

I. INTRODUCTION TO THE GENERAL PLAN

The Cypress General Plan is the primary source of long-range planning and policy direction that will guide growth and preserve the quality of life within the community. The future of Cypress, like that of all cities, will be the result of past and current decision making by those who have a local role in the development process, including residents, property and business owners, elected officials and City staff. The 2000 General Plan Update supersedes the 1993 General Plan Update and is based upon the community’s vision for Cypress and expresses the community’s long-term goals. Implementation of the Cypress General Plan will ensure that future projects and improvements are consistent with the community’s goals, policies and objectives.

COMMUNITY PROFILE

LOCATION AND SETTING

The City of Cypress is located in the northwestern portion of Orange County, California and is part of the larger Southern California region. The cities which border Cypress include La Palma, Buena Park, Anaheim, Stanton, Garden Grove, Los Alamitos, Long Beach, Hawaiian Gardens, Lakewood, and Cerritos (refer to Exhibit I-1, *Regional Location*, and Exhibit I-2, *Local Vicinity*). The entire region has witnessed an unprecedented population and economic growth during the past 50 years. As a result, Cypress and the surrounding jurisdictions are situated in an urbanized environment with limited remaining vacant land.

HISTORICAL PERSPECTIVE OVERVIEW

The City of Cypress was originally named Dairy City when it was incorporated in 1956. On August 6, 1957, based on a vote from the residents, the City’s name was officially changed to Cypress. For many decades, agricultural uses co-existed with the thriving dairy business. Land development began in Cypress as the agricultural and vacant land in eastern Los Angeles County transitioned to residential, commercial, and industrial uses.

In the 1960’s the Cypress City Council modified the City’s Land Use Element and Zoning in order to increase interest in residential development throughout the community. Cypress transformed to a suburban city during the 1960’s and 1970’s as housing demands increased in the region and agricultural uses were forced to relocate to outlying areas.

INSERT EXHIBIT I-1
"Regional Location"

INSERT EXHIBIT I-2
“Local Vicinity”

CYPRESS TODAY

Today, as the City of Cypress approaches build-out, both the General Plan and the Redevelopment Plans have focused on preserving residential neighborhoods, guided the remaining development opportunities, and encouraged the revitalization of selected areas. Recent revitalization efforts have been focused along the Lincoln Avenue Corridor and neighborhood commercial centers throughout the City.

The remaining vacant parcels of land in Cypress are primarily in the southern portion of the community and are slated for business park development. The Land Use Plan supports the continued development of the Cypress Business Park which has witnessed substantial growth during the past 1990's.

MISSION STATEMENT

“The City of Cypress, in partnership with the community, will maintain and enhance a safe, attractive and sustainable environment in which to live, work and play.”

VISION FOR CYPRESS

“The vision of the City of Cypress is to be an outstanding family-oriented community and premier business center.”

PURPOSE AND AUTHORITY

The State of California mandates that each jurisdiction prepare and adopt a comprehensive general plan. Government Code Section 65300 et. seq. requires the general plan to address all issues that affect the physical development of the community, as well as land outside its boundaries that potentially affect the City's long-term planning. The role of a general plan is to act as a “constitution” for development, the foundation upon which all land use decisions are based.

All general plans in California must meet minimum requirements, as stipulated in the State Government Code. Each general plan is required to address State mandated issues as they apply to the particular community. State mandated issues, more commonly referred to as “elements,” include: Land Use; Housing; Circulation; Open Space; Conservation; Noise; and Safety. Each jurisdiction has the authority to include additional elements if the issue is important to the long-term development of the community.

The organization of the general plan is also determined by the local jurisdiction. Most general plans are organized by individual issue sections, or elements. Although the State allows the local jurisdiction the latitude to combine or place the elements in any order, all elements must be internally consistent and have equal status. Equal status means that each element is equally important, thereby giving the same authority to the Land Use Element as to the Noise or any other element, including any optional elements the local jurisdiction elects to include in their general plan.

The City of Cypress General Plan contains goals, policies, and plans which are intended to guide land use and development decisions. The General Plan consists of a Land Use Policy Map and the following elements, or chapters, which together fulfill the state requirements for a General Plan:

State Mandated Elements:

- ◆ Land Use Element
- ◆ Housing Element
- ◆ Circulation Element
- ◆ Safety Element
- ◆ Noise Element
- ◆ Conservation, Open Space and Recreation Element

Optional Elements:

- ◆ Air Quality Element
- ◆ Growth Management Element

Table I-1 shows the relationship between the elements of the Cypress General Plan and the state-mandated elements.

