

City of Pico Rivera



General Plan

October 2014



Pico Rivera General Plan



Prepared for:
The City of Pico Rivera
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Prepared by:



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Translutions, Inc.



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- F – Economic Prosperity Report
- G – Noise Tables

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CHAPTER 1

Introduction

What the Pico Rivera General Plan is Designed to Do

The General Plan articulates our City's commitment to managing our future. Through the General Plan, the citizens of Pico Rivera describe our community's goals, policies, and standards, communicating our expectations for the public and private sectors and their responsibility to assist in meeting community objectives.

Overall, the General Plan:

- Provides a statement of community values and shared vision;
- Serves as a strategic, proactive planning tool for achieving that vision;
- Guides land use and development, environmental management, infrastructure, and municipal services decisions; and
- Meets the requirements of state law.

Provide a Statement of Community Values and Shared Vision

The Pico Rivera General Plan is a statement of community values and priorities. It describes the type of community we are and want to be, and sets forth goals, objectives, policies and implementing actions across a wide range of issues to help us achieve our goals. It also describes priorities for putting the General Plan into action. Overall, the Pico Rivera General Plan articulates our vision of the future and how we intend to achieve it.

Serve as a Proactive Strategic Planning Tool

The Pico Rivera General Plan is a strategic tool for guiding the City's physical development, and, in turn, its economic and social development. It is based on a comprehensive understanding of:

- The issues we have overcome, the issues we face today, and those we may face in the future;
- The expectation of local residents, property owners, and businesses for their community; and
- A clear sense of what we hope to accomplish.



Community Pride Event



Paseo Del Rio



KABOOM build event at
Pio Pico Playground

Guide Land Use, Development, Environmental Management, and Other Decisions

The General Plan is designed to guide the City's immediate and long-term land use, development, and environmental management decisions. City decision-makers will use the plan as a blueprint for:

- Choices about the use of land, including the desired location, character, and quality of future development, as well as the process by which development should proceed;
- Meeting the housing needs of all economic segments of the community;
- Maintaining mobility for the movement of people and goods;
- Providing needed infrastructure and public and human services;
- Enhancing the community's economic prosperity;
- Protecting environmental resources;
- Protecting people and property from natural and man-made disasters;
- Promoting the health of our community's residents; and
- Maintaining a quiet and peaceful community.

As the City faces challenges and creates its future, the General Plan will serve as a guide to help ensure that each decision made by the City meets short term needs and is also in the best interest of our community's long-term future.

Meet the Requirements of State Law

All cities and counties in California are required to have an up-to-date General Plan. According to State guidelines for the preparation of general plans, the role of the General Plan is to establish a document that will "...act as a 'constitution' for development, the foundation upon which all land use decisions are to be based. It expresses community development goals and embodies public policy relative to the distribution of future land use, both public and private."

As further mandated by the State, the General Plan must serve to:

- Identify land use, circulation, environmental, economic, and social goals and policies for the City and its surrounding planning area as they relate to land use and development;
- Provide a framework within which the City's Planning Commission and City Council can make land use decisions;
- Provide citizens the opportunity to participate in the planning and decision-making process affecting the City and its surrounding planning area; and
- Inform citizens, developers, decision-makers, and other agencies, as appropriate, of the City's basic rules that will guide both environmental protection and land development decisions within the City and surrounding planning area.

State law requires that the General Plan include seven mandatory elements, but allows flexibility in how each local jurisdiction structures these elements, and also allows the adoption of additional elements addressing subjects not specifically required by state law. The required elements of the General Plan include:

- The **LAND USE ELEMENT** designates the general distribution of uses of the land for housing, business, industry, open space, education, public buildings and grounds, waste disposal facilities, and other categories of public and private uses. The Land Use Element also sets forth standards for population density and building intensity.
- The **CIRCULATION ELEMENT** is correlated with the land use element, and identifies the general location and extent of existing and proposed major thoroughfares, transportation routes, terminals, and other local public utilities and facilities. Overall, the objective of the Circulation Element is to promote the movement of people and goods.
- The **HOUSING ELEMENT** embodies policy to meet the current and projected housing needs for all economic segments of the community, and includes a five-year action program.
- The **CONSERVATION ELEMENT** addresses the conservation, management, and use of natural resources, including water, soils, biological habitats, and mineral deposits.
- The **OPEN-SPACE ELEMENT** details programs for preserving open space within the community.
- The **NOISE ELEMENT** evaluates present and projected noise levels within the community as a guide for establishing a pattern of land uses that minimizes the exposure of community residents to excessive noise.
- The **SAFETY ELEMENT** protects the community from risk associated with seismic, geologic, flood, and fire hazards, including identification of hazards, establishment of safety standards, and delineation of evacuation routes.

