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April 16, 2026

Comments Submitted via Email to: genplan@planning.lacounty.gov

County of Los Angeles
Department of Regional Planning
320 W Temple St, Room 1362
Los Angeles CA 90012

DRAFT

RE: General Plan Tune Up (001)

Dear Department of Regional Planning,

The Puente Hills Habitat Preservation Authority (Habitat Authority) appreciates the opportunity to comment on the Los Angeles County General Plan Tune-Up (001). Specifically, the Habitat Authority requests that Senate Bill 1425 (SB 1425) and Assembly Bill 1889 (AB 1889) be proactively addressed during this tune-up iteration.

The Habitat Authority is a joint powers authority established pursuant to California Government Code Section 6500 *et seq.* with a Board of Directors consisting of members representing the City of Whittier, County of Los Angeles, Sanitation Districts of Los Angeles County, and a public member from the community of Hacienda Heights. According to its mission, the Habitat Authority is dedicated to the acquisition, restoration, and management of open space in the Puente Hills for preservation of the land in perpetuity, with the primary purpose to protect the biological diversity. Additionally, the agency endeavors to provide opportunities for outdoor education and low-impact recreation.

The Habitat Authority owns and/or manages over 3,880 acres which comprise the Puente Hills Preserve (Preserve) located within Los Angeles County. Over \$100 million of public funds have been invested in the Preserve and its sustainability is biologically dependent on the open space land to the east of its jurisdiction. The Preserve is located within the well-studied Puente-Chino Hills Wildlife Corridor (PCHWC) which is widely recognized as being regionally important for wildlife movement (Conservation Biology Institute 2005¹, and citations therein). Covering more than 30,000 acres of land, this wildlife corridor boasts a wide variety of habitats that support a unique assemblage of plants and animals and serves several ecological functions that contribute to ecosystem health. Connectivity among open space maintains the transfer of genetic material among generations of plants and animals, ensuring healthy and sustainable populations. Many

¹ Conservation Biology Institute. 2005 Maintaining Ecological Connectivity Across the “Missing Middle” of the Puente-Chino Hills Wildlife Corridor. Prepared by WD Spencer

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agencies and jurisdictions over Los Angeles and Orange Counties have partnered during the past 30 years for the preservation of the PCHWC.

Senate Bill 1425 (SB 1425) requires that, by January 1, 2026, open space plans must be updated to include:

- Access to open space for all residents in a manner that considers social, economic, and racial equity in coordination with environmental justice policies
- Climate resilience and other co-benefits of open space, correlated with the safety element
- Rewilding opportunities (e.g., the preservation, enhancement, and expansion of an integrated network of open space to support beneficial uses, such as habitat, recreation, natural resources, historic and tribal resources, water management, and aesthetics), correlated with the land use element

Assembly Bill 1889 (AB 1889, the “Room to Roam Act”) mandates that the conservation element of the general plan must be updated to incorporate wildlife connectivity upon the next general plan revision on or after January 1, 2028 to:

- Identify and analyze connectivity areas, permeability, and natural landscape areas within the jurisdiction
- Identify and analyze existing or planned wildlife passage features to ensure that future development does not undermine wildlife movement and habitat connectivity
- Analyze opportunities to remediate existing barriers to wildlife connectivity and restore degraded habitat and open space
- Consider appropriate standards, policies, and implementation measures to support wildlife connectivity, such as wildlife-friendly fencing and lighting, habitat connectivity overlay zones, and compact development standards

Los Angeles County has a unique responsibility because it contains some of the most critical wildlife corridors in Southern California—and intense development pressure. Given the importance of these updates, and the immediate opportunity presented by this General Plan Tune-Up, we encourage the County to expedite their planning efforts to proactively address these elements specifically as they relate to the Puente-Chino Hills. We encourage the County to consider applying relevant General Plan policies and any amendments adopted pursuant to SB 1425 and AB 1889 to projects that have not yet received approval, including those with completed applications, in order to support consistent planning outcomes and to help ensure that projects currently in the pipeline do not limit the County’s long-term ability to advance rewilding efforts and maintain effective wildlife connectivity and corridors. This would not only ensure compliance with state law, but also foster more sustainable, biodiverse, and resilient communities.

Thank you for your consideration, and feel free to contact me (ISulic@bos.lacounty.gov), Ecologist Michelle Mariscal (mmariscal@habitatauthority.org) or Executive Director Andrea Gullo (agullo@habitatauthority.org) for further discussion.

Sincerely,

DRAFT

Ivan Sulic
Chair, Board of Directors

cc: Board of Directors
Citizens Technical Advisory Committee