

CHAPTER 3 GOALS AND POLICIES

The following goals and policies set forth the framework to realize the vision for the North City Specific Plan as well as apply to this Specific Plan. They serve as guidelines for decision making and provide direction for the future. The goals and policies were derived from input received from the community at several Steering Committee meetings and public workshops and from City officials and staff during the planning process for the NCSP and confirmed during the public outreach conducted for this Specific Plan.

The goals and policies are consistent with the City's General Plan, as well as with "Smart Growth" principles. Smart Growth can be defined as growth that is economically sound, environmentally friendly and supportive of community livability. Smart Growth recognizes that growth and development are both inevitable and beneficial. It turns the development debate away from the traditional "growth/no growth" question to "how and where new development should be accommodated."

The goals and policies are provided for under the following categories:

1. Land Use
2. Economic Development
3. Open Space and Natural Resources
4. Circulation
5. Parking
6. Infrastructure

A. Land Use

Goal LU-1: Provide for development within the Specific Plan by designating appropriate land uses and intensities to meet the needs of anticipated growth and to achieve the community's objectives.

Policy LU-1.1: Establish land use districts that have complimentary rather than competitive uses and maintain the integrity of, and interrelationships among, the districts.

Policy LU-1.2: Accommodate employment, visitor-serving, and residential uses, as well as local and regional-serving amenities within a comprehensive mixed use environment.

Goal LU-2: Respond to market trends and developer interest by creating a forward-looking and responsive land use plan for the Specific Plan.

Policy LU-2.1: Mix land uses to create a vibrant and more active

environment and make the most efficient use of available land.

Policy LU-2.2: Explore various techniques, including public/private partnerships, which create the potential for visionary new uses (such as entertainment, cultural, or recreational attractions) to the Specific Plan.

Goal LU-3: Create the opportunity for a regional commercial development attraction around the interchanges along Interstate 10 (I-10).

Policy LU-3.1: Take advantage of the Specific Plans prominent location and accessibility along the I-10 corridor by orienting strategic uses, such as employment, retail and visitor-serving amenities, toward freeway access points.

Policy LU-3.2: Accommodate visitor-serving and hospitality uses to establish North City as an important destination within the Coachella Valley.

Policy LU-3.3: Attract high-quality mixed-use projects in locations with high freeway visibility and accessibility.

Goal LU-4: Create a jobs/housing balance in North City.

Policy LU-4.1: Implement mixed use zoning that promotes employment uses near housing and permits a wide range of housing types.

Policy LU-4.2: Maximize the economic impact of available business park and industrial land in PA3 by giving priority to clean enterprises that yield large numbers of highly skilled high-paying jobs relative to site size.

Goal LU-5: Create a range of housing opportunities and choices (Smart Growth principle).

Policy LU-5.1: Implement mixed use zoning that encourages housing types at varying densities for both stand-alone and mixed use residential developments that are suitable and attractive to a variety of age groups and family types.

Policy LU-5.2: Encourage higher density development for the efficient use of land and by expanding housing choices within Cathedral City and the Coachella Valley.

Goal LU-6: Encourage efficient patterns of development within the Specific Plan (Smart Growth principle).

Policy LU-6.1: Assure that neighborhood-serving commercial development

is strategically sited to meet the needs of the Specific Plans residents while maximizing pedestrian access and minimizing the need for vehicle travel.

Policy LU-6.2: Identify site opportunities and actively recruit developers of mixed-use projects that integrate residential and commercial uses.

Goal LU-7: Create a vibrant environment for both residents and visitors.

Policy LU-7.1: Attract entertainment and recreational activities for a multitude of demographics.

Policy LU-7.2: Accommodate a variety of housing options in the mixed use areas, including attached and detached housing, senior citizen housing, and live-work space.

Policy LU-7.3: Provide site opportunities conducive to outdoor special events in the mixed use areas, such as live entertainment and art festivals.

Policy LU-7.4: Maintain a continuity of pedestrian activity along major commercial corridors through active ground-level retail and restaurant uses.

