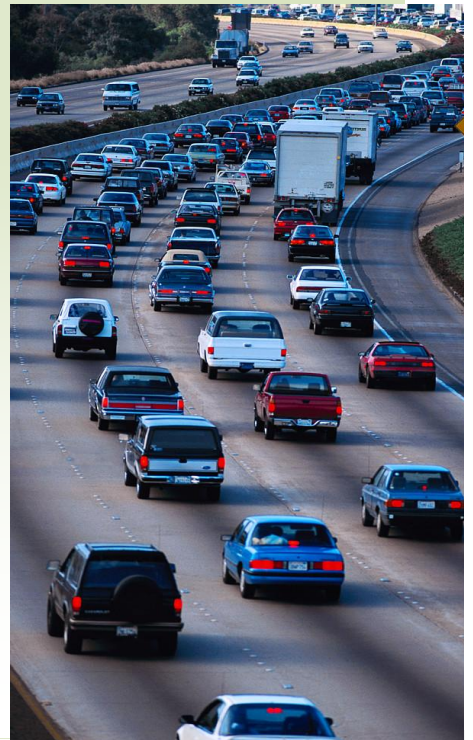


Prepared for the **Valley Industry
and Commerce Association**

San Fernando Valley

Community of Interest Analysis

The purpose of this report is to provide a visualization of the distinct geographic, demographic, and socioeconomic nature of the San Fernando Valley (SFV), also known as the 'Valley', and its sub-regions. We provide a case for treatment of the SFV as a unique community of interest that is fundamentally different from that of the remainder of the City of Los Angeles. A secondary goal is to define communities within the SFV which are also communities of interest and should retain a contiguous geography in proposed restricting plans. Specifically, that the nature of subpopulations in the East and West SFV require consideration, based on demographic and socioeconomic variability and designations of connectedness defined internally by neighborhood members. Finally, this report will provide evidence that communities at the periphery of the region have developed significant associations, via transportation and school district associations, with communities along the western edge of the San Fernando Valley which lie along the Ventura and Los Angeles County boundary as to be considered contiguous *communities of interest*.



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The San Fernando Valley was originally populated by various Native American peoples, including the Tongva tribe.

Early speculators settled in the SFV to form many of the communities found today.

Access to water sealed the fate of the Valley as an independent city. The Valley was annexed by the City of Los Angeles in 1915.

Brief History of the San Fernando Valley

The San Fernando Valley, considered by many to be the quintessential American suburb, has a long and complex history of demographic, socioeconomic, land use, and political change. Originally populated by the Tongva tribe of Native American peoples, in addition to Tataviam and Chumash tribal influences from the north and west respectively, the San Fernando Valley region was an active and vital early settlement and trading area¹. Spanish explorers encountered "El Valle de los Encinos" in late 1769, and soon after Spanish-based ranches began to appear in the southeastern portions of the Valley we know today. The original San Fernando Mission or the Mission San Fernando Rey de España, established in 1797, was devised as an extension of Spanish-influence north of the Santa Monica Mountains previously established through El Pueblo de la Reina de los Ángeles to the south. This new outpost acted as an essential connection point for stage lines running north-south, a warehouse for commercial property originating out of the Pueblo, and the center for agriculture in the Valley region². The Valley remained a center of agriculture, including large areas of wheat and orange groves through much of the 1800s.

Spurred by speculators in the later 1870s and 1880s, including Isaac Lankershim, Charles Maclay, and George K. Porter, the Valley's ownership was split into two northern and southern regions, divided along modern day Roscoe Boulevard in the heart of the Valley basin. In the northeastern region, Maclay founded the town of San Fernando and established the first railway connecting the Valley to the remainder of the City via the Newhall Pass, and providing the first point of meaningful and consistent contact between the City and Valley regions³.

Political and economic influence over the Valley by the City was solidified by the opening in 1913 of the aqueduct connecting the Owen's Valley in the Eastern Sierras to the Valley. Although flowing to the Valley, the aqueduct and its source lands were owned solely by the City of Los Angeles. In 1915 many of the towns in the Valley voted in favor of annexation and officially joined the City of Los Angeles in order to benefit from this new water source⁴. As both political and transportation connectivity increased between the City and Valley, the vision of the Valley as an agricultural region began to shift to that of a bedroom suburban community. As a consequence, housing development in the early 20th Century began to increase.

As originally envisioned, Los Angeles and its Valley suburb were to become 'an archipelago of communities where each community was more a town or village than a city neighborhood', a 'city of small trips'⁵. By the mid-1950s, with the post-war boom of tract home developments, most of the Valley had transitioned from agricultural area to residential and commercial land use. Abandoning the earlier envisioning of the Valley as a grouping of towns with lush natural space, the Valley became the quintessential 50s and 60s suburban region, dominated by auto-centered retail centers and tightly-knit suburban neighborhoods⁶. As a result of its complex history and character, the Valley has become a unique suburban community within the City of Los Angeles, as well as across the nation. If taken by itself, the Valley would be the fifth largest city in the nation and remains a significant axis of cultural, political, and place-identity into the 21st century.

Description of the San Fernando Valley

Valley Boundaries

The City of Los Angeles covers approximately 500 square miles and is comprised of nearly 4 million highly diverse individuals⁷. The San Fernando Valley is a geographically distinct region within the northern section of the City of Los Angeles. Bounded by major mountain ranges, including the Santa Susanna and San Gabriel Mountains to the north and the Santa Monica mountains to the south, this region is a topographically, demographically, and even climatically unique division of the City. The large pseudo-suburban region of the San Fernando Valley in particular occupies a significant portion of the City's (nearly 50%) and County's urban area and includes several incorporated cities and unincorporated areas. The SFV is comprised of a population that, although technically remains a part of the City at large (exclusive of the cities of Calabasas, Hidden Hills, San Fernando, Burbank, and Glendale), is highly isolated due to its particular geography. Using Geographic Information Systems (GIS) paired with geospatial data, we can visualize and analyze the special geographic structure and composition of the San Fernando Valley^{8,9}.

