Introduction to the General Plan

Temecula combines urban, suburban, and rural lifestyles within a unique natural setting. Incorporated on December 1, 1989 as a General Law City, Temecula has become one of the fastest growing cities in the State of California, as well as the Nation. Located in the southwestern corner of Riverside County, the City provides a peaceful setting embracing the rich history of the area and encompassing those values into the growth of the community. More than any single idea within the Temecula General Plan is the commitment to the preservation and enhancement of a high quality of living in the Temecula Valley. Physical identity and cohesion, adequate services and facilities, high quality development, and a wide range of community activities all underlie this ideal. Temecula was planned to offer the best amenities of a city, while preserving the topography of the surrounding area. These complementary features have resulted in both a high quality of life and prosperity for the residents and businesses within the community. Recent growth pressures within the City and in surrounding jurisdictions have established a need for Temecula to update long range plans for development.

What is the General Plan

Temecula's General Plan identifies a community vision for the future and establishes a framework to guide future decisions regarding development, resource management, public safety, public services, and the overall quality of the community. During creation of the General Plan, the community worked together to craft and define this vision through text and illustrations. The General Plan reflects the planning desires and values of Temecula residents, the business community, and public officials.

The Temecula General Plan describes how citizens will work to retain the natural and aesthetic qualities that make their City unique, and at the same time, respond to the dynamics of regional growth and meet changing community needs. The General Plan serves as a policy guide, balancing these inter-related factors to Temecula's community vision.

