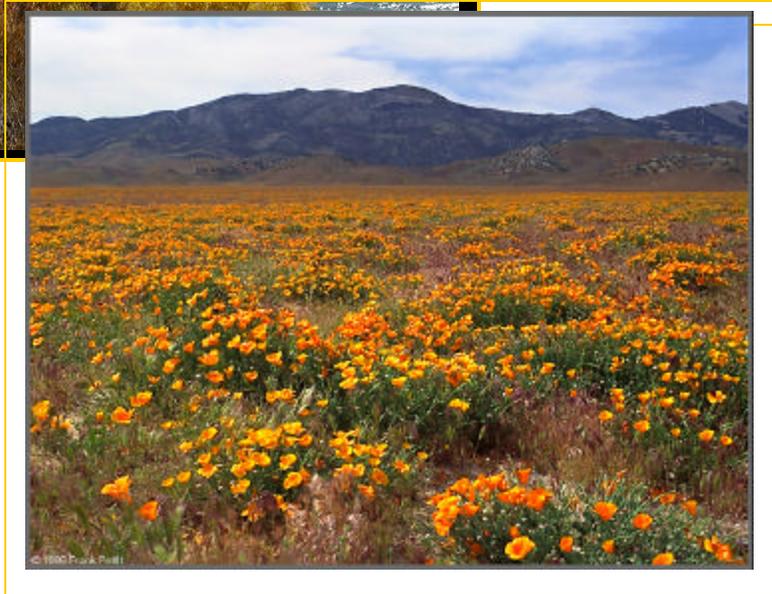
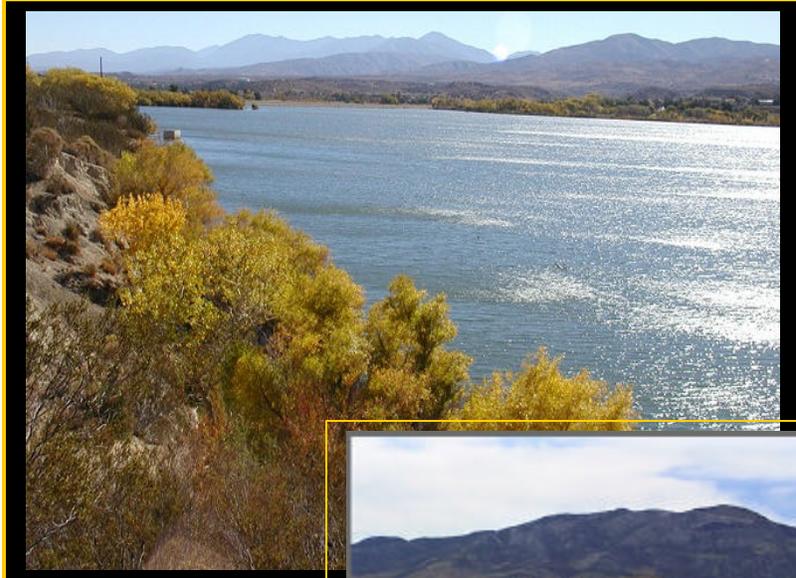


Local Agency Formation Commission  
for Los Angeles County



*August 25, 2004*

# Final High Desert Municipal Service Review

REPORT OF THE LOCAL AGENCY FORMATION COMMISSION FOR LOS ANGELES COUNTY

# High Desert Region Municipal Service Review

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# Executive Summary

The Local Agency Formation Commission has been tasked by the State Legislature to perform a comprehensive review of essential municipal services that are provided to the communities of the High Desert geographic region, also known as the Antelope Valley. The municipal service review is a requirement to updating the sphere of influence of a local agency. Spheres of influence are updated and reviewed no less than every five years and only as determined necessary by LAFCO.

LAFCOs were established by the Legislature to “discourage urban sprawl” and “encourage orderly governmental boundaries.” The Antelope Valley is an area of anticipated high growth in the County of Los Angeles within the next few decades. The main factor of growth and migration is the availability of affordable housing in comparison to Los Angeles where young families have been priced-out of the housing market. LAFCO’s mission is to ensure that the local agencies of the region are able to sustain this growth and encourage orderly development of governmental and district boundaries.

The region is mostly rural and suburban and comprised of large areas of unincorporated county territory. Lancaster and Palmdale are the region’s most populated cities and urban centers. Smaller pockets of populated communities exist within the unincorporated areas and include several communities, such as, Acton, Quartz Hill, Antelope Acres, Little Rock, Lake Los Angeles and others. The geographic boundaries for the purpose of conducting municipal review study areas were established according to watershed boundaries.

Like many local agencies within Los Angeles County, Palmdale and Lancaster are “contract cities,” in that they contract with the County of Los Angeles for fire protection and emergency medical services, law enforcement, and in the case of Lancaster, library services as well. The remaining municipal services are provided by the city or special districts. Eight special districts provide water to the region. Although, six additional water companies provide water within the MSR area they were not considered because they are private water companies, whose boundary service areas are not regulated by LAFCO. Wastewater services are provided by three county sanitation districts. There is one cemetery district, hospital district, mosquito abatement district, and conservation district, each providing service within the high desert area.

Staff recommends that that Commission approve and adopt the nine written determinations for the High Desert Municipal Service Review. In reviewing and updating the sphere of influence of the Cities of Lancaster and Palmdale, staff concludes and recommends that the spheres of influence of both cities should not be revised or expanded at this time and requests that the Commission approve and adopt the four written determinations of the City of Lancaster Sphere of Influence Update and the City of Palmdale Sphere of Influence Update.

## Municipal Service Review (MSR) Determinations

The Commission must adopt the following nine written determinations when approving municipal service reviews pursuant to Government Code Section 56430.

### Infrastructure Needs and Deficiencies

By the year 2020, the population of the Cities of Lancaster and Palmdale are expected to double from the 2000 Census estimates. Growth projections for the area could create a significant impact on service demand and response times in the region. There have been continuous efforts by services providers to increase capacity and improve infrastructure in anticipation of the on-coming growth. The existing infrastructure of both cities is sufficient to handle current and future needs for the region.

Two municipal service providers were determined to have infrastructure needs or deficiencies, County Sanitation Districts No. 14 and 35, and the Consolidated Fire Protection District of Los Angeles County (CFPD). Los Angeles County Sanitation District No. 14 is currently dealing with the increased volume of effluent discharge and environmental issues stemming from storm run-off during the winter rainy season. County Sanitation District No. 35 has never developed a sewage system. The District is in the process of adopting a mitigation plan which includes treatment facility upgrades and expansions, increased reclamation, agricultural reuse and municipal reuse of treated water. Both the City of Palmdale and CFPD have identified the need for additional fire stations and are working together to meet those needs. Plans to build two new stations exist and sites for other future facilities are currently being identified.

The region's transportation infrastructure along I-5, SR-14 and SR-138 must also be improved to meet growing demand and facilitate economic growth in the area.

### Growth and Population Projections

Lancaster and Palmdale are among the top ten fastest growing cities in LA County. The populations of both cities are fairly even. Significant future growth in population is anticipated for the cities, as well as the entire region. According to State Department of Finance data, as of January 2003, the population of Lancaster was 126,100, Palmdale's was 127,200 and the aggregate population of the High Desert Region MSR boundary area was estimated to be 323,244 residents. By 2020, the population of the region is expected to nearly double to approximately 621,483 residents. The biggest issue facing the region will be the availability of water supplies to meet the needs of the growing population.

### Financing Constraints and Opportunities

Many cities throughout the State of California have been hit by the State's budget crisis, placing constraints on many cities, especially those that rely on vehicle license fees. Both

Lancaster and Palmdale have seen an increase in real-estate transfer tax due to the high demand in housing and the attraction of affordable homes in the High Desert area. Lancaster and Palmdale increased their sales tax revenue by aggressively pursuing commercial interests as a means to overcome revenue shortfalls. Community leaders encourage economic development. Regional assets that make the Antelope Valley attractive to businesses include a state enterprise zone, a foreign trade zone, an airport and the availability of large areas of vacant land at affordable prices. The financial condition of Lancaster and Palmdale continues to improve.

#### Cost-Avoidance Opportunities

Both cities achieve economies of scale by contracting with the county for services, such as, police, fire, animal control and library services, in addition to providing transportation service to the region through a joint partnership. The Antelope Valley Transit provides critical transportation for many commuters in the region, in addition to senior and Para transit services.

#### Opportunities for Rate Restructuring

No government options that would lead to the restructuring of rates for municipal services were noted.

#### Opportunities for Shared Facilities

A significant sharing of facilities and resources occurs in the High Desert region. By developing a shared transit system and by contracting with the Los Angeles County Sheriff's Department and the inclusion of both cities in the Consolidated Fire Protection District, regional facilities are shared by the agencies and others. The Cities also utilize regional wastewater treatment and solid waste facilities. Other shared facilities and resources between County and local agencies include, parks and recreational facilities, schools, and libraries.

#### Government Structure Options

No policy options or government structure options are proposed as a result of the service review study. There are no recommendations to consolidate, detach, annex or dissolve service agencies within the region.

#### Management Efficiencies

Palmdale and Lancaster are well-managed cities, striving to improve the financial conditions of the city and quality of life issues for their communities. The cities have initiated studies of services and availability of resources, in order to improve services to their residents in the most cost effective way.

#### Local Accountability and Governance

Lancaster and Palmdale are responsive to the citizens of their community and encourage public participation at Council meetings, community meetings and workshops. Both cities publish and

mail informational materials to their residents advising them of community issues, city affairs, as well as, local activities, and events.

Recommendation:

Staff recommends that that Commission approve and adopt the nine written determinations for the High Desert Municipal Service Review.

## Sphere of Influence (SOI) Determinations City of Lancaster

Pursuant to Government Code Section 56425, the Commission must make the following four determinations when reviewing and updating the sphere of influence for the City of Lancaster.

Staff proposes no changes in the city's current sphere of influence. Future annexation requests and SOI amendments must take into account the availability of water and wastewater services at the time of filing.

### Present and Planned Land Uses in the Area

Planned land uses within the city's sphere of influence consist of 65% Rural Residential, 22% Urban Residential, 1.3% Multifamily Residential, 1.2% Residential, 8.5% Employment, 1.8% Public Facilities, and .4% Specific Plan.<sup>1</sup>

According to the Department of Conservation Farmland Mapping and Monitoring Program, small pockets of agricultural land, designated as Prime Farmland, exist east of the urban core center. Large areas of undeveloped territory exist north of the city boundary to the Kern County line and the San Bernardino County line to the east. Approximately 89% of land acreage in Lancaster, including unincorporated areas, is vacant.

### Present and Probable need for Public Facilities and Services in the Area

Lancaster provides adequate public facilities and services to meet the current needs of residents and businesses within the existing sphere of influence. The city has promoted projects for in-fill housing, thereby discouraging urban sprawl. As further development occurs in the future, a higher level of municipal services and additional or upgraded infrastructure and facilities will be needed.

### Present Capacity of Public Facilities and Adequacy of Public Services

Lancaster provides sufficient municipal services to its residents and has the capability of providing increased services as the city expands.

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<sup>1</sup> Land use percentage was derived using data proved in the Lancaster General Plan, Table 4.0-1, for City Acres and Unincorporated County Acres.

Existence of any Social or Economic Communities of Interest

A variety of social and economic communities of interest occur in the area. The city's major commercial corridor is located east and west of the Antelope Valley Freeway, between Avenue I and Avenue L. There is one industrial park south of Avenue K, between Division Street and 5<sup>th</sup> Street East. Edwards Air Force Base is northeast of Lancaster, within its sphere of influence.

Quartz Hill is a significant unincorporated community to the southwest within the city's SOI. Other residential communities of interest outside of the City include Antelope Acres, the Serrano Ranch Specific Plan area, Del Sur, and Fairmont.

Recommendation:

In reviewing and updating the sphere of influence for the City of Lancaster, staff recommends that the Commission not revise or expand the city's sphere of influence and that the Commission approve and adopt the four written determinations of the City of Lancaster sphere of influence update.

## Sphere of Influence (SOI) Determinations

### City of Palmdale

Pursuant to Government Code Section 56425, the Commission must make the following four determinations when reviewing and updating the sphere of influence for the City of Palmdale.

Staff proposes no changes in the city's current sphere of influence. Future annexation requests and SOI amendments must take into account the availability of water and wastewater services at the time of filing.

#### Present and Planned Land Uses in the Area

Planned land uses within the city's sphere of influence consist of 1.2% Rural Residential, 9.7% Single Family Residential, 0.6% Multiple-Family Residential, 0.2% Mobile Home, 0.5% Commercial, 1.7 % Industrial, 0.4% Public Facilities, 4.9% USAF Plant 42, 0.4% Agriculture, 0.6% Park and Open Space, and 79.5% Vacant.

According to the Department of Conservation, Farmland Mapping and Monitoring Program, small pockets of agricultural land, designated as Prime Farmland and Grazing Land, exists east of the urban core center.

#### Present and Probable need for Public Facilities and Services

Palmdale provides adequate public facilities and services to meet the current needs of residents and businesses within the existing sphere of influence. The city has promoted projects for in-fill housing, thereby discouraging urban sprawl. As further development occurs in the future, a higher level of municipal services and the need for additional or upgraded infrastructure and facilities will arise.

#### Present Capacity of Public Facilities and Adequacy of Public Services

Palmdale provides sufficient municipal services to its residents and has the capability of providing increased services as the city expands.

#### Existence of any Social or Economic Communities of Interest

A variety of social and economic communities of interest occur in the area. Aerospace and

related industries are centered at USAF Plant 42, outside of the city, as is Palmdale Regional Airport. Commercial activity occurs at Palmdale Trade and Commerce Center, along Palmdale Boulevard, between Avenue P and 10<sup>th</sup> Street West. Industrial uses occur primarily around Plant 42 and Little Rock Wash.

Lake Los Angeles and Littlerock are unincorporated communities east of the city. Acton to the south and Leona Valley to the west are also unincorporated communities of interest. Several Mobile Home Park communities exist within the city. The communities of City Ranch, Rancho Vista, Ritter Ranch, Joshua Hills and Hillside Residential are specific plan areas within Palmdale.

Recommendation:

In reviewing and updating the sphere of influence for the City of Palmdale, staff recommends that the Commission not revise or expand the city's sphere of influence and that the Commission approve and adopt the four written determinations of the City of Palmdale sphere of influence update.

# Introduction

## *Introduction and Overview*

This report has been prepared by the Local Agency Formation Commission for Los Angeles County (LAFCO), in accordance with Government Code Section 56430 of the State of California Government Code. Effective January 2000, the State Legislature amended the Government Code requiring that LAFCO conduct a comprehensive review of municipal services and update the spheres of influence of all agencies under LAFCO's jurisdiction by December 31, 2005 and subsequently, every five years thereafter as necessary. The new legislative requirement directs LAFCO to conduct a comprehensive review of municipal service delivery and update the spheres of influence of all agencies under LAFCO's jurisdiction not less than every five years. This chapter provides an overview of LAFCO's history, powers and responsibilities.

### HISTORY OF LAFCO

After World War II, California experienced dramatic growth in population and economic development. With this boom came a demand for housing, jobs and public services. To accommodate this demand, the state approved the formation of many new local government agencies, often with little forethought as to the ultimate governance structures in any given region. This lack of coordination and inadequate planning led to a multitude of overlapping, inefficient, jurisdictional service boundaries and the premature conversion of California's agricultural and open-spaced lands. Recognizing this problem in 1959, Governor Edmund G. Brown, Sr. appointed the Commission on Metropolitan Area Problems. The Commission's charge was to study and make recommendations on the "misuse of land resources" and the growing complexity of local governmental jurisdictions. The Commission's recommendations on local governmental reorganizations were introduced to the Legislature in 1963, resulting in the creation of local agency formation commissions for each county.

### LAFCO RESPONSIBILITIES

LAFCOs were formed to discourage urban sprawl, preserve agricultural and open-spaced lands and encourage the orderly formation and development of local governmental agencies. LAFCOs are responsible for coordinating logical and timely changes in local governmental boundaries, including annexations and detachments of territory, incorporations of cities, formations of special districts, and consolidations, mergers and dissolutions of districts, as well as reviewing ways to reorganize, simplify, and streamline governmental structure. LAFCOs' efforts are directed toward seeing that services are provided efficiently and economically while agricultural and open-spaced lands are protected.

