

CHAPTER 2

Core Values and Guiding Principles

This chapter of the General Plan documents the aspirations the community's residents, businesses, and leaders have for the City's next fifteen to twenty years and identifies the basic values and principles upon which the General Plan is based.

Where We Have Been and Where We Are Going

Forces Shaping Today's Community

Pico Rivera's existing community character is a result of its natural setting, a compact community flanked by two rivers, and the history of the area, which began as and later evolved into two small separate residential communities situated between the rivers – the towns of Pico and Rivera—that were ultimately incorporated into the City of Pico Rivera.

Following the end of WWII, the demand for housing in southern California attracted land developers to the towns of Pico and Rivera and the lands between the Rio Hondo and San Gabriel Rivers. In the 1950s, large parcels of land were purchased and cleared for residential development. New homes, schools and churches were built, and commercial enterprises were established. As subdivisions sprang up, young families quickly filled the area and drew the older neighborhoods of Pico and Rivera closer together, leading to incorporation of the City of Pico Rivera on January 7, 1958.

Pico Rivera has a long history as a major employment location, given its proximity to downtown Los Angeles, the ports of Los Angeles and Long Beach, and excellent rail and freeway access, and a large local work force. The Ford Motor Company purchased a large tract of land in Pico Rivera in 1957, and established the Pico Rivera assembly plant, making Pico Rivera a major regional employment center. The Ford plant was one of southern California's major manufacturing facilities, turning out 1.4 million automobiles before its closure in 1980.

The economic engine created by the Ford plant was revived several years after the plant's closure when Northrup purchased the facility and established a 2.0 million-square-foot manufacturing facility, which became home to the B-2 bomber program. In 1993, Northrup announced that the plant would be closed in



Rio Hondo River



Industrial business in Pico Rivera



Pico Rivera Towne Center

1997, resulting in the lay-off of approximately 7,600 workers. Ultimately, the Ford/Northrup plant became the site of the Pico Rivera Towne Center, which includes a large-scale commercial center and several million square feet of modern industrial facilities.

The economic activity created by the Ford assembly plant gave rise to a thriving industrial economy in the city, including additional industrial development along Telegraph Road and Paramount Boulevard, as well as industrial development along the San Gabriel River and in the northeastern portion of the city, north of Whittier Boulevard.

Commercial development within Pico Rivera largely grew up along the major east-west routes that cross the Rio Hondo and San Gabriel rivers – Beverly Boulevard, Whittier Boulevard, Washington Boulevard, Slauson Avenue, and Telegraph Road. Smaller commercial areas grew along Rosemead Boulevard and Durfee Avenue extending from those east-west streets. Pico Rivera’s older commercial areas largely consisted of free-standing commercial buildings housing independently owned businesses aligned along major road corridors in “strip commercial” arrangements, with a small number of larger centers that were generally anchored by a supermarket or other neighborhood oriented retail use.

More recently, larger community-serving commercial centers have been developed, clustered along Whittier and Washington boulevards.

Key community features and landmarks are identified in **Table 2-1** and **Figure 2-1**.