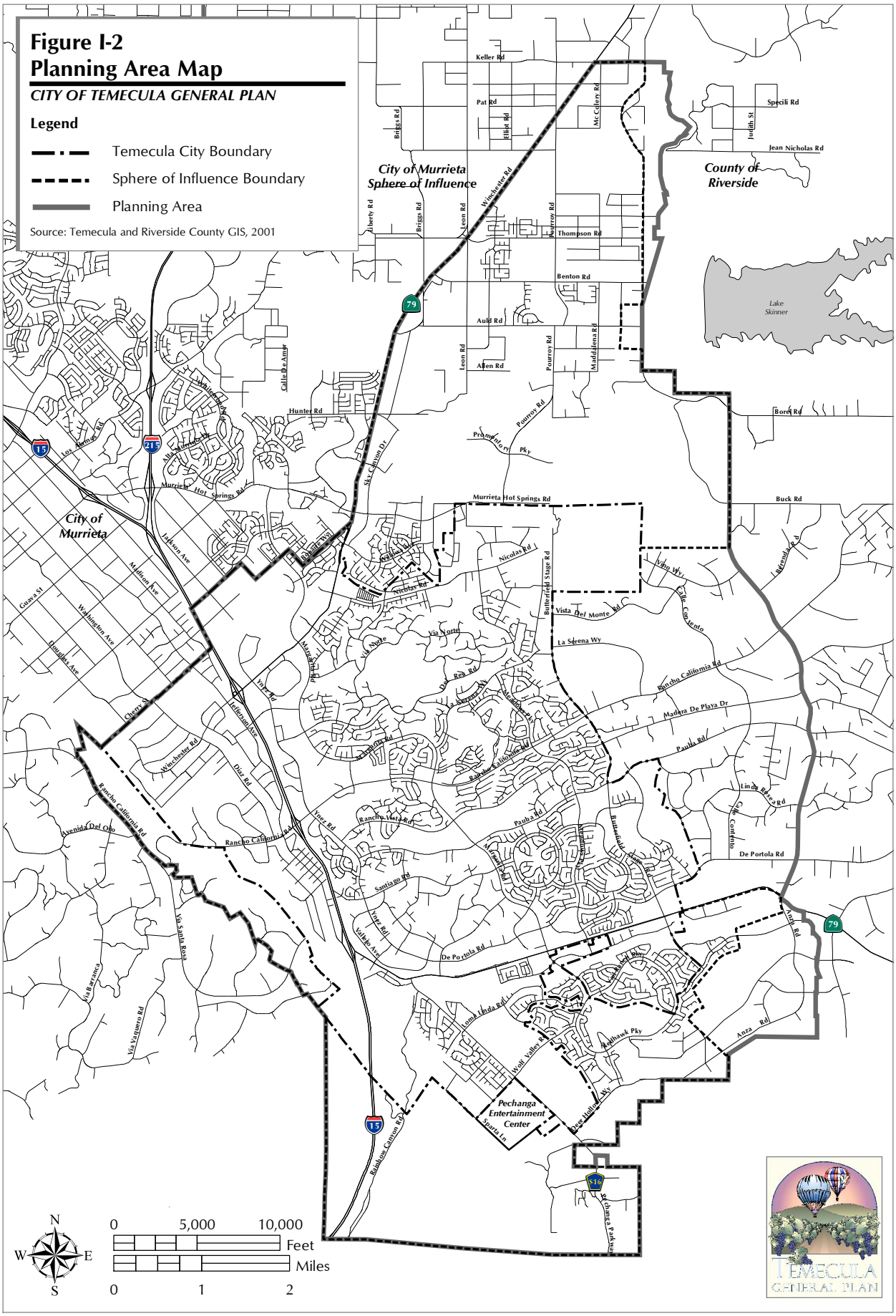
Temecula Planning Area

Importantly, this General Plan addresses not just lands within the City's corporate limits, but also unincorporated Riverside County properties surrounding Temecula, both within and beyond the City's Sphere of Influence. Throughout the General Plan, this combined area is referred to as the "Planning Area," illustrated in Figure I-1. While properties beyond the City limits are under the jurisdiction of Riverside County agencies, they bear a critical relationship to Temecula's planning activities, and from a visual standpoint, form a significant backdrop to the community. One day, they may become part of the City, and planning for service extensions, integrated infrastructure, and high design quality is timely and prudent.

Temecula's Planning Area totals approximately 62 square miles and is shown in Figure I-2. The present City boundary encompasses approximately 28 square miles. The 24 square mile Sphere of Influence, established by the County's Local Agency Formation Commission (LAFCO), includes unincorporated areas that will most likely be annexed in the future, on a project by project basis, by the City of Temecula. The Planning Area provides a reasonable measure of the City's present region of interest.

Figure I-1
Regional Location

Overlooking a City in Evolution: The Temecula Planning Area is characterized by agricultural lands and vineyards that flow into homes and neighborhoods. The City also includes clean industrial and business centers, as seen in the foreground.


Legend
Temecula City Boundary
Sphere of Influence Boundary
Planning Area
Source: Temecula and Riverside County GIS, 2001
City of Murrieta Sphere of Influence
County of Riverside
City of Murrieta
Lake Skinner
Pechanga Entertainment Center
Keller Rd
Pat Rd
Specili Rd
Jean Nicholas Rd
Thompson Rd
Benton Rd
Auld Rd
Allen Rd
Hunter Rd
Bore Rd
Buck Rd
Murrieta Hot Springs Rd
Nicolas Rd
Vista Del Monte Rd
La Serena Wy
Rancho California Rd
Madera De Playa Dr
Paula Rd
Linda Bella Rd
De Portola Rd
Santiago Rd
Via Norte
Via Noche
Via Rosa
Via Serena
Via Contento
Via Wy
Via Ventura
Via Bayanca
Via Santa Rosa
Avenida Del Ola
Rancho Vista Rd
Margarita Rd
Butterfield Stage Rd
Jefferson Ave
Madison Ave
Washington Ave
Hayes Ave
Guava St
Cherry St
Winchester Rd
Los Alamos Rd
Alta Murrieta Dr
Sky Canyon Dr
Pourroy Rd
Promontory Pky
Leon Rd
Briggs Rd
Liberty Rd
Mc Collum Rd
Maddalena Rd
Calle De Amor
Lagrenda Ln
Anza Rd
Loma Linda Rd
Wolf Valley Rd
Redhawk Pky
Rancho Pechanga Rd
Rancho Pechanga Pkwy
Rancho Pechanga Dr
Rancho California Rd
Rancho Vista Rd
Rainbow Canyon Rd
Santa Lu
Vista Hollow Wy
Butterfield Stage Rd
Margarita Rd
Yorba Rd
Vallejo Ave
Dos Rosas Rd
Via Norte
Via Noche
Via Serena
Via Contento
Via Wy
Via Ventura
Via Bayanca
Via Santa Rosa
Avenida Del Ola
Rancho California Rd
Rancho Vista Rd
Rancho California Rd
Rancho Pechanga Rd
Rancho Pechanga Dr
Rancho Pechanga Pkwy
Rancho Pechanga Rd
Rancho Pechanga Dr
Rancho Pechanga Pkwy
Rancho California Rd
Rancho Vista Rd
Rancho California Rd