## L A F C O P O W E R S

Each LAFCO regulates boundary changes proposed by other local governmental agencies or individuals by approving or disapproving such changes, with or without amendment, wholly, partially or conditionally. Each LAFCO is empowered to initiate updates to spheres of influence, as well as proposals involving the dissolution and consolidation of special districts and the merging or establishment of subsidiary districts. Otherwise, LAFCO actions must originate as applications initiated by petition or resolution of a legislative body.

## C O M P O S I T I O N O F C O M M I S S I O N M E M B E R S

Pursuant to Government Code Section 56326, the Los Angeles County LAFCO is composed of nine regular Commissioners: two members from the Board of Supervisors; one representative from the City of Los Angeles; two members who represent the other 87 cities in Los Angeles County; two members who represent special districts; and two public members, one representing the public as a whole, and the other representing the San Fernando Valley Statistical Area. There are six alternate Commissioners; one from each of the above-membership categories.

### *Municipal Service Review Origins*

The municipal service review requirement was adopted after the Legislature's consideration of two studies recommending that each LAFCO throughout the State conduct reviews of local agencies. The Little Hoover Commission study focused on the need for oversight and consolidation of special districts, whereas the Commission on Local Governance for the 21<sup>st</sup> Century study focused on the need for regional planning to ensure efficient service delivery as California's population continues to grow.

## L I T T L E H O O V E R C O M M I S S I O N

In May 2000, the Little Hoover Commission<sup>2</sup> released a report entitled *Special Districts: Relics of the Past or Resources of the Future*. This report focused on governance and financial problems among independent special districts, and the barriers to LAFCO's pursuit of district consolidation and dissolution. The report raised the concern that "the underlying patchwork of special district governments has become unnecessarily redundant, inefficient and unaccountable."<sup>3</sup>

In particular, the report raised concerns about a lack of visibility and accountability among some independent special districts. The report indicated that many special districts hold excess reserve funds and some receive questionable tax revenues. The report expressed

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<sup>2</sup> The Little Hoover Commission, formally known as the Milton Marks "Little Hoover" Commission on California State Government Organization and Economy, is an independent state oversight agency that was created in 1962. The Commission's mission is to investigate state government operations and – through reports, recommendations and legislative proposals – promote efficiency, economy and improved service. By statute, the Commission is a balanced bipartisan board composed of five citizen members appointed by the Governor, four citizen members appointed by the Legislature, two Senators and two Assembly members.

<sup>3</sup> Little Hoover Commission. *Special Districts: Relics of the Past or Resources for the Future?* (Sacramento: Commission on Local Governance for the 21<sup>st</sup> Century, May 2000), 12.

concern about the lack of financial oversight of the districts. It asserted that financial reporting by special districts is inadequate, that districts are not required to submit financial information to local elected officials, and concluded that district financial information is “largely meaningless as a tool to evaluate the effectiveness and efficiency of services provided by the districts, or to make comparisons with neighboring districts or services provided through a city or county.”<sup>4</sup>

The report pointed to relatively low voter turnout rates and a greater frequency of uncontested elections among special districts than among city councils. Further, the report questioned whether special districts are providing adequate notice of public meetings.

In addition to concerns about the accountability and visibility of special districts, the report raised concerns about special districts with outdated boundaries and outdated missions. The report questioned the public benefit provided by health care districts that have sold, leased or closed their hospitals, and asserted that LAFCOs consistently fail to examine whether they should be eliminated. The report pointed to service improvements and cost reductions associated with special district consolidations, but asserted that LAFCOs have generally failed to pursue special district reorganizations.

The report called on the legislature to increase the oversight of special districts by mandating that LAFCOs identify service duplications and that LAFCOs study reorganization alternatives when: service duplications are identified, district insolvencies appear, district reserves are excessive, rate inequities surface, a district’s mission changes, a new city incorporates and when service levels are unsatisfactory. To accomplish this, the report recommended that the state strengthen the independence and funding of LAFCOs, require districts to report to their respective LAFCO, and require LAFCOs to study service duplications.

#### COMMISSION ON LOCAL GOVERNANCE

The legislature formed the Commission on Local Governance for the 21<sup>st</sup> Century (“21<sup>st</sup> Century Commission”) in 1997 to review current statutes on the policies, criteria, procedures and precedents for city, county and special district boundary changes. After holding 25 days of public hearings, wherein over 160 organizations and individuals, the “21<sup>st</sup> Century Commission released its final report *Growth Within Bounds: Planning California Governance for the 21<sup>st</sup> Century* in January 2000. The report examines the way that government is organized and operates, and establishes a vision of how the state will grow by “making better use of the often invisible LAFCOs in each county.”<sup>5</sup>

The report points to the expectation that California’s population will double over the first four decades of the 21<sup>st</sup> Century, and raises concern that our government institutions were designed when our population was much smaller and society less complex. The report warns that, without a strategy, open spaces will be swallowed up, expensive freeway extensions will be needed, and employment centers will become farther removed

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<sup>4</sup> Little Hoover Commission, 24.

<sup>5</sup> The Commission on Local Governance for the 21<sup>st</sup> Century ceased to exist on July 1, 2000, pursuant to a statutory sunset provision.

from housing, leading to longer commutes, increased pollution and a more stressful lifestyle. *Growth Within Bounds* acknowledges that local governments face unprecedented challenges in their ability to finance service delivery since the voters cut property tax revenues in 1978 and the legislature shifted property tax revenues from local government to the schools in 1993. The report asserts that these financial strains have created governmental entrepreneurship in which cities, counties and districts compete for sales tax revenue and market share.

The 21<sup>st</sup> Century Commission recommended that effective, efficient and easily understandable government be encouraged. In accomplishing this, the 21<sup>st</sup> Century Commission recommended consolidation of small, inefficient or overlapping providers, transparency of municipal service delivery to the people, and accountability of municipal service providers. The sheer number of special districts, the report asserts, “has provoked controversy, including several legislative attempts to initiate district consolidations”<sup>6</sup> but cautions LAFCOs that decisions to consolidate districts should focus on the adequacy of services, not on the number of districts.

*Growth Within Bounds* cautions that LAFCOs cannot achieve their fundamental purposes without a comprehensive knowledge of the services available within its county, the current efficiency of providing service within the county, future service needs, and expansion capacity of each service provider. Comprehensive knowledge of water and sanitary providers, the report argued, would promote consolidations of water and sanitary districts, reduce water costs and promote a more comprehensive approach to the use of water resources. Further, the report asserted that many LAFCOs lack such knowledge, and should be required to conduct such a review to ensure that medical services are logically extended to meet California’s future growth and development.

The state-mandated municipal service review would require LAFCO to examine consolidation or reorganization of service providers within a geographic area. The 21<sup>st</sup> Century Commission recommended that the review should include water, wastewater, solid waste, and other municipal services considered important to future growth. The Commission recommended that the service review be followed by consolidation studies and performed in conjunction with updates of spheres of influence. It also suggested that service reviews be designed to make nine determinations, each of which was incorporated verbatim on the subsequently adopted legislation.

#### MUNICIPAL SERVICE REVIEW LEGISLATION

The Cortese-Knox-Hertzberg Local Government Reorganization Act of 2000 requires LAFCO to review municipal services before updating the spheres of influence of local agencies.<sup>7</sup> This requirement verifies the need for a coordinated and efficient public service structure in support of 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 provided efficiently and cost-

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<sup>6</sup> Commission on Local Governance for the 21<sup>st</sup> Century. *Growth Within Bounds: Planning California Governance for the 21<sup>st</sup> Century* (Sacramento: Commission on Local Governance for the 21<sup>st</sup> Century, 2000), 70.

<sup>7</sup> California Government Code §56430(c).

effectively.

Effective January 1, 2001, Government Code Section 56430 requires LAFCO to conduct a review of municipal services provided in a county by region, sub-region or other designated geographic area, as appropriate, for the service or services to be reviewed, and prepare a written statement of determination with respect to each of the following:

1. Infrastructure needs or deficiencies;
2. Growth and population projections;
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 Government Code Section 56430. However, LAFCO, other local agencies and the public may subsequently use the determinations to analyze prospective changes of organization or reorganization to establish or amend spheres of influence.

Municipal service reviews are not subject to the provisions of the California Environmental Quality Act (CEQA) because they are only feasibility or planning studies for *possible* future action which LAFCO has not approved. (Cal. Pub. Res. Code § 21150) The ultimate outcome of conducting a service review however, may result in LAFCO taking discretionary action with respect to a recommended change of organization. Either LAFCO, if acting on its own, or the local agency that submits a proposal to LAFCO, will be considered the lead agency for purposes of CEQA and must conduct an appropriate environmental review prior to LAFCO taking action.

LAFCO is charged with preparing municipal service reviews and updating the spheres of influence of 180 local agencies. Given the enormity of the task, the Executive Officer has divided the county into nine geographic areas, based primarily on watersheds, for which MSR's are being prepared:

1. Catalina Island (completed May 12, 2004)
2. High Desert
3. Las Virgenes
4. Santa Clara
5. Northwest San Gabriel Valley
6. Gateway
7. Northeast San Gabriel Valley
8. South Bay
9. Los Angeles

The Local Agency Formation Commission for Los Angeles County has determined that certain special districts (cemetery, community services, garbage disposal, health care, library, recreation and park, resource conservation, and mosquito abatement) are subject to sphere of influence reviews and updates, but are not considered "backbone" municipal services. These special districts will be subject to abbreviated municipal service reviews and sphere of influence updates.

The MSR process involves agency review and public hearings prior to the Commissioner's decision on the nine determinations. The process involves the following steps:

**Preliminary Municipal Service Review:** During this step, LAFCO sent questionnaires (Requests for Information) to the agencies about their delivery of municipal services. LAFCO prepares the preliminary municipal service review report, and submits that report to the affected agencies for review. During or upon completion of the 30-day review period, LAFCO invites the agencies to discuss their comments and related policy options with the Executive Officer.

**Draft Municipal Service Review:** After receiving the agencies' comments, LAFCO makes report revisions and releases the draft municipal service review report to the Commission and to the general public 21 days in advance of the public hearing. LAFCO then holds a public hearing to consider public comment.

**Final Municipal Service Review:** At the public hearing, the Commissioners may proceed to reach the nine written determinations regarding municipal service review or may request report and resubmit it to the Commissioners at the next meeting.

**Sphere of Influence Update:** After making the nine written determinations, the commission may proceed to update the spheres of influence of the agencies covered in the municipal service review report. Affected agencies must be notified 21 days in advance of this hearing.

## High Desert Region Service Providers

### *About the Region*

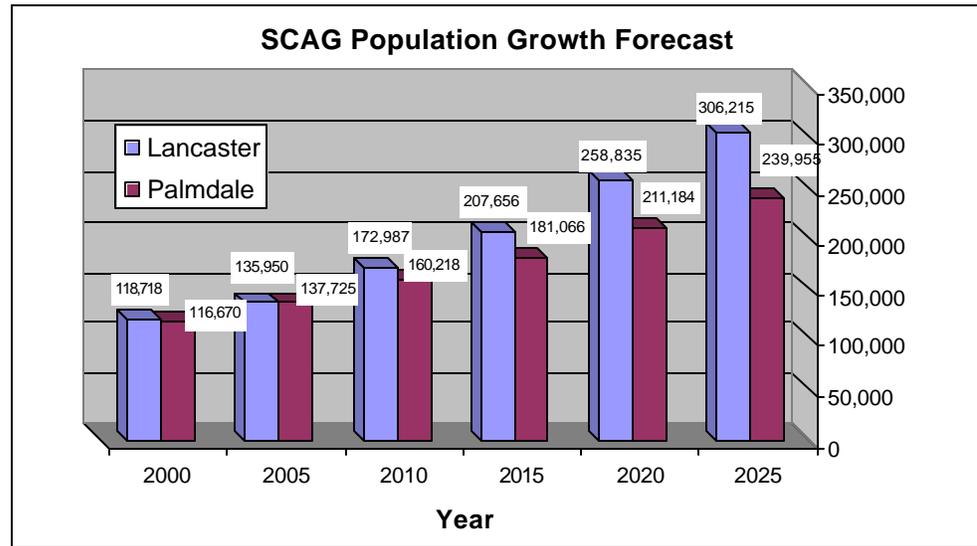
The High Desert Region, also referred to as the Antelope Valley, consists of elevated desert terrain, is located in the northernmost part of Los Angeles County, and includes the western portion of the Mojave Desert. To the south and proceeding east and west is the Angeles National Forest, to the northwest is the Tehachapi Mountain range, directly north is Edwards Air Force Base and to the east is the San Bernardino County line.

The following chapters give a brief review of local agencies providing municipal services to the High Desert or Antelope Valley region. The area includes the incorporated cities of Lancaster and Palmdale, and consists of large areas of mostly rural unincorporated county territory. A map of the High Desert MSR region is provided as Exhibit A. There are three main urban centers in the High Desert Region: Lancaster, Palmdale and the unincorporated community of Quartz Hill. Definitive communities of interest that exist within county unincorporated territory include: Acton, Antelope Acres, El Dorado, Juniper Hills, Lake Los Angeles, Quartz Hill, Westside Park, and White Fence Farms. The following “villages” are designated rural communities: Crystallaire, Elizabeth Lakes, Gorman, Green Valley, Lake Hughes, Leona Valley, Littlerock, Pearblossom, Sun Village, and Wrightwood. Other very low density rural communities in the unincorporated area include: Big Pines, Del Sur, Hi Vista, Llano, Neenach, Redman, Roosevelt, Three Points, and Valermo.

This report does not give a complete comprehensive review of special district service providers within the High Desert Region. Municipal Service Reviews and sphere of influence updates for special districts that provide essential or “backbone” municipal services will be published and acted on by the Commission at a later date.

## Growth and Population Projections

Figure ? 2-1 SCAG Growth Projections



According to the United States Census Bureau 2000 Census, in 2000 Lancaster had 118,718 residents and Palmdale had 116,670. SCAG, the Southern California Association of Government, is a regional planning agency that includes Imperial, Los Angeles, Orange, San Bernardino, Riverside, and Ventura Counties. The chart above shows SCAG 2005-2025 population projections based on the 2000 Census. Lancaster is estimated to grow by 187,497 residents and Palmdale by 123,285 residents, by the year 2025. The City of Palmdale noted that the SCAG projections were based on old data developed by SCAG in the 1990's when Lancaster population was expected to exceed Palmdale's. Palmdale states that SCAG's revised projections show that Palmdale is expected to be the fastest growing City in the region.

Table 2-2? U.S. Census Bureau Historical Census Population

| CITY      | 1960   | 1970   | 1980   | 1990   | 2000    | GROWTH RATE |
|-----------|--------|--------|--------|--------|---------|-------------|
| LANCASTER | 26,012 | 30,948 | 48,027 | 97,291 | 118,718 | 3.6         |
| PALMDALE  | 11,522 | 8,511  | 12,277 | 68,842 | 116,670 | 9.1         |

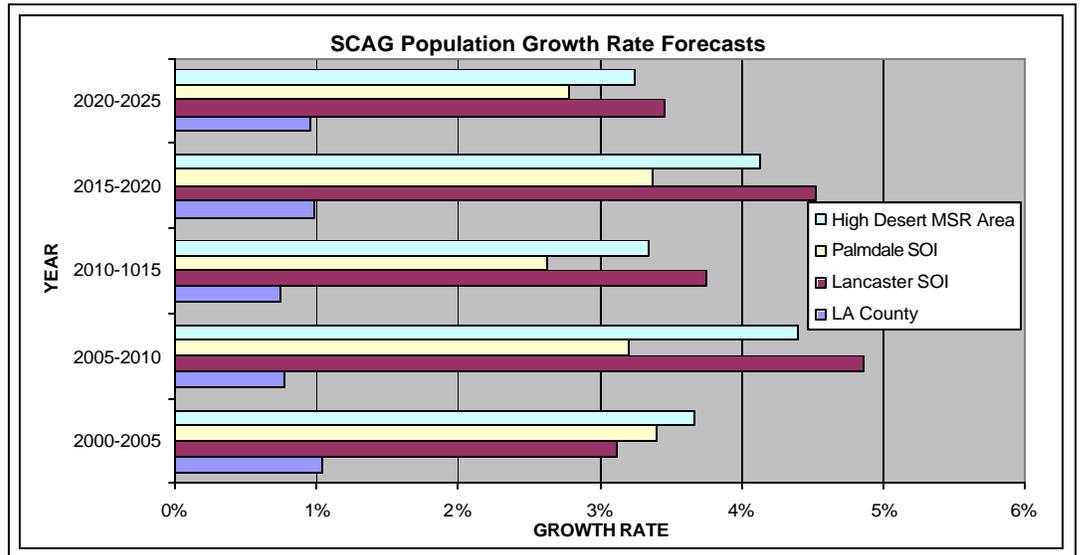
Historical census data shows that the populations of Palmdale and Lancaster have grown significantly since 1960. By 2000, the population of Palmdale had increased nine-fold and Lancaster's had nearly quadrupled.

