



The Result: Plan Features

VISION-DRIVEN PLAN

Designed to meet State General Plan requirements (per California Government Code Section 65300 et seq.) and implement the RCIP Vision, this Plan outlines policies, standards, and programs to guide day-to-day decisions concerning Riverside County's future. Updating and revising the County's General Plan also serves several other important purposes, it:

- *Provides clarity and stability in community development policy;*
- *Incorporates the major conclusions from the CETAP and MSHCP studies;*
- *Establishes a comprehensive and sound database for further implementation, project evaluation, administration, and monitoring; and*
- *Provides a basis for collaborative planning initiatives by cities, councils of government, the County and other governmental agencies.*

The General Plan is grounded in the RCIP Vision, sets the direction for the County's land use and development in strategic locations, as well as the development of its economic base, the framework of its transportation system, and the preservation of the extremely valuable natural and cultural resources it contains. The Riverside County General Plan serves as a "guidebook" containing direction that will enable achievement of its Vision Statement.

A set of General Plan Principles has been developed as an outgrowth of the Consensus Planning Principles and Vision. One section of those Principles, relating to the General Plan Certainty System, is introduced in this section and contained in the General Plan. The remaining sections of that document are contained in Appendix B to the General Plan. Together, the Consensus Planning Principles, the Vision, and the General Planning Principles contain a number of significant new directions, embodied in the Plan, which are intended to chart Riverside County a new course for the 21st century.

Significant new General Plan features include:

Clarity in Land Use Guidance

Completely Mapped Policy — Land use mapping at the General Plan level (see Chapter 3, Land Use Element) depicts four "Foundation" Components, while Area Plans use a streamlined, consistent set of land use designations that fall under the umbrella of the Foundation Components.

The Foundation Components — The RCIP Vision calls for the land uses in the County to be clearly mapped, and areas suitable for development or agriculture to be easily distinguishable from those to be permanently conserved, either for habitat or to accommodate natural resources or open space. As a result, the land use designations used in this General Plan fall under the umbrella of four Foundation Components, or major categories of County land use: Community Development, Rural, Agriculture, and Multipurpose Open Space. The countywide map of land use delineates only those four Foundation Components (see Chapter 3, Land Use Element).

As detailed in the description of the General Plan Certainty System (see general description below and Chapter 10, Administration), the significance of these foundation components is that General Plan Amendments proposing a change of land use designation from one Foundation Component to another will only be entertained by the County at five-year intervals, except in specific extraordinary circumstances.

Area Plans — Nineteen Area Plans replace the previously adopted set of Community Plans as well as the Riverside Extended Mountain Area Plan and the Southwest Area Plan. Area Plan boundaries have been adjusted to include most of the unincorporated area of western Riverside County, as well as the Coachella Valley, Desert Center and the Palo Verde Valley. Area Plans are comprised of a