*The Valley has become a unique **suburban** community within the City of Los Angeles.*

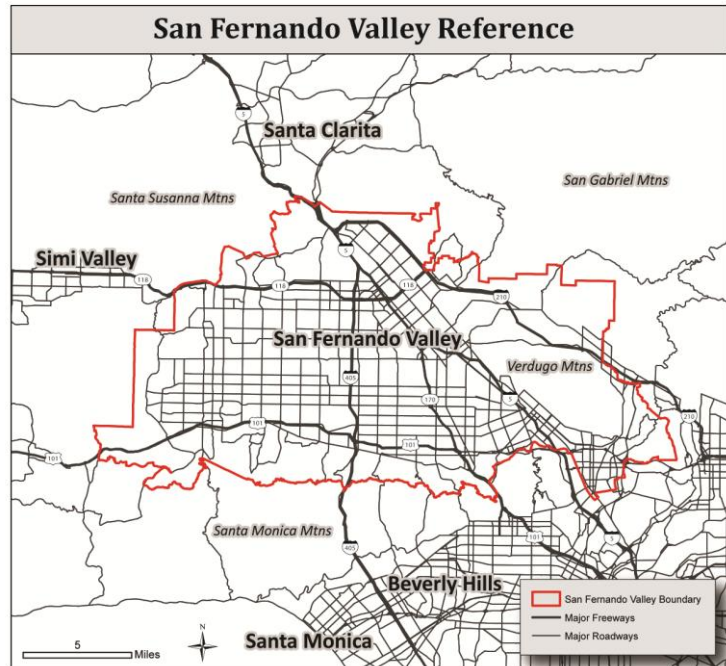


The Valley occupies nearly 50% of the City of Los Angeles' urban area.

The San Fernando Valley is a geographically distinct region.

The Santa Monica Mountains provide a natural barrier between the SFV and the City of Los Angeles.

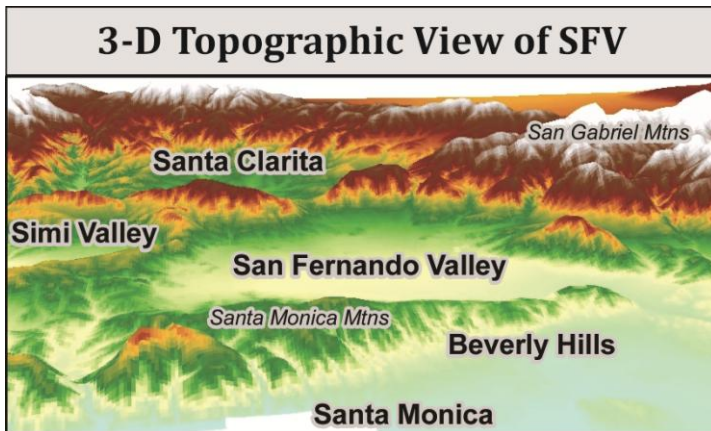
Two-dimensional models of the SFV and the City fail to properly account for the barriers between these disparate communities.



Valley Topography

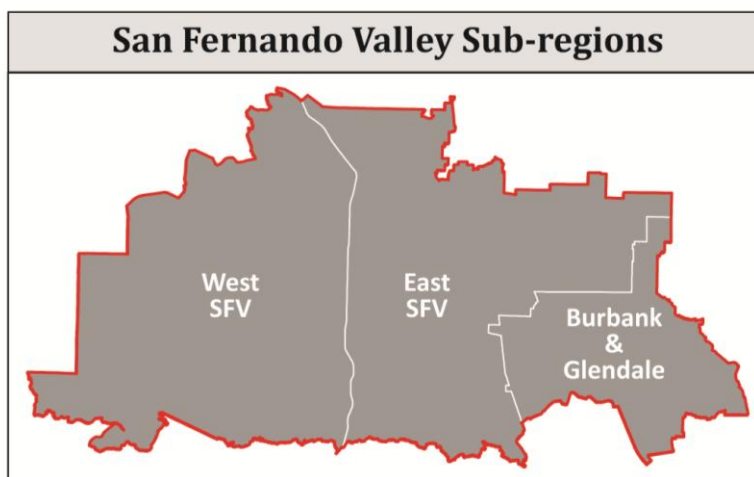
The topography of the SFV and the distinct mountain ranges which surround it provide a natural barrier to movement. Three-dimensional renderings bring into sharp relief the large section of mountainous open space, provided by the Santa Monica Mountains, separating the San Fernando Valley from the City of Los Angeles proper¹⁰.





Valley Sub-regions

Significant anecdotal and direct evidence shows support for major thoroughfares as barriers to neighborhood connectivity and interpersonal interaction^{11,12,13}. The I-405 freeway, running north-south through the central SFV, is a physical dividing line between the East and West SFV. This physical barrier between these regions of the San Fernando Valley provides for the development of distinct demographic and socioeconomic communities with divergent interpersonal connectivity on opposing sides of the freeway. For further analysis, we divide the San Fernando Valley into three discrete areas, the West SFV, the East SFV, and the far eastern cities of Glendale and Burbank, using 2010 Census Tract boundaries¹⁴.



Three-dimensional modeling illuminates the distinct topography of the SFV.

The I-405 is a significant physical dividing line between the East and West SFV.

Sub-regions within the SFV create distinct communities with divergent connectivity.

The Valley is a collection of distinct incorporated and unincorporated communities.

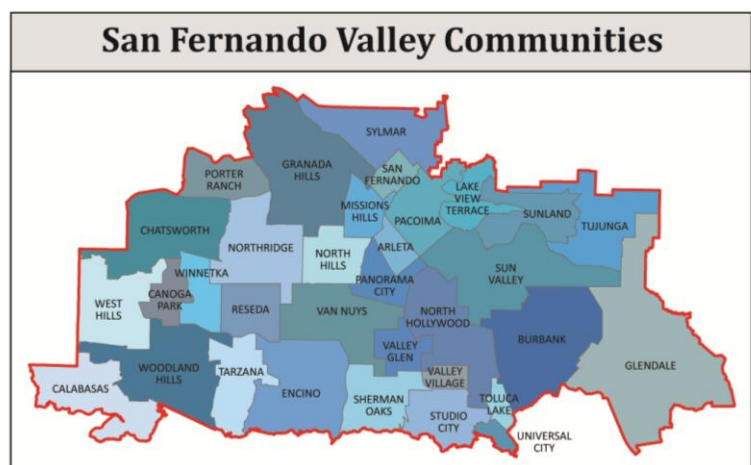
These communities provide residents with a sense of place, a sense of belonging.

Valley communities are the centers of social and political engagement.