\*Population 2000 is based on 2000 Census data with each census block assigned to the particular agency by the County of Los Angeles Urban Research Division. Projected population, employment and housing unit

data is based on the SCAG RTP 2001 annual growth rates, as applied to the 2000 Census data. These projections are based on 1990 census tract geographies.

The following chart depicts estimated future growth rates within the High Desert Municipal Service Review boundary area, as well as growth rates for Lancaster and Palmdale sphere of influence boundaries. The estimated growth rate for unincorporated Los Angeles County was included for comparison. Lancaster is anticipated to be the fastest growing city in the region, reaching its highest population growth rate of 4.9% from 2005 - 2010.<sup>8</sup> Growth rate for LA County, in comparison to the High Desert cities and region, will retain a relatively constant rate of 1%.

Figure ? 2-3 SCAG  
Growth Rate Forecast



### *Population, Housing and Jobs in the High Desert Region*

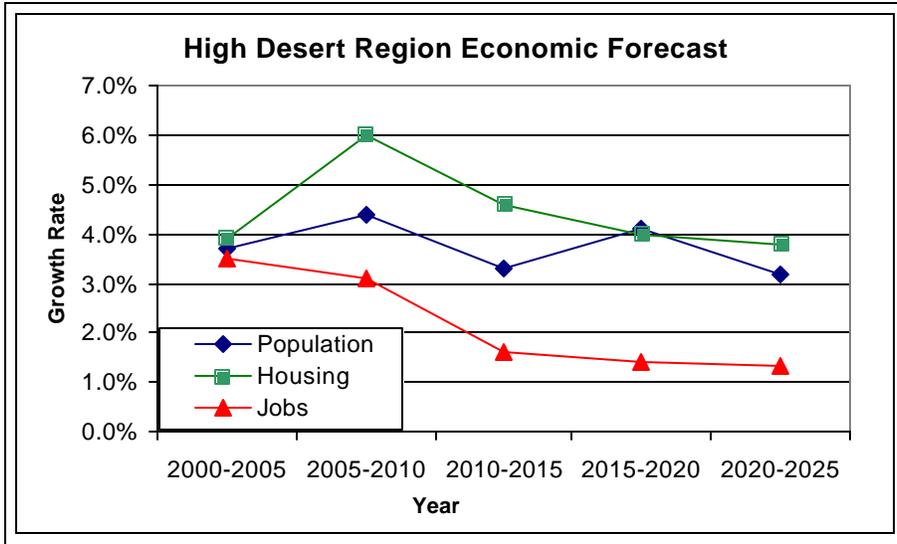
#### REGIONAL EMPLOYERS

Manufacturing is the largest sector of employment in the Antelope Valley. Employment is centered on the aerospace industry. Boeing, Lockheed Martin Skunk Works, and Northrop Grumman are the largest employers, located at USAF Plant 42, in Palmdale. In the government sector, Edwards Air Force Base is the largest employer and the largest non-aerospace employers are U.S. Borax, Anderson-Barrows and Kaiser Permanente.

<sup>8</sup> Population 2000 is based on 2000 Census data with each census block assigned to the particular agency by the County of Los Angeles Urban Research Division.

\*Projected population, employment and housing unit data is based on the SCAG RTP 2001 annual growth rates, as applied to the 2000 Census data. These projections are based on 1990 census tract geographies.

Figure 2-4? High Desert Region Economic Forecast



Housing demands will continue to increase at higher levels than the rest of the county. Growth rates for population, housing and employment indicate that a significant number of residents in the region commute to work. The chart at left reflects a growing disparity between population and job creation. For information regarding average commuting times for High Desert residents see Chapter 3, page 27.

## *List of Service Providers*

LAFCO is required to review services for agencies with spheres of influence. The following table provides a list of all agencies having spheres of influence that provide municipal services within the High Desert Region geographic area, in addition to a schedule of municipal service review and sphere of influence update actions. Service providers include cities and special districts within Los Angeles County whose boundaries are within LAFCO's jurisdiction.

A municipal service review and sphere of influence update of all non-essential service districts was completed prior to the publication of this report. LAFCO determined that abbreviated studies would be performed on non-essential municipal service districts, such as, cemetery, resource conservation, healthcare, etc. Separate municipal service review studies will be implemented for all water and wastewater providers within LA County.

Table 2-5? Regional Service Providers

| <b>Agency</b>  | <b>Municipal Service Review</b> | <b>Sphere of Influence Update</b> |
|--|---------------------------------|-----------------------------------|
| City of Lancaster                                    | Yes                             | Yes                               |
| City of Palmdale                                     | Yes                             | Yes                               |
| Antelope Valley Healthcare/Hospital District         | Yes                             | Completed                         |
| Antelope Valley Resource Conservation District       | Yes                             | Completed                         |
| Antelope Valley Mosquito and Vector Control District | Yes                             | Completed                         |
| Antelope Valley-East Kern Water Agency               | Yes                             | Subject to separate action.       |
| County Sanitation Districts No.14                    | Yes                             | Subject to separate action.       |
| County Sanitation District No. 20                    | Yes                             | Subject to separate action.       |
| County Sanitation District No. 35                    | Yes                             | Subject to separate action.       |
| Consolidated Fire Protection District                | Yes                             | Subject to separate action.       |
| County Waterworks District #37- Acton                | Yes                             | Subject to separate action.       |
| County Waterworks District #40- Antelope Valley      | Yes                             | Subject to separate action.       |
| Lancaster Cemetery District                          | Yes                             | Completed                         |
| Littlerock Creek Irrigation District                 | Yes                             | Subject to separate action.       |
| Palm Ranch Irrigation District                       | Yes                             | Subject to separate action.       |
| Palmdale Water District                              | Yes                             | Subject to separate action.       |
| Quartz Hill Water District                           | Yes                             | Subject to separate action.       |
| West Valley County Water District                    | Yes                             | Subject to separate action.       |

## *Municipal Services*

The Cities of Lancaster and Palmdale provide a wide range of municipal services to their residents, parks and recreational services, land use planning, street maintenance, flood control and storm water disposal, housing and transportation services. Law enforcement is provided through contract with the Los Angeles County Sheriff's department. Fire protection and emergency medical services are provided to Lancaster and Palmdale through annexation to the County's Consolidated Fire Protection District (CFPD).

## Municipal Service Review Determinations

### *Infrastructure Needs and Deficiencies*

LAFCO's role is to assess whether a local agency is able to provide needed resources to its residents at the present time and whether it is capable of meeting anticipated future resource demands within the agency's boundary and sphere of influence.

In areas where high growth is anticipated, it is particularly important for LAFCO to evaluate whether the city has the current capacity and infrastructure necessary to maintain and meet future demand. Consideration must be given to the agency's long-term infrastructure plans and available resources.

There have been continuous efforts by services providers in the region to increase capacity and improve infrastructure in the Antelope Valley Region. The County Sanitation Districts have recently upgraded treatment facilities and increased capacity to accommodate demand growth. Mitigation efforts are being adopted by County Sanitation District No. 14 to mitigate the impacts of increasing effluent flow. The three major landfills in the region, Lancaster Landfill, Antelope Valley I and Antelope Valley II have recently expanded permitted landfill capacity.

The City of Palmdale plans to donate land for the development of two new fire stations and is working with the CFPD to identify other future sites as developments take place and demand increases. The proposed City Ranch community in Palmdale will require the addition of a fire station, once development takes place.

*Regional Facilities*

Fire protection and emergency medical services are provided to the High Desert Region by the Consolidated Fire Protection District of Los Angeles County, which is a special district. CCPD Battalions 11 and 17 have jurisdiction in the MSR area. Fire protection and emergency medical service for the City of Lancaster and the surrounding unincorporated area is adequate to meet the needs and demands of the current population. The City of Palmdale reported that there is a shortfall in the number of fire stations needed in the City. It is working with the CFPD to build two new stations, Fire Station 93 and Fire Station 136, and identify potential sites for future facilities.

*Funding*

Funding of fire protection and emergency medical services is through a portion of the ad valorem tax and special tax assessment of homeowners. Replacement, upgrading and construction of new facilities are also offset by developer mitigation fees imposed by the cities.

*Rating Standards and Response Times*

The Consolidated Fire Protection District does not have a regional breakdown of response times but is currently working on implementing a process to provide the data.<sup>9</sup> Average response times provided are for the entire district. Median response time reported for FY 2002-03 was 4.5 minutes for Urban areas, 5.6 minutes for Suburban and 7.3 minutes for Rural areas.

The District strives to maintain the State's Emergency Medical Services Authority Standards for providing emergency medical services. For basic life support calls the State standard is 5 minutes for Metro/Urban areas and 15 minutes for Suburban/Rural areas. For advanced life support calls the standard response times are 8 minutes for Metro/Urban areas and 20 minutes for Suburban/Rural areas.<sup>10</sup>

The Insurance Service Organization (ISO), an independent private insurance research group that rates fire departments on their ability to provide protection. The ISO uses a rating scale of 1 (best protection) to 10 (least protection) to rate city fire departments on a national basis. Ratings for CFPD vary according to location. According to the Fire District, CFPD generally has a Class 4 ISO rating for the entire developed Antelope Valley Region, which is considered good-adequate for an urban area.

*Service Calls*

Approximately 72% of the CFPD's service calls are for emergency medical services. Calls for fire incidents constitute only 4% of the total number of calls for fire service in

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<sup>9</sup> Interview with Los Angeles County Fire Department, Planning Division February 23, 2004.

<sup>10</sup> California Emergency Medical Services Authority. *EMS System Standards and Guidelines*, 1993.

the region. The remaining calls are 12% for false alarms and 12% for other (miscellaneous). The chart below gives the number and type of incidents for each fire station in the region.

Table ? 3-1 CFPD  
Service Call Incidents

| <b>Consolidated Fire Protection District<br/>Number and Type of Incident by Fire Station Jurisdiction<br/>1/1/03 - 12/31/03</b> |                     |              |                |              |               |               |
|---|---------------------|--------------|----------------|--------------|---------------|---------------|
| <b>City</b>   | <b>Fire Station</b> | <b>Fire</b>  | <b>Medical</b> | <b>False</b> | <b>Other*</b> | <b>Total</b>  |
| <b>Lancaster</b>  | <b>FS 33</b>        | 228          | 4,881          | 825          | 640           | 6,574         |
|   | <b>FS 84</b>        | 66           | 1,450          | 176          | 278           | 1,970         |
|   | <b>FS 112</b>       | 10           | 71             | 17           | 30            | 128           |
|   | <b>FS 117</b>       | 84           | 1,253          | 159          | 211           | 1,707         |
|   | <b>FS 129</b>       | 59           | 918            | 189          | 221           | 1,387         |
|   | <b>FS 130</b>       | 74           | 1,048          | 231          | 196           | 1,549         |
|   | <b>FS 134</b>       | 69           | 1,779          | 240          | 270           | 2,358         |
|   | <b>FS 135</b>       | 78           | 1,323          | 147          | 208           | 1,756         |
| <b>Palmdale</b>   | <b>FS 24</b>        | 110          | 1,540          | 473          | 306           | 2,429         |
|   | <b>FS 37</b>        | 175          | 2,515          | 480          | 332           | 3,502         |
|   | <b>FS 79</b>        | 31           | 276            | 26           | 200           | 533           |
|   | <b>FS 92</b>        | 109          | 950            | 144          | 213           | 1416          |
|   | <b>FS 131</b>       | 154          | 3,483          | 607          | 452           | 4,696         |
| <b>Total</b>  |                     | <b>1,247</b> | <b>21,487</b>  | <b>3,714</b> | <b>3,557</b>  | <b>30,005</b> |
| * Hazardous Materials, explosions, good intent and miscellaneous incidents  |                     |              |                |              |               |               |

## HOUSING

### *Affordability*

The High Desert Region of California is the most affordable housing region in the State of California. According to the California Association of Realtors (C.A.R.), the housing affordability index in the High Desert Region was 56 percent compared to Los Angeles which was 22 percent and the State of California, which was 23 percent as of January 2004. In other words, 56 percent of the households in the High Desert Region can afford to purchase a median income home. C.A.R.'s housing affordability index is based on the minimum household income needed to purchase a median-income home.

### *Housing Needs*

The Regional Housing Needs Assessment (RHNA) is a tool utilized by SCAG to determine projected housing needs for a particular city and whether the housing market currently meets those needs. These figures are based on the most current Census data, forecasted employment and projected growth for the region. The Fair Share Adjustment is utilized to project the needs and housing impact on lower income households in comparison to each community within a regional area.

The projected RHNA need for the entire SCAG- North Los Angeles unincorporated sub-regional area is projected to be 30,174 housing units needed by 2005. According to the RHNA, Palmdale will require additional housing units for 9,878 households and Lancaster will require construction of 7,205 additional housing units, by the year 2005, in order to keep pace with forecasted population growth and demands.

## PARK AND RECREATIONAL SERVICES

Lancaster and Palmdale both have a goal of providing 5.0 acres of park land per 1,000 residents. Parks are primarily funded through in-lieu development fees, impact fees, public financing districts, bond measures and grants.

Both cities provide a variety of recreational programs for children, youth/teens, adults and seniors. Recreational programs offered for children, youth and adults include instructional classes, and year-round day camps.

## LAW ENFORCEMENT

### *Funding*

Both cities achieve economies of scale by contracting with the Los Angeles County Sheriff's Department for law enforcement services. Lancaster's annual expenditure for contract law enforcement for Fiscal Year 2002-03 was \$11,531,637, or approximately 30% of the city's General Fund operating budget. Palmdale's annual budget expenditure for contract law enforcement was \$12,202,120, or 29% of the city's General Fund budget. Per capita expenditures for law enforcement are \$94 for Lancaster and \$99 for Palmdale, based on 2002 California Department of Finance Population estimates.

### *Regional Facilities*

Two Sheriff's stations under the jurisdiction of Region I service the High Desert Region. The Palmdale Station is located at 1020 East Palmdale Boulevard, Palmdale, CA and provides service to the City of Palmdale and surrounding unincorporated territory. Station area coverage is approximately 770.6 square miles. There are 167 sworn officers and 40 civilian personnel assigned to the Palmdale station. The existing facility is not adequate to meet the station's personnel needs and demands. A new 50,000 square-foot station is being built, which will have a lock-up cell and a 9-1-1 call center. The Lancaster Station services the City of Lancaster and unincorporated territory, including unincorporated communities, such as, Quartz Hill and Antelope Acres, and Lake Los Angeles. Area coverage for the Lancaster Station is 600.4 square miles. The station has 223 sworn officers and 74 civilian personnel assigned to it, and Lancaster recently hired eight additional officers to meet increasing needs for law enforcement in the area.

