaluation of management efficiencies; and
- I. Local accountability and governance.

The municipal service review process does not require LAFCO to initiate changes of organization based on service review findings; it only requires that LAFCO make determinations regarding the provision of public services per the provisions of Government Code Section 56430. However, LAFCO, local agencies, and the public may subsequently use the determinations to pursue changes to services, local jurisdictions, or spheres of influence.

IV. WHEN PREPARED

LAFCO will determine when municipal service reviews are necessary. Generally, reviews will be prepared in conjunction with sphere of influence studies or updates; however, service reviews may also be conducted independent of the sphere of influence process. LAFCO will conduct service reviews independent of the sphere of influence updates based on a number of factors, including but not limited to: concerns of affected agencies, the public, or LAFCO; public demand for a service review; public health, safety or welfare issues; and service provision issues associated with areas of growth and/or development. A list of the relevant factors of analysis that may be considered during the preparation of service reviews is attached.

Minor amendments to a sphere of influence, as determined by LAFCO, will not require a municipal service review.

V. SERVICES ADDRESSED

Municipal service reviews will address identified services within the service review boundary, which are generally associated with growth and development. Target services include, but are not limited to, water, sewer, drainage, libraries, roads, parks, police, and fire protection. General government services such as courts, social services, human resources, treasury, tax collection, and administrative services will generally not be included. LAFCO will determine which services will be included in each service review.

VI. AGENCIES INCLUDED

Local agencies that are subject to LAFCO review, or are required to have a sphere of influence, are subject to municipal service reviews.

VII. BOUNDARIES

LAFCO will determine the final geographic boundary and agency(ies) that will be the subject of a service review. Factors that may be considered in determining a service review boundary include, but are not limited to: existing city and special district jurisdictional and sphere boundaries; topography; geography; community boundaries; tax / assessment zones; infrastructure locations; transportation systems and roads; areas with shared facilities; areas with shared social and economic communities of interest; plus other factors as determined by LAFCO.

LAFCO will consider information received from affected agencies and public scoping meetings when determining boundaries. Generally, service reviews will

be conducted for sub-regional areas within the County of San Diego; however, a service review may be done for a single agency, multiple agencies, subregional areas, or on a countywide basis. Agencies that have service provision issues related to a current service review, as identified by LAFCO, will be included in the service review. Service reviews addressing multiple services may have separate geographic boundaries established for each service.

VIII. ENVIRONMENTAL DETERMINATION

Local agencies that submit municipal service review proposals to LAFCO will be considered lead agencies for purposes of environmental review and should approve whatever environmental determination is appropriate under the California Environmental Quality Act (i.e., exemption, negative declaration, environmental impact report).

IX. PREPARATION

- A. LAFCO will determine the priority, schedule, procedure and content for service reviews.
- B. As part of the budgetary process, LAFCO will develop a priority work plan of service reviews to be addressed during the fiscal year. LAFCO may alter the annual service review work program at any time in response to changing circumstances, new information, or direction from the Commission. During the budgetary process, LAFCO staff will inform those agencies that may be listed on the annual priority work plan.
- C. LAFCO will mail a survey/questionnaire to the affected agency(ies) identified in the service review work plan.
- D. LAFCO may hold public scoping meetings, as necessary, for selected service reviews to gather additional input on the following issues:
 - 1. Additional agencies to be included within a service review;
 - 2. Geographic area of a service review;
 - 3. Concerns of affected agencies; and
 - 4. Areas of concern to be addressed in a service review.

Public notice will be given for scoping meetings. All affected agencies, interested agencies, and persons or entities requesting notice will receive a mailed notice.

- E. Municipal service reviews will fall into two general categories:
 - 1. **Routine reviews** are anticipated to be uncomplicated and straightforward with few concerns about the adequacy of public

services. Routine service reviews may be conducted for single agencies or for multiple agencies that provide similar services. The boundary of a routine service review may cover a sub-region, region, or the County of San Diego.

2. **Intensive reviews** are anticipated to require detailed analysis of complex and controversial issues. Categorizing a service review as *intensive* may be the result of analysis of pending LAFCO proposals, or of service provision concerns otherwise identified by LAFCO, other agencies, or the public.
- F. LAFCO may establish a service review committee to provide technical and/or policy advice to LAFCO staff. The service review committee may consist of LAFCO Commissioners from each representative category (county, cities, special districts, and the public). The committee may be expanded to include representatives from the LAFCO Special Districts and Cities Advisory Committees and/or other members as determined by LAFCO. When serving on the service review committee, all committee members shall exercise their independent judgment on behalf of the interests of residents, property owners, and the public as a whole, and not solely the interests of the type of agency or organization they represent.
 - G. LAFCO staff will prepare a final municipal service review report that includes the determinations required by State Law. The report may identify future studies or actions, which LAFCO or other agencies may take to implement the recommendations of the report. All service review reports will be available for a public review period prior to being considered by the appropriate advisory or decision-making body. The Commission will consider the municipal service review report and determinations at a noticed public hearing. The report will be available for a public review period prior to the hearing.
 - H. San Diego LAFCO has established a fee for conducting municipal service reviews. If necessary, LAFCO may recover reasonable costs for preparation of a service review study beyond the adopted fee. For any service review that may involve costs beyond the standard LAFCO fee, LAFCO staff will prepare a scope of work and schedule with an estimate of reasonable costs associated with conducting the service review.

