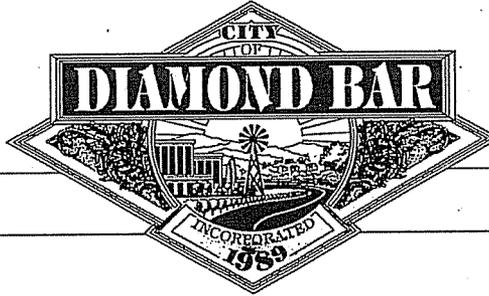


Meeting Date: February 3, 2015

CITY COUNCIL

AGENDA REPORT

**TO:** Honorable Mayor and Members of the City Council

**VIA:** James DeStefano, City Manager 

**TITLE:** General Plan Status Report for 2014

**RECOMMENDATION:**

Receive and file.

**BACKGROUND:**

State Law requires each city to prepare and adopt a comprehensive, long-term General Plan to guide its physical development. The General Plan is a policy document comprised of goals, objectives, and strategies for implementation. The City of Diamond Bar has periodically amended the General Plan as needed, since its adoption on July 25, 1995.

In accordance with California Government Code Section 65400(b), the City is required to submit an annual General Plan status report to the local legislative body (City Council), the State Governor's Office of Planning and Research (OPR), and State Department of Housing and Community Development (HCD) on the status of the General Plan, its implementation progress, and how the City is meeting the regional housing needs for the community. The attached report lists the City's progress toward the implementation of the General Plan for the period of January 1, 2014 to December 31, 2014, by meeting the City's share of regional housing needs pursuant to Government Code Section 65584 and by the City's effort to remove governmental constraints, which may influence the maintenance, improvement, and development of housing pursuant to State Law.

Prepared by:



Grace S. Lee  
Senior Planner

Reviewed by:



Greg Gubman, AICP  
Community Development Director

**Attachment:**

1. 2014 General Plan Status Report

## CITY OF DIAMOND BAR

### General Plan Status Report 2014

Period beginning January 1, 2014 and ending December 31, 2014

On July 25, 1995, the City Council adopted the City of Diamond Bar's General Plan, which is a State mandated document that the City uses to plan the framework for its future physical, social and economic development. The General Plan is considered a long-term document that projects development within a community for approximately 15 to 20 years. By projecting conditions and needs into the future, the General Plan establishes a basis for evaluating current policy and providing insight on future policy.

The City of Diamond Bar General Plan consists of the following six elements:

- |                        |                                  |
|------------------------|----------------------------------|
| 1) Land Use            | 4) Public Health and Safety      |
| 2) Housing             | 5) Circulation                   |
| 3) Resource Management | 6) Public Service and Facilities |

The following information summarizes the status of the objectives that the City has implemented for each element of the General Plan in 2014.

#### LAND USE ELEMENT

Diamond Bar is for the most part a residential community. Detached single-family dwellings represent the majority of the City's housing stock; however, multi-family housing exists along Diamond Bar Boulevard, south of Grand Avenue and along Golden Springs Drive, west of Diamond Bar Boulevard. Since the adoption of the Land Use Element, development in Diamond Bar has occurred pursuant to the goals, objectives, and policies of the General Plan.

**Objective 1.2** – Preserve and maintain the quality of existing residential neighborhoods while offering a variety of housing opportunities, including mixed land uses.

- The City issued 46 construction permits for new single-family dwellings and 36 construction permits for additional livable square-footage to residential dwellings.

This level of construction activity is an indicator of the continued desirability of Diamond Bar as a place to live, and its residents' desire to remain in their homes, neighborhoods and schools by adapting their homes to meet the needs of their families. Moreover, as individual properties are improved and upgraded, the overall quality of the neighborhoods in which they are located also improves.

- Lennar Homes is currently in the construction phase for the development of 182 for-sale dwelling units – consisting of 120 detached homes and 62 townhomes –

on approximately 30 acres located at the southeast corner of Brea Canyon Road and Diamond Bar Boulevard. Lennar is marketing the project under the name "Willow Heights." Of the 46 construction permits for new single-family dwellings mentioned above, 43 permits were issued to Lennar Homes for 27 detached homes and 16 townhomes.

**Objective 1.3** – Designate adequate land for retail and service commercial, professional services, and other revenue generating uses in sufficient quantity to meet the City's needs.