It is important to note also that Census Tract boundary divisions have been modified (split, merged, and significantly altered) between the 2000 and 2010 census years to reflect changes (increases and decreases) in area populations. Tracts which overlapped the I-405 freeway in 2000 have been split in 2010 boundaries to reflect this significant barrier.

Historic Communities

The San Fernando Valley is also a collection of several distinct incorporated cities and unincorporated communities which have developed throughout the history of the region. The City of Los Angeles portion of the SFV is composed of many unofficial or quasi-cities which have developed either from early settlement, such as with Porter Ranch, or through more modern community development, activism, and members' sense of place^{15,16}. Such is the case with the relatively new community of Valley Glen in the Southeast SFV. In total, the SFV is composed of 29 quasi-cities and five incorporated cities. Boundaries defined here are based off of community boundaries defined originally by the 2010 Valley Economic Summit Report, a project co-sponsored by the Valley Economic Alliance and California State University, which used U.S. Census Bureau tract-level boundaries for 2000¹⁷.



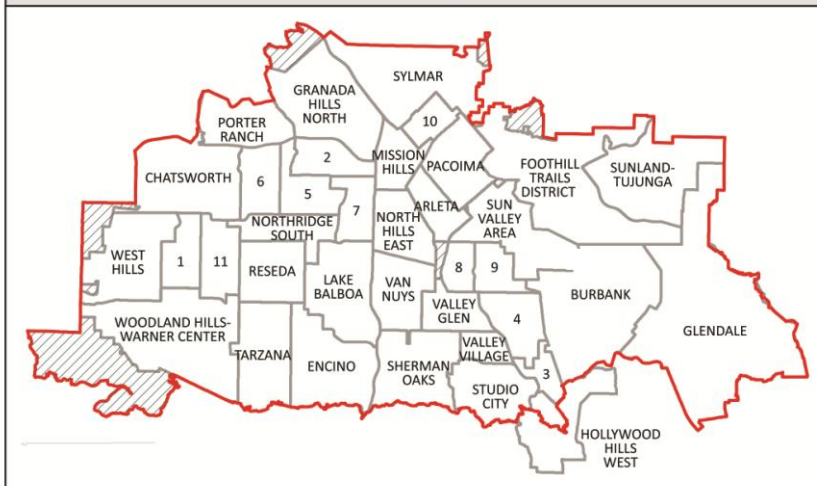
However, adjustments in city boundaries were made to accommodate recent changes in U.S. Census Bureau tract boundaries for 2010 which were published in early 2011. Additionally, these boundaries do not correlate perfectly with neighborhood council boundaries certified by the City of Los Angeles. Neighborhood council boundaries do not necessarily follow census tract boundaries and therefore make summarization of census-based data less direct and more difficult. However, the general demographic patterns seen via tract-based communities are comparatively similar to those at the neighborhood council level.

Valley Neighborhood Councils

Neighborhood council areas, although not fully addressed here in terms of demographic analyses, are important boundaries to consider as these community definitions have developed out of local residents' desires for greater local empowerment¹⁸. As divisions, in large part, of previously defined historic communities in the SFV, we do not address the specific demographic and socioeconomic nature of these subdivisions due to time constraints.

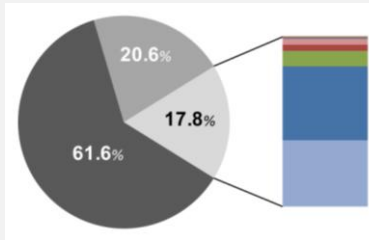
Neighborhood council areas have developed out of residents' desires for greater local empowerment.

San Fernando Valley Neighborhood Councils



- | | | |
|-----------------------------|--------------------|------------------------------|
| 1. CANOGA PARK | 5. NORTHRIDGE EAST | 9. NORTH HOLLYWOOD NORTHEAST |
| 2. GRANADA HILLS SOUTH | 6. NORTHRIDGE WEST | 10. CITY OF SAN FERNANDO |
| 3. GREATER TOLUCA LAKE | 7. NORTH HOLLYWOOD | 11. WINNETKA |
| 4. MID-TOWN NORTH HOLLYWOOD | 8. NOHO WEST | |

Demographic & Socioeconomic Character of the SFV

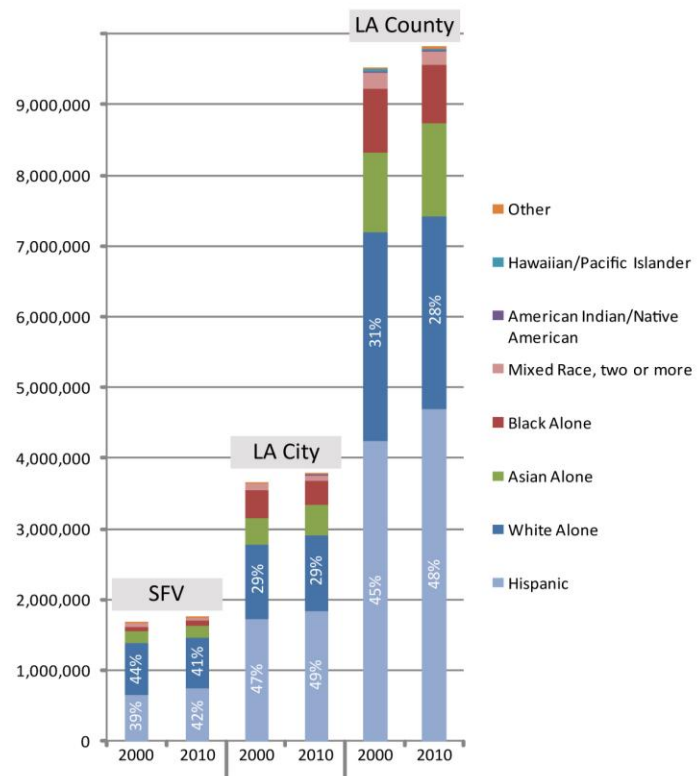


The Valley encompasses nearly 50% of the City of Los Angeles' total population.

In 2010, Hispanics accounted for over 42% of the Valley's population.

White Alone populations are no longer the majority in the Valley.

