



# *A Vision for Riverside County*

## **VISION AS A GUIDE FOR THE RCIP**

Our values drive our vision. What we, the people of Riverside County want for our future, our communities, and ourselves will shape the Riverside County Integrated Plan. Implementing the plan will unify our resources to achieve our common purpose. What we choose to do or not to do will, in turn, validate or refine our vision so that it is not only imaginative in seeking a better future, but practical in creating expectations that are real. In short, this will lead to a comprehensive plan that says what it means and means what it says.

Why is this so important? It is because the only way for our vision to be translated into reality is to work at it and persist. In other words, completing the RCIP is not the end of the process; it is the beginning. That is when the hard-but truly rewarding-work begins.

### **Integration: The Hallmark of the Riverside County Plan**

The key to the entire RCIP lies in the word “integration.” There are a number of movements throughout the nation that seek to improve quality of life. They all include useful ideas, usually organized around a major theme or emphasis. Examples include Healthy Cities, Sustainable Development, Livable Cities, Safe Communities, Smart Growth, Clean Cities and a number of others. The RCIP is not beholden solely to any one of these ways of defining “quality of life.” Rather, it seeks to integrate combinations of the best ideas from these programs and locally initiated concepts. That will allow us and our leaders to tailor the most applicable ideas to Riverside County’s needs and potentials. If any single quality is evident regarding Riverside County, it is diversity. So, the vision for its future must respect the fact that “one size does not fit all.” The foundation for this approach is integration of a host of ideas rich in potential, based not on a single theme, but on what makes the most sense for Riverside County.

It is essential to appreciate the fact that this vision for Riverside County allows for varied interpretations, depending on one’s priorities. This cannot and should not be avoided. Yet, it should become clear, as implementation of the vision occurs, if some aspect of the vision is completely ignored. That is not acceptable and will require serious attention. So this vision should be thought of as a consolidation of many legitimate agendas within which balanced response is expected. That this balance will vary at different times and in different locales does not diminish the value of the vision. After all, the vision is intended to motivate excellence, not impose a singular straightjacket on the future. Rather, it reflects the heritage of diversity that has always enriched the character of this place.

This thought leads to one final idea reflected in our community vision statement. We constantly refer to the term “quality of life” in describing what we seek in our living environment. We all agree that this is a desirable purpose, yet we may define quality to mean widely differing things. For purposes of this vision statement, quality of life is defined to include all of the ingredients contained in



our vision. It is not exactly the same thing in every portion of the County. It is a balancing of competing priorities that do not enjoy universal support throughout the County. Yet the vision statement includes an essential common ground that must be found to some degree in any quality of life definition used here.

*With this in mind, the RCIP...*

1. Adapts the best part of many themes to the needs of Riverside County.
2. Derives its power from the values that are held by the people here.
3. Balances stability in the landscape with the dynamism and flexibility to adapt to changing future circumstances.
4. Uses the best available data and analysis to guide decision making without constraining the overall vision.
5. Is flexible so that it can be adjusted to accommodate future circumstances, yet provides a solid foundation of stability so that basic ingredients in the plan are not sacrificed.
6. Protects high-value environmental resources and private property rights – and develops the complex tools needed to do so.
7. Integrates and works closely with cities and their planning efforts.
8. Provides a long-term means for economic stability to be achieved through investment by a variety of interests: residential, agricultural, property owner, environmental, institutional, business community, labor, and others.
9. Seeks a balanced transportation system where people do not need to be totally dependent on the single-occupant vehicle.
10. Stimulates an unprecedented level of intergovernmental cooperation and collaboration.

*The RCIP will...*

1. Provide on-going monitoring, measurement, and status on progress toward achieving the vision.
2. Preserve crucial open space and transportation corridors, resulting in more compact and efficient development than would otherwise happen.
3. Provide a range of community design options to respond to varied lifestyle choices.
4. Put a focus on high quality, efficient growth that uses land resources efficiently.
5. Provide a process for adjustment through General Plan reviews, in accordance with state law, at regular intervals or when triggered by key events.