### *Service Demands*

In 1999, the Department had a total of 8,261 sworn officers on staff. That number has now grown to 8,861 sworn officers. According to the Sheriff's data, the crime rate for the High Desert region is high in comparison to neighboring communities, such as, Santa Clarita. The Part I crime rate per 10,000 for Lancaster in 2002 averaged 377, including the surrounding unincorporated area and 397 for the City of Palmdale and

the surrounding unincorporated area, compared to 205 Part I crimes committed per thousand population in the Santa Clarita Valley .<sup>11</sup>

*Response Times*

There are no established standards for law enforcement agencies in California relating to emergency response times, crime clearance rates or patrol staffing levels. Morgan Quitno is an independent private research and publishing company that ranks crime by state and city according to population size. Six crime categories are considered: murder, rape, robbery, aggravated assault, burglary and motor vehicle theft. The organization's 10<sup>th</sup> Annual Safest City and Metropolitan Awards, ranks Palmdale 210<sup>th</sup> out of 350 cities nationwide and the City of Lancaster at 252<sup>nd</sup>.

The following charts and data show the crime statistics for both cities and the surrounding unincorporated areas from 1999 to 2002. Part I crimes are Homicide, Rape, Robbery, Aggravated Assault, Burglary, Larceny Theft, Grand Theft Auto, and Arson. Part II crimes are, Forgery, Fraud, Felony and Misdemeanor Sex Offenses, Non-aggravated Assaults, Weapon Laws, Offenses against Family, Narcotics, Liquor Laws, Drunk/Alcohol/Drugs, Disorderly Conduct, Vagrancy, Gambling, Drunk Driving Vehicle/Boat, Vandalism, Warrants, Receiving Stolen Property, Federal Offenses without Money, Federal Offenses with Money, and miscellaneous Felonies and Misdemeanors.

Table 3-2?

**Area Crime Statistics  
LA County Sheriff's Department<sup>12</sup>**

| Station          | Year | Area  | Population Coverage |                            | Part I Crimes | Part II Crimes | Reported Incidents | Crime Rate Per 10,000 |
|------------------|------|-------|---------------------|----------------------------|---------------|----------------|--------------------|-----------------------|
| <b>Lancaster</b> |      |       | <b>City</b>         | <b>Unincorporated Area</b> |               |                |                    |                       |
|                  | 2002 | 523.5 | 124,218             | 34,464                     | 1,402         | 5,091          | 20,194             | 127.73                |
|                  | 2001 | 600.4 | 120,142             | 27,538                     | 1,702         | 4,892          | 19,324             | 130.85                |
|                  | 2000 | 600.9 | 118,718             | 28,738                     | 1,301         | 4,988          | 18,199             | 123.42                |
|                  | 1999 | 600.6 | 130,100             | 60,000                     | 1,511         | 5,642          | 18,519             | 97.41                 |
| <b>Palmdale</b>  | 2002 | 622.6 | 125,942             | 39,132                     | 1,663         | 4,119          | 21,604             | 130.87                |
|                  | 2001 | 770.1 | 119,806             | 41,045                     | 1,799         | 3,424          | 18,375             | 114.24                |
|                  | 2000 | 770.9 | 116,670             | 40,509                     | 1,643         | 3,256          | 17,376             | 116.90                |
|                  | 1999 | 771.6 | 120,100             | 36,000                     | 1,587         | 3,575          | 16,356             | 104.78                |

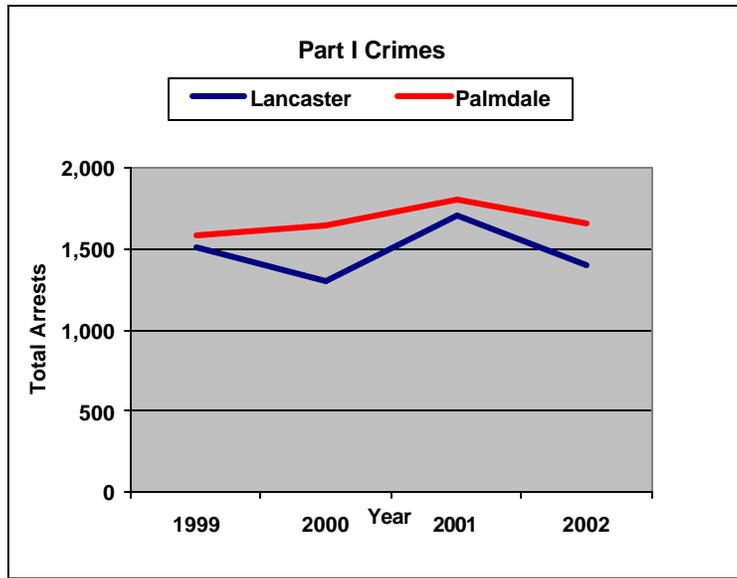
<sup>11</sup> County of Los Angeles Sheriff's Department. 2002 Crime and Arrest Statistics, 18.

<sup>12</sup> County of Los Angeles Sheriff's Department. Year in Review, 1999, 2000, 2001, and 2002.

### Part I Crimes

Part I crime rates are calculated according to the number of Part I offenses committed per thousand people. The data indicates that Part I crimes in Lancaster reached peak in 2001, and declined in subsequent years. Part I crimes have occurred at relatively the same rate in Palmdale since 1999. The overall rate of violent crimes per thousand people in Palmdale has increased from 104.78 in 1999 to 130.8 in 2002. In Lancaster the overall rate of crimes per thousand people has increased from 97.41 in 1999, peaked to 130.87 in 2001 and declined to 127.73 in 2002. Overall crime rate is calculated by the total number of Part I and Part II crimes per capita.

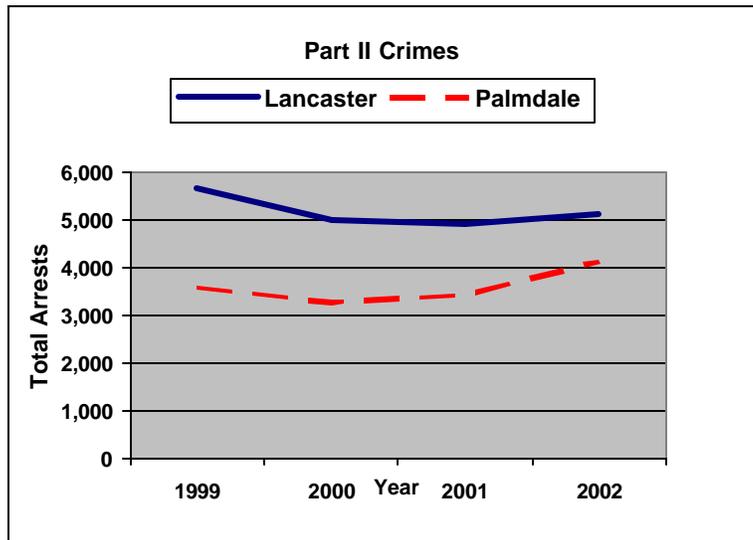
Figure 3-3? **Part I Crime Statistics**



### Part II Crimes

According to Department statistics, Part II crimes have declined in Lancaster but have steadily increased in the Palmdale area. The combined coverage area for both stations is approximately 1,301 acres, in 2002.

Figure 3-4? **Part II Crime Statistics**



### SOLID WASTE

Collection of residential, commercial and industrial wastes for both cities is handled by private haulers. There are three landfills that provide solid waste disposal for the area: Antelope Valley Public Landfill I and II, located at 1200 West City Ranch Road, Palmdale and Lancaster Landfill and Recycling Center, located at 600 East Avenue "F", Lancaster. All three landfills are owned and operated by Waste Management of California, Inc. In light of anticipated growth in the Antelope Valley area, Waste

Management has proposals to expand and bridge Antelope Valley Landfills I and II and expand the Lancaster Landfill.

Both Antelope Valley Landfill I and II service the Palmdale area. Antelope Valley Landfill I, located east of Landfill II, was established in the 1950s. It encompasses 72 acres, of which 57 acres is permitted for landfill operations. The landfill has a maximum permitted daily capacity of 1,869 cubic yards. Both landfills have a combined remaining permitted capacity of 12,209,000 cubic yards and an estimated remaining life of eighteen years.<sup>13</sup> Landfill II encompasses 98 acres of which 54 acres are permitted for disposal. The landfill has a daily maximum permitted capacity of 2,400 cubic yards. A proposal exists to bridge the two landfills and expand by 185 acres.

The Lancaster Landfill provides solid waste disposal services to the Lancaster area. It covers approximately 276 acres, of which 78 acres are currently permitted for waste disposal. The landfill has a remaining permitted capacity of 19,784,429 cubic yards and a maximum daily permitted capacity of 1,684 cubic yards. The estimated remaining life of the landfill is forty-two years due to its future expansion capacity of 209 acres.

#### T R A N S P O R T A T I O N

Rapid population expansion in the High Desert Region has had a direct impact on the freeway system, as the majority of people residing in north Los Angeles County commute to work, mostly to the San Fernando Valley or the Los Angeles Basin. Residents of the combined North Antelope Valley and South Antelope Valley reported in the 2000 Census that 92 % of the residents use a car, truck or van as a means to get to work. Of those residents 49% reported commutes of 30 minutes to 90 minutes or more, which translates into greater travel demands and commute times.

The Population Reference Bureau is an agency that studies and tracks population trends using the latest Census data. In its publication: *Going to Work: Americans' Commuting Patterns in 2000*, Palmdale residents were rated as having the longest average commute times to work (43 minutes) out of 245 cities polled nationwide with populations of 100,000 or more.<sup>14</sup>

The Antelope Valley transportation system will face challenging demands keeping up with the anticipated growth in the region. Severe traffic congestion already exists along the region's main highways and freeways - Interstate 5 (I-5), State Route 14 (SR-14 or Antelope Valley Freeway) and State Route 138 (SR-138). Interstate 5 is a main corridor for the movement of goods between the Ports of Los Angeles/Long Beach and the Central Valley. State Route 14 is considered a commuter corridor that is estimated to triple the volume of commuters by 2025. Safety issues are also a growing concern; the study indicates that accidents rates involving fatalities, along the I-5 and SR-14, are above the State average.

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<sup>13</sup> California Integrated Waste Management Board. *Los Angeles County Countywide Integrated Waste Management Plan, 2002 Annual Report*, Facility/Site Summary Details, 2004.

<sup>14</sup> Pollard, Kevin. *Going to Work: Americans' Commuting Patterns in 2000*. (Population Reference Bureau, 2000).

A North County Combined Highway Corridor Study was initiated to review the area's transportation issues. The study was conducted by the Los Angeles County Metropolitan Transportation Authority (MTA), in cooperation with the California Department of Transportation (Caltrans), the County of Los Angeles, and the Cities of Lancaster, Los Angeles, Palmdale and Santa Clarita, the Federal Highway Administration, and the Federal Transit Administration. The study, which has not yet been finalized, proposes short term goals (2010) and long term goals (2025) to improve traffic flow and freeway connectivity.

Short-range improvements include the expansion of SR-138 from one lane to two lanes in each direction from Avenue T to the San Bernardino County line and the purchasing of new right-of-ways to implement the improvements. Along Interstate 5, improvements include the addition of an HOV and truck lane in each direction from the I-5/SR-14 interchange to Calgrove Boulevard and the addition of an HOV lane in each direction from Calgrove Boulevard to the I-5/126 Grade Separation. Improvements for SR-14 includes the addition of three HOV reversible lanes from the I-5/SR-14 interchange to Pearblossom Highway, two HOV reversible lanes from Pearblossom Highway to Avenue P and three continuous mix flow lanes from Sand Canyon Road to Avenue P.<sup>15</sup>

Long-range improvements include the possibility of constructing a new freeway/expressway between I-5 and I-15, the expansion of transit service along SR-138 to add three new express bus routes and construct seven new park-and-ride lots. Improvements along the I-5 corridor call for the doubling of lanes from four to eight and the tripling of transit service.

#### W A T E R

LAFCO has contracted with Dudek and Associates to perform comprehensive municipal service reviews of water providers in Los Angeles County. The water service MSRs are being conducted according to the regional areas adopted by the Commission. The MSRs include the Antelope Valley-East Kern Water Agency, Los Angeles Waterworks District #40, Littlerock Creek Irrigation District, Palm Ranch Irrigation District, Palmdale Water District, Quartz Hill Water District, and West Valley County Water District. Dudek's preliminary study of water providers in the High Desert Region concluded that there were no significant issues regarding service demands and infrastructure needs and that all water facilities and infrastructure for the region are adequate. The preliminary report was inconclusive as to whether projected demands could be met, given the information that was provided by the water agencies. The water districts however, did not report any significant concerns in meeting future demand needs.

#### *Ground Water*

The Antelope Valley ground-water basin, a primary source of ground-water for the region, comprises 1,580 square miles and covers parts of Los Angeles County, Kern County and San Bernardino County. Water run-off comes from Big Rock and Little

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<sup>15</sup> Parsons Transportation Group. *MTA, North County Combine Highway Corridors Study, Final Report (Los Angeles: County Metropolitan Transportation Authority, 2004.*

Rock Creek in the San Gabriel Mountains and from Cottonwood Creek in the Tehachapi Mountains. Water flows towards the basin at Rosamond Lake and also collects at Rogers Lake and Buckhorn Lake. The basin provides between 50-90 percent of the total water supply for the Antelope Valley.

The Antelope Valley Groundwater Basin is not an adjudicated basin, pumpers can extract without limits. Groundwater levels in the Antelope Valley Basin have decreased in recent years by approximately 18 feet due to excessive pumping of groundwater, primarily around Lancaster and Edwards Air Force Base. Land subsidence has occurred in these areas as a direct result of over-pumping, and had reduced aquifer-system storage by 50,000 acre feet (AF). Total storage capacity of the Basin is estimated to be between 68,000,000 AF and 70,000,000 AF and the annual recharge is between 31,200 to 59,100 AF/yr.<sup>16</sup> The latest available data for annual extraction is from USGS (United States Geological Survey) for 1995, when pumpage totaled 74,500 AF/yr.<sup>17</sup>

### *Imported Water*

Antelope Valley-East Kern Water Agency (AVEK) is the single wholesale supplier of water in the region and is also a retailer of untreated water for agricultural purposes. The agency's service area includes northern Los Angeles County, Eastern Kern County and a small portion of Ventura County. AVEK supplies imported water to all other water districts in the Antelope Valley with the exception of Palmdale Water District, Littlerock Creek Irrigation District and West Valley County Water District. The agency has a maximum entitlement of 141,400 AF/yr of water from the State Water Project (SWP) but averages 70,000 AF/yr in deliveries. The total amount of SWP water entitlements to the Antelope Valley is 153,800 AF/yr and includes allocations for AVEK, Palmdale Water District and Littlerock Creek Irrigation District.<sup>18</sup> Deliveries have been less than the total entitlements; full deliveries are anticipated for 2020.

## W A S T E W A T E R

### *County Sanitation Districts No. 14, 20 & 35*

The County Sanitation Districts of Los Angeles (CSD) are a confederation of independent county sanitation districts that operate under one or more joint powers agreements. CSD provides wastewater and solid waste management. The Districts are formed pursuant State of California Health and Safety Code Sections 4700 et seq. CSD's are enabled to construct, operate and maintain facilities for the purpose of collection, treatment and disposal of wastewater. Edwards Air Force Base and USAF Plant 42 maintain and operate their own independent wastewater treatment and disposal systems.

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<sup>16</sup> California Department of Water Resources. *Antelope Valley Groundwater Basin, California's Groundwater, Bulletin 118* (California Department of Water Resources, 2003).

<sup>17</sup> U. S. Department of the Interior, U.S. Geological Survey. *Simulation of Ground Water Flow and Land Subsidence in the Antelope Valley Ground-Water Basin, California* (USGS, 1997-2000) , 70.

<sup>18</sup> County of Los Angeles, Dept. of Public Works. *Waterworks Dist.40, 2000 Urban Water Management Plan* (Los Angeles: Los Angeles County Department of Public Works, 2000) ,6.

The County Sanitation District charges new users or developers a connection fee, which goes into a separate Capital Improvement Fund to finance any future improvements as needed.