Using U. S. Census Bureau decennial census data for 2000 and 2010, we illustrate the demographic nature and shift of the Valley over the last decade^{19,20}. The San Fernando Valley in the year 2000 accounted for nearly 50% of the City of Los Angeles' population, with a total of nearly 1.7 million residents. Of the more than 9.5 million people living within Los Angeles County in the same year, 17.8% were living in the SFV. By 2010, the SFV's population as a percentage of the County had risen by over 4.2%, growing in total number by just over 70,000 from 2000 to 2010.



Although early 19th and 20th century settlements of the SFV consisted of European White settlers and those moving from the central city of Los Angeles seeking safer more suburban environments, the modern SFV is a highly diverse community comprised of various ethnic and racial groups. Similar to their White counterparts, these ethnic and racial groups have moved to the SFV searching for safer and more affordable housing in the San Fernando Valley's distinct suburban communities. White Alone individuals in 2000 retained a simple majority in the SFV, outnumbering Hispanics/Latinos by a margin of 5%.

White Alone populations cluster most prominently in Southwest and Southeast communities.

Asian Alone individuals occupy a greater percentage of Northwest SFV communities.

Black Alone individuals have a very small presence in the SFV.

Using historic community boundaries which provide a more accurate representation of 'on-the-ground' community engagement and neighborhood connectedness, we can see notable variability in demographic characteristics across the SFV region. Census tract-level demographic data for 2010 shows a large percentage of communities in the Northeast SFV occupied by majority Hispanic populations; whereas, Hispanics make up a much smaller portion of the Southwest SFV. White Alone populations cluster most prominently in Southwest and Southeast communities, especially those in the foothill and hilltop areas of the Santa Monica Mountains.

Although occupying a far smaller total population in the SFV, a community-based pattern of Asian Alone settlement also arises. Specifically, Asian Alone individuals occupy a greater percentage of Northwest SFV communities than any other community region. Additionally, although Black Alone individuals have a very small presence in the SFV, a large percentage of those living in the Valley reside within the quasi-community of Lake View Terrace in the Northeast sub-region.

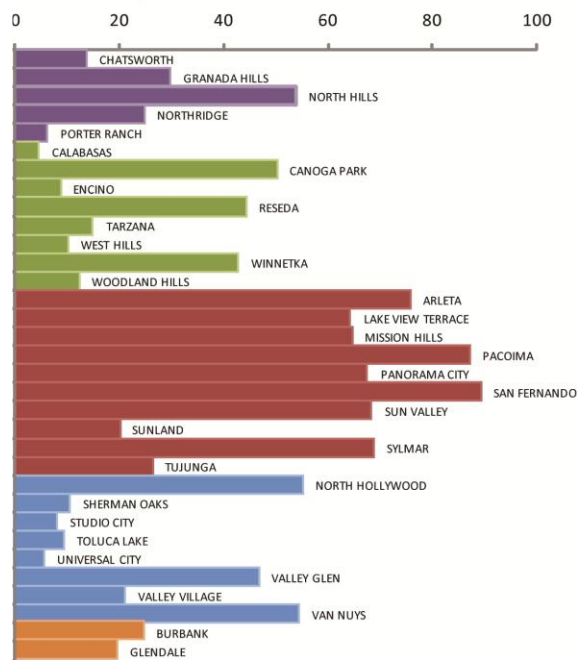
Socioeconomic indicators gathered from the U. S. Census Bureau's American Community Survey (2005 - 2009) describe the SFV on the whole, as compared to the City or County of Los Angeles, as a strongly suburban middle-class community²¹. The median household income of the SFV (\$64,184) is nearly 6% greater than Los Angeles County (\$60,628) and well over 18% higher than the City of Los Angeles at large (\$54,059). SFV median household incomes are also higher than both California (\$60,392) and national (\$51,425) medians.

Socioeconomic Indicators for SFV Sub-regions (2005 - 2009)

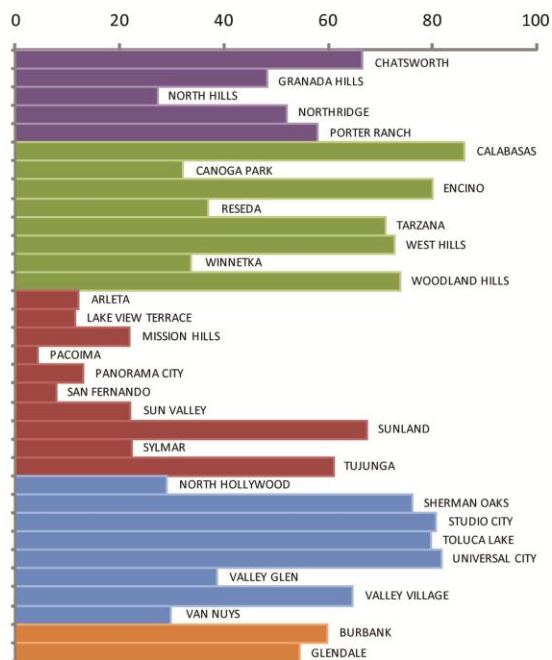
	Median Household Income	Median Housing Value	Percent with Bachelors Degree or higher	Percent Below Poverty Level
Northwest SFV	\$78,047	\$576,348	35.75%	10.33%
Southwest SFV	\$84,241	\$638,225	39.15%	9.69%
Northeast SFV	\$57,096	\$441,490	14.98%	13.96%
Southwest SFV	\$66,236	\$687,276	41.17%	11.69%
West SFV	\$78,016	\$596,706	36.83%	\$9.13%
East SFV	\$54,082	\$497,954	22.37%	15.56%
Burbank & Glendale	\$63,099	\$586,581	36.55%	10.16%
SFV (total)	\$64,184	\$547,714	29.80%	12.4%
City of Los Angeles	\$54,059	\$553,749	19.65%	26.98%
Los Angeles County	\$60,628	\$530,738	26.93%	15.6%

