



Chapter 2: A Vision for Riverside County

Overview

If you are reading this vision statement it is because you have some interest in what is happening in Riverside County. You may be concerned about your current or future quality of life, how your property will be impacted by change, whether to locate your business here, or, as a government official, what a decision should be regarding a particular issue. This vision will tell you in broad terms what values prevail here and how future community-building decisions will be affected by those values.

A vision is a positive mental image of the future that is expressed as if it had already been achieved. It is used, not only to shape plans, but also to motivate long term commitment to those plans and their implementation. It is a tool for inspiring achievement and unifying energies toward a future that is considerably more desirable than it would be without such thoughtful preparation.

Our vision for Riverside County is designed to:

1. Build on lasting values;
2. Appeal to the best in people;
3. Have universal appeal, despite unavoidable differences in priority;
4. Communicate in terms people can easily understand;
5. Represent common ground as the basis for resolving inevitable differences;
6. Be both visionary and practical; and
7. Be rich with opportunities for personal interpretation within the framework of the common ground.

The process for developing this vision involved:

1. Listening to the people of Riverside County through outreach meetings and public opinion polling;
2. Consolidating information from workshops involving the Board of Supervisors, Riverside County Transportation Commission, County Planning Commission, cities, tribal governments, appointed advisory committees, and special interest groups;



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3. Augmenting that input with technical and planning knowledge from the staff and consultants;
4. Discussions among participants in the planning process of important issues that must be addressed in the vision; and
5. Preparing and refining the draft vision based on these discussions.

This Vision is made up of four parts. The first is a summary version that captures the essence of the Vision, but does not contain the depth of content generated by the outreach process. It is designed to be published separately as an easy to read, stand-alone document. The second part is this overview, which sets the stage for the substance of the Vision. The third part is a statement of fundamental values that provide the foundation for the Vision. The importance of these values cannot be overstated. They are the rationale for everything that appears on the Vision statement. The fourth is the Vision Statement itself. This part describes what Riverside County is like after 20 years of collaboration, based on the common ground established through the process of preparing the Riverside County Integrated Plan.

The essence of the Vision Statement is a description of conditions related to twelve major topics arising from the public outreach process. Each topic contains a number of issues that had to be addressed if the stated values were to truly influence the future. The translation of these issues into a description of results after 20 years of implementation provides the substance of the Vision for Riverside County.

How is this Vision used? Here are some ways:

1. Each General Plan Element contains a description of how it implements the Vision.
2. Each Area Plan contains a description of how the Vision applies uniquely to that area and how it is implemented.
3. The land use and supporting transportation and open space systems respond directly to the Vision through the General Plan Elements and Area Plans.
4. Communities in unincorporated areas are shaped by the content of the Vision.
5. The General Plan Implementation Program is reviewed annually as part of the County budget process and achievements toward the Vision are documented. County resources are focused on supporting the Vision.
6. Achievement of the Vision is being tracked by indicators that are either measurable or at least clearly defined based on a shared definition of success.
7. Staff reports on public improvement projects and private development projects specify how they serve to implement the Vision.



8. Public interest groups regularly observe the implementation process to both celebrate achievements and raise concerns when they are warranted.
9. The Riverside County Vision is frequently the subject of news media stories that call attention to aspects of its status.
10. Educational programs throughout the County contain segments on current issues and how their resolution reinforces the direction stated by the Vision.
11. The entire General Plan is reviewed and refined periodically in response to changing conditions and the degree to which the Vision is being achieved.

In short, the Riverside County Vision is at the heart of a great many public deliberations and has the continual attention of the public. It is a central part of the decision-making systems that shape what happens, where it happens, and how it happens.

FUNDAMENTAL VALUES

The physical character of our communities cannot be divorced from the values they respect. Sooner or later, these values manifest themselves in how our development decisions are made and how those decisions shape our communities. Where our values and results are synchronized, our communities prosper; where they are in conflict, so are the communities.

The simplest way to summarize our vision for Riverside County is to say that:

Riverside County is a family of special communities in a remarkable environmental setting.

Our vision is based on values that provide the foundation for common ground that, in turn, underpin the General Plan's goals, policies, and actions. The people of Riverside County declare that they join together in holding the following values and seeking a community future based on them. It can be argued that our values are optimistic and very ambitious: that they require our best instincts to prevail. Of course-why would we seek less in shaping our communities?

So, with that theme in mind, let us express the values that have motivated our community building and that will continue to do so in the future.

Community

We are, in fact, a community within which a family of local communities exists. "Family" means that we treat each other with the compassion and respect that one rightfully expects of family members. The richness of our natural setting is a shared resource of inestimable value. Despite differences in priorities and approaches, we are engaged in community building for ourselves and our heirs based on the common ground we have forged.