Although, both the Lancaster and Palmdale Water Reclamation Plants expanded in the mid-1990s to accommodate demand growth, disposal of effluent is still a concern for the Lancaster Water Reclamation Plant because of geographic constraints. There are no natural outlets, such as rivers or oceans for effluent disposal. Leaching and protection of ground water quality is also of concern.<sup>19</sup>

The District is in the process of finalizing and adopting an Environmental Impact Report for the Lancaster Water Reclamation Plant 2020 Facilities Plan (LWRP 2020 Plan). The LWRP 2020 Plan outlines County Sanitation District No. 14’s plan to mitigate the impacts of increased effluent flow, and treatment of bio-solids and sludge in the Lancaster area in order to meet future growth demands. There are community concerns regarding current management of the District’s wastewater process.

The “2020 Plan” includes facility upgrades and expansion for agricultural reuse. The District is in the process of purchasing or leasing 4,170 acres of vacant land, which will then be leased for farming of alfalfa crops using treated water from the facility.<sup>20</sup> The alfalfa will not be used for human consumption. Providing water for alfalfa crops is a growing concern to farmers in the Antelope Valley where rising costs of agricultural water has driven out some alfalfa production.<sup>21</sup>

County Sanitation District No. 35, located in the Acton area, has never developed a sewage system. At one time it was expected to be an area of high growth however, the number of residents has not increased significantly and demand is low.

T A B L E 3 - 5 ? C S D D E M O G R A P H I C S

| SANITATION DISTRICT | BOUNDARY AREA | POPULATION SERVED |
|---------------------|---------------|-------------------|
| CSD No. 14          | 29,118 acres  | 135,387           |
| CSD No. 20          | 20,650 acres  | 97,019            |
| CSD No. 35          | 6,681 acres   | 13,916            |

<sup>19</sup> County Sanitation Districts of Los Angeles County. *Comprehensive Annual Financial Report* (Los Angeles: County Sanitation Districts, 2002).

<sup>20</sup> Interview Sagar Raksit, Los Angeles County Sanitation District and LWRP 2020 Plan EIR, 3/24/04.

<sup>21</sup> California Farmer, 2003.

### Financing Constraints and Opportunities

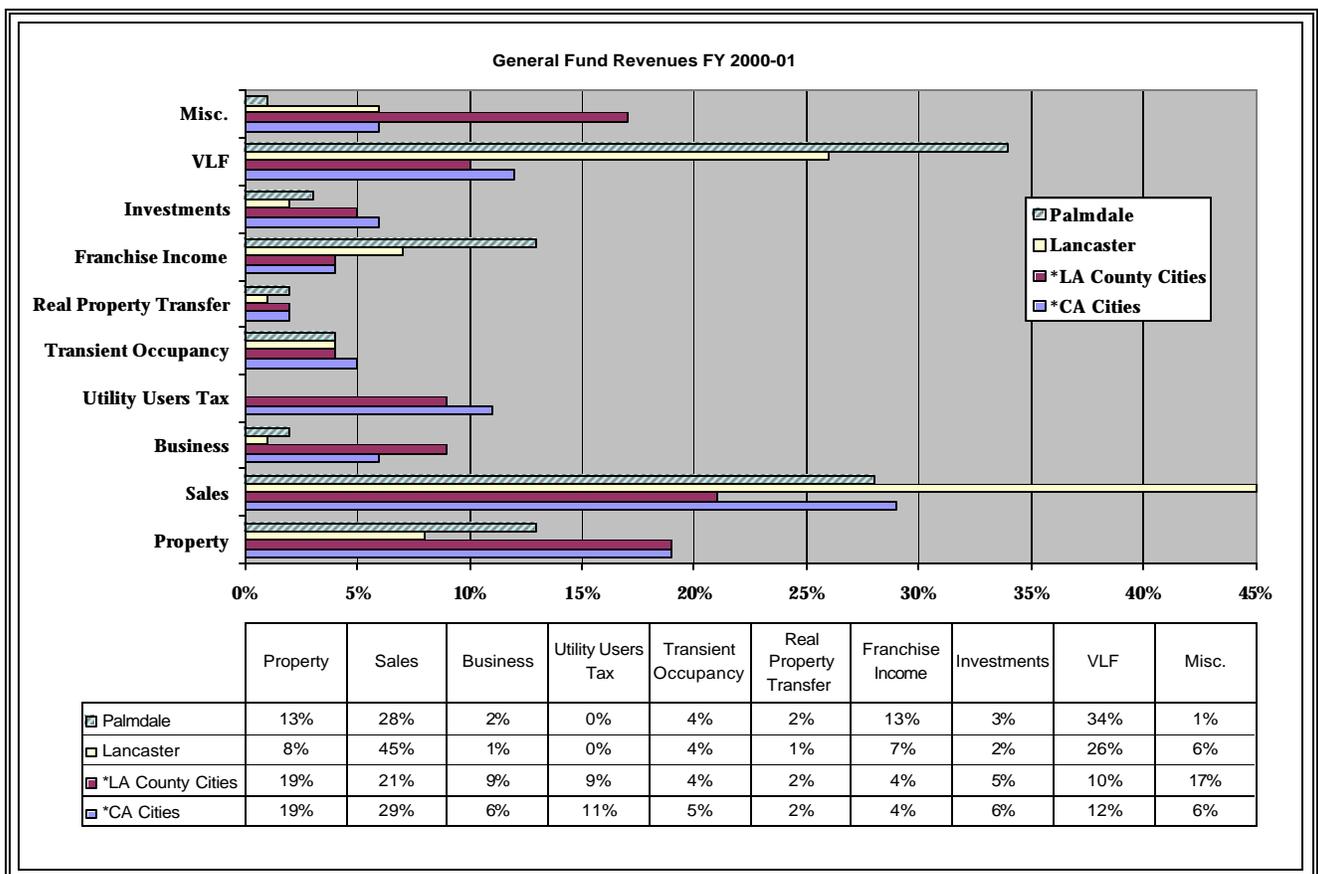
It is safe to say that Palmdale and Lancaster avoid the costs of unnecessary financial obligations for capital improvements and maintenance associated with new development. Costs for new services and infrastructure are borne by developers through mitigation fees, in-lieu fees, and impact fees and does not directly affect existing residents or have a negative fiscal impact on the cities.

Los Angeles County Sheriff Lee Baca has proposed a tax initiative to help fund increasing demands and costs for police services. The initiative, slated for the November 2004 election ballot, would increase sales tax by a half-cent.

The Consolidated Fire Protection District identified one funding constraint.<sup>22</sup> The CFPD maintains that it lost approximately \$543,000 in operating revenue from City of Palmdale redevelopment areas in 2002-2003. Tax increment monies go directly to the Community Redevelopment Agency. Whereas, some cities have given CFPD full pass through, the City of Palmdale has not. This is an annual loss through the life of the redevelopment project

The chart below shows general fund revenue shares received by the Cities of Palmdale and Lancaster for fiscal year 2000-01 and compares it to the average fund revenues reported by cities within Los Angeles County and the State of California.

Figure ? 3-6  
General Fund  
Revenues



<sup>22</sup> Interview with Los Angeles County Fire Department, Planning Division February 23, 2004.

CITY OF PALMDALE

Palmdale's General Fund Revenues for FY 2000-2001 totaled \$20,474,416. General fund dollars per capita average \$175.<sup>23</sup> Vehicle license fees accounted for the highest share of general fund revenues 34%, compared to the State average of 12% and 10% for the average city in Los Angeles County. The second highest share of general fund revenues is sales tax, which constituted 28%, compared to the State average of 29% and County average of 21%. The city also received 13% of its general fund revenue in franchise income, which was 9% higher than the State average and 5% higher than the average for all cities within the County. Property taxes constituted 13% of the revenue share. The remaining revenue received for business tax, transient occupancy tax, real property transfer tax, and investments were modest compared to State averages. The city does not have a utility users' tax. Palmdale maintains an average general fund reserve ratio of 5-8%.

CITY OF LANCASTER

Lancaster's General Fund Revenues for FY 2000-2001 totaled \$28,115,912. The average for all California Cities was \$497 of general fund revenues spent per capita. Lancaster's average was \$237 per capita.<sup>24</sup> Sales tax accounts for the highest share of general fund revenues, 45% compared to the State average of 29%. The second highest share of general fund revenues was from vehicle license fees, which constituted 25%, in comparison to the State average of 11%. The city also received 7% of its general fund revenue in franchise income, which is 3% higher than the State average. The remaining revenue received for property tax, business tax, transient occupancy tax, real property transfer tax, and investments were modest compared to State averages. The City of Lancaster does not have a utility users' tax.

Most healthy cities maintain an average of 5-10 % general fund balance in reserve. Lancaster City Council adopted an ordinance that requires the city to maintain a 10 % general fund reserve.

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<sup>23</sup> California State Controller. *Cities Annual Report Fiscal Year 2000-01* (Sacramento: Office of the State Controller, 2000-2001).

\*General fund revenue per capita is based on the 24-hour population including both residents and employees, with population data from the 2000 Census.

<sup>24</sup> State Controller, *Cities Annual Report Fiscal Year 2000-01*.

### *Cost Avoidance Opportunities*

Both cities provide a full range of services to its constituents with the exception of water and wastewater treatment. There is no duplication of municipal services. Cost reductions are fully practiced and economies of scale achieved through contracting of law enforcement services with the County Sheriff, by the provision of fire protection and emergency services through the Consolidated Fire Protection District, by utilizing available county services for animal control and library services, and through the operation of a joint transit authority to provide transportation services to residents in the region. In addition, other resources and facilities are shared on a regional basis due to geographic constraints and the practice of management efficiencies.

### *Opportunities for Rate Structuring*

There are no apparent governmental options for city services that would lead to rate variances and restructuring. Governmental services are provided as cost-effectively as possible.

### *Opportunities for Shared Facilities*

There is a significant sharing of facilities and resources in the High Desert region. The Antelope Valley Transit Authority is a joint powers authority, established between Los Angeles County, the City of Lancaster and the City of Palmdale, to provide unified transportation services between the jurisdictions. Regional law enforcement facilities are shared by cities, county, state and federal agencies. CFPD fire station facilities and resources are shared as there are no city jurisdictional boundaries. If the closest CFPD resource is busy, the next closest is dispatched, regardless of the municipality. Shared facilities also include parks and recreational facilities, schools, and libraries. Both cities also utilize regional wastewater treatment and solid waste facilities.

### *Government Structure Options*

LAFCO may consider the advantages and disadvantages of alternative government structure options. According to Government Code §56375(a), LAFCO is empowered to initiate certain changes of organizations, such as, district consolidation, dissolution, mergers, and establishment of subsidiary districts, in addition to reorganizations that include these changes of organization. The Legislature, in Government Code §56425(g), also encourages the Commission to recommend governmental reorganizations to particular agencies in the county, using sphere of influence updates as the basis for those recommendations.

Lancaster and Palmdale did not propose any alternative structure options. The City of Palmdale noted that less restrictive development standards within unincorporated county areas has resulted in opposition of property owners to annexation efforts.

In the past ten years, the City of Palmdale has processed nineteen proposals for annexations. Residents opposed only one annexation, that being the most recent. As a

result of protests from residents to City of Palmdale Annexation No. 2000-01A, the LAFCO called for an election, which was held on June 8, 2004. Out of eighty-one ballots cast, 75 voted in opposition to the annexation and six voted in support, thereby terminating the proposal. LAFCO recently received two requests for annexation; one proposal is to annex ninety-three acres and another is to annex 107 acres of unincorporated territory within the city's SOI. There are no future annexation requests for areas outside the current SOI.

A Draft Municipal Service Review of Water Service in the High Desert Region has been prepared by Dudek and Associates. It is scheduled to be adopted by the Commission in July 2004. The draft MSR of water providers identifies possible government structure options for Quartz Hill Water District, Los Angeles County Waterworks District #37 and County Waterworks District #40, however, no definitive structure options, such as annexations, detachments and consolidations were noted or recommended.<sup>25</sup>

### *Evaluation of Management Efficiencies*

Lancaster and Palmdale each have the characteristics of an efficient and well-run city that serve their residents effectively. Both cities strive to improve their financial situation in light of State budget constraints. The cities have initiated studies of services and availability of resources, in order to improve services to their residents in the most cost effective way.

#### CITY OF LANCASTER

The Government Finance Officer's Association (GFOA) awarded a Certificate of Achievement for Excellence in Financial Reporting to the City of Lancaster for its comprehensive annual financial report (CAFR) for Fiscal Year 2000-2001. Lancaster has received the award for at least sixteen consecutive years. Additionally, Lancaster was awarded the California Society of Municipal Finance Officers (CSMFO) Certificate of Award for Outstanding Financial Reporting for its CAFR for fiscal year 2000-2001 and the Certificate of Award – Excellence in Operational Budgeting. Lancaster has received CSMFO's Certificate of Award for Outstanding Financial Reporting for fifteen consecutive years. The city was also awarded the GFOA Award of Excellence for its valuable contribution in government finance, and the Distinguished Budget Presentation Award for fiscal year 2001-02.

#### CITY OF PALMDALE

The City of Palmdale was awarded a Certificate of Achievement for Excellence in Financial Reporting by GFOA for its CAFR for Fiscal Year 2000-2001. Palmdale has received the award for at least eleven consecutive years. The city also received GFOA's Distinguished Budget Presentation Award for fiscal year 2001-02. In addition, Palmdale was awarded the CSMFO Certificate of Award for Outstanding Financial Reporting for its CAFR for twelve consecutive years.

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<sup>25</sup> Dudek and Associates. *Draft Municipal Service Review Report, Water Service-High Desert Region* (Encinitas: Dudek and Associates, 2004).

## *Local Accountability and Governance*

Lancaster and Palmdale are governed by an elected City Council that is accessible, responsive and accountable to the needs of its residents. The cities actively encourage participation and inform residents of local agency meetings, plans and programs. Websites for each of the cities provides information on council meetings, agenda and staff reports; the city budget, a directory of contacts for city services and departments, and information regarding local events and activities. Informational publications and newsletters are sent to residents on a regular basis and provide constituents with a wealth of information on local agency activities, the city budget, community meetings and local events.

Lancaster has implemented an internet based complaint system that allows citizens to track the status of a complaint. Calls for complaints for both cities are generally referred to appropriate city departments, where calls are tracked and responded to.

## City of Lancaster

### *Background*

The City of Lancaster is located in northern Los Angeles County, approximately 70 miles north of downtown Los Angeles and the Kern County line. It is bordered by unincorporated county territory to the east, north and west, and the City of Palmdale to the south. The city limits encompass approximately 94 square miles.

Lancaster is a general law city that was incorporated on November 22, 1977 and is governed by a four-member city council and mayor elected at large. The council meets every 2<sup>nd</sup> and 4<sup>th</sup> Tuesday of the month. Minutes of those meetings are posted on the City's website.

Lancaster's sphere of influence boundaries encompasses 394 square miles and extends beyond the city boundaries. Within the city are islands of unincorporated territories to the southeast and west, and includes the community of Quartz Hill to the southwest. These islands were part of a special study area that was adopted in 1987 and revised in 1988. In 1996, Assembly Bill 296 temporarily granted expansion of Lancaster's sphere of influence to the east to include Edwards Air Force base and adjacent territory to the San Bernardino County line.<sup>26</sup> The bill expired on January 1, 2000. A map of the city and its sphere of influence boundaries is provided as Exhibit B.

The city anticipates future annexations of unincorporated territories as a result of future urban development proposals and expresses an ultimate desire to expand its sphere of influence to be coterminous with Los Angeles County boundaries to the east and west.

### CITY SERVICES

Lancaster is a full service municipal government that is responsive to the needs of its residents and many of the issues regarding growth and future development of the

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<sup>26</sup> City of Lancaster. Lancaster *General Plan* (Lancaster: City of Lancaster, 1997).

Antelope Valley. The city provides the following services to its residents:

- Animal Control Services (through contract with Los Angeles County Animal Control)
- Fire Protection and Emergency Medical Services (through the Consolidated Fire Protection District)
- Law Enforcement (through contract with Los Angeles County Sheriff's Department)
- Public park maintenance, recreational programs and services
- Land use planning and building regulation
- Street maintenance
- Street lighting (through Southern California Edison)
- Flood Control and storm water disposal
- Transit Services (by Antelope Valley Transit Authority – a JPA between the Cities of Palmdale, Lancaster and Los Angeles County.)