Racial/Ethnic Demographic Breakdown for SF (2005-2009) Communities

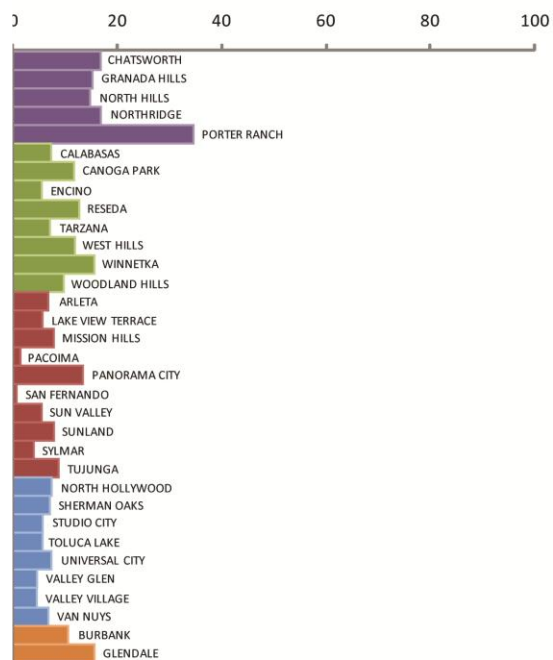
Percent Hispanic



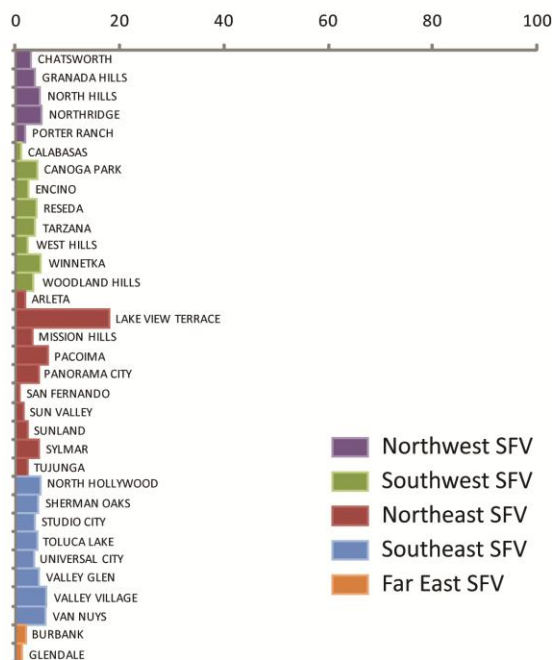
Percent White Alone



Percent Asian Alone



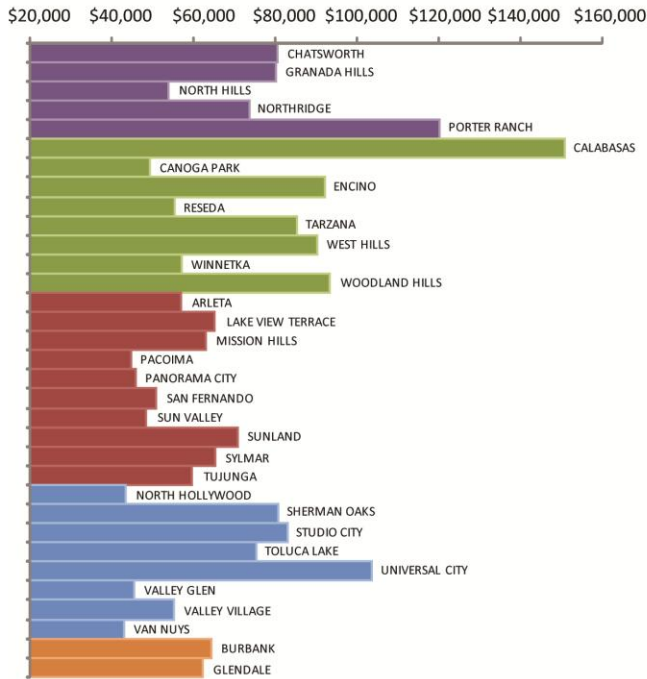
Percent Black Alone



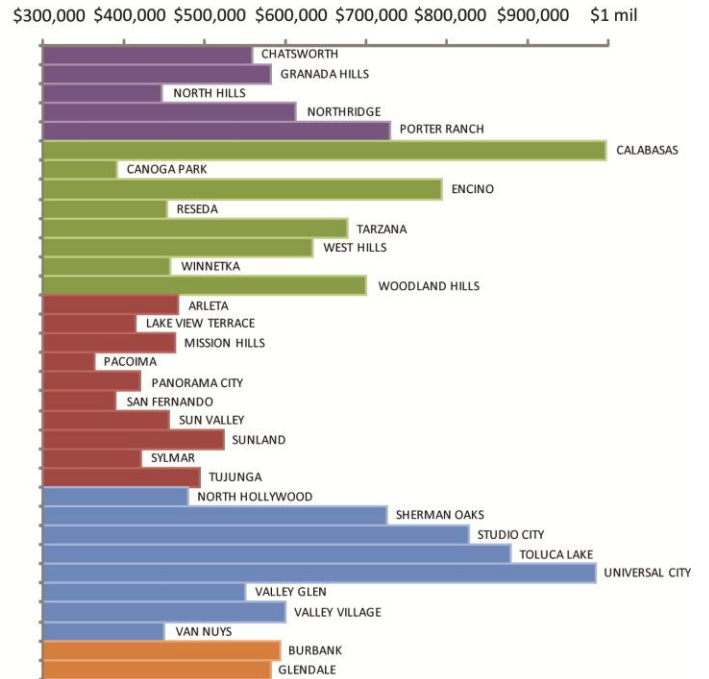
- Northwest SFV
- Southwest SFV
- Northeast SFV
- Southeast SFV
- Far East SFV

Socioeconomic Indicators for SFV Communities (2005-2009)