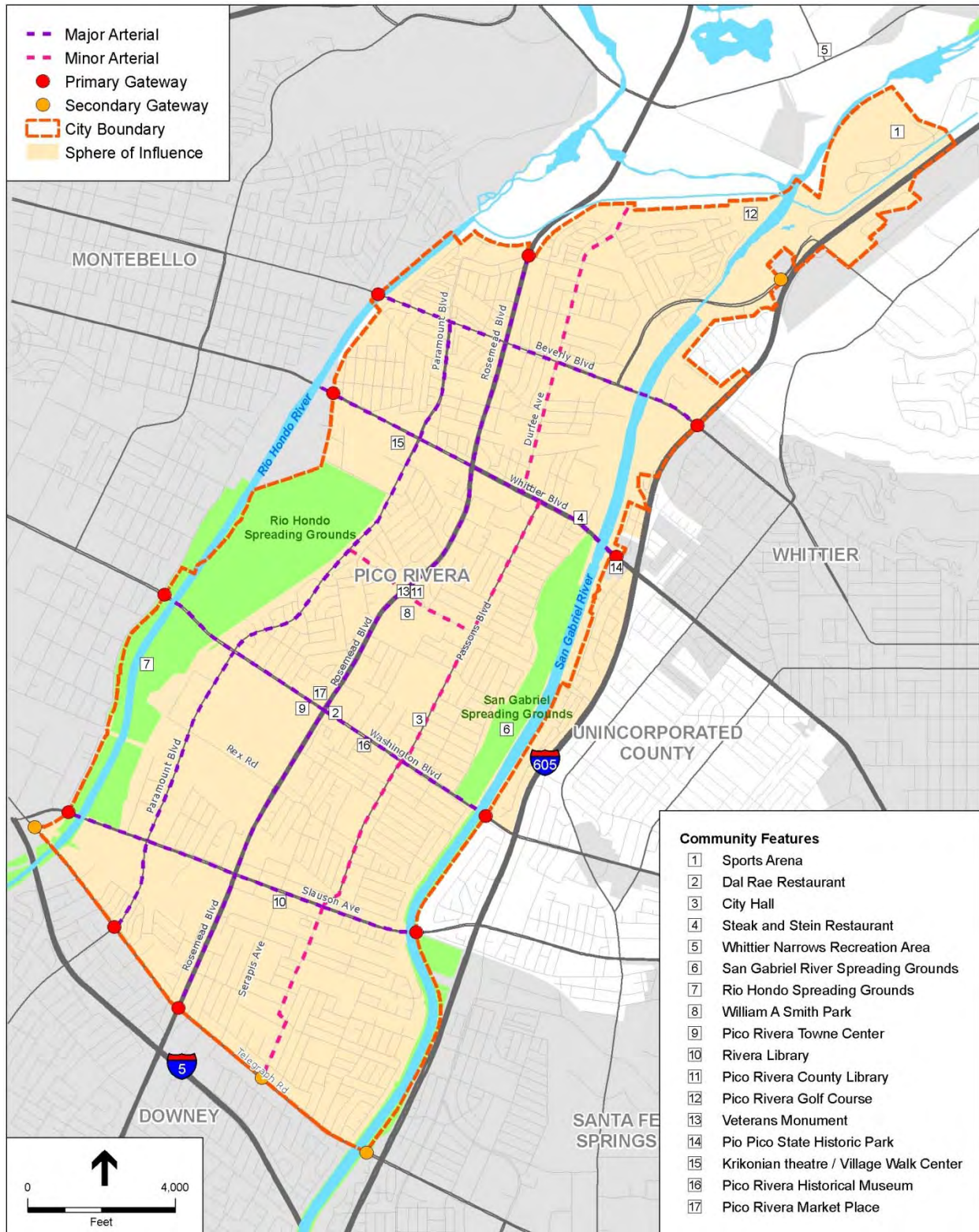


Figure 2-1: Community Features

2. Core Values and Guiding Principles

Table 2-1:
Community Features and Landmarks

Map No.	Feature Name	Description
1	Sports Arena	The Sports Arena is adjacent to the Bicentennial Park in Pico Rivera. This community landmark has 6,000 seats, is famous for its Mexican rodeos (chareadas) and Latin entertainment, and is known as a popular recreation place for the Hispanic population in the Los Angeles area. The Pico Rivera Sports Arena was built in 1979 and is reputed to be the largest Mexican rodeo ring in the country.
2	Dal Rae Restaurant	The Dal Rae Restaurant is a historic landmark in Pico Rivera located on Washington Boulevard, just east of Rosemead Boulevard. The Dal Rae was opened in 1951, moved to its current location in Pico Rivera in 1958, and is now long known as an LA institution. It is a popular meeting place for business lunches.
3	Civic Center Complex	Although not formally designed as such, three adjacent public uses form the civic center. <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • <i>City Hall:</i> The Pico Rivera City Hall is the center of local government in the city. The City Hall is located 6615 Passons Boulevard, north of Washington Boulevard, between the Pico Rivera Sheriff's Station and the El Rancho High School. • <i>Los Angeles County Sheriff's Station:</i> Los Angeles County's Pico Rivera Sheriff Station is situated immediately south of City Hall, providing the community the sense of being serviced by its own police department while benefiting from other services offered by the sheriff. The City of Pico Rivera has contracted with the Sheriff's Department for law enforcement services since the City's incorporation in 1958. The Sheriff's station and City Hall share entry access from Passons Avenue. • <i>El Rancho High School:</i> Immediately north of City Hall is El Rancho High School, located at 6501 S. Passons Boulevard. This historic landmark first opened in September of 1952.
4	Steak and Stein Restaurant	The Steak and Stein Restaurant is located off of the 605 Freeway in Pico Rivera on East Whittier Boulevard. Steak and Stein was built in the 1940s.
5	Whittier Narrows Recreation Area	This feature, which lies immediately north of the city limits, separates the urban structure of the community from natural features in the Whittier Narrows Recreation Area. The Whittier Narrows Dam and associated flood control facilities that surround the city function both as a defensive buffer against flood hazards but also insulates the city from adjacent outside development, giving city residents a sense of uniqueness and sense of place. The natural, park land and recreation areas adjacent to the Dam also add opportunities for a variety of recreation options not found within the city.
6, 7	Rio Hondo and San Gabriel River Channels	Pico Rivera is unique in that it is bordered on both the east and west by open areas used for flood control and ground water recharge. The Rio Hondo and San Gabriel River Channels provide defined and distinct edges to the community. Since almost the entire city is located below the level of the channel levees, visitors who travel through the area retain a sense of entry, arrival and exit not found in surrounding communities.
