



Introduction



A "sphere of influence" is the area outside of and adjacent to a city's border that the city has identified as a future logical extension of its jurisdiction. While the County of Riverside has land use authority over city sphere areas, development in these areas may directly affect circulation, service provision, and community character within the cities.

Throughout the Area Plan, special features have been included to enhance the readability and practicality of the information provided. Look for these elements:



Quotes — quotations from the RCIP Vision or individuals involved or concerned with Riverside County.



Factoids — interesting information about Riverside County that is related to the element.



References — contacts and resources that can be consulted for additional information.



Definitions — clarification of terms and vocabulary used in certain policies or text.

The Highgrove area is a very distinct and special environment. From virtually any place here, you have a sweeping view of distant mountains and nearby mountains and hills. Rock outcroppings within the Box Springs Mountains accent the hillsides and provide a distinct texture to the landscape. The citrus groves of Highgrove and the lush riparian nature of Springbrook Wash also contribute to the unique character of the area.

A word must be stated regarding the titles used in this area plan. This area plan name refers in large part to one distinct community; Highgrove, located west and east of Interstate 215, in the northerly portion of this planning area. The remaining areas south of the Highgrove community, including the entire University City neighborhood and portions of the Box Springs Mountains, are also included in this area plan. The entire Highgrove planning area also falls within the City of Riverside's Sphere-of-Influence.

This is not a stand-alone document, but rather an extension of the County of Riverside General Plan and Vision Statement. The County of Riverside Vision Statement details the physical, environmental, and economic characteristics that the County aspires to achieve by the year 2020. Using the Vision Statement as the primary foundation, the County of Riverside General Plan establishes policies to guide development and conservation within the entire unincorporated County territory, while the area plan provides policy direction specifically for Highgrove.

In addition to a description of the location, physical characteristics, and special features here, the area plan contains a Land Use Plan, statistical summaries, policies, and accompanying exhibits that allow anyone interested in the continued prosperity of this distinctive area to understand the physical, environmental, and regulatory characteristics that make this such a unique area. Background information also provides insights that help in understanding the issues that require special focus here and the reasons for the more localized policy direction found in this document.

Each section of the area plan addresses critical issues facing the Highgrove area. Perhaps a description of these sections will help in understanding the organization of the area plan as well as appreciating the comprehensive nature of the planning process that led to it. The Location section explains where the area plan fits with what is around it and how it relates to the cities that impact it. Physical features are described in a section that highlights the planning area's communities, surrounding environment and natural resources. This leads naturally to the Land Use Plan section, which describes the land use system guiding development at both the countywide and area plan levels.

While a number of these designations reflect the unique features found only in the Highgrove area, a number of special policies are still necessary to address unique situations. The Policy Areas section presents these policies. Land use related issues are addressed in the Land Use section. The plan also describes relevant transportation issues, routes, and modes of transportation in the Circulation section. The key to understanding our valued open space network is



described in the Multipurpose Open Space section. There are, of course, both natural and man made hazards to consider, and they are spelled out in the Hazards section.

A Special Note on Implementing the Vision

The preface to this area plan is a summary version of the Riverside County Vision That summary is, in turn, simply an overview of a much more extensive and detailed Vision of Riverside County two decades or more into the future This area plan, as part of the Riverside County General Plan, is one of the major devices for making the Vision a reality.

No two area plans are the same. Each represents a unique portion of the incredibly diverse place known as Riverside County While many share certain common features, each of the plans reflects the special characteristics that define its area's unique identity. These features include not only physical qualities, but also the particular boundaries used to define them, the stage of development they have reached, the dynamics of change expected to affect them, and the numerous decisions that shape development and conservation in each locale. That is why the Vision cannot and should not be reflected uniformly.

Policies at the General Plan and area plan levels implement the Riverside County Vision in a range of subject areas as diverse as the scope of the Vision itself The land use pattern contained in this area plan is a further expression of the Vision as it is shaped to fit the terrain and the conditions in the Highgrove area.

To illustrate how the Vision has shaped this area plan, the following highlights reflect certain strategies that link the Vision to the land. This is not a comprehensive enumeration; rather, it emphasizes a few of the most powerful and physically tangible examples.

Open Space Resources. The rolling hillside terrain, rock outcroppings, and riparian corridors of the Highgrove area define the character of this region. The Box Springs Mountains and Springbrook Wash are prime examples of the area's prominent open space and rural character. They also serve as important habitat preservation areas for several species. The plan preserves the character of the Box Springs Mountains with the application of the Open Space Conservation designation, and applies specific policy guidance for the preservation of Springbrook Wash.

Rural Character. The rural nature of the Highgrove area is evident throughout much of the planning area. The community of Highgrove, particularly in its eastern half, has a very distinct rural character. The land use patterns reflect a strong commitment to continuation of the cherished rural/semi-rural lifestyle in this part of the County.

Data in this area plan is current as of June 19, 2001. Any General Plan amendments approved subsequent to that date are not reflected in this area plan and must be supported by their own environmental documentation. A process for incorporating any applicable portion of these amendments into this area plan will be part of the General Plan Implementation Program.