Adopted: April 8, 2002
Technically Updated: June 26, 2002

FACTORS OF ANALYSIS

Municipal Service Review Determinations

The Cortese-Knox-Hertzberg Local Government Reorganization Act of 2000 requires LAFCOs to conduct reviews of municipal services and make nine written determinations. The following factors to be considered provide examples of how San Diego LAFCO will fulfill the determination requirement.

Determination 1: Infrastructure needs or deficiencies

In authorizing the preparation of municipal service reviews, the State Legislature has focused on one of LAFCO's core missions—encouraging the efficient provision of public services. Infrastructure needs or deficiencies, which refers to the adequacy of existing and planned public facilities in relation to how public services are, and will be, provided to citizens, impacts the efficient delivery of public services. Infrastructure can be evaluated in terms of capacity, condition, availability, quality, and correlations among operational, capital improvement, and finance plans. It is recognized that there may be unmet infrastructure needs due to budget constraints or other factors; however, identification of deficiencies may promote public understanding and support for needed improvements.

Determination 2: Growth and population projections for the affected area

Efficient provision of public services is linked to the ability of service providers to plan for future need. For example, a water purveyor must be prepared to supply water for existing **and** future levels of demand, and also be able to determine **where** future demand will occur. Municipal service reviews will give LAFCO, affected agencies, and the public the means to examine both the existing and future need for public services and will evaluate whether projections for future growth and population patterns are integrated into an agency's planning function.

Determination 3: Financing constraints and opportunities

LAFCO must weigh a community's public service needs against the resources available to fund the services. During the municipal service review, the financing constraints and opportunities, which have an impact on the delivery of services, will be identified and enable LAFCO, local agencies, and the public to assess whether agencies are capitalizing on financing opportunities. For example, a service review could reveal that two or more water agencies that are each deficient in storage capacity and, which individually lack financial resources to construct additional facilities, may benefit from creating a joint venture to finance and construct regional storage facilities. Service reviews may also disclose innovations for contending with financing constraints, which may be of considerable value to numerous agencies.

Determination 4: Cost avoidance opportunities

LAFCO's role in encouraging efficiently provided public services depends, in part, on helping local agencies explore cost avoidance opportunities. The municipal service review will explore cost avoidance opportunities including, but not limited to: (1) eliminating duplicative services; (2) reducing high administration to operation cost ratios; (3) replacing outdated or deteriorating infrastructure and equipment; (4) reducing inventories of underutilized equipment, buildings, or facilities; (5) redrawing overlapping or inefficient service boundaries; (6) replacing inefficient purchasing or budgeting practices; (7) implementing economies of scale; and (8) increasing profitable outsourcing.

Determination 5: Opportunities for rate restructuring

When applicable, the municipal service review will review agency rates, which are charged for public services, to examine opportunities for rate restructuring without impairing the quality of service. Agency rates will be scrutinized for: (1) rate setting methodologies; (2) conditions that could impact future rates; and (3) variances among rates, fees, taxes, charges, etc., within an agency and region. Service reviews will identify strategies for rate restructuring, which would further the LAFCO mission of ensuring efficiency in providing public services.

Determination 6: Opportunities for shared facilities

Public service costs may be reduced and service efficiencies increased, if service providers develop strategies for sharing resources. For example, service providers in San Diego County currently share communication centers, wastewater treatment facilities, and distribution lines. Sharing facilities and excess system capacity decreases duplicative efforts, may lower costs, and minimizes unnecessary resource consumption. The service review will inventory facilities within the study area to determine if facilities are currently being utilized to capacity and whether efficiencies can be achieved by accommodating the facility needs of adjacent agencies. Options for planning for future shared facilities and services will also be considered.

Determination 7: Government structure options, including advantages and disadvantages of consolidation or reorganization of service providers

The municipal service review provides a tool to comprehensively study existing and future public service conditions and to evaluate organizational options for accommodating growth, preventing urban sprawl, and ensuring that critical services are efficiently and cost-effectively provided. While the service review does not require LAFCO to initiate changes of organization based on service review finding, LAFCO, local agencies, and the public may subsequently use service reviews to pursue changes to services, local jurisdictions, or spheres of influence. LAFCO may examine efficiencies that could be gained through: (1) functional reorganizations within existing agencies; (2) amending or updating spheres-of-influence; (3) annexations or detachments from

cities or special districts; (4) formation of new special districts; (5) special district dissolutions; (6) mergers of special districts with cities; (7) establishment of subsidiary districts; or (8) any additional reorganization options found in Government Code § 56000 et. seq.