The previous Pico Rivera General Plan was adopted in 1993, and has been periodically amended since then. The 2014 update brings the General Plan into conformance with changes in State law and other legal requirements; reflects changes in the local population and economy that have occurred since 1993; incorporates the most recent projections and assumptions regarding future growth; and responds to the issues, challenges, and opportunities the community now faces. The General Plan Update addresses all lands within the city limits as well as unincorporated Los Angeles County properties located along the eastern edge of the city within its designated Sphere of Influence (see **Figure 1-1**). In this General Plan, the combined city area and sphere of influence are termed the “planning area”. While properties within the sphere of influence are under the jurisdiction of Los Angeles County, these properties bear a critical relationship to Pico Rivera’s planning activities, including planning for the extension of services and facilities, and integrated infrastructure.

1. Introduction

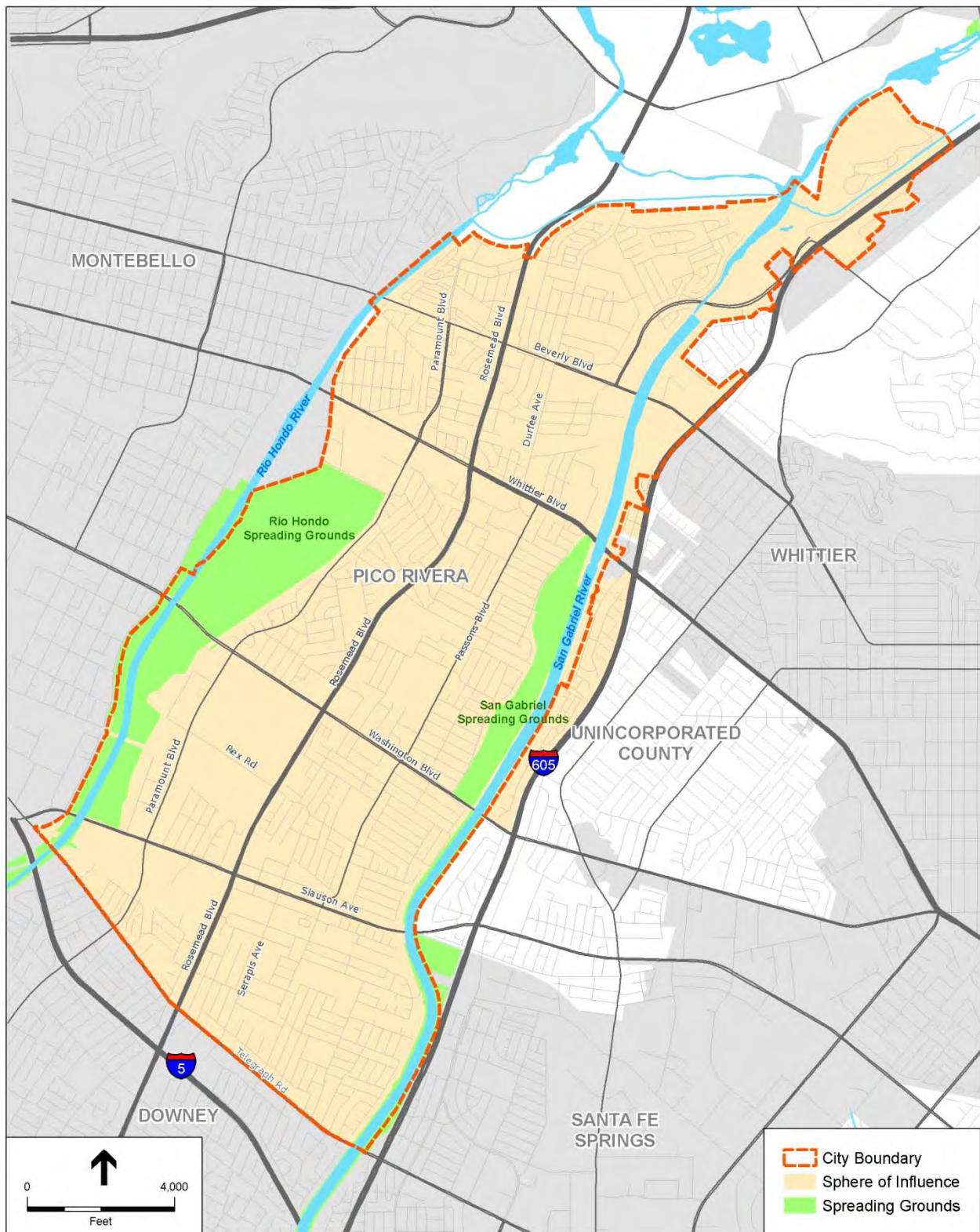


Figure 1-1: Planning Area

To continue to function as the "constitution" for managing the community's future, the General Plan needs to reflect current conditions and community values and priorities. The city recognizes that the General Plan will need to be periodically reviewed and then adjusted in response to changing conditions, availability of more recent information, changing technologies, and shifting community values.

As a result, State law provides for amending and updating the General Plan. By law, each element of the General Plan may be amended a maximum of four times a year (several changes may be grouped into each amendment, and there is no limit on the number of individual changes any single amendment may consider.). State law also requires that the City's Housing Element be updated every eight (8) years.

The City may initiate, or any citizen may apply to amend general plan text, exhibits, or maps. In order to ensure a compatible and internally consistent general plan document, any proposed change to the plan must be consistent with the criteria and conditions of the balance of the General Plan text, as well as with general plan maps and exhibits.

How the General Plan was Updated

Existing Conditions

The first step in the General Plan update process was to inventory and assess the existing conditions in the City of Pico Rivera. The information gathered drew upon background research, field work, stakeholder interviews, and information from City staff and other agencies to document the community's baseline conditions.

The technical studies completed as part of the data base compilation are included in the Environmental Impact Report Appendices. These technical studies addressed:

- Air Quality and Greenhouse Gas Emissions