## City of Lancaster Services

### ANIMAL CONTROL

Lancaster contracts with the County of Los Angeles for the provision of animal control services to its residents. Services such as, animal licensing, care and boarding facilities are located at the local animal shelter facility in the city.

### ELECTRIC POWER AND UTILITIES

Electric power is provided to residents by Southern California Edison and gas is provided by Southern California Gas.

### HOUSING

In 2000, SCAG determined that the City of Lancaster Regional Housing Needs Assessment (RHNA) was 7,205 additional new housing units. The 2000-2005 assessment means that Lancaster will need 1,609 Very Low Income units, 1,241 Low Income units, 2,487 Moderate Income units and 3,895 Above Moderate Income units by 2005 to comply with regional population growth and community housing needs.<sup>27</sup>

Data for new housing construction was only available for 2002; the city reported that a total of 479 new single-family homes were constructed.

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<sup>27</sup> University of California Los Angeles. *SCAG Regional Housing Needs Assessment*  
<<http://api.ucla.edu/rhna/RegionalHousingNeedsAssessment/RHNABackground/PDF8aRHDP.pdf>>

LAND USE AND PLANNING

The last land use survey for Lancaster was conducted in 1996. The chart below shows the percentage of existing developed land use distribution within the Lancaster General Plan Study area. Within the city boundaries, approximately 80% of the total land acreage was undeveloped and within the unincorporated areas approximately 96 % was undeveloped.<sup>28</sup>

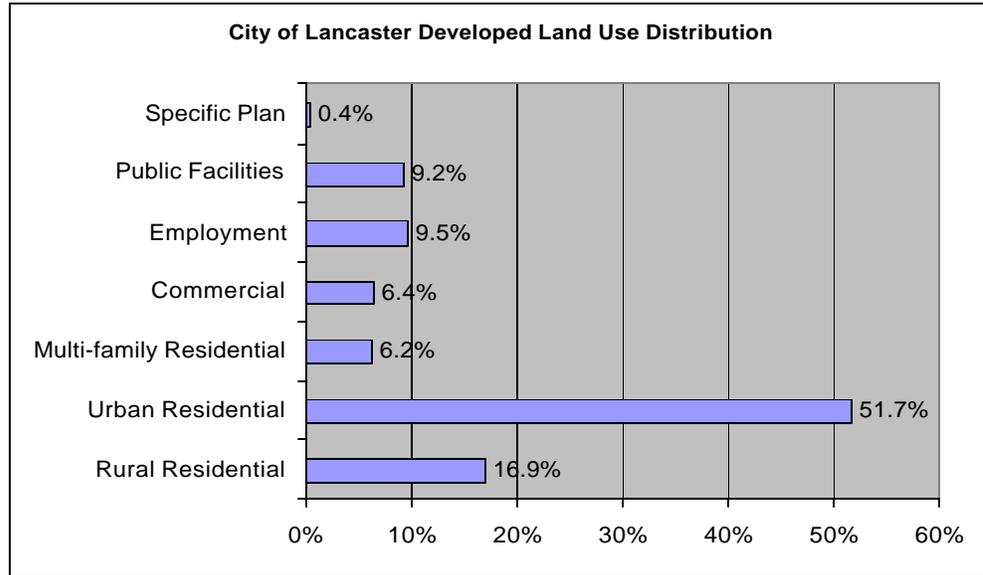


Figure ? 4-1 Lancaster Land Use Distribution

RECREATION AND PARKS

Lancaster has 460 acres of developed park land and currently has plans to develop three new parks totaling 141 acres. The new parks include, Whit Carter Park, a 62-acre community park, a twelve-acre neighborhood park on Lancaster Boulevard that is part of a downtown redevelopment effort and a 67-acre youth baseball and soccer facility.

The city provides a variety of programs for youth and adults and seniors. The Department operates three cultural facilities, a performing arts center, historical center and a museum/art gallery.

A variety of recreational programs are offered for children, youth, adults and seniors. Programs for adults include instructional classes and sports activities. Programs for children and youth include instructional classes, sports and team programs, and day camps.

SOLID WASTE

Solid waste disposal is available through Waste Management of California, a private hauler for the region.

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<sup>28</sup> City of Lancaster, *General Plan*, 4.0-1- 4.0-2. Percentage of undeveloped land use was derived from the tables provided.

## STREET MAINTENANCE

The city provides street maintenance, street sweeping and traffic engineering services for roads within the city limits.

## TRANSPORTATION

Antelope Valley residents have some of the longest commutes in the nation. As reported in the 2000 Census, the mean travel time to work for residents of Lancaster was 32 minutes; in comparison to the rest of the nation where the average mean time to work is 26 minutes. Regional transportation issues affecting the quality of life for Lancaster residents are addressed further in Chapter 3.

Local transit services are provided by the Antelope Valley Transit Authority. The agency provides bus, commuter and para-transit services for seniors and the disabled. Commuter bus service is provided to Los Angeles and the San Fernando Valley.

### City of Lancaster Service Providers

## CONSOLIDATED FIRE PROTECTION DISTRICT

The Consolidated Fire Protection District of Los Angeles County (CFPD) is the contract provider for fire protection and emergency medical services to Lancaster and the surrounding unincorporated county areas. The area is mainly served by Battalion 11 however, all CFPD stations within the region provide response to calls depending on proximity of the location and type of call.

The CFPD received an estimated \$8,400,000 in year 2002-2003, based on the total assessed value of land. When divided by the total population of the city, 123,000 residents in 2002, the average amount received per capita was \$68. To offset the impact of development in high growth areas, such as Lancaster, the Los Angeles Board of Supervisors adopted a Developer Fee Fire Station Plan in 1991 for the benefit of the District. The developer fee, which is currently \$0.37 per square foot, is used to fund new fire stations and apparatus equipment. Lancaster is one of five cities in Los Angeles County that has adopted the District's developer fee plan. The other four cities are Agoura Hills, Calabasas, Malibu and Santa Clarita. Although a definite location has not been determined, a new fire station, Fire Station 113, is to be constructed in the vicinity of 70<sup>th</sup> Street West and Avenue K.

There are eight fire stations within the City of Lancaster sphere of influence that have "first-in" response jurisdiction<sup>29</sup> (see attached map Exhibit D). Types of apparatus equipment are explained in Chapter 9.

**FIRE STATION 33** – 44947 Date Ave. is the base station for Battalion 11 Headquarters and is equipped with an engine, a quint, a paramedic squad and is staffed by nine firefighters, three of whom are paramedics.

**FIRE STATION 84** – 5030 West Avenue L-12 serves the Quartz Hill area and is equipped with an engine, a squad and a patrol vehicle. It is staffed by five firefighters,

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<sup>29</sup> City of Lancaster, *General Plan*.

three of whom are paramedics.

**FIRE STATION 112** – 8812 W. Avenue E-8, houses a volunteer fire company that services the Antelope Acres community, and is equipped with an engine and staffed by nine paid call firefighters.

**FIRE STATION 117** – 44851 30<sup>th</sup> Street East, is equipped with an engine and a watertender. The fire station is staffed by four full-time firefighters.

**FIRE STATION 129** – 42110 6<sup>th</sup> Street West, is the Division Headquarters. It is equipped with an engine, an emergency support team, a squad and a paramedic squad. Station 129 is staffed by seven firefighters, three of whom are paramedics, and also serves as the headquarters for the Antelope Valley's Assistant Chief.

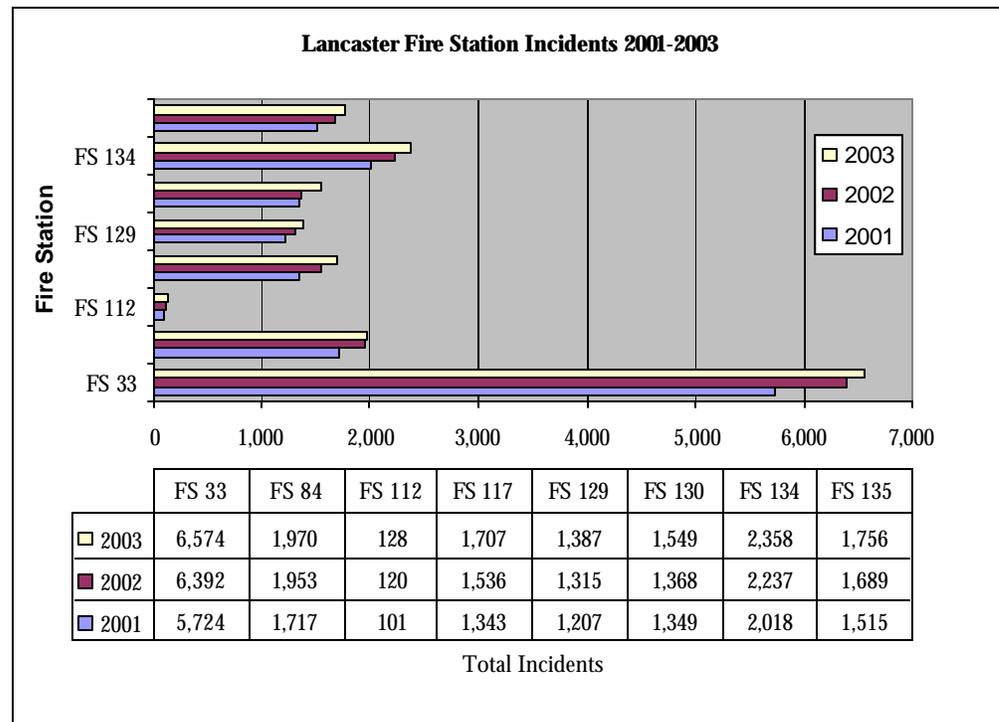
**FIRE STATION 130** – 4558 40<sup>th</sup> Street West, is a three-person engine company.

**FIRE STATION 134** – 43225 North 25<sup>th</sup> Street West, consists of a three-person engine company and a three person Urban Search and Rescue squad, which combined are referred to as a USAR task force.

**FIRE STATION 135** – 1846 East Avenue K-4, is a three-person engine company.

The following chart provides data (years 2001, 2002 and 2003) on the total number of incidents for each fire station having principle jurisdiction in Lancaster. The number includes service calls made for fires, medical, false alarms and miscellaneous, in addition to calls for hazardous materials, explosions, and good intent.

Figure ? 4-2 Lancaster Fire Station Service Calls



## S H E R I F F

The Lancaster Sheriff's Station is located at 501 W. Lancaster Boulevard, Lancaster. It is a fairly new facility that is able to accommodate future growth needs. In addition, the station is shared with the Los Angeles County District Attorney's office, the California Highway Patrol, and the Los Angeles County Probation Department. There are 223 full-time sworn personnel and 59 full-time civilian personnel assigned to the station from 2002-2003. There were also 110 volunteers that helped staff the facility. The local agency recently added eight additional police officers to their contract. The ratio of officers to resident is 1:593, one officer per 593 resident.<sup>30</sup> In 2002, the Department reported 49,543 calls were received, of which 2,828 were emergency calls, 9,898 priorities and 36,817 routine. Officer-generated activity totaled 86,954 incidents, which included arrests, citations and other actions.

Response times reflect the high level of crime activity and high traffic collision rate the area. There are also geographic constraints because of the large number of unpaved roads and rough terrain. In Lancaster, the average response time reported by the Department for emergency calls was 5.23 minutes; priority calls averaged 14.87 minutes and routine calls averaged 145.53 minutes. In the unincorporated areas emergency calls averaged 9.3 minutes, priority calls 20.27, and routine calls average 87.06 minutes.<sup>31</sup> Interviews with Lancaster and Palmdale station personnel attributed the higher crime rates as a direct result of parolees being discharged in the area and increased recidivism.<sup>32</sup>

Lancaster station personnel indicated that current staffing is inadequate and the number of available units has remained static for the past several years, though there has been a steady increase in response times and overall crime rates. Future demands will not be met unless resources and the level of staffing are increased.

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<sup>30</sup> Per capita estimate is based on the current population of 132,314 as projected by SCAG and the number of contracted police officers.

<sup>31</sup> Response times were provided by the Department and averaged on a monthly basis.

<sup>32</sup> Interview with Lt. Andersen of the Lancaster Sheriff's Station and Lt. Meenke of the Palmdale Sheriffs Station.

## City of Palmdale

### *Background*

The City of Palmdale encompasses approximately 174 square miles and is located in north Los Angeles County, south of Lancaster and west of the San Bernardino County line. It lies between the foothills of the San Gabriel Mountains and the Mojave Desert.

Palmdale is a general law city that was established on August 24, 1962 and is governed by a four-member city council and mayor elected at large. City Council meetings are held every 2<sup>nd</sup> and 4<sup>th</sup> Mondays of the month. Minutes of the meetings are posted on the internet and will be televised in the near future.

The city does not anticipate any future annexations of unincorporated territories outside of its current sphere of influence. There are two annexation requests currently pending. A map of the city and its sphere of influence is provided as Exhibit C.

### CITY SERVICES

The City of Palmdale is a full service municipal government that is responsive to the needs of its residents and many of the issues regarding growth and future development of the Antelope Valley. The city provides the following services to its residents:

- Animal Control Services (through contract with Los Angeles County Animal Control)
- Fire Protection and Emergency Medical Services (through the CFPD)
- Law Enforcement (through contract with the Los Angeles County Sheriff's Dept.)
- Public park maintenance, recreational programs and services
- Land use planning and building regulation
- Library Services
- Street maintenance
- Street lighting (through Southern California Edison)
- Flood Control and storm water disposal
- Transit Services (by Antelope Valley Transit Authority – a JPA between the Cities of Palmdale, Lancaster and the County)

## City of Palmdale Services

### ANIMAL CONTROL

Palmdale contracts with the County of Los Angeles for the provision of animal control services to its residents. Services such as, animal licensing, care and boarding facilities are located at the local animal shelter facility in the City of Lancaster.

### ELECTRIC POWER AND UTILITIES

Electric power is provided to residents by Southern California Edison and gas is provided by Southern California Gas.

### HOUSING

In 2000, SCAG determined that the City of Palmdale Regional Housing Needs Assessment was 9,878 additional new units. The 2000-2005 assessment determined that the city would need to construct 1,974 Very Low Income units, 1,521 Low Income units, 2,487 Moderate Income units, and 3,895 Above Moderate Income units by 2005 to comply with regional growth and community housing needs.<sup>33</sup>

As of 2003, Palmdale met 45% of SCAG's housing construction goal, with 4,483 new housing units constructed. The majority of the units constructed were 2,516 units in the above moderate income range, 515 units were moderate income, 116 units low income, and 228 units very low income.

### LAND USE AND PLANNING

Palmdale's General Plan was adopted in 1993. There have been no updates on the city's existing land uses since then. The chart below shows the percentage of land use distribution within the city's general plan study area.

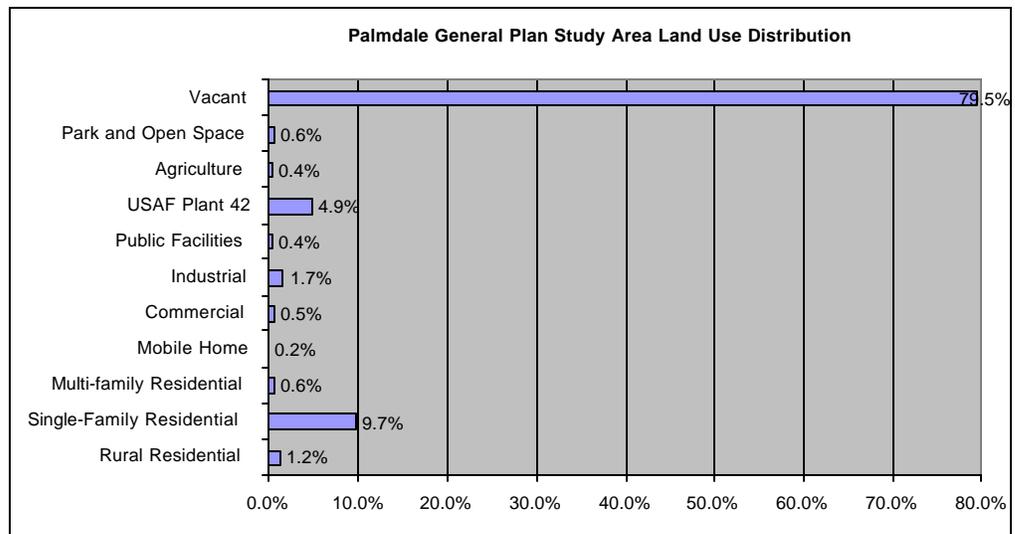


Figure ? 5-1 Palmdale Land Use Distribution

<sup>33</sup> City of Palmdale. *2002-2003 Annual Report on Implementation of the City of Palmdale General Plan* (Palmdale: City of Palmdale, 2002-2003), 6.