8	William A. Smith Park	Smith Park is centrally located in Pico Rivera, bounded on the West by Rosemead Boulevard, and on the North by Mines Avenue. This community park, which contains a community center, art center, and olympic-size pool complex, is adjacent to the library and close to the Pico Rivera Town Center. Its size, location, and range of activities provides Pico Rivera with a distinctive central gathering place.
9	Pico Rivera Towne Center	The Pico Rivera Towne Center, located on the southwest corner of Washington and Rosemead Boulevards, is a 630,000 square foot, open-air shopping center. This center is known as Pico Rivera's premiere destination for shopping, and dining.
10	Rivera Library	Pico Rivera operates two community libraries with the Los Angeles County Library system. Rivera Library located at 7828 South Serapis Avenue was founded in 1913 and has been at its present location since 1970. At 6,724 square feet, Rivera Library is the smaller of the two libraries.
11	Pico Rivera Library	Pico Rivera Library at 9001 East Mines Avenue re-opened in 2013 after it was torn down and rebuilt to almost double its original size. The 16,000 square foot state-of-the-art facility is Leadership in Energy and Environmental Design (LEED) certified and includes a literacy center, teen space, meeting room with seating for 80 people, two group study rooms, plus 29 computers for the public. The library replaced the former 7,000 square foot library built in the 1960's.

Table 2-1 (cont.):
Community Features and Landmarks

Map No.	Feature Name	Description
12	Pico Rivera Municipal Golf Course	The Pico Rivera Municipal Golf Course is located at 3260 Fairway Drive and was built in 1965 and features an executive nine hole course designed by famed golf course architect William Bell Jr., credited with building approximately 50 golf courses in Southern California.
13	Veterans Monument/Eternal Flame	The Eternal Flame monument located on Mines Avenue across the street from Smith Park is dedicated to all veterans past and present.
14	Pio Pico State Historic Park	Pio Pico State Historic Park is located at 6003 Pioneer Boulevard in the City of Whittier and features one of southern California's remaining 19th century structures made out of adobe. The 5 acre park encompasses historic gardens and the beautiful restored home of Pio Pico. It is registered as California Historic Landmark NO. 127. A bell marks the original El Camino Real, which passed directly in front of the park during Pio Pico's time.
15	Krikorian Theater Village Walk	The Krikorian Theatre Village Walk is located on the southwest corner of Whittier and Paramount Boulevards. The 12 -acre commercial center is anchored by Krikorian Theatres and includes several national retailers.
16	Pico Rivera Historical Museum	The museum is located at 9122 Washington Boulevard and utilizes a historic 1887 train depot as its main structure. The museum is operated by the Pico Rivera History and Heritage Society.
17	Pico Rivera Marketplace	The Pico Rivera Marketplace is located on the northwest corner of Washington and Rosemead Boulevards. This is one of the City's newer shopping centers with major retailers such as LA Fitness, Fresh and Easy and Chase Bank.