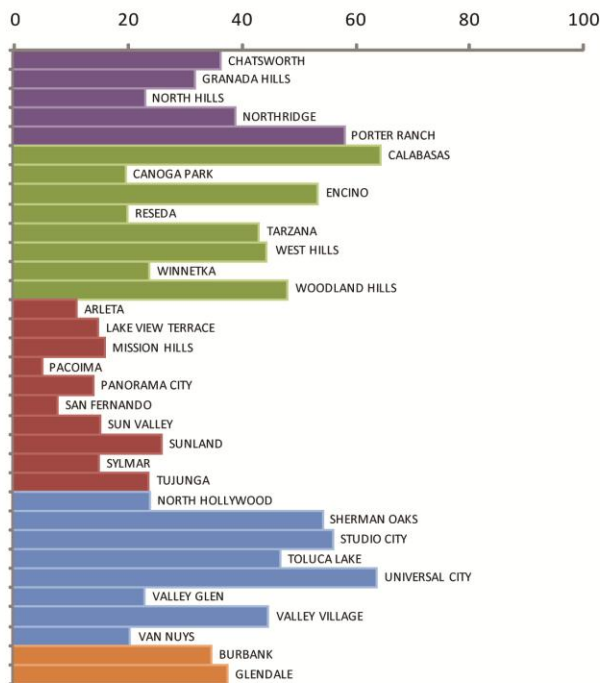
Median Household Income



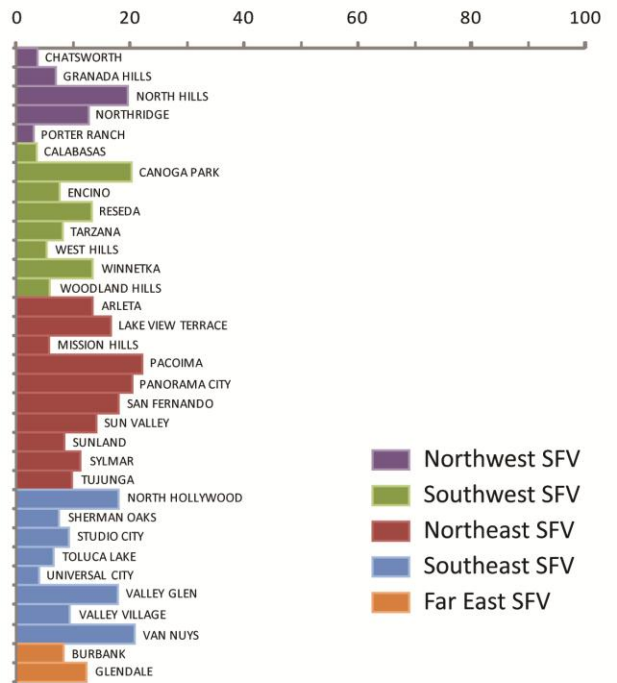
Median Housing Value



Percent with Bachelors Degree or higher



Percent Below Poverty Level



- Northwest SFV
- Southwest SFV
- Northeast SFV
- Southeast SFV
- Far East SFV

On average the SFV also contains a greater percentage share of well-educated working professionals than the City or County of Los Angeles. As compared to Los Angeles County (26.9%), a nearly 3% greater proportion of individuals in the SFV (29.8%) hold a Bachelor's Degree or higher. The percentage of individuals with a Bachelor's Degree or higher in the SFV also sits above the California average of 26.6% and national levels of 27.5%. The City of Los Angeles (19.65%) when contrasted to the SFV shows just over 10% fewer individuals holding at least a Bachelor's Degree.

In parallel, the SFV on average maintains a relatively stable economic base with only 12.4% of its residents living below poverty level thresholds defined by the U. S. Census Bureau. This falls below the California average level of 13.3% and the national levels (13.2%). Poverty levels in the SFV also fall significantly below City of Los Angeles (26.98%) and Los Angeles County levels (15.6%).

Although the SFV is on average a strongly middle-class community, disparities between sub-regions are evident on further investigation. Notably, the median household income for the West SFV is \$20,000 higher than the East SFV. Within the East SFV, the Northeast sub-region's median household income is comparatively lower than the SFV on average, while the Southeast remains marginally higher. The Southeast SFV is a particularly 'mixed bag' in terms of median incomes, with foothill communities, such as Universal City and Studio City, displaying high incomes, counterbalanced by low incomes in the Valley floor neighborhoods of Van Nuys, Valley Glen, and North Hollywood.

Sub-region educational attainment follows similar geographic patterns as those displayed by median household income, with one major divergence. Specifically, there are upwards of 30% fewer individuals holding a Bachelor's Degree or higher in the Northeast sub-region compared to all other sub-regions in the Valley. This proportion falls far lower even than City, County, or even State-wide averages, raising concerns about the economic volatility and vulnerability of this under-educated population. However, it should also be noted that although educational attainment is very low in this area, the percentage of the Northeast living below poverty level (13.96%) is below both City and County levels and is essentially equivalent to State levels. Therefore, it can be proposed that individuals in the Northeast, regardless of education, have established sufficient sources of income.

The SFV contains a greater percentage share of well-educated working professionals than the City or County of Los Angeles.

Only 12.4% of SFV residents live below poverty level thresholds, on average.

Upwards of 30% fewer individuals hold a Bachelor's Degree or higher in the Northeast sub-region.

The I-405 and US-101 Valley freeway corridors were rated in the Top 100 Most Congested in 2010.

Transit connectivity differences provide for greater isolation of the West versus the East SFV.

The SFV is a semi-isolated region resulting in a unique community. This isolation results not only from the distinct topographic barriers separating it from the City of Los Angeles but also from transit restrictions, exacerbated by the topography, that limit movement from and to the region. The National Traffic Scorecard, created by INRIX using GPS-based probe vehicle data, rated 23 of the major freeways in Los Angeles County in its top 100 most congested²². Of these, four connect to the SFV, including the northbound and southbound US-101 and the northbound and southbound I-405. The northbound and southbound I-405 freeways, the main arteries connecting the Northwest SFV to the City at large were ranked 3rd and 12th in the overall ranking. The northbound and southbound US-101 corridors linking the Southwest SFV to the City were ranked 31st and 40th respectively. Although the East SFV is also plagued by transit congestion, this region is provided greater arterial access to the City by not only the I-405 and US-101 freeways, but also the CA-170 and I-5 freeways. This difference in transit connectivity between the West and East SFV provides for differing activity and work-based travel outside the Valley and varying levels of connectedness to the City at large, resulting in greater isolation of the West SFV than the East SFV.