- Traffic and Circulation
- Noise
- Water Supply

This assessment also identified the issues to be addressed in the General Plan update, and described alternative means available to the City to resolve those issues. This included information, issues, and alternatives in relation to:

- Community Development
- Population and Housing
- Economic Development

- Transportation and Circulation
- Municipal Facilities and Services
- Environmental Management

This information is included in the Environmental Setting section of the Draft Program EIR.

Workshops

A workshop was held with the City Council at the outset of the update program to provide the Council and community with background on the update program, General Plan requirements, and what would be addressed during the update. Additional workshops were held to discuss Proposed Land Use Changes, General Plan Policy Alternatives, Opportunity Areas, and to review the proposed updated General Plan and zoning ordinance.

Three community workshops were held to discuss (1) land use, transportation, economic development and environmental issues; (2) proposed land use changes, opportunity areas and policy alternatives and (3) housing element rezonings.

General Plan Advisory Committee

The General Plan Advisory Committee for the General Plan Update is comprised of two City Council members, two Planning Commissioners, two sister City Commissioners and two Parks Commissioners. The General Plan Advisory Committee's role was to provide input on recommendations for updating the General Plan and zoning ordinance.

Environmental Review

In accordance with the requirements of the California Environmental Quality Act (CEQA), an Environmental Impact Report (EIR) was prepared for the 2014 General Plan Update. The Draft General Plan Update and the Draft Program EIR were circulated for public review and comment. Public comments on the Draft Program EIR were reviewed and responded to, and revisions to the Draft Program EIR were made in response to public comments received where appropriate. Following completion of the Final Program EIR, public hearing drafts of the proposed 2014 General Plan Update were prepared for review and consideration by both the Planning Commission and the City Council.

Public Hearings were held by the Planning Commission and City Council on September 15, 2014, October 6, 2014, and October 28, 2014 to review/consider the Final Program EIR, public testimony, and the public hearing draft of the 2014 General Plan Update.

At the conclusion of the Public Hearing process, the City Council approved the 2014 General Plan Update. This action was taken after the City Council certified



Community Workshop

that Final Program EIR was in compliance with the provisions of CEQA. Mitigation measures included in the EIR were incorporated into goals, policies, and/or implementation actions, as appropriate.