## RECREATION AND PARKS

Palmdale has a total of 544 acres of park land, of which 285 acres are developed and 258 acres are undeveloped and slated for future park development. Recent plans for park development includes the Marie Kerr Park expansion on the west side, a 40-acre site that will include a pool, 8 softball fields, a community recreation facility and an outdoor amphitheater, and the Eastside Recreational Complex, a 33-acre aquatic park will include a community recreational building, three different types of pools, a water slide and a pad for a future library. Palmdale residents approved a \$30 million bond measure to help fund construction and expansion of these facilities.

Existing recreational facilities includes three golf courses, an indoor gymnasium, a cultural center with auditorium and stage, a senior center and community arts center.

The City of Palmdale provides a variety of recreational programs for children, youth/teens, adults and seniors. Recreational programs offered for children and youth include instructional classes, organized sports, and year-round day camps.

## SOLID WASTE

Solid waste disposal is available through Waste Management of California, a private hauler for the region.

## STREET MAINTENANCE

The city provides street maintenance, street sweeping and traffic engineering services for roads within the city limits.

## TRANSPORTATION

According to the 2000 Census, Palmdale residents reported the longest commute times to work than the average U.S. resident. Residents in the 2000 Census reported a 43 minute mean travel time to get to work, in comparison to 26 minutes for the average United States resident. Regional transportation issues that affect the quality of life for Palmdale residents are further addressed in Chapter 3.

Local transit services are provided by the Antelope Valley Transit Authority. The agency provides bus, commuter and para-transit services for seniors and the disabled. Commuter bus service is provided to Los Angeles and the San Fernando Valley.

Major public transportation improvements in the city include construction of a new Metrolink commuter rail station, west of Sierra Hwy. and south of Technology Drive that includes bus, vanpool and park-n-ride services, and the Avenue S Corridor Improvement Project to expand Avenue S from two to four lanes, from 20<sup>th</sup> Street East to SR-14.

Palmdale Regional Airport is operated by the City of Los Angeles department, Los Angeles World Airports (LAWA), under agreement with the U.S. Air Force. Los Angeles owns 17,750 acres, adjacent to USAF plant 42. The airport is seen as a possible means to relieving congestion at LAX.

## City of Palmdale Service Providers

### CONSOLIDATED FIRE PROTECTION DISTRICT

The City of Palmdale was annexed to the Consolidated Fire Protection District of Los Angeles County for fire prevention and emergency medical services. The city and surrounding unincorporated areas are principally serviced by CFPD Battalion 17.

Fire protection and emergency medical services are largely funded through a portion of the ad valorem property tax and a special tax assessed to property owners. CFPD received an estimated \$9,100,000 in property taxes in year 2002-2003, based on the total assessed value of land. When divided by the total population of the city, 123,600 residents in 2002, the average amount received per capita is approximately \$74. Palmdale has not adopted the District's Developer Fee Plan (see page 31). The city adopted a Fire Facilities Impact Fee to offset development costs of building new facilities. Palmdale's fee is currently \$0.3716 per square foot of residential, commercial and industrial development.

The following fire stations are within the City of Palmdale sphere of influence and have "first-in" (primary) response jurisdiction (see attached map Exhibit D). A description of the various types of equipment is discussed in Chapter 9.

**FIRE STATION 24** – located at 1050 Ave. P, Palmdale serves as Battalion headquarters. It is equipped with an engine and a truck. Station 24 has seven firefighters.

**FIRE STATION 37** – located at 38318 E. 9th Street East, is equipped with an engine and a squad. The station has a total of five firefighters, of which three are paramedic positions.

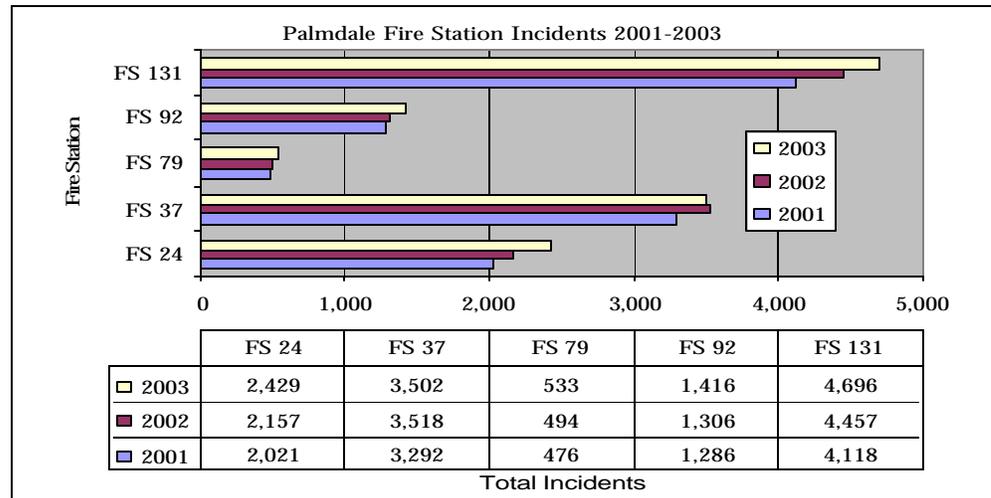
**FIRE STATION 79** - located at 33957 Longview Road, Pearblossom, is an augmented fire station equipped with an engine and staffed by four firefighters. Staffing is augmented by call fire fighters.

**FIRE STATION 92** - located at 8905 E. Avenue U, Littlerock, is equipped with an engine and a paramedic squad. The station has a total of five firefighters, of which three are paramedic positions.

**FIRE STATION 131** – located at 2629 East Ave. "S", Palmdale, is equipped with an engine and a paramedic squad. The station is staffed by five fire fighters, of which three are paramedic positions.

The following chart provides data (years 2001, 2002 and 2003) on the total number of incidents for each fire station having principle jurisdiction in Palmdale. Included in the total is the number of service calls made for fires, medical, false alarms and other, which includes calls for hazardous materials, explosions, good intent and other miscellaneous calls.

Figure ? 5-2 Palmdale  
Fire Station Service Calls



S H E R I F F

The Palmdale Sheriff's Station is located at 1020 East Palmdale Boulevard, Palmdale. The facility is located in a commercial shopping center and is inadequate in meeting staff needs. Emergency calls (911) are currently routed through the Lancaster Station. A new 47,000 square-foot facility is being built as a joint effort between the city and the County. The estimated construction cost of the new facility is approximately \$23.9 million. Palmdale contributed \$1.3 million for the land.

The new station will include a helipad, a maintenance building, and a 911 dispatching center and holding facility which the current station lacks. For fiscal year 2002-2003, the Department reported that station staffing included a total of 167 sworn personnel and 40 civilian personnel. There are also 128 volunteers that assist in staffing the facility. The ratio of officers to residents is 1:761, one officer per 761 residents.<sup>34</sup>

The total number of emergency calls reported for the station was 64,023 in year 2002. Total arrests made numbered 5,330 and 15,092 citations were issued. Response times for the City of Palmdale averaged 5.2 minutes for emergency calls, 12.3 minutes for priority calls and 58.53 minutes for routine calls. In the unincorporated area, response times averaged 11.43 minutes for emergency calls, 22.33 minutes for priority calls and 74.37 minutes for routine calls. High response times reflect the geographic constraints of the high desert terrain and largely rural areas.

Palmdale is one of the few contract cities that have continually increased police staffing in order to accommodate increasing growth and demand in the area. Crime rates in the Antelope Valley are higher than most other areas of Los Angeles County, which department staff feels is due to the high number of parolees.<sup>35</sup> The Sheriff's Department stated that their current financing constraints are due to the State's current fiscal situation.

<sup>34</sup> Per capita estimate is based on the current population of 133,230 as projected by SCAG and the number of contracted police officers.

<sup>35</sup> Interview with Lt. Andersen of the Lancaster Sheriff's Station, and Lt. Meenke and Sgt. Russ Hill of the Palmdale Sheriff's Station.

## Antelope Valley Healthcare and Hospital District

The Antelope Valley Healthcare and Hospital District (AVHHD) was formed on January 20, 1953, under California Health and Safety Code Section 32000 *et seq.* The District has an elected five-member Board of Directors. Healthcare districts are empowered to operate ambulances, operate or provide assistance in the operation of free clinics, diagnostic and testing centers, health education programs, wellness and prevention programs, rehabilitation, aftercare, and any other health care services provider, groups, and organizations that are necessary for the maintenance of good physical and mental health in the communities served by the district.

The AVHHD encompasses approximately 1,475 miles and provides inpatient, outpatient and home healthcare services to citizens of the district area. A map of the District is provided as Exhibit E. The clinical and support services that the district provides are: diagnostic radiology, dietary science, emergency medicine, ambulatory care, nuclear medicine, medical laboratory and pathology, mental health services and pharmacy, physical therapy, respiratory care, and social services.

The District's actual budget for Fiscal Year 2003 reports that it received approximately \$188,162,000 in Net Patient Revenues and \$5,466,000 from other sources. Expenses for Fiscal Year 2003 totaled \$199,372,000, the majority of which was utilized for expenditures on labor (\$111, 343,000).

An abbreviated municipal service review and sphere of influence update for the District was adopted on June 23, 2004.

## Antelope Valley Resource Conservation District

Resource Conservation Districts (RCDs), also known as “Soil Conservation Districts” were established in response to the “Dust Bowl” crisis that occurred in the 1930s. RCDs were formed pursuant to the State of California Public Resources Code Section 9000, *et seq.* and are formed for the purpose of soil and water conservation, to control water runoff, development and distribution of water, soil erosion and stabilization, watershed restoration and enhancement and to protect water quality and water reclamation.

They were originally empowered to manage soil and water resources. These powers were expanded in the 1970s to include fish and wildlife habitat conservation. RCDs today manage a variety of resource conservation projects which includes soil and water conservation projects; wildlife habitat enhancement and restoration, control of exotic plant species, watershed restoration, conservation planning, and public education. RCDs receive little funding from local taxes. The majority of their funding is through grants and fundraising.

The Antelope Valley Resource Conservation District (AVRCD) was established in 1942. Its boundaries encompass the Mojave Desert and Lancaster Valley in the northeast part of the county; the San Gabriel Mountains, south of the Mojave Desert and northeast of the San Fernando Valley; the San Fernando and San Gabriel Valley; and the Coastal Plain, which borders the Pacific Ocean on the west. A map of the District is provided as Exhibit F.

The District has a five-member governing Board of Directors. Members are generally nominated by the Board of Directors. Meetings are held on a regular, monthly basis.

The Antelope Valley Resource Conservation District constitutes 1,600,000 acres and according to the district, provides services to approximately 610,000 residents. The district’s proposed budget for fiscal year 2003-2004 is \$205,000. The majority of revenues are received from property taxes and the remainder is from nursery sales, nursery and rental income and other miscellaneous funds. Total proposed expenditures are \$205,000, the majority of which is utilized for personnel salaries and

rent or leases.

AVRCD provides public educational outreach programs to the general public and schools within the district. To accomplish this goal the district produces educational videos, sponsors environmental events, workshops and produces various informational media, such as brochures and comic books. Some of the District's objectives are to promote exotic plant eradication and wildlife enhancement, reduce soil erosion, improve irrigation efficiency, and monitor water quality within the district.

An abbreviated municipal service review and sphere of influence update for the District was adopted on June 23, 2004.

## Antelope Valley Mosquito and Vector Control District

The Antelope Valley Mosquito and Vector Control District (AVMVCD) is an independent special district that was established on August 21, 1958, by the County Board of Supervisors, pursuant to California Health and Safety Codes Section 2200, *et seq.* The District's boundaries encompass approximately 238 square miles and cover most of Palmdale and Lancaster. Services are provided to residents within its boundaries. AVMVCD states that it also provides services by contract to the City of Rosamond, in Kern County. A map of the District is provided as Exhibit G.

There are five members of the governing Board of Trustees, three members are appointed by the County Supervisor of the District, one member each is appointed by the City of Lancaster and one member by the City of Palmdale. Members meet on a monthly basis.

AVMVCD is active in reducing the Antelope Valley mosquito population through a variety of methods and monitors outbreak of mosquito-borne diseases, such as Encephalitis and West Nile Virus. The District also responds to and monitors the activity of Africanize honeybees, which were confirmed in the area in 1999. In addition, the District offers information and educational programs to the general public, schools and community organizations.

The District is funded solely through property taxes. The actual annual budget revenues for Fiscal Year 2001-2002 for the district were \$608,575. Total expenditures were \$497,841, the majority of which were utilized for personnel and administrative salaries. Revenues for the proposed annual budget for Fiscal Year 2003-2004 were estimated at \$944,823 and total expenditures were estimated to be \$609,823.

The District manager expressed concern that they cannot provide proactive mosquito abatement services against West Nile Virus in areas where Prop. 218 measures failed; the areas where residents voted against annexation to the District where, Rancho Vista, Quartz Hill and the northwest quadrant of Lancaster. She also emphasized that it was a potential public health concern, in light of the fact that there was one positive case of West Nile Virus reported in Pearblossom last year. In May 2003, the District initiated a

Proposition 218 special assessment district vote. The purpose of the special assessment proposal was to allow a benefit assessment charge for the communities of Quartz Hill, Rancho Vista in west Palmdale and the northwest quadrant of Lancaster, and to propose annexation of these areas if approved by the voters. These areas are currently within the district's sphere of influence. According to SCAG growth projections, the region is anticipated to grow substantially. As housing continues to grow, so does water usage and water run-off, which in turn increases the potential for mosquito breeding areas.

An abbreviated municipal service review and sphere of influence update for the District was adopted on June 23, 2004.

## Consolidated Fire Protection District

### *About the District*

The Consolidated Fire Protection District (CFPD) is governed by the Fire Protection District Law of 1987, California Health and Safety Code Section 13800, *et. seq.* It was established on April 12, 1949 by a resolution of the Los Angeles County Board of Supervisors, as a result of merging several fire protection districts. The Los Angeles County Board of Supervisors acts as the governing body. The CFPD provides fire protection, emergency medical, hazardous materials response, rescue services and in some areas lifeguard services. It also provides other related services such as forestry, fire prevention and educational programs.

All cities that receive services from CFPD are within the District's sphere of influence boundary areas (see map Exhibit H). There are ten cities in LA County that receive fire protection services from CFPD on a fee-for-service basis. They are: Azusa, Commerce, Lynwood, Palos Verdes Estates, Pomona, Hawthorne, Covina, El Monte, Inglewood and Gardena. CFPD receives funding primarily through property tax revenue, special tax and contract fees. The Board of Supervisors adopted a Developer Fee Program to meet the need for increased resources in designated high growth areas. There are five cities that have adopted the program, Agoura Hills, Calabasas, Malibu, Lancaster and Santa Clarita. Monies received from the program can only be spent within that particular area and are used to help finance new stations and equipment needed due to new development.

Previous chapters of this report provide a detailed description of fire stations and equipment. Explanations of types of fire equipment are as follows: an engine carries a hose, water, and has water-pumping capabilities; a truck carries specialized equipment and ladders (no water or water-pumping capabilities); a quint somewhat combines the capabilities of the engine and truck - it carries all the specialized equipment and ladders that a truck carries and also carries hose, water and has water-pumping capabilities; an emergency support team (EST) is a 2-person unit that provides first-alarm firefighting support to specific areas in the District.

This report does not provide a complete comprehensive service review of the District. A separate municipal service review and sphere of influence update of the agency will be prepared for consideration by the Commission at a future time.