TEMECULA'S EVOLUTION

TEMECULA'S BEGINNING – WHERE THE SUN BREAKS THROUGH THE MIST

Little is known of Temecula's first inhabitants, the Luiseño Indians. These Native American people were present in the Temecula area in the 1700s when the first Spanish padres visited. It is believed that these hunter-gatherers first arrived and established settlements around 900 A.D. It is also known that from these people, Temecula was given its name, which comes from the Luiseño Indian word, *Temecunga*, literally translated as *Place of the Sun*. The Spanish interpreted and spelled the word as *Temecula*. Over the years, the meaning of "Temecula" has been translated using several interpretations, including the most popular: *Where the Sun Breaks Through the Mist*. Temecula is the only city in California to still retain an original Indian name.

TEMECULA- FROM MEXICAN RANCH TO TOWN OF THE WEST

In the early 1800s, with California under Spanish then Mexican control, much of what we geographically know as Southern California was divided into ranches or Ranchos. In 1835, the Spanish Governor Figueroa first granted Rancho Temecula to Jose Antonio Estudillo. With the transition of California from a Spanish colony to a newly independent Mexican state, the 26,000-acre Rancho Temecula was granted to a Mexican army officer, Felix Valdex, in the 1840s. In 1846, the Rancho was sold to Louis Vignes, one of California's first commercial winemakers.

The transition from Rancho to town of the Old West came with incorporation of California as a U.S. state and the resulting western expansion by stagecoach and later, by railroad. This expansion began in the 1850s, when the first American settlers arrived in Temecula, and accelerated between 1858 and 1861 with the operation of the Butterfield Overland Stage. With the opening of the California Southern Railroad Line in 1882, Temecula became established as a historical western town. In 1905, the railroad brought Walter Vail to the Temecula Valley to begin ranching operations on the 87,000-acre Vail Ranch.

TEMECULA- THE CITY OF TODAY

In 1964, Kaiser Aluminum and Chemical purchased Vail Ranch, beginning Temecula's transition from avocado orchards, vineyards, and other agricultural uses, to an urbanized community by preparing the Rancho California Development Plan. The overall land use pattern and circulation system of Temecula today has largely been guided by this plan. In 1989, Temecula incorporated as a General Law City. The City of today encompasses both Old Town Temecula and a portion of the planned community of Rancho California. Since incorporation, the City has improved upon the good parts of this original blueprint to create a desirable

community with exceptional public safety, community services, recreational amenities, and a robust commerce.

TEMECULA'S VISION FOR THE FUTURE

Building upon the City's history, and upon the vision statement from the City's first General Plan, the *Vision for the Future* provides a foundation for the General Plan, and a basis for goals, policies, and programs. The vision is an expression of what the community wants to maintain or become:

Temecula supports a family-focused lifestyle enjoyed by its residents, while promoting a strong local business community and agricultural, technological, and manufacturing industries. *The community continues to be a regional destination for those seeking the desirable atmosphere established by wineries and historic Old Town. A strong business community, quality housing stock, scenic open space, and cultural amenities make Temecula a desirable place for higher education facilities to locate. Cleanliness, positive community identity, and low crime rate make residents feel safe in their neighborhoods, commercial districts, and schools.*

The local circulation system meets the needs of Temecula residents and businesses while calming traffic in residential neighborhoods and near schools. Within this circulation system, pedestrians and cyclists are able to travel safely and quickly throughout the community. Appropriate pedestrian-oriented commercial and office uses are concentrated within village centers, and mixed use commercial and residential developments are encouraged.

