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**SUBMITTED BY:**  
George Carvalho  
City Manager

## Santa Clarita's Investment in Youth

Every day in our country children are dying; they are dying as a result of violence in their homes, in their schools, and on our streets.

In a 24-hour period, nine American children are murdered; 13 die from gunshots; and 30 are wounded by guns. There are 307 arrests for crimes of violence; 5,314 children are arrested; 270,000 guns are carried to school; and 1.2 million "latchkey" children come home to houses in which there is a gun and no parent.

In California, children are killing children. More than 80% of crimes committed in this country are committed by young people, between the ages of 13 and 22, against victims their own age. Our own County of Los Angeles has experienced a significant increase in juvenile delinquency and criminal behavior, and as a result, Santa Clarita is impacted by increasing gang activity and incidents of graffiti and ethnic intolerance.

Our criminal justice system is not working. The prison population in this country has increased sixfold since 1980 at a cost of \$25,000 per prisoner per year. The State of California has invested heavily in its criminal justice system in the last 20 years; yet, our crime statistics continue at a staggering rate. At the same time, there has been a disinvestment in our educational and library systems, recreation programs, and many health and human services.

How can we on a local level begin to make changes that will benefit our children before it's too late? The key is prevention and education. We need to recognize the needs of our youth and provide constructive alternatives to their involvement in drugs, gangs and criminal activity. The City of Santa

Clarita recognizes that there exists a shrinking window of opportunity "in which to take an approach" before these problems become unmanageable. It is projected that our teen age population will be 25% larger by the year 2005.

The City of Santa Clarita is committed to investing in the future of our youth. A key component of this investment is the recently completed Youth Strategic Plan. This cooperative three-year plan was initiated and developed by concerned youths and adults of the community, as well as the City. Other actions include the creation of the City-wide Youth Master Plan, which provides a 15-20 year plan, ensuring that the youth of our City have a positive environment in which to grow, thrive and succeed.

Other key community-wide, collaborative actions now underway are: the Anti-Gang Task Force and the Pride Committee, which address gang issues within the community; and the Human Relations Forum, which addresses racial intolerance. In addition, in 1994 the City opened the Newhall Community Center, which offers positive alternative forms of recreation and a gathering place for youth.

In 1995-96, the City has designated funds for additional recreational and alternative programs for young people.

The City feels it is important to have taken these important steps in investing in our youth by allocating resources to support the plans and programs which we hope will ensure them a safe and productive future. The success of these efforts, however, needs the direct involvement of parents, schools, businesses, law enforcement and other non-profit groups. Are you up to this challenge?

# City of Santa Clarita

## Budget Project Team

### Department Heads

George Carvalho, City Manager  
Ken Pulskamp, Assistant City Manager  
Jeff Kolin, Deputy City Manager/Special Projects  
Lynn M. Harris, Deputy City Manager/Director of Public Works  
Don Duckworth, Director of Redevelopment  
Anthony Nisich, City Engineer  
Steve Stark, Director of Administrative Services  
Rick Putnam, Director of Parks, Recreation and Community Services

### Budget Officers

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### Department Budget Officers and Assistants

Susan Caputo, Clerk Typist/City Manager's Office  
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