



Guiding Principles

The City of San Diego General Plan integrates the following basic principles which describe the essential structure of San Diego's plan and reflect the core values that guide its development:

1. An open space network formed by parks, canyons, river valleys, habitats, beaches, and ocean;
2. Diverse residential communities formed by the open space network;
3. Compact and walkable mixed-use villages of different scales within communities;
4. Employment centers for a strong economy;
5. An integrated regional transportation network of walkways, bikeways, transit, roadways, and freeways that efficiently link communities and villages to each other and to employment centers;
6. High quality, affordable, and well-maintained public facilities to serve the City's population, workers, and visitors;
7. Historic districts and sites that respect our heritage;
8. Balanced communities that offer opportunities for all San Diegans and share citywide responsibilities;
9. A clean and sustainable environment; and
10. A high aesthetic standard.

The updated General Plan translated these organizing principles into new policy direction in the ten elements of the General Plan. Because less than four percent of the City's land remains vacant and available for new development, the plan's policies represent a shift in focus from how to develop vacant land to how to reinvest in existing communities. Therefore, new policies have been created to support changes in development patterns to emphasize combining housing, shopping, employment uses, schools, and civic uses, at different scales, in village centers. By directing growth primarily toward village centers, the strategy works to preserve established residential neighborhoods and open space, and to manage the City's continued growth over the long term.

The guiding principles of the General Plan are based on the Strategic Framework Element vision statement and "Core Values" that address San Diego's physical environment, economy, and culture and society. These values were developed by the Strategic Framework Citizens' Committee which included more than 40 individuals of diverse and accomplished backgrounds. In addition, thousands of others provided valuable input to the Strategic Framework Element in public hearings, public workshops, community planning group meetings, public forums, and email communications. Community planning groups provided input through their own meetings and as members of the Community Planners Committee. The complete Core Values can be found in the General Plan Appendix A, SF-2. In addition, those that contributed to the development of the SFE are acknowledged in Appendix A, SF-3.