- The City approved a new fitness center (Crunch Fitness) in a 16,800 square-foot lease space located within the Diamond Bar Towne Center at 1132 S. Diamond Bar Blvd. and a certificate of occupancy was issued on October 3, 2014.
- The City approved an addition for an automated drive-thru car wash to an existing Extra Mile convenience store building located at the existing Chevron service station at 21324 Pathfinder Road.
- The City approved a new 4,894 square-foot commercial building to suit a Starbucks, T-Mobile and Waba Grill restaurant as tenants located within the Target shopping center at 22438 Golden Springs Drive. Submitted into plan check on January 2015.
- The City approved a two-story, 33,850 square-foot expansion to an existing 31,050 square-foot Kaiser Permanente medical office building at the corner of Bridgegate and Copley Drive, which is currently under construction. The expansion will accommodate new and expanded facilities for services including OB/GYN, pediatrics, optometry, and behavioral health. The estimated completion date is March 6, 2015.
- The Shell Station located on the northeast corner of Diamond Bar Blvd. and Palomino Dr. reopened after four years, and construction is currently underway on the convenience store. The tenant improvement and completion of the car wash is planned in early 2015.
- The City adopted the "C-3-PD/Hotel Overlay" zoning district to promote and facilitate the orderly redevelopment of a prominent, freeway offramp-adjacent site, formerly occupied by an automobile dealership and drive-thru restaurant, in a manner consistent with the City Council's adopted Goals and Objectives, most notable the Fiscal Responsibility/Economic Development goal to *"(i) identify specific development opportunities and develop Specific Plans to revitalize the K-Mart and Honda property areas in a way that provides the greatest net benefit to the community."* Any land use plan formulated within the Overlay is required to include a hotel as the primary use. Secondary uses are limited to those already permitted or conditionally permitted in the underlying C-3 district. Existing buildings within

the Overlay may be occupied by uses permitted or conditionally permitted in the C-3 district, without a hotel as the primary use, provided that no existing building is enlarged, and no new buildings are established. The zone change will provide the foundation for a land use strategy and new zoning regulations to guide the establishment of new uses that would support the goal of yielding the highest municipal returns, while generating sufficient private returns to be of interest to the private development community.

- The City is working with the property owner of the former Honda site to attract a hotel development. The City hired Kosmont Associates, an economic development consultant to work with the City and the property owner.
- The City approved plans for the tenant improvements, including ADA upgrades within the parking lot area of Diamond Bar Towne Center for a Walmart Neighborhood Market to occupy the former Ralphs site, which is scheduled to open in Spring of 2015.
- Diamond Bar Kmart located on the southeast corner of Diamond Bar Blvd. and Gentle Springs Lane closed its operations in December 2014. The landlord purchased the lease and is working on a plan to redevelop the site with a mixed use project.

**Objective 1.4** – Designate adequate land for educational, cultural, recreational, and public service activities to meet the needs of Diamond Bar residents.

- The Willow Heights project referenced above will include a 4.3 gross-acre neighborhood public park, called Diamond Canyon Park—which is under construction.
- The City continues to have a joint use agreement with Pomona Unified School District to use Lorbeer Middle School for their football/soccer and track fields.
- The City constructed the Grandview & Grandview Link trails adjacent to the Diamond Bar Center.
- The City is evaluating the entire Heritage Park site to determine how it can best meet the community's needs going forward, including upgrades to accommodate persons with disabilities. Heritage Park is a 3.4-acre neighborhood park and is one of the City's oldest parks. A neighborhood meeting was conducted to solicit input on the renovation of the park and community center, which also includes exploring the potential for expanding the floor space by adding storage space.

**Objective 2.1** – Promote land use patterns and intensities which are consistent with the Resource Management Element and Circulation Element.

**Strategy 2.1.2** – Ensure that new development utilizes feasible contemporary technologies to reduce energy and water consumption, generation of solid and hazardous wastes, and air and water pollutant emissions.

- In accordance with the Site D Specific Plan, Lennar's Willow Heights project is required to incorporate green building strategies and facilitate energy and water conservation.
- The Willow Heights project and the Kaiser Permanente medical office building expansion adopted and implemented Low Impact Development (LID) measures to reduce and potentially eliminate water pollutants in the storm drain system.