Policy LU-7.5: Encourage pedestrian-oriented specialty retail shops offering quality goods and services in the mixed use areas, with a balance between individually-owned businesses and franchise or corporate entities.

Policy LU-7.6: Implement development standards and design guidelines to provide an appropriate transition between commercial uses and adjacent residential uses.

Goal LU-8: Encourage good design and high-quality development within the Specific Plan.

Policy LU-8.1: Implement development and design standards that result in attractive developments of high quality construction.

Policy LU-8.2: Through design review, ensure that new development enhances the character of the Specific Plan by requiring design and architectural elements that support high quality development and contribute to an active pedestrian environment.

Policy LU-8.3: Encourage the inclusion of urban amenities such as plazas, walkways, landscaping, and appropriate water features within mixed use and commercial developments.

Policy LU-8.4: Encourage development to include high quality building exteriors, enhanced pavement, and special entryway and corner landscaping.

Goal LU-9: Encourage sustainable design and development practices.

Policy LU-9.1: Encourage land uses that take advantage of the area's natural resources, such as topography, wind, sun, etc., and emphasize environmental sensitivity and sustainable development practices throughout the Specific Plan area.

Policy LU-9.2: Attract businesses in the burgeoning "green building" industry to locate in the Specific Plan.

Policy LU-9.3: Implement standards and guidelines for sustainable development based on best management practices and available and emerging technologies in the design, construction and long-term maintenance of projects.

Policy LU-9.4: Encourage participation in the City's Voluntary Green Building Program for Residential Construction (Ordinance Number 657).

Policy LU-9.5: Provide incentives for projects to achieve the Leadership in Energy and Environmental Design (LEED) Certification (Green Building Rating System) or other similar certification.

B. Economic Development

Goal ED-1: Encourage residential, commercial and industrial development in the Specific Plan that will enhance the long-term financial stability and fiscal viability of the City.

Policy ED-1.1: Provide for a fiscally sound mix of land uses.

Policy ED-1.2: Attract and recruit new businesses that are appropriate to each land use district as defined in the Specific Plan.

Policy ED-1.3: Guide the establishment of a diversified local business base that provides growing sales tax, property tax, and other revenues to the City to pay for municipal investment and operations.

Policy ED-1.4: Encourage private sector investment by aggressively marketing the Specific Plan and maintaining a business-friendly climate.

Policy ED-1.5: Consider innovative financing mechanisms, including, but not limited to, establishing Community Facilities Districts (CFD), Special Assessment Districts and Developer Impact Fees to fund, construct and maintain necessary public facilities and infrastructure.

Policy ED-1.6: Strive to streamline the processing of development proposals that support the economic goals of the community.

Policy ED-1.7: Retain and recruit employers in sectors which generate and broaden employment opportunities and increase discretionary incomes.

Goal ED-2: Establish North City as a dominant commercial node within the Coachella Valley.

Policy ED-2.1: Promote retail development opportunities, thereby increasing fiscal benefits and minimizing sales tax “leakage” to surrounding areas.

Policy ED-2.2: Integrate pedestrian-oriented design in mixed use districts to facilitate accessibility and increase activity at retail establishments.

Policy ED-2.3: Attract businesses by supporting the implementation and completion of major infrastructure improvements in the Specific Plan.

C. Open Space and Natural Resources

Goal OS-1: Support the preservation and management of all identified habitat lands of threatened and endangered species.

Policy OS-1.1: Adhere to prescribed land management practices of the Coachella Valley Multiple Species Habitat Conservation Plan (MSHCP).

Goal OS-2: Promote water conservation and water quality.

Policy OS-2.1: Require all developments to provide on-site areas for treatment of rainwater runoff through landscape-based methods such as dry wells and vegetated bioswales instead of, or in addition to, curb and gutter/storm sewer systems.

Policy OS 2.2: Work with private developers to establish reclaimed water systems in new developments.

Goal OS-3: Create a comprehensive, interconnected open space network and trails system.

Policy OS-3.1: Coordinate with Coachella Valley Association of Governments (CVAG) and Coachella Valley Regional Trails Alliance to determine optimal locations for trails and assure connectivity on a regional level.