## County Sanitation Districts

The County Sanitation Districts of Los Angeles (CSD) are a confederation of independent county sanitation districts that operate under one or more joint powers agreements. CSD provides wastewater and solid waste management. The Districts are formed pursuant to State of California Health and Safety Code Sections 4700, *et seq.* CSD's are enabled to construct, operate and maintain facilities for the purpose of collection, treatment and disposal of wastewater. Edwards Air Force Base and USAF Plant 42 maintain and operate their own independent wastewater treatment and disposal systems.

The County Sanitation District charges new users a connection fee, which goes into a separate Capital Improvement Fund to finance any future improvements as needed.

It takes approximately one million gallons daily (mgd) per year of processed wastewater to service 24 households. Although, both Lancaster and Palmdale WRP's expanded in the mid-1990s, disposal of effluent is a concern because of geographical factors. There are no natural outlets, such as rivers and oceans for effluent disposal. Leaching and protection of ground water quality is also of concern.<sup>36</sup>

### COUNTY SANITATION DISTRICT NO. 14

County Sanitation District No. 14 (CSD No. 14) provides collection, treatment and disposal of wastewater within the City of Lancaster and includes other areas beyond the city limits. CSD No. 14 was established on August 31, 1978. The District's SOI includes the entire City of Lancaster, portions of the City of Palmdale, and surrounding unincorporated areas (see attached district boundary map Exhibit I). It is also a contract service provider for the Antelope Valley State Prison facility.

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<sup>36</sup> County Sanitation District, *Comprehensive Annual Financial Report, 2002.*

There are no requirements for annexation proposals to the District generated by proposed housing developments; however, County Sanitation maintains a policy of requiring that a developer be responsible for conveying wastewater generated by the project to the existing network. Developers pay annexation fees and costs of lines to service their developments. Connection fees charged for hooking into those lines are placed in a special fund to finance future capital improvements and expansion.

Sewer lines located within city streets are owned by the City of Lancaster and maintained by Los Angeles County Public Works Department. The County Sanitation District maintains the 21 major trunk sewer lines for District 14 and the Lancaster Water Reclamation Plant (WRP). Sewage flow from other trunk lines is directed to the Rosamond Outfall Trunk Sewer, near Avenue H and then north to the Lancaster WRP.

Lancaster WRP is located at 1865 West Avenue "D", Lancaster, west of the Antelope Valley (14) Freeway and occupies 545.5 acres. The plant's total capacity is 16 million gallons daily (mgd) but is currently processing 12.5 mgd of wastewater daily and, is therefore, operating below capacity. It provides service to a population of approximately 160,000 people.

The District is currently in the process of circulating a facilities plan and associated Environmental Impact Report (EIR) for expansion of the Lancaster WRP, to ultimately 26 mgd capacity, as a result of anticipated significant area growth through year 2020. Results of the study will determine future amendments to the District's sphere of influence.

#### COUNTY SANITATION DISTRICT # 20

CSD No. 20 provides wastewater services for most of the City of Palmdale and outlying unincorporated areas (see attached map Exhibit J). The District's boundary encompasses 20,640 acres and provides service to a population of approximately 97,019. There are no future plans to expand the sphere of influence of the District.

The Palmdale Water Reclamation Plant is located at 39300 30th Street, Palmdale. The facility currently processes 9 million gallons of effluent daily and has a capacity of 15 mgd. The treatment facility provides service to a population of 150,000 people.

#### COUNTY SANITATION DISTRICT # 35

The District was formed because of anticipated growth in the area; however, population growth and demand within the district boundaries has remained low. It is currently inactive and has no customer base. Residents within the District's sphere of influence utilize septic tanks. It is recommended that this district be dissolved.

This report does not provide a complete comprehensive service review of the Districts. A separate municipal service review and sphere of influence updates of local agencies that provide wastewater services will be prepared for consideration by the Commission at a future time.

## County Waterworks District

### *Enabling Act*

County waterworks districts are independent special district formed pursuant to California Water Code Section 55000, *et seq.* Waterworks districts are empowered to provide water for domestic, agricultural, industrial and fire protection purposes. The district can operate facilities relative to the sale of water, treatment and reclamation of saline and wastewater, and sewage collection.

#### LOS ANGELES COUNTY WATERWORKS DISTRICT # 37

Los Angeles County Waterworks District No. 37 was established on August 16<sup>th</sup>, 1963.. The District is located in the Acton area and encompasses approximately 11,270 acres, south of the City of Palmdale and provides service to a population of approximately 160,000 residents. The County waterworks districts are operated and maintained by the Los Angeles County Department of Public Works. The governing body for the districts is the County of Los Angeles Board of Supervisors.

Projected demands were not available for the district. In 2002, Waterworks District No. 37 received 1,594 AF/yr from imported sources and 1,180 AF/yr from groundwater sources.

#### LOS ANGELES COUNTY WATERWORKS DISTRICT # 40

The Los Angeles County Waterworks District was first formed on December 9, 1935. An internal reorganization occurred in November 1993 to consolidate eight waterworks districts (Districts 4, 24, 27, 33, 34, 35, 38, and 39) into one district – District 40. District No. 40 provides retail water service to the Antelope Valley region and covers approximately 554 square miles, in north eastern LA County. The District is comprised of eight regions, Lancaster, Palmdale, Pearblossom, Littlerock, Sun Village, North East Los Angeles County, Lake Los Angeles, and Rock Creek. A map of the District is provided as Exhibit K.

Sixty percent of the District's water supply source is from imported water purchased from AVEK, the remaining forty percent comes from groundwater sources.<sup>37</sup>

The District's projection of water use is 72,205 AF/yr for 2005 and anticipates usage demand to increase to 133,407 AF/yr in 2020. Water demand for 2003 was 44,467 AF/yr. In 2002, County Waterworks District No. 40 received 21,194 AF/yr from ground-water sources and 30,600 AF/yr from imported sources. The County Waterworks Districts imported water from the following sources in 2002: AVEK – 35,180 AF/yr, Castaic Lake Water Agency – 1,071 AF/yr, and West Basin Municipal Water District – 10,076 AF/yr.

Dudek and Associates has prepared a comprehensive Draft Municipal Service Review of water providers for the High Desert Region and is scheduled to be adopted by LAFCO on August 25, 2004.

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<sup>37</sup> County of Los Angeles Department of Public Works, 2000 Urban Water Management Plan ,District 40, page 7.

# Lancaster Cemetery District

## *About the District*

Lancaster Cemetery dates back to the 1890's, when legend has it that a cowboy discovered the body of rancher and buried him on the present day site. Lancaster was then a classic western town, with gold-miners, ranchers and cattlemen. The area then became the local cemetery. The property was donated to the County of Los Angeles in 1902. The cemetery fell into disrepair during the 1930's and 40's, which prompted residents to petition the County to form the district so that the cemetery could be maintained.

The Lancaster Cemetery District, as an independent special district, was established on January 31, 1950, pursuant to the California Health and Safety Code Sections 8890, *et seq.* The District's sphere of influence encompasses approximately 480 square miles. It provides burial services only to residents within the Districts' SOI, which includes the City of Lancaster, county unincorporated area and northern portion of the City of Palmdale (see map Exhibit L). Funding for the District is received through direct tax assessment of the residents within the boundary area. Three trustee members, appointed by the County Board of Supervisors, form the cemetery's governing body.

The Lancaster Cemetery is located at 111 E. Lancaster Boulevard, Lancaster and consists of eleven acres. Six acres are developed and contain 6,252 grave sites, of which 765 plots are available and two cremation monuments with 60 niches. The remaining five acres have not been utilized but would provide an additional 5,000 plots, based on an average of one-thousand burials per acre. On average, the District performs 100 burials per year and has an estimated remaining life of eighty-three years.

Although, the Cemetery District provides the majority of services to the residents of Lancaster and a portion of Palmdale, there are no future plans to expand its sphere of influence to include the remaining portions of Palmdale.<sup>38</sup>

An abbreviated municipal service review and sphere of influence update for the District was adopted on June 23, 2004.

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<sup>38</sup> Interview with Barbara Little, Manager, and Jack Abney, Chairman, February 18, 2004.

## Irrigation Districts

### *Enabling Act*

Irrigation Districts are formed pursuant to the California Water Code Sections 20500, *et seq.* They are empowered to provide water for any beneficial purpose and can control, store, treat, distribute and reclaim water or wastewater. An irrigation district can also provide electric power.

#### LITTLE ROCK CREEK IRRIGATION DISTRICT

Littlerock Creek Irrigation District (LCID) was established in March 1892. The District's boundaries cover 11,000 acres and includes a small portion of south east Palmdale and unincorporated areas to the east and south east (see map Exhibit M). LCID is a State Water Project contractor and has an entitlement allocation of 2,300 AF/yr. Approximately 300 acre-feet of water annually is imported through joint agreement with Palmdale Water District. In addition, LCID pumps 1400 AF/yr of groundwater. It provides retail water service to approximately 3,000 domestic and agricultural customers.

#### PALMDALE WATER DISTRICT

Palmdale Water District (PWD) was established on July 26, 1918. Its service area covers 187 miles and consists of over thirty sections of non-contiguous territory, including the City of Palmdale (see map Exhibit N). PWD provides water in the High Desert region to areas that are not capable of being served by Antelope Valley-East Kern Water Agency and LACWWD #40. The District is a State Water Project contractor that provides both wholesale and retail water and is also a supplier of water to Littlerock Creek Irrigation District. PWD imports between 10,000-13,000 acre-feet of water annually from the State Water Project and pumps an average of 9,800 AF/yr of groundwater.

#### PALM RANCH IRRIGATION DISTRICT

Palm Ranch Irrigation District (PRID) was established on July 7, 1959. The governing body is elected at large. Its service area covers 1,500 acres (5.7 miles) within the unincorporated area of Quartz Hill. The District provides retail water for approximately 1,600 service connections. PRID imports approximately 200 AF/yr

(2001 and 2002) water through AVEK (Antelope Valley-East Kern Water Agency) and pumped approximately 1,827 acre-feet of ground-water in 2002.

Dudek and Associates has prepared a detailed Draft Municipal Service Review study of water providers for the High Desert Region which is scheduled to be adopted by LAFCO on August 25, 2004.

## County Water Districts

### *Enabling Act*

County Water Districts are formed pursuant to California Water Code Sections 30000, *et seq.* County water districts are authorized to receive water rights, appropriate, sell, store and conserve water. Surplus water may be sold to municipalities, public agencies or consumers outside of the district. County water districts can also provide wastewater treatment.

LAFCO initiated a municipal service review study of all water agencies under its jurisdiction. Water MSR studies were prepared according to the designated LAFCO MSR regional areas. Dudek and Associates has prepared a detailed Draft Municipal Service Review study of water providers for the High Desert Region which is scheduled to be adopted by LAFCO on August 25, 2004.

#### QUARTZ HILL WATER DISTRICT

Quartz Hill County Water District was established on May 20, 1954. Its governing body is composed of a five-member Board of Directors elected at large. The District's territory encompasses approximately 4,500 acres and provides service primarily within Lancaster's sphere of influence (see map Exhibit P). Quartz Hill CWD is a water retailer and provides service to about 4,800 meter connections. It receives water from the Antelope Valley-East Kern Water Agency (AVEK) and does not have adjudicated water rights. In 2002, the agency received 2630 AF/yr of imported water from AVEK and 2802 AF/yr from ground water.

The district has observed a growth rate of 3% per year for the past ten years. The High Desert Water MSR study indicated that the agency provides adequate service and infrastructure to meet demand needs. Demand is projected to nearly double in 2022 (9,466 AF/yr) from actual usage of 5,251 AF/yr in 2002.<sup>39</sup>

A portion of the agency's service boundaries lay within County Waterworks District #40 however, facilities do not overlap and the District does not anticipate any future boundary changes.

#### WEST VALLEY COUNTY WATER DISTRICT

West Valley County Water District (WVCWD) was established in August 1971. The governing body is elected at large. The District's boundary area covers three square

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<sup>39</sup> Quartz Hill Water District. *2002 Urban Water Management Plan*, 11.

miles of territory in an unincorporated area north west of Lancaster, in the north westernmost part of Los Angeles County (see map Exhibit Q). It provides retail water service to 185 meter connections. WVCWD pumps approximately 250 acre-feet of water annually and does not rely on imported water.

## Water Agencies

### *Enabling Act*

The Antelope Valley- East Kern Water Agency (AVEK) was formed under Act 9095, Section 83, Chapter 2146 of 1959; Uncodified Acts, Part 2. The agency is empowered to operate water works plants and hydroelectric facilities, construct and operate recreational facilities in conjunction with the operation of a reservoir, acquire and sell water to municipalities, public agencies, and persons within the agency's boundary.

### *Antelope Valley – East Kern Water Agency*

AVEK was formed in 1959 for the purpose of obtaining imported water for the Antelope Valley. Files from LAFCO's archives state that the Agency was formed because of concerns of overdraft of the Antelope Valley groundwater basin, an issue that still exists in the region today. At that time, the State Department of Water Resources indicated that extraction of the Antelope Valley Basin was 250,000 AF/yr, whereas the safe yield was determined to be 75,000 AF/yr. In more recent years the USGS has estimated the safe yield to be between 31,200AF/yr and 59,100 AF/yr.<sup>40</sup>

AVEK's boundary area includes a portion of Kern County and is comprised of two principal groundwater basins, the Fremont Basin in Kern County and the Antelope Valley Basin in Los Angeles County. The southern boundary extends to the foothills of the San Gabriel Mountains. The westerly and northerly boundaries reach the foothills of the Tehachapi and Sierra Nevada ranges. The Agency's boundary area includes the Cities of Palmdale and Lancaster (see map Exhibit R).

AVEK is a contractor of the State Water Project (SWP) and maintains approximately 80 service connections. The agency's available SWP entitlement is 141,400 AF/yr, deliveries for 2002 were 59,529 AF/yr.

The Agency maintains four water treatment facilities. The Quartz Hill plant services the region and was expanded in 1989. It has the capacity of producing 65 million gallons per day.

Dudek and Associates has prepared a detailed Draft Municipal Service Review study of water providers for the High Desert Region which is scheduled to be adopted by LAFCO on August 25, 2004.

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<sup>40</sup> County of Los Angeles, Department of Public Works, Waterworks District 40, 2000 Urban Water Management Plan, December 2000.

C O M M E N T S   A N D   R E S P O N S E S

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City of Palmdale (July 30, 2004): Comments were noted and modifications were made to the text.

Los Angeles County Department of Public Works (June 30, 2004): Comments were noted and revisions were made to the text.

Consolidated Fire Protection District of Los Angeles County (July 21, 2004): Comments were noted and revisions were made to the text.

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## INTERVIEWS

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Michael R. Adams, Housing Manager, City of Palmdale

Debbie Aguirre, Supervising Planning Analyst, County of Los Angeles Fire Department

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Sharon McCaughey, Senior Planner, City of Palmdale

Dave Meenk, Operations Lieutenant, Los Angeles County Sheriff's Department, Palmdale Station

Rick Mouwen, Lieutenant, Los Angeles County Sheriff's Department

Lyle W. Norton, Parks, Recreation and Arts Director, City of Lancaster.

Sagar Raksit, Supervising Engineer, Planning and Property Management Section, County Sanitation Districts of Los Angeles County

Leon E. Swain, Director of Public Works, City of Palmdale

Robert W. Toone, Jr. City Manager, City of Palmdale

Shane Walter, Director Building and Safety, City of Palmdale

James R. Williams, Public Works Director, City of Lancaster

## DATA SOURCES

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Agency-specific data: responses to LAFCO Request for Information

Crime Statistics: Los Angeles County Sheriff Department

Demographic Data: California Department of Finance

Demographic Data: U.S. Bureau of the Census

Financial Data: California State Controller; Local Government Annual Financial Reports

Population Projections: Southern California Association of Governments, Regional Transportation Plan, 2001

Maps: LAFCO archives; Los Angeles County Public Works Department; Thomas Brothers

City and District Parcel Boundary and Ownership Data: Los Angeles County Assessor

# MAP EXHIBITS