



Plan Integration

The major thrusts of the County's planning program have resulted in a high degree of program component integration. New transportation corridors (and expansion of older ones) are designed to either avoid environmentally sensitive areas or, if necessary, to pass through them in a very sensitive way. The multi-purpose open space system not only provides a remarkable habitat and recreation resource, but it also provides a framework that distinguishes our family of communities. These components are both integrated into the General Plan through the system of Area Plans covering all but the most remote desert areas of the County. As a consequence, our communities and their development areas are well served by transportation networks and our priceless environmental resources are permanently preserved for future generations.

1. A key opportunity for plan integration is exemplified by the existence of critical corridors linking our communities – all of which are part of the service systems that enable our communities to prosper. This includes open space corridors for vistas and recreation, habitat corridors for wildlife and plants, transportation corridors for mobility, riding and hiking trails for recreational travel, and bikeways as an alternate mode of travel as well as recreation pursuit. In essence, this is resulting in a planned, interdependent network of systems to serve our communities.
2. Many of the corridors are recognized, not only as community links or buffers, but also as unifying elements that reinforce community identity.
3. The need for safe and efficient access to jobs, housing, commerce, and public services for residents of all ages, income groups, and physical abilities is reflected in the comprehensive transportation network serving the County.
4. Flexible planning tools such as mixed use zoning, incentives for creative use of land, overlay zoning, and multiple, flexible use of open space are in common use as our communities mature and new communities take shape.

Financial Realities

Few of the aspirations reflected in the current state of community development, transportation support, and multi-purpose open space preservation could have come about without an aggressive and creative financing strategy. The financing of improvements and programs has benefitted from the unique breadth and integration of the County's planning program. We are very competitive for grant funding. The burden for costs to achieve what we have today has fallen on those who benefit to a degree not achieved in many locales.

1. A wide variety of public and private funding arrangements are in operation, including creative use of state and federal grant and loan funds to confront the continuing financial reality of not having enough money to do everything that is desired.
2. The County has a reputation for being unusually creative in gaining leverage out of limited funds by using them as seed money to attract larger



investments in community facilities and programs, to obtain public and private grants, and stimulate investment participation by the private sector.

3. Along with its emphasis on achieving community desires, the County remains highly respected for its sensitivity to private property rights.
4. Because of its fiscal achievements, Riverside County and its cities are exceptionally effective at forestalling unfunded mandates from state and federal levels.

Intergovernmental Cooperation

The integration of planning and importance of the transportation corridors, multi-purpose open space system, and development commitments have had an impact on governmental decision making at many levels. Numerous examples now exist of intergovernmental arrangements to facilitate continued implementation of the policy direction established almost 20 years ago. The result of this is not only improved governmental effectiveness, but also less conflict over policy issues, increased competitiveness for grant funding, and establishment of a strong tradition of intergovernmental cooperation.

1. Recognition that many aspects of the vision are boundary-less is exemplified by the extensive array of intergovernmental arrangements involving the County, cities, special districts, Indian tribes, and unincorporated communities.
2. A coordinated and streamlined permitting process is now in operation that is feasible because areas clearly slated for development are identified and appropriate open space areas are acquired or protected.
3. Because of additional regional County facilities and cooperative agreements with some cities and other institutions, public hearings on certain issues and projects are now held locally so as to be more convenient to those most impacted by the decisions.
4. New school sites are used as a focal point of neighborhoods as a result of collaboration between local governments.
5. Intergovernmental partnerships have eliminated the once common contentiousness surrounding annexations, incorporations, and preservation of unincorporated community integrity.
6. Several inter-county and intra-county compacts now exist regarding cooperative programs for open space management, transportation corridor planning and implementation, air quality and water quality improvements, water resource management, and other critical topics of mutual concern.
7. The tradition of intergovernmental cooperation is well established and office seekers habitually include this topic in their campaigns city and County decision-makers and other opinion leaders actively support intergovernmental initiatives.