Determination 8: Evaluation of management efficiencies

Management efficiency refers to the effectiveness of internal and external characteristics of agencies to provide efficient, quality public services. Efficiently managed agencies consistently implement plans to improve service delivery, reduce waste, eliminate duplications of effort, contain costs, maintain qualified employees, build and maintain adequate contingency reserves, and encourage and maintain open dialogues with the public and other public and private agencies. The service review will evaluate management efficiency by analyzing agency functions, operations, and practices—as well as the agency’s ability to meet current and future service demands. Services will be evaluated in relation to available resources and consideration of service provision constraints.

Determination 9: Local accountability and governance

In making a determination of local accountability and governance, LAFCO will consider the degree to which local accountability is fostered. *Local accountability and governance* refers to public agency decision making and operational and management processes that: (1) include an accessible and accountable elected or appointed decision making body and agency staff; (2) encourage and value public participation; (3) disclose budgets, programs, and plans; (4) solicit public input when considering rate changes and work and infrastructure plans; and (5) evaluate outcomes of plans, programs, and operations, and disclose results to the public.

Subject**STRATEGY FOR CONDUCTING AND USING MUNICIPAL SERVICE REVIEWS****Purpose**

To establish a framework that will assist the Local Agency Formation Commission in the preparation of municipal service reviews, while maintaining a focus on the service review determinations specified in State Law.

Background

AB 2838 (Cortese-Knox-Hertzberg Local Government Reorganization Act of 2000) requires Local Agency Formation Commissions to conduct countywide, regional, or sub-regional municipal service reviews either before, or in conjunction with, sphere updates to help ensure the efficient provision of local governmental services. The process of information collection, data analysis, and development of the service review determinations requires a high level of participation and cooperation between San Diego LAFCO and local agencies.

Policy

It is the policy of the San Diego Local Agency Formation Commission to use the following six strategies to assist in the preparation of municipal service reviews:

1. *Scope of Work*: In order to successfully manage the data collection and analysis processes and guide service reviews toward timely completion, each service review should have a well-defined scope of work that incorporates the following:
 - a. Develop and adhere to a realistic and manageable scope of work.
 - b. Define the services to be reviewed.
 - c. Identify unambiguous geographic boundaries for study areas.
 - d. Define the time period under review.
 - e. Defer review of services or service providers, which are marginally related to the pending service review, to subsequent service reviews, if necessary and appropriate.

2. *Requests for Information:* Collection of data is dependent on the cooperation and voluntary participation of local agencies. Requests for information should not represent an undue burden to local agencies and should be conducted in the following manner to maximize cooperation and participation levels:
 - a. Discourage multiple requests for information unless there are compelling reasons.
 - b. Limit requests for information to matters that are essential to conduct the service review and relevant to the nine determinations required by Government Code § 56430.
3. *Service Review Time Frame:* Service reviews provide a snapshot view of service delivery issues and are not meant to be ongoing studies. The following approaches will enable service reviews to be conducted in the shortest amount of time:
 - a. Develop a task and time schedule for each service review and adhere to it.
 - b. Confine data collection to the time period established under the scope of work unless there are compelling reasons to expand the time frame.
4. *Regional View:* Service reviews represent programmatic or macro-level information reports. The following approaches will reinforce the programmatic focus of service reviews:
 - a. Adhere to the nine service review determinations in maintaining a programmatic view of service delivery.
 - b. Focus on service delivery programs, procedures, policies and rules, rather than individuals who may be involved in the service delivery programs.
 - c. Collect micro-level data only if necessary and if associated with programmatic aspects of service delivery.
5. *Level of Inquiry:* Multiple agencies may be involved with a service review. Individual agencies may be subject to different levels of review and inquiry based on the following:
 - a. Allow for variation within the type and amount of information requested for each service review and from each local agency based on unique circumstances.

- b. Utilize the judgment of staff, commissioners, advisory committees, stakeholders, public and agencies, etc., to establish an appropriate level of inquiry and data collection.
 - c. Defer the collection of data that is marginally related to the pending service review to subsequent service reviews.
6. *Data Accuracy*: Accurate data is essential for making meaningful conclusions and determinations. In some cases, LAFCO staff may not be qualified to ascertain accuracy of data and will need to obtain outside assistance. In other instances, either raw data, or conclusions of service review may not be germane to LAFCO's purview of the service review determinations required by State Law. In order to maintain focus on accuracy and relevancy of data:
- a. Utilize LAFCO staff, the Commission's advisory committees, local service agencies, or other appropriate organizations to determine data accuracy and relevancy.
 - b. Refer service reviews to other regulatory agencies if data is determined to pertain to areas outside of LAFCO's purview, or is not relevant to a pending service review.

Adopted: April 7, 2003