**Table I-1
RELATIONSHIP OF GENERAL PLAN ELEMENTS
TO STATE-MANDATED ELEMENTS**

Cypress General Plan Elements	State-Mandated General Plan Elements							Optional Elements
	Land Use	Circulation	Housing	Conservation	Open Space	Safety	Noise	
Land Use	●							
Circulation		●						
Housing			●					
Conservation/ Open Space/ Recreation				●	●			
Safety						●		
Noise							●	
Air Quality								●
Growth Management								●

SUPPORTING DOCUMENTATION

Several supporting documents were produced during the development of the Cypress General Plan Update, including the General Plan Program Environmental Impact Report (Program EIR). Other technical reports used in preparing the Plan include those for noise, traffic/circulation, fiscal issues and housing. These documents provide substantial background information for the General Plan.

The Program EIR for the Cypress General Plan Update is available under a separate cover. Environmental clearance documentation is required for all projects, including planning documents, pursuant to the California Environmental Quality Act and guidelines (Public Resources Code 21000 et. seq. and California Code of Regulations 15000 et. seq.). The purpose of the EIR is to ensure

that citizens and public officials are aware of the environmental implications of the policies and programs in the General Plan.

PLAN ORGANIZATION AND USE

The General Plan is comprised of this Introduction and 8 elements. Each element is complete in itself, but is an integral part of the General Plan. Each of the 8 General Plan elements is organized according to the following format: 1) Introduction; 2) Existing Conditions; 3) Key Issues; 4) Plan; and 5) Goals and Policies.

The Introduction of each element describes the focus and the purpose of the element. The relationship of the element to other General Plan elements is also specified.

The Existing Conditions subsection describes the existing environment in relation to the element. For example, the Noise Element describes the noise conditions throughout the City and how noise is generated.

The Key Issues subsection describes the background information pertaining to each element. In addition, if there are any State or Federal plans which are relevant to the element, this section contains a brief description of the plan and what the City needs to do in order to comply with the plan.

Each element also contains a Plan section. The Plan provides an overview of the City's course of action to implement the identified goals and policies. For example, the Land Use Element contains a "Land Use Plan" indicating the types and intensities of land use permitted in Cypress. The Circulation Element contains a "Circulation Plan" describing the overall circulation system required to meet the future needs of Cypress. Whenever possible, the Plan contains illustrative maps, diagrams and tables.

The final section of each element is the Goals and Policies for the City. The goals are overall statements of community desires and are comprised of broad statements of purpose or direction. The policies serve as a guide to the City Council, and City Staff in reviewing development proposals and making other decisions that affect the future growth and development of Cypress.

The organization of the General Plan allows users to turn to the section that interests them and quickly obtain a perspective on the City's policies on the subject. However, General Plan users should realize that the policies in the various elements are inter-related and should be examined comprehensively. Policies are presented as written statements, tables, diagrams, and maps. All of these policy components must be considered together when making planning decisions.

OVERVIEW OF THE GENERAL PLAN

ORGANIZATION

The Cypress General Plan is organized in a traditional element oriented format. The elements, however, are organized into functional chapters. Each of the elements includes a statement of authority, a summary of existing conditions, and the goals and policies pertaining to the subject matter. The goals and policies represent the City's position related to the future development and improvements in Cypress.

DESCRIPTION OF THE PLAN

The Cypress General Plan established a blueprint for the City's long-term policies, improvements and development. The overall intent of the General Plan is to direct daily City actions, through policy statements, toward improving and maintaining a socially cohesive, economically viable, and physically attractive community. A long-range plan is essential to ensure the citizens' health, safety, and welfare are maintained at exceptional levels. To this end, the Cypress General Plan is the document that addresses the issues that potentially threaten the quality of life for City residents and businesses.

LAND USE ELEMENT

Land use planning exemplifies the City's desire to maintain its distinctive image and sound economic base. The Land Use Element's goals and policies and land use designations are intended to promote the economic vitality of the City, while maintaining the exceptional quality of life that the residents expect. Additionally, the Land Use Element provides a focused discussion of economic development issues, as well as includes goals and policies to ensure long-term economic development throughout the City.

CIRCULATION ELEMENT

The Circulation Element establishes a roadway system that will adequately meet the buildout needs of the City. Additionally, the Circulation Element includes policies for bike lanes, street improvements, and other transportation issues.