Organization of the Pico Rivera General Plan

Core Values and Guiding Principles

Following this Introduction, Chapter 2 describes the type of community we want Pico Rivera to be. It describes our community's core values, the strategic direction we will take to capitalize on our strengths and address key planning issues, and the guiding principles we will follow to achieve the outcomes we desire through the planning process. Chapter 2 describes the major themes -- the "big ideas" -- on which the General Plan is based providing the foundation for the goals, policies and implementation actions included in the various elements of the General Plan.

General Plan Elements

The General Plan is organized into the following elements:

- Land Use
- Housing
- Circulation
- Community Facilities
- Economic Prosperity
- Environmental Resources
- Safety
- Healthy Community
- Noise

Table 1-1 identifies the relationship between the elements of the Pico Rivera General Plan and the required content of the State mandated elements.



Monument located at
Smith Park



Smith Park Groundbreaking

Table 1-1:
State Mandated General Plan Elements

	Land Use	Circulation	Housing	Conservation	Open Space	Noise	Safety	Additional Elements
Pico Rivera General Plan Elements	Land Use	x						
	Housing		x					
	Circulation		x					
	Community Facilities	x						x
	Economic Prosperity							x
	Environmental Resources				x	x		
	Safety						x	
	Healthy Community		x					x
	Noise						x	

Each element begins with a discussion of relevant issues, and presents goals, policies, and implementing actions addressing those issues:

- **Goals** are general statements of values or aspirations held by the community describing what it is we want to achieve. These are the outcomes toward which the City will direct its efforts.
- **Policies** describe what we will do and how we will make decisions in relation to a particular issue in order to achieve our goals. Policies are presented in the form of guidelines, standards, objectives, maps or diagrams, or a combination of these components:
 - **Guidelines** provide instructions regarding how some aspect of land use regulation will be conducted.
 - **Standards** provide specific, quantified measure of performance.
 - **Objectives** define the specific results outcomes or products to be delivered.
 - **Maps and diagrams** are graphic expressions of community policy.
- **Implementation Actions** put the goals and policies into practice, and include ongoing programs sponsored by the City or discrete, time-specific actions to be taken and completed.

How the General Plan will be Used

The Pico Rivera General Plan is intended for use by all members of the community.

- ***If you are a Pico Rivera resident***, the General Plan indicates the general types of uses that are permitted around your home, the long-range plans and changes that may affect your neighborhood, and the policies the City will use to evaluate development applications that might affect you and your neighbors. The General Plan identifies the actions that the City will take to ensure that your neighborhood remains a great place to live.
- ***If you are a Pico Rivera business owner***, the General Plan outlines the measures the City will take to protect your investment and encourage your future success. Expectations for the City's business districts are spelled out, and policies to ensure that business operations will be compatible with other businesses and nearby residential areas are identified.
- ***If you are interested in moving your family or business to Pico Rivera*** or developing land within the City, the General Plan will introduce you to our community. The General Plan and its supporting documents contain extensive background information about Pico Rivera, including long-range population and economic forecasts. The General Plan Land Use map (Figure 3-1) provides a useful starting point to understanding the types of uses permitted in the City along with their planned locations. However, it is important to review maps and policies throughout this document and the Pico Rivera Zoning Code to get a complete perspective on how and where development may take place.

The General Plan is also a tool to help City staff, City Boards and Commissions, and the City Council make land use and public investment decisions. It provides the framework for the City's Zoning Code. It identifies the transportation improvements, community service and facility needs, and environmental programs needed to sustain and improve the quality of life in the City. Future development decisions must be consistent with the Plan. Finally, the Plan is intended to help other public agencies, from Caltrans to our local school districts, as they contemplate future actions in Pico Rivera.

How the General Plan Will Be Implemented

Implementation Tools and Programs

The ultimate measure of Pico Rivera's General Plan is how effectively application of its policies achieves the community's core values and guiding principles. The General Plan will be implemented through a combination of:

- **Standard Implementation Tools**, routine actions, regulations, and operations carried out and applied by the City that will implement a majority of the General Plan's policies.
- **Specific Implementation Programs**, focused actions tied to the implementation of individual policies or a series of related policies where added direction is required or desired.