INRIX 2010 Annual Report: 100 Most Congested Corridors
San Fernando Valley Ranked Corridors

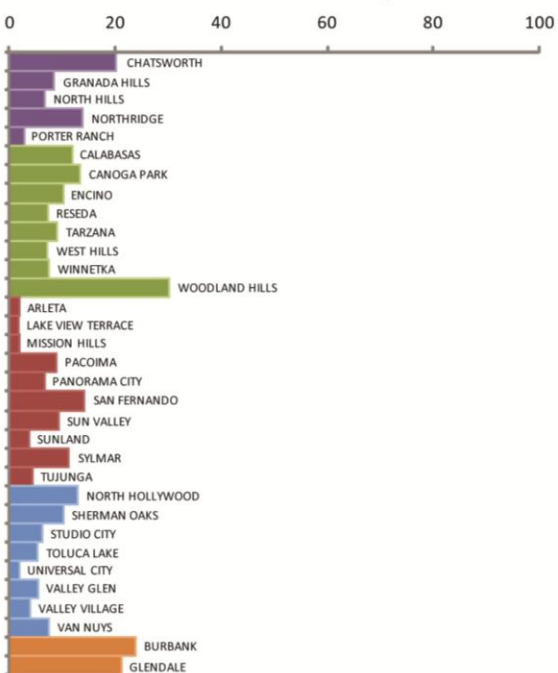
Rank	Road	From	To	Corridor Length (miles)	Worst Peak Average Travel Time (minutes)	Average Peak Delay (minutes)	Average Peak Travel Time Tax (%)
3	Northbound I-405	I-105/Imperial Hwy	Getty Center Drive	13.1	41	28	224%
12	Southbound I-405	Nordhoff Street	Mulholland Drive	8.1	26	18	225%
31	Northbound US-101	I-5/CA-60	Haskell Avenue	21.5	46	24	108%
40	Southbound US-101	Ventura Blvd/Shoup Ave.	Vignes St./Exit 2B	26.7	51	25	95%

Transportation modeling illustrates daily interaction between communities and individuals.

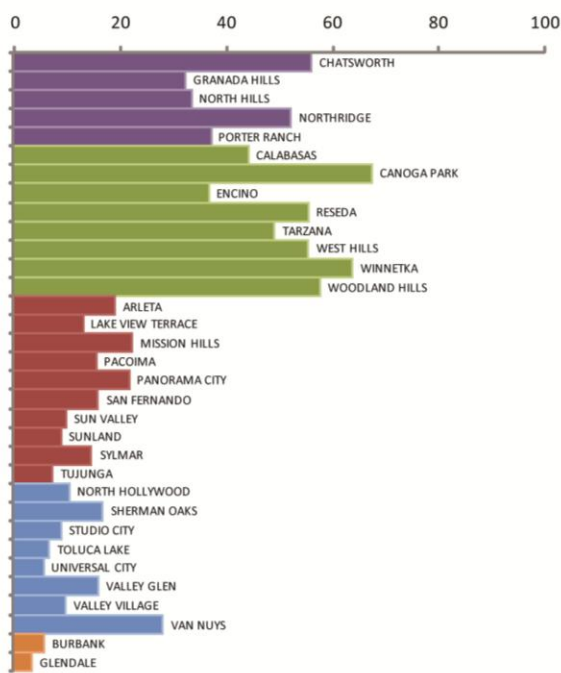
Transportation models which endeavor to illustrate trip distributions for specific communities in the SFV allow for direct visualization of transportation patterns and average daily interaction between regions, communities, and individuals in the SFV. Using transportation demand data provided by the Southern California Association of Governments, we are able to visualize these patterns across the SFV²³. Specifically, these data answer the question of where persons on average travel for work, school, and for entertainment. In consideration of time and space constraints, this report will focus specifically on work-based travel patterns.

Daily Work-based Trip Destinations

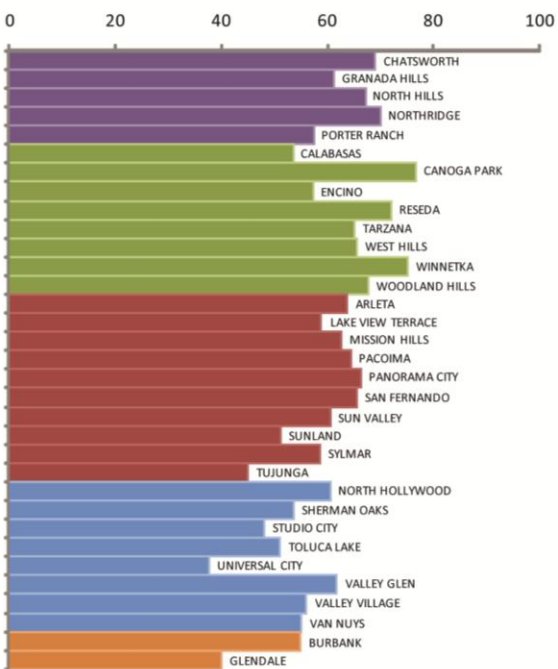
Percent within Same Community



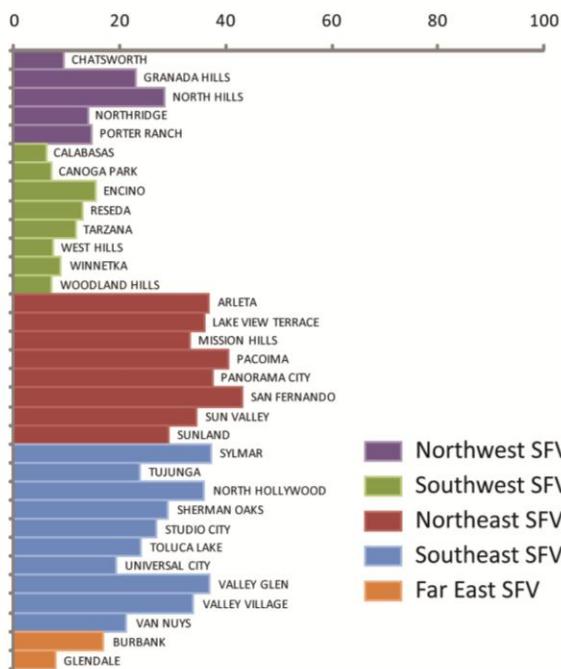
Percent within West SFV



Percent within SFV



Percent within East SFV



- Northwest SFV
- Southwest SFV
- Northeast SFV
- Southeast SFV
- Far East SFV

On average, 1.2 million daily work-based trips originate from the SFV.

Sixty percent of trips originating from the SFV also had destinations in the SFV.

The West SFV showed 10% more work-based trip destinations within the SFV.

