

Community Focus Statement A: Protect the treasures of Mentone for years to come.

Action Statement A.5: Advocate for changes in development standards requiring new development to set aside land for open space and/or agricultural use.

A5

Benchmark: Regulations adopted for new development to set aside open space and agricultural land.

Champion: Volunteer group or person or can be identified by the community

Estimated Cost: \$10,000



Santa Ana Wash in Mentone, CA. Photo source: [Don Graham](#)

To protect and enhance Mentone’s natural resources and agricultural history, new development could be required to designate land in the community for agricultural uses or open space. Land conservation could take a variety of forms and should be flexible to allow the community to best protect natural and agricultural resources. A developer could set aside a portion of land on a project site for conservation; however, this option may not always be feasible or desired. Other options for land conservation include donating land not associated with the development project or paying an in-lieu fee to a nonprofit land conservation organization.

One example of a nonprofit land conservation organization is a land trust. If a land trust were to be established in Mentone, it could undertake or assist in conservation easement acquisition. A conservation easement is a voluntary legal agreement between a landowner and land trust that permanently limits uses of the land for the purposes of conservation. Easements can vary and can be tailored to a community’s specific desires. Some easements may prohibit any kind of development in order to protect land as open space. Others may allow for continued or expanded agricultural uses. Conservation easements can also help landowners, as easements often lower the land value and result in lower property taxes.

Land conservation has a variety of health and economic benefits, and would allow Mentone to protect natural resources in the community for generations to come. By requiring new development to contribute to open space conservation, Mentone can balance growth, while honoring its historical agricultural roots and the natural environment.



Action	Action Leader	Timeline	Resources
1. Establish a task force to draft community-based standards for open space and agricultural standards.	Champion	Year 1 - Year 3	San Bernardino County Land Use Services http://cms.sbcounty.gov/lus/Home.aspx
2. Coordinate with the community to create consensus on open space and agricultural land designation.	Task force Mentone Area Community Association	Year 1 - Year 3	Mentone Area Community Association https://www.facebook.com/mentone.association
3. Schedule a meeting with the San Bernardino County Land Use Services Department to present standards and urge the adoption of the standards.	Task force	Year 1 - Year 3	Land Trust Alliance http://www.landtrustalliance.org/
4. Coordinate with the County to ensure the adoption and implementation of open space and agricultural standards.	Task force	Year 1 - Year 3	Case Study: Marin Agricultural Land Trust http://www.malt.org/
5. Revisit the standards on an annual basis to make sure regulations are up to date and current.	Task force	Annually	
6. Seek conservancy organizations to purchase land development.	Task Force		