Commercial, office, and light industrial/manufacturing uses locate and thrive in Temecula, providing fiscal stability to the City and a revenue source to finance community improvements and open space resources, including cultural art centers, community centers, and parks. Financial stability provides a high quality of public and private services and activities meeting the needs of a wide array of interests, ages, and lifestyles. These beneficial businesses also operate in harmony with surrounding residential neighborhoods. Diverse housing options are available to meet the needs of all segments of the community, while protecting the character and value of single-family neighborhoods.

Other strengths within the community include the high quality local public education system. High quality education is offered and children are provided strong role models and training for a successful future. Properties are well maintained so that Temecula remains an attractive and enjoyable place to live, work, and play.

PURPOSE OF THE GENERAL PLAN

Under California law, every city must adopt a comprehensive, long-term General Plan to guide physical development within the incorporated area, as well as to plan for land beyond the municipal boundaries that bear a relationship to the city's planning activities. In essence, a city's General Plan serves as the blueprint for future growth and development. The plan must contain policies and programs to provide decision makers with a solid basis for future decisions related to land use and development.

Regional growth and transportation plans prepared by the Southern California Association of Governments (SCAG) and implemented through the Western Riverside County Council of Governments (WRCOG) also guide long range development within the greater Temecula region. The goals and policies of this General Plan are supportive of regional objectives established by the Regional Comprehensive Plan, Regional Transportation Plan, and SCAG's Growth Vision Compass. Temecula's General Plan represents a significant opportunity to implement these regional plans and programs through local actions that benefit the community, sub-region, and region in the future.

State law further indicates that the General Plan is the primary document a jurisdiction must use to regulate land use. Consequently, the Development Code, specific plans, and individual public and private development proposals must be consistent with General Plan goals, policies, and standards.

To ensure that every city and county prepares General Plans that are comprehensive and long-term in perspective, State statutes establish requirements for the minimum contents of a General Plan. (Sections 65350 through 65590 of the Government Code.) By law, a General Plan must contain the following seven "elements", which must be internally consistent:

- Land Use
- Circulation
- Housing
- Conservation
- Open Space
- Noise
- Safety

Jurisdictions may prepare and adopt any other General Plan element or address any other subject of particular local relevance or interest, with the understanding that these optional elements must be implemented with the same vigor – and are subject to the same legal scrutiny – as the mandatory elements. The City of Temecula has elected to address economic development, community design, public facilities and services, growth management, and air quality within the General Plan as additional elements.

The **Land Use Element** establishes a framework for growth and development within the Planning Area, and provides for the types, intensity, density, and distribution of land uses found in Temecula.

The **Circulation Element** establishes the transportation network needed to support the travel demands associated with land uses.

The **Housing Element** describes how current housing will be conserved and new housing will be produced. This element defines local housing problems and needs and identifies programs to achieve housing objectives.

The **Open Space/Conservation Element** establishes polices and implementation programs to encourage the conservation, protection and management of natural resources within the Planning Area. This element also addresses the parks and recreation system needed to serve the community.

The **Growth Management/Public Facilities Element** addresses public services and infrastructure requirements needed to serve development in a timely manner. This element also addresses local and regional growth management issues, including compliance with State laws.

The **Public Safety Element** provides a planning framework for the protection of the community from natural and human activity hazards.

The **Noise Element** identifies noise sensitive land uses and noise sources, and establishes programs to protect the community from the adverse affects of excessive noise.

The **Air Quality Element** establishes a policy foundation to implement local government control measures, as required by the Air Quality Management Plan.

The **Community Design Element** provides design policies and criteria that address issues to enhance and preserve the community-wide appearance and character of Temecula, including visual compatibility between land uses, preservation of neighborhoods and significant natural features, quality design treatment of current land uses and new land use concepts, such as mixed-use development, and provision of public improvements and community spaces required for an evolving community.