Policy OS-3.2: Implement the provisions in Chapter 5 to set aside rights-of-way for bikeways and pathways through private development that will connect to the overall trail system.

Policy OS-3.3: Implement the provisions in Chapter 7 to meet the recreation needs for future residents of the Specific Plan.

Policy OS-3.4: Implement the guidelines set forth in Chapter 5 for a systematic approach to developing parks and trails as the Specific Plan develops.

Goal OS-4: Assure that views to the Specific Plan from the I-10 freeway and the Coachella Valley are attractive and inviting.

Policy OS-4.1: Establish open space edges and planted transition zones that demarcate the Specific Plan development area to give it a positive visual relationship with the rest of the City and surrounding natural landscape.

Policy OS-4.2: Preserve views to Edom Hill and Flat Top Mountain from the I-10 freeway and from major public roadways within the Specific Plan.

Policy OS-4.3: Regulate building height in the flat areas directly north of I-10 to preserve the viewshed to Flat Top Mountain from I-10.

Policy OS-4.4: Minimize cut-and-fill operations and prohibit use of reflective surfaces on the hillside areas visible from I-10 and from the public viewsheds south of I-10.

Goal OS-5: Create a visually appealing, unified Specific Plan with a distinct character.

Policy OS-5.1: Take advantage of the Plan area's natural environment and dramatic views to enhance the quality of the overall development.

Policy OS-5.2: Provide parkland and recreational facilities that meet or exceed the service standards set forth by the City's General Plan of at least 3 acres of parkland per 1,000 residents.

Policy OS-5.3: Locate landscaped gateways immediately north of I-10 on Bob Hope Drive.

Policy OS-5.4: Through detailed landscape and irrigation plans as part of development project applications, implement the Street Tree Master Plan contained in this Specific Plan with unique parkway trees for each street to delineate vehicle/pedestrian spaces and to provide shade.

Policy OS-5.5: Create landscape or architectural buffers between incompatible uses.

Policy OS-6.6: Provide space for planted screens that will visually soften industrial uses, parking lots and utilities.

Goal OS-6: Enhance the pedestrian environment and provide for comfortable settings in which people can gather.

Policy OS-6.1: Provide open space and planted parkways as buffers to mitigate natural environmental factors, such as wind and heat, and human impacts, such as noise and vehicular traffic.

Policy OS-6.2: Provide vegetated or architectural windscreens in focused high wind areas.

Policy OS-6.3: Create a parkway along the north side of I-10 that spans the length of the Specific Plan.

Policy OS-6.4: Provide for the creation of gathering places, such as plazas, pocket parks, and shared roadways, within private development.

Policy OS-6.5: Provide site furniture and lighting appropriate to the desert environment and unique to the Specific Plan.

Policy OS-6.6: Use traffic calming strategies, such as paving color and pattern, raised roundabouts and intersections, curbed planters, and signage.

Policy OS-6.7: Locate streetscape elements to enhance the public realm by framing views, screening parking areas, identifying entries, providing shade, etc.

Policy OS-6.8: Development proposals shall include a Streetscape Plan to implement the streetscape and gateway design concepts contained in this Specific Plan.

D. Circulation

Goal C-1: Construct a circulation system with the least possible impact on the natural environment.

Policy C-1.1: Ensure that the design of Valley Center Boulevard provides for fluvial sand transport along Willow Wash to allow sand to be transported under I-10.

Policy C-1.2: Ensure that the design of the Valley Center Boulevard bridge structure over Willow Wash provides for the movement of animals under the road.

Policy C-1.3: Adopt horizontal and vertical alignments of Valley Center Boulevard that minimize the amount of required grading, consistent with safe roadway design.

Goal C-2: Separate local from regional traffic.

Policy C-2.1: Design Valley Center Boulevard as a street that serves local traffic.

Policy C-2.2: Improve Varner Road to serve regional traffic.

Policy C-2.3: Support Transportation System Management (TSM) improvements, such as a Freeway Service Patrol, to maximize the capacity of I-10 and discourage freeway traffic from deflecting to local streets.