Specific Implementation Programs are interspersed within each General Plan element as appropriate. The Standard Implementation Tools are summarized below:

- **Zoning Code & Other Regulations.** The City's Zoning Code is one of the primary tools for implementing the General Plan. The Zoning Code specifies permitted uses, development standards, and other regulations that direct development and support implementation of General Plan policies. In addition to the Zoning Code, there are other regulations in place, such as the City's Subdivision Ordinance, Building Codes, and the California Environmental Quality Act, to ensure that development and related improvements occur in a manner that furthers the direction of the General Plan.
- **Development Review.** Many General Plan policies will be implemented through the review of both private and public projects. The City's Zoning Code, Subdivision Ordinance and other regulations establish development review processes that provide for City consideration of individual project proposals, and authorize the City to approve, deny, or condition projects based on their consistency with the General Plan and other considerations. The development review process also offers opportunities for the engagement and input of the public, outside agencies, and other interests.
- **Master Plans & Programs.** Pico Rivera has adopted various plans and programs that direct City services and facilities. Key among these is the City's Capital Improvement Program (CIP), which is the primary mechanism to schedule and fund infrastructure and facilities of citywide benefit. The City's plans and programs are directly linked to and comprise a key tool in implementing General Plan policies, standards, and priorities.
- **City Operations & Budget.** The City operates, manages and maintains a broad range of services and facilities to meet community needs. The type, quantity and quality of services and facilities provided by the City are directly linked to General Plan standards and priorities, and make a significant difference in how effectively the General Plan is implemented. The City's projected revenues and recommended spending are accounted for in its annual budget.

- **Intergovernmental Coordination.** For a number of policies, implementation of the General Plan will depend upon or be enhanced through coordination with and potential actions by other agencies. Decisions made by the City affect the region, and activities outside of Pico Rivera have varying impacts on the City. The City coordinates with numerous local, County, regional, state, and federal agencies that provide services, facilities, funding and/or administer regulations that directly or indirectly affect General Plan implementation.
- **Joint Partnerships.** Partnering with non-governmental public and private organizations that have expertise in specific areas provides opportunities for the City to implement the General Plan in a collaborative and efficient manner. The City coordinates and partners with a variety of non-governmental agencies and organizations including utility companies, transit providers, educational institutions, healthcare providers, railroad operators, the Chamber of Commerce, development interests, and businesses.
- **Public Information.** Pico Rivera uses a variety of communication media to keep residents and businesses informed of City services, activities and issues, many of which directly or indirectly relate to implementation of the General Plan. In addition to the City's website, public hearings, notices in the Whittier Daily News, community meetings, email blasts, Facebook, Twitter and public access television (CTV3), the Public Information Office produces a monthly newsletter (The Profile), special publications, information booklets, brochures, promotional information, and press releases.

Sections of the City's Zoning Code were updated concurrent with the General Plan to address rezoning consistent with the Adopted 2014-2021 Housing Element. Subsequent to adoption of the General Plan, the City will need to review and update its remaining regulations and codes, master plans and programs, fees, and other revenue generating mechanisms, as appropriate, to be consistent with and further implement the General Plan.

Monitoring

The City will annually review the General Plan to evaluate the progress in implementing its goals and policies. Since issues the General Plan addresses will continue to evolve over time, a regular review and reporting of implementation will help ensure the City is moving forward in achieving the General Plan's vision. This review will report on the status of each implementation program, and consider any new planning tools, policy approaches, funding sources, and feedback from monitoring activities. The findings of the review will be sent to the Governor's Office of Planning and Research, as required by Government Code Section 65400.

General Plan Consistency

Section 65300.5 of the California Government Code requires the General Plan and its Elements to be “an integrated, internally consistent and compatible statement of policies....” The need for internal consistency revolves around the following issues.

- All elements of the General Plan have equal legal status. Because no element can legally overrule another, the General Plan must resolve potential conflicts between or among the elements through clear language and policy consistency.
- All General Plan elements must be consistent with each other. Provisions of the General Plan must not require the City to take an action prohibited by another General Plan provision. In addition, the assumptions and vision used to create individual portions of the General Plan need to be uniform and consistent.
- Because General Plan text and diagrams are both integral parts of the General Plan they must be consistent with each other.