HOUSING ELEMENT

The Housing Element provides programs and policies that will assist the City in meeting the State and region's goals of providing affordable housing to all socio-economic segments of the population. The Element discusses citywide housing and population demographics, regional fair-share housing allocations, and implementation mechanisms to assist the City in providing a full range of housing opportunities.

CONSERVATION, OPEN SPACE AND RECREATION ELEMENT

The Conservation Element assures the protection of natural resources; such as water, soils, wildlife, minerals and other natural resources. In addition, the Conservation Element is designed to prevent against the wasteful exploitation, degradation, and destruction of these natural resources. The Open Space Element identifies and protects open space that is left undeveloped for public health and safety reasons such as flood protection, and preserves open space that is used for natural resources. The Recreation Element identifies planned park and recreation facilities designed to support the needs of Cypress' population.

SAFETY ELEMENT

The Safety Element helps protect the community from natural and man-made hazards. Natural hazards include flooding, earthquakes, ground rupture, and landslides. Man-made hazards can result from hazardous and toxic materials, fires, crime, and aircraft overflight. Ultimately, the Safety Element concentrates on reducing death, injuries, property damage, and economic and social dislocation resulting from these hazards.

NOISE ELEMENT

The Noise Element of a general plan is a comprehensive program for including noise control in the planning process. It is a tool for achieving and maintaining environmental noise levels compatible with land use. The Noise Element focuses on the location of noise generating land uses in proximity to residential, recreational, and other noise sensitive land uses, and provides policies to alleviate potential impacts due to the noise.

AIR QUALITY ELEMENT

The Air Quality Element is intended to protect the public's health and welfare by implementing measures that allow the South Coast Air Basin to attain federal and state air quality standards. In addition, the Element contains provisions to address new air quality requirements.

GROWTH MANAGEMENT ELEMENT

The purpose and intent of this Element is to mandate that growth and development is based upon the City's ability to provide an adequate circulation system and public facilities. The Growth Management Element is designed to ensure that the planning, management and implementation of traffic improvements and public facilities are adequate to meet the current and projected needs of the City.

ADMINISTERING THE GENERAL PLAN

It is the intent of the City Council to implement this General Plan by establishing annual planning goals based on the Plan, developing implementing ordinances and regulations, and providing the requisite staff resources. The City Council is also mindful that its intention to implement this General Plan is based on the availability of funding and that some goals, policies, and programs might not be achieved if funds are unavailable.

Once adopted, the General Plan does not remain static. As time goes on, the City may determine that it is necessary to revise portions of the text or add policies or programs to reflect changing circumstances or philosophy.

State law provides direction on how cities can maintain the General Plan as a contemporary policy guide: it requires each planning department to report annually to the City Council on "the status of the plan and progress in its implementation" (§65400[b]). The City Council may respond to the planning department review by setting goals for the coming year. In addition, the City should review the Plan every five years to determine whether or not its content and policies are still appropriate and consistent with community values and conditions.

AMENDING THE PLAN

It is necessary to periodically review, update and revise the General Plan as the City and its resources are developed. State law permits General Plan amendments up to four times per year for each mandatory element (Government Code §65358[b]). Optional elements are permitted by State law (Government Code §65303), and once adopted, the optional elements carry the same legal weight as the seven mandated elements. However, State law does not specify any limitations regarding the number of times an optional element can be amended per year.

In addition, the State recommends short-term portions, such as the implementation program, of the General Plan be reviewed on an annual basis (Government Code §65400[b]) and that the entire document be thoroughly reviewed every five years, and revised as necessary.

RELATION TO OTHER DOCUMENTS

The City regulates the use of property within its jurisdiction through the General Plan and zoning, subdivision, and building regulations for the purpose of promoting the health, safety, and welfare of the public. The General Plan is a legal document, adopted by the City Council, which concerns development and redevelopment in the City. Other legal documents are also adopted by the City Council and affect development in the City. They include the Zoning Ordinance, Specific Plans, and building regulations. The General Plan is the guiding document for all other land use regulations. Following adoption of the General Plan, any regulations in the zoning, subdivision, building, and other ordinances that are not consistent the Plan will be amended to insure consistency.

The Zoning Ordinance is one of the many programs that implement the General Plan. It is more detailed than the Plan and regulates development lot-by-lot, based on the General Plan's goals, policies, and land use map. The Zoning Ordinance divides the City into districts, or zones, that specify allowable uses for real property, and size restrictions for buildings within these districts and other factors.

The Specific Plans regulate and control the design and improvement of areas which are designated within the Specific Plan areas. All Specific Plans within the City must remain consistent with the General Plan and the subsequent General Plan Updates.