Key Forces of Change for Pico Rivera's Future

While much has been accomplished, the future will present a new set of challenges and opportunities. Key drivers of change for Pico Rivera include:

- **Shifting demographics.** Over the next 15 to 20 years, the community will experience an aging population of baby boomers (born between 1946 and 1964) and an increasing population of Gen Y's (born between 1982 and 2001). By 2030, 19 percent of the city's population will be 65 years or older. The result will be an increasing need for housing and social services for seniors.
- **Increasing educational attainment.** The proportion of households of local residents having a college degree is steadily rising, and the city has committed to further increasing educational attainment with the goal that every Pico Rivera household has a college graduate. The increases in education attainment that have occurred to date are reflected in increasing local incomes, expansion of the community's retail shopping opportunities, and changes in the local labor base in the form of increasing numbers of professionals and white collar workers. These trends will continue in the future, resulting in further expansion of the city's commercial base and opportunities for development of professional office space.
- **Greater emphasis on local communities' role in health care delivery and community health.** Recognizing that an increasing number of Americans suffer from chronic diseases such as obesity, diabetes, heart disease, asthma, and depression, there has been and will continue to be an increasing need to design communities to assist in improving the long term health of residents. This will mean increasing opportunities for people of all ages and abilities to engage in routine and safe physical activity, to access health care, and to promote self-improvement and intellectual development for personal and economic growth. Communities that have access to safe and convenient transportation options, arts and cultural facilities, extensive social interaction, varied parks and recreation facilities and programs, healthy foods, medical and mental health care services, and quality educational facilities will become increasingly desirable and experience better health outcomes, improved quality of life, and economic prosperity.

Core Values: People, Places, Environment, and the Economy

The General Plan defines four important areas vital to achieving our desired future – Core Values – that provide the road map for the City's next twenty years. Overall, these core values define a future that simultaneously promotes **social well-being, excellence in place-making, respect for the natural environment, and economic vitality** for current and future generations.

Social Well-Being

Pico Rivera's future is a community that...

- Recognizes it is part of a larger region and strives to fulfill its responsibilities to that region.
- Fosters a range of social interactions and maintains a strong sense of belonging to the community.
- Is dedicated to educational excellence and achievement.
- Provides access to cultural amenities and effective and affordable health care and other services.
- Provides all residents access to quality and affordable health and social services.
- Recognizes the importance of children and seniors by providing exceptional cultural, recreational, educational, and social support programs.
- Protects the safety and security of its residents, businesses, employees and visitors.
- Values its history and culture.
- Strives to provide access to a wide range of healthy food options.
- Encourages civic involvement, open informed discussion to address common issues, and provides its citizens with a voice in managing the future of their community.

Excellence in Place-Making

Pico Rivera's future is a community that...

- Is well planned and provides an efficient arrangement of:
 - diverse and affordable housing opportunities;
 - quality retail and service businesses;
 - a broad range of employment-generating uses,
 - extensive recreational and educational facilities, and
 - places for community and civic activities.
- Protects citizens and businesses from the adverse impacts of other nearby uses.
- Maintains a safe and efficient multi-modal mobility network that provides efficient local and regional connectivity for the movement of people and goods, promotes choice, facilitates personal freedom, and supports the needs of local businesses.
- Provides the full range of efficient and affordable public facilities and utilities.
- Cherishes its residential neighborhoods, and protects their character.
- Is well designed, visually pleasing, and reflective of the character and culture of Pico Rivera.



Public Meeting to discuss rehabilitation of the former Bicentennial Park Campgrounds



Pico Rivera Towne Center



Pico Rivera Bicycle Festival

Respect for the Natural Environment

Pico Rivera's future is a community that...

- Protects and restores remaining features of the area's natural riparian habitats.
- Minimizes the impacts of urban activities on natural environmental systems and functions within the minimum feasible carbon footprint.
- Minimizes the net consumption of water, energy, and other resources.
- Provides an adequate, assured supply of clean water.
- Relies to the maximum extent feasible on clean energy supplies.
- Protects the cleanliness of air, water, and soil resources.
- Reduces to the maximum extent feasible the creation of solid wastes requiring placement in landfills.

Economic Vitality

Pico Rivera's future is a community that...

- Fosters cooperation between the private and public sectors.
- Provides a positive atmosphere for the establishment, success, and growth of private businesses.
- Provides a broad range of desirable employment and entrepreneurial opportunities.
- Generates sufficient revenue to pay for the range of services and facilities desired by local citizens and businesses.
- Ensures that new development pays for itself.



NORMS Restaurant
groundbreaking