Goal C-3: Provide convenient access to I-10 for purposes of conveying residents, employees and visitors into and out of the Specific Plan.

Policy C-3.1: Support the construction of an interchange at DaVall Drive.

Goal C-4: Provide the highest level of access for all modes of transportation and maintain efficient circulation in the Specific Plan.

Policy C-4.1: Preserve the traffic-carrying capacity of arterial streets by promoting shared access locations among multiple properties and/or establishments, reciprocal access agreements, shared parking, and the use of side streets to provide access to parcels where possible.

Policy C-4.2: Support trip reduction and other Transportation Demand Management (TDM) efforts.

Policy C-4.3: Limit median openings on Valley Center Boulevard to facilitate smooth traffic flow.

Policy C-4.4: Encourage increased public transit accessibility and use by incorporating transit amenities into project design, including easy access to transit stops and parking lots near major transit stops.

Policy C-4.5: As the Specific Plan develops, identify activity centers that would benefit from increased transit access and work with Sunline Transit Agency to provide service to those centers.

Policy C-4.6: Facilitate bicycle use and circulation within and to the Specific Plan by providing safe and convenient connections between bike paths and major land uses.

Policy C-4.7: Promote a safe and attractive pedestrian environment to encourage pedestrian traffic.

Policy C-4.8: Encourage the use of new and innovative modes of transportation to further remove traffic from busy thoroughfares.

Policy C-4.9: Study the feasibility and location of a multi-modal transportation center near high density development to take advantage of the potential provision of high speed rail, increased bus service, and linkages with the Palm Springs International Airport.

Goal C-5: Enhance connectivity along Valley Center Boulevard by providing for alternative transportation modes.

Policy C-5.1: Preserve right-of-way in the median along Valley Center Boulevard for future use by advanced transit technologies, such as Personal Rapid Transit (PRT), Automated Road Vehicles (ARV), or Intelligent Multimode Transportation (IMT).

Policy C-5.2: Create a multi-modal corridor along Valley Center Boulevard by providing a multi-use path for electric vehicles, bikes, and pedestrians.

Goal C-6: Limit the impact of truck traffic on overall traffic flow in the Specific Plan.

Policy C-6.1: designate truck routes for access to truck-intensive uses in the Specific Plan.

Goal C-7: Connect North City with the rest of Cathedral City, especially the Downtown area.

Policy C-7.1: Consider a local transit line between North City and Downtown to connect the two areas.

E. Parking

Goal P-1: Provide adequate, efficient parking throughout the Specific Plan

while avoiding an oversupply of parking through the use of shared parking and reduced parking requirements.

Policy P-1.1: Encourage the development of shared parking facilities wherever possible, both in mixed use developments and among specific uses having different periods of peak demand.

Policy P-1.2: All parking spaces within the Specific Plan shall be double-striped.

Policy P-1.3: Conduct a periodic review of the City's parking requirements to ensure that appropriate parking is provided, and revise the parking requirements as necessary.

Policy P-1.4: Use landscaping and/or covered parking, including incorporation of solar panels, as a means to reduce heat gain in parking areas.

F. Infrastructure

Goal I-1: Provide fully functional, safe, cost-effective and environmental-friendly public infrastructure (i.e. sewer, water, and storm drainage) to meet the needs of future development within the North City Specific Plan.

Policy I-1.1: Coordinate and fully utilize the management resources of Coachella Valley Water District (CVWD) and Riverside County Flood Control District to install complete wet utility (water, sewer and storm drainage) networks for the Specific Plan.

Policy I-1.2: Coordinate with the various dry utility purveyors (SCE, Southern California Gas Company, Verizon Communications and Time Warner Cable) to design and install a network of underground lines, using the same trench locations, for supplying service to new development in North City.

Goal I-2: Support the provision of a sustainable, long-term supply of clean and healthful water that is available for development in North City.

Policy I-2.1: Require the use of water-conserving appliances and fixtures in all new development, as mandated by State law.

Policy I-2.2: Require the use of low water consuming, drought-tolerant landscape plantings as a means of reducing water demand.

Policy I-2.3