The **Economic Development Element** provides direction for economic development and a means to attain an economically viable community.

Table I-1 summarizes of the organization of the General Plan and the interrelationship between the elements.

TABLE I-1
INTERRELATIONSHIP BETWEEN TEMECULA GENERAL PLAN ELEMENTS

Temecula General Plan Elements	Related Elements and Issues
Land Use Element	Circulation; Housing; Conservation of Open Space and Resources; Growth Management; Fiscal Viability; Infrastructure and Services; Economic Development
Circulation	Growth Management; Air Quality; Noise; Land Use, Mixed-Use Development
Housing	Land Use; Parks; Public Services; Schools; Noise
Open Space/Conservation	Land Use; Parks & Recreation; Trails; Cultural Resources; Public Safety
Growth Management/Public Facilities	Land Use; Regional Coordination; Air Quality; Circulation; Congestion Management; Public Safety
Public Safety	Open Space/Conservation; Land Use; Noise; Circulation; Facilities Planning
Noise	Circulation; Public Safety; Land Use
Air Quality	Land Use; Regional Coordination; Circulation
Community Design	Land Use; Public Facilities; Parks, Trails & Open Space; Mixed-Use Development; Housing; Economic Development
Economic Development	Land Use; Public Facilities & Services; Community Design; Housing

ORGANIZATION AND USE OF THE GENERAL PLAN

The General Plan is comprised of this Introduction and nine elements. Each element is complete in itself, but is an integral part of the General Plan. The General Plan is accompanied by a Glossary (Appendix A). Each of the nine General Plan elements is organized according to the following format: 1) Introduction; 2) Plan; 3) Goals and Policies; and 4) Implementation Programs.

The Introduction of each element describes the focus and the purpose of the element. Other plans and programs beyond the General Plan are identified that may be used to achieve specific goals. The relationship of the element to other General Plan elements is also discussed in the Introduction.

Each element also contains a Plan section. This section offers an overview of the City's approach to significant planning issues. For example, the Land Use Element indicates the types and intensities of land use permitted in the City. The Circulation Element describes the overall circulation system required to meet the future needs of Temecula. Wherever possible, this section contains illustrative maps, diagrams, and tables. This section also contains "Plans in Action" which describe measures that the City has put in place to implement identified goals and policies.

The Goals and Policies section of each element contains a description of identified goals and policies related to the element topic, based on input received from the community, members of the Planning Commission and City Council, City staff, and other public agencies.

Goals are broad statements of community desires, purpose or direction. Policies serve as guides to the City Council, Planning Commission, other City commissions and boards, and City staff in reviewing development proposals and making other decisions that affect the future growth and development of Temecula.

Following the Goals and Policies section of each Element are Implementation Programs which identify specific actions to achieve the goals, policies, and plans identified in each General Plan element. These programs identify and describe specific actions and responsible parties to ensure that General Plan goals, policies, and plans are implemented.

The Glossary is an appendix to the General Plan (Appendix A), providing a set of definitions for technical terms used throughout the Plan.

The organization of the General Plan allows users to turn to the section that interests them and quickly obtain a perspective of City policies on the subject. However, General Plan users should realize that the policies in the various elements are interrelated 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.

Community Participation in the General Plan Program

Public participation played an important role in the Temecula General Plan program. Because the General Plan reflects community goals, citizen input was essential to identify issues and formulate goals. Public participation in the General Plan preparation process occurred through the following methods:

- Three Community Workshops involving City staff, consultants, and the public. Community members were invited to the Workshops to discuss their visions for the future of Temecula, to review land use, circulation, and housing alternatives and policies, and to comment on a preliminary draft of this General Plan.

- The public was able to address decision makers regarding the General Plan at four Joint Planning Commission/City Council Workshops. These workshops were conducted to: review the vision for the future and confirm major issues; review draft goals and policies; review land use, circulation, and housing alternatives; and review the preliminary Draft General Plan prior to public hearings.

- The Draft General Plan and Draft Environmental Impact Report were circulated for public review and comment before the General Plan Public Hearings held by the Planning Commission and City Council prior to adoption.