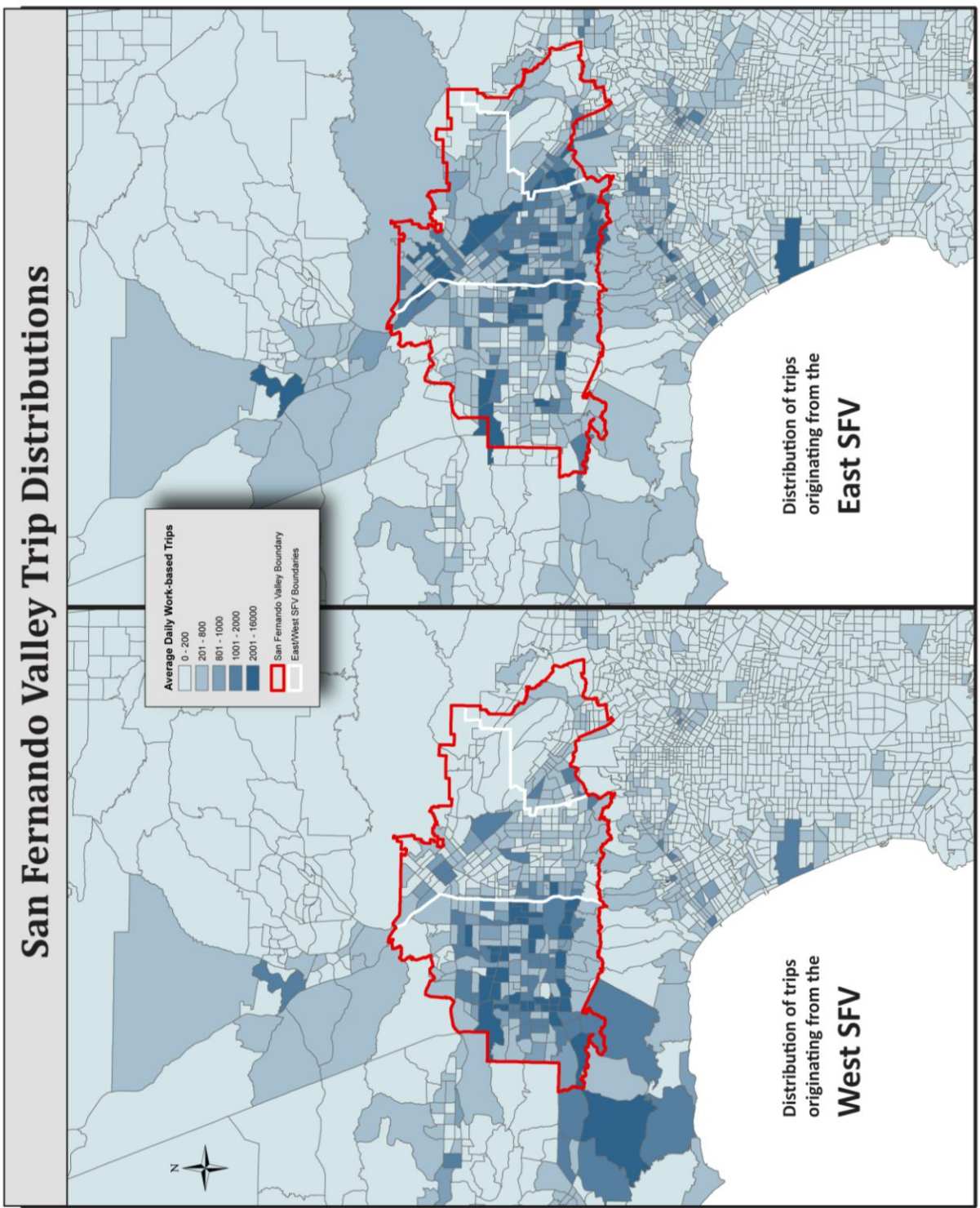
West SFV communities are more likely to travel to eastern Ventura county than to communities south of the Santa Monica Mountain range.

Mapping and summarization of these distributions illustrates that although some individuals do travel from various points in the SFV to the City for work, for school, and for entertainment, the majority of the daily trips originating from the SFV have destinations within the SFV and are within relatively short ranges from origination points. Of the roughly 1.2 million average daily work-based trips originating from the SFV, 60% had destinations in the SFV and 10% on average began and ended their trips within the same community, regardless of the SFV sub-region.

When separating East from West SFV, we find that the West SFV showed 10% more work-based trip destinations within the SFV than the East SFV (66% and 56% respectively). Fifty-nine percent of work-based trips originating from the West SFV had destinations in the same region, where as only 32% of trips originating in the East Valley remained in the East. The West SFV also had 5% more within-community work-based trips than the East Valley. Of the 33 communities within the SFV, Chatsworth in the Northwest, Woodland Hills in the Southwest and Glendale and Burbank in the far East SFV showed the highest numbers of within-community trips (i.e. the most restricted travel patterns) of any community. These examples provide further evidence that travel restrictions, although experienced by all sub-regions of the SFV, are felt more severely by the West SFV.

Choropleth mapping of travel patterns provides illustrations of the interconnectivity of individuals across a particular landscape. These constrained patterns of travel parallel and influence the localized interactions between community members in the SFV. In particular we can see that West SFV communities, especially those found along the southern edge of Los Angeles County actually are more likely to travel for work to communities within Eastern Ventura County along the northbound I-101 corridor than to areas in the City of Los Angeles south of the Santa Monica Mountains. This connection is reinforced by the inclusion of Calabasas, Hidden Hills, and parts of West Hills within the Las Virgenes School District, whose majority lies within Ventura County²⁴. This provides a unique and important instance of trans-county community interconnectivity.

This analysis provides evidence that the topographic and transportation barriers are most likely forcing individuals to find work destinations within close proximity to their homes to avoid the congestion along the area's major freeway corridors which run from the Valley into the City of Los Angeles.



The Valley basin is a topographically unique community of interest.

Restricted patterns of movement between the SFV and the City of Los Angeles are evident.

The connectivity between the SFV and the City is tenuous at best due both to natural barriers and place identities.

Summary and Conclusions

Restricted patterns of movement between the SFV and the City of Los Angeles provide substantive support for the proposal that the known sub-regions and communities within the SFV are appropriate units for measuring local understanding and reflect the disparate experiences ‘on-the-ground’ of the specific sets of individuals living within these boundaries.

The Valley basin is a topographically unique *community of interest*, within which lie distinct sub-regions and communities. Although portions of the Valley, most notably the West SFV, share socioeconomic characteristics with portions of the City at large, including the Beverly Hills area, the tangible connectedness between these areas is tenuous at best due both to natural barriers and place identities strongly rooted in daily Valley life, irrespective of socioeconomic status.

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