**Objective 3.1** – Create visual points of interest as a means of highlighting community identity.

- The Grand Avenue Beautification Project is a streetscape project that will incorporate the community identity through landscape and hardscape elements at the intersections of Grand Avenue/Diamond Bar Boulevard and Grand Avenue/Longview Drive. This project will incorporate a new entry monument at the easterly city limit along Grand Avenue at Longview Drive that will establish the standards for all future entry monuments at the City limits. The City Council is scheduled to approve the plans and specifications on February 3, 2015 and construction to commence in March of 2015.
- The Willow Heights project referenced above will incorporate community identity through an entry feature at the corner of Brea Canyon Road and Diamond Bar Boulevard to mark the entrance to the City. The development will also be required to incorporate street improvements that are in conformance with the final adopted Grand Avenue streetscape specifications along Diamond Bar Boulevard parkway and future neighborhood park frontage.

## **HOUSING ELEMENT**

The Housing Element identifies and makes provisions for existing and future housing needs. Several programs continue to be implemented based on the strategies within the Housing Element as follows:

- The City adopted Diamond Bar's 2013-2021 Housing Element Update of the General Plan. The City of Diamond Bar is required by State law to update its Housing Element every eight years. It is also the only Element of the General Plan that is subject to State certification through the California Department of Housing and Community Development (HCD). The City received certification of the 2013-2021 Housing Element cycle on January 9, 2014 and the City Council adopted the Housing Element on January 21, 2014.

- The City continues to implement a proactive Neighborhood Improvement/Code Enforcement program and direct eligible households to available rehabilitation assistance in order to correct code violations.
- The City continues to assist in the rehabilitation of existing housing stock through CDBG Home Improvement Program funds for home rehabilitation.
- The City continues to be a participating city in the first time homebuyer assistance program and Mortgage Credit Certificates available through Los Angeles County.

## **RESOURCE MANAGEMENT ELEMENT**

Issues related to open space and conservation overlap in Diamond Bar. As a result, the City combined its Open Space Element and Conservation Element into one Resource Management Element. The Resource Management Element addresses open space, visual resources, biological resources, and parks and recreation. Additionally, this element establishes strategies for effectively managing local and natural resources in order to prevent waste, destruction, or neglect. Progress toward implementing strategies within the Resource Management Element has been made in the following areas:

**Objective 1.3** – Maintain a system of recreation facilities and open space preservation which meet the active and passive recreational needs of Diamond Bar residents of all ages.

- The City continues to work with Lewis Corporation to develop Larkstone Park as part of the 99-unit South Pointe West development.
- The City is currently reviewing construction documents for park improvements at Diamond Canyon Park, a new 4.3 gross-acre public park at Willow Heights. Lennar Homes will construct the park and dedicate the park to the City.
- The City constructed the Grandview & Grandview Link trails adjacent to the Diamond Bar Center. Grants were used to fund these trails, which require the City to maintain the parcels containing the trails as open space in perpetuity.

**Objective 2.1** – Minimize the consumption of water through combination of water conservation and use of reclaimed water.

- The Willow Heights project referenced above is conditioned to incorporate water conservation landscaping, water saving features within the units, and use of reclaimed water in public landscaped areas when it becomes available.
- The City implemented a 20% water reduction across parks and medians to comply with recent mandatory water cutbacks.

**Objective 2.5** – Minimize the environmental impacts of landfill disposal of solid wastes through an aggressive public education and information campaign designed to promote a comprehensive program of source reduction, recycling, composting, and household hazardous waste reduction activities.

- The City implemented a revised Construction and Demolition permit process to better reach the 75% solid waste diversion goal mandated under the adoption of the Solid Waste Ordinance in 2011. The new diversion goal applies to all construction and demolition projects over 1,000 square feet, including both residential and commercial sectors.
- The City has been significantly reducing the tonnage of Green Waste utilized as Alternative Daily Cover (ADC). This year the City's residential and commercial waste haulers had zero green waste reported as ADC. The Green Waste collected from residents and businesses is processed for composting materials and diverted from the landfills.
- The City's contracted residential and commercial waste haulers continue to offer comprehensive waste collection and curbside recycling services citywide. Curbside recycling services include collection of green waste, used oil, bulky items, and hypodermic needles.
- The City, in conjunction with Los Angeles County Public Works, provides a Household Hazardous Waste (HHW) event in the City once a year. The HHW event takes most forms of electronic and hazardous waste including paint, batteries, and other toxic materials that are recycled and do not enter the waste stream.
- The City conducts an annual birthday party celebration that includes a Going Green section where information on recycling is provided to residents. Representatives from the City's franchise waste haulers, Southern California Edison, Southern California Gas, Walnut Valley Water District are present to provide information on recycling and conservation.
- The City conducts an annual America Recycles Day event that includes e-waste collection for household electronic waste such as televisions and computer equipment, free mulch giveaway, textile recycling and paper shredding.
- The City website and public information outlets are routinely used to promote recycling and information on new laws such as AB 341 that require businesses and multi-family residential communities to meet new diversion requirements. A new component this year included the use of a monthly electronic Enviro-Link newsletter that covers a variety of environmental topics. A video production covering the topic of proper sorting techniques was prepared to promote public education in this area.

- The City partners with Ken's Ace Hardware for the collection and recycling of batteries of household batteries, fluorescent tubes and light bulbs. This location continues to serve as a successful and convenient drop-off location for Diamond Bar residents.
- The City implemented a new recycle bin program for schools and home-based businesses. Eligible organizations receive up to ten bins to source separate recyclable beverage containers. The program is funded through the CalRecycle Beverage Container Recycling Grant Program.

## **PUBLIC HEALTH AND SAFETY ELEMENT**

The Public Health and Safety Element contains provisions that relate to the protection of life, health, and property from natural hazards and man-made hazards. It identifies areas where public and private decisions on land use need to be sensitive to hazardous conditions caused by slope instability, seismic activity, flood, fire, and wind.

**Objectives 1.1 and 1.2** – Minimize the potential for loss of life, physical injury, property damage from seismic ground shaking and other geologic hazards, and the public health hazards and nuisances from the effects of a 100-year storm and associated flooding.

- The City continues to require site-specific geotechnical investigations and drainage studies which must be approved by the Director of Public Works/City Engineer prior to issuance of any grading permits in conjunction with the Uniform Building Code and as part of the standard conditions of approval that are applied to all new developments and redevelopment projects.
- The City continues to expand upon its emergency preparedness and response capabilities with the inclusion of a dedicated Emergency Operations Center (EOC) in City Hall. The dedicated EOC provides the City with added flexibility to coordinate and respond to emergencies, provide redundant communications to public safety agencies, and enable added communications to residents. City Hall also has a backup power generator to ensure critical systems are operational in the event of a prolonged emergency.
- The City's public safety agencies continue efforts to outreach to residents on safety, including earthquake, fire, and emergency preparedness topics. The City's public safety agencies work in coordination with the City's Public Information Division to communicate time sensitive information to residents through the City website, as well as the Neighborhood Watch Program. The City also initiated an Emergency Preparedness and Neighborhood Watch monthly newsletter that focuses on public safety and emergency preparedness related topics.

**Objective 1.3** – Require that properties in and adjacent to wildland areas are reasonably protected from wildland fire hazards without degrading the viability of natural ecosystems, providing a balance between removal of flammable vegetation, introduction of fire resistant vegetation, and preservation of natural vegetation.

- The Los Angeles County Fire Department maintains a helicopter landing site (helipad) located adjacent to the Eastgate Drive Reservoir on a hilltop in the vicinity of Pantera Park. This helipad consists of two square concrete helicopter landing pads. It was first built in 2006 and upgraded in 2013, and has since been maintained on an annual basis. The helipad plays an important role in local and regional wild land fire detection and suppression operations by providing a safe landing site for aircraft to refuel and have their water tanks refilled.

## **CIRCULATION ELEMENT**

The Circulation Element defines the transportation needs of the City and presents a comprehensive transportation plan to accommodate those needs. The focus of this element is the identification and evaluation of local circulation needs, balancing those needs with regional demands and mandates.

**Objective 1.1** – Participate in local and regional transportation related planning and decision-making.

- The City continues its collaboration with the City of Industry in the implementation of the 57/60 Confluence Project. This is a \$256 million multi-phase improvement project to the existing 57/60 interchange.
  - **Phase One** of the project is the construction of a \$12 million westbound on-ramp from Grand Avenue. It is fully funded, with a \$7.5 million MTA grant and local match funding (expected construction to begin Summer 2015).
  - **Phase Two** is the construction of a \$20 million westbound SR-60 off-ramp and an auxiliary lane to Grand Avenue. The project has been awarded a \$10 million TIGER grant (In September 2014) and a \$9.4 million MTA grant with local match funding (expected construction to begin early 2016).
  - **Phase Three** is the construction of \$14 million street widening improvements in the vicinity of Grand Ave./Golden Springs Dr. intersection. It is fully funded as well, with a \$6.8 million grant from MTA and local match funding (expected construction to begin Mid-2016).
  - **Phase Four** is the freeway mainline improvements and by-pass connectors and is estimated at \$210 million. Working with Caltrans HQ, the SR 57/60 Confluence Project was include in the Projects of National and Regional Significance (PNRS) Program as required by MAP-21. In July 2014, the Federal Highway Administration confirmed that this project is in the PNRS.

Furthermore, staff has secured recognition of sections of the SR-57 and SR-60 and the 57/60 Confluence Area as a component of the state and national freight networks in an effort to secure \$210 million in future funding for Phase Four of this project. The Draft Environmental Impact Report for Phases Three and Four is currently being circulated for public review. The EIR for Phase One and Two has already been completed.

The City continues to annually implement the guidelines of the Los Angeles County Congestion Management Program, which is required to maintain eligibility for regional transportation funding opportunities.

- The City has been active in monitoring the Multi-County Goods Movement Action Plan to ensure the City is not negatively impacted by the strategy and implementation plan for the Southern California goods movement transportation system. The City has been very proactive in addressing the Southern California Association of Governments (SCAG) efforts to incorporate an East/West Truck Corridor between Interstate 710 and Interstate 15 into the Goods Movement Element of the 2012 Regional Transportation Plan (RTP). The City has collaborated with affected stakeholder agencies to voice concerns regarding the premature nature of declaring the San Jose Creek Flood Control Channel as the preferred solution for goods movement. The current San Jose Creek Flood Control Channel proposal has not been sufficiently studied and lacks critical analysis to ensure adjacent communities will not be negatively impacted. The 2012 RTP was adopted in April 2012 but the City went off record regarding the need to expand the study scope to include other east-west corridors along the 10, 210, and 91 freeways. The City is advocating for transportation solutions that are equitable in their distribution of goods movement related traffic.
- The Lemon Avenue interchange project is expected to result in the closure of the SR-60 Brea Canyon Road eastbound access ramps and create on-ramp and off-ramps at Lemon Avenue. The benefit of the Lemon Avenue project will effectively reduce truck traffic on Golden Springs Drive because access to the City of Industry can be provided without traversing arterial roadways in Diamond Bar. The final design is anticipated to be completed by January 2015. The Freeway Agreement was executed in December 2010 and a Right-of-Way Cooperative Agreement was signed in September 2011. The right-of-way phase is currently underway with the State taking the lead on the necessary acquisition of land for the interchange improvements and is expected to be completed by January 2015. The Advertise, Award and Administer (AAA) Agreement was approved by Council in September 2014. Construction is expected to begin in Summer 2015 with a completion by December 2016.

**Objective 1.2** – Balance the need for optimum traffic flow on City Arterials within economic realities, environmental, and aesthetic considerations.

- Closed Circuit Television (CCTV) cameras have been installed at key arterial intersections (16 locations) to provide real time feedback for use in managing the signal system. Currently, the City has a total of 19 arterial intersections equipped with battery back-up systems to ensure temporary signal operations continue during power outages. Design for an additional 15 locations will be underway by the end of 2014.
- The City is developing design plans to enhance the streetscape at the Grand Avenue/Diamond Bar Blvd. intersection and Grand Avenue/Longview Drive intersection using SAFETEA-LU and STPL funds. This Grand Avenue Beautification Project will provide an opportunity to create street design standards for all future development to follow. Construction is expected to begin by March 2015 with completion in June 2015.
- As part of the 2013 Call for Projects, a Metro's competitive grant program, the City submitted an application and was awarded \$1.4 million for the development and implementation of an adaptive traffic control system. Scheduled to start in FY 2015-2016, this system can adjust signal timing to optimize traffic flow based on real-time traffic conditions.

**Objective 1.3** – Maintain the integrity of residential neighborhoods. Discourage through traffic.

- In residential neighborhoods, the Neighborhood Traffic Management Program (NTMP) continues to be an effective tool in providing a procedure to implement traffic calming devices in neighborhoods that experience speeding and cut-through traffic. This year, staff worked closely with a neighborhood in the vicinity of Castle Rock/Crooked Creek/Gold Run to implement traffic calming measures along the residential roadways. Neighborhoods have also benefited from a residential parking district that preserves residential street parking through a permit system in the areas around Diamond Bar High School.

**Objective 2.1** – Maximize the use of alternative transportation modes within and through the City to decrease reliance on single-passenger automobiles.

- The City continues to sell monthly Metro bus and rail passes in addition to Foothill Transit Zone passes. These programs are subsidized by Proposition "A" funds and provide a benefit to Diamond Bar residents because of the subsidized rates.
- The City's Dial-a-Ride program provides discounted taxi services to residents over 60 years of age and disabled adults 18 years and older. The program is subsidized through the City's allocation of Proposition C funds and provides supplemental transportation options to residents for medical and other related service needs.

- The City website continues to provide alternative transportation information to residents, including website links to Metro, Foothill Transit, Metrolink and Amtrak rail, and Ridematching information.

**Objective 3.1 – Improve the safety and efficiency of existing transportation facilities.**

- The Capital Improvement Program for 2014 lists specific projects that were approved, and the General Plan Conformity Report annually identifies projects completed in conformance with the General Plan. The following capital improvement projects including traffic signal modifications and street improvements were accomplished in 2014:
  - The City completed the Arterial Zone 1 and Residential Area 2 Road Maintenance Project.
  - The City completed the Median Modification at the Diamond Bar Blvd. and Kiowa Crest intersection.
  - The construction of traffic calming measures along residential roadways in the Castle Rock, Crooked Creek/Gold Run neighborhood.
  - The following projects are scheduled to be complete by the end of 2014:
    - Installation of 15 new Battery Back-up Systems (BBS) in traffic signal cabinets at intersections along major arterials in the City.

**PUBLIC SERVICE AND FACILITIES ELEMENT**

The Public Service and Facilities Element deals with the long-term provision of municipal services and facilities, and what types of facilities are needed to support those services. This element focuses on identifying City facilities and services needed to sustain the community's quality of life; long-range planning to fund City services and buildings; and coordinating and cooperating with various local agencies to provide those services not provided by the City.

**Objective 1.1: Maintain adequate infrastructure facilities and public services to support development and planned growth.**

- The City continues to require new development to pay development fees for infrastructure facilities and/or provide the necessary infrastructure to support the new development. Additionally, all new subdivisions are required to connect to the public sewage system.
- The Willow Heights project referenced above will be required to pay appropriate fair-share contributions toward the improvement of areawide street improvements

and the following traffic improvements will be implemented, which will be completed prior to the issuance of project certificates of occupancy:

- Cherrydale Drive at Diamond Bar Boulevard: Provide an option left/through lane and a separate right-turn lane on the northbound approach; restripe southbound approach to provide an option left/through/right-turn lane on Cherrydale. Widen eastbound approach to provide a separate right-turn lane. Modify median and restripe Diamond Bar Boulevard to provide dual westbound left-turn lanes. Install traffic signal.
- Brea Canyon Road at Diamond Bar Boulevard: Widen northbound approach on Brea Canyon Road to provide a second right-turn lane. Restripe eastbound approach and departure on Diamond Bar Blvd. to a third through lane. Restripe westbound approach on Diamond Bar Blvd. to provide a second left turn lane. Modify the existing traffic signal and associated equipment.
- The Kaiser Permanente medical office building expansion paid their fair share contributions toward the improvement of area wide street improvements.

## **COMPREHENSIVE GENERAL PLAN UPDATE**

The City Council adopted a new special revenue fund in the FY 2014-15 budget to fund the comprehensive update of the City's General Plan. In the two decades following its initial adoption of the City's General Plan, nearly all of the General Plan's goals and objectives have been implemented. The City will be revisiting the guiding vision and policies expressed in Diamond Bar's General Plan and embark on a comprehensive General Plan Update program. This program would enable the City to proactively and opportunistically guide the City through another 20-year cycle of growth and change. This project will take 24-36 months to complete. An initial allocation of \$500,000—from the proceeds from the sale of Site D—was transferred into the fund to start the effort.

## **CONCLUSION**

The General Plan continues to direct all land use decisions and remains an effective guide for future development. The City continues to pursue economic development to increase City revenue, address traffic related issues, and preserve open space and continues to create a community environment that nurtures social, cultural, religious, educational and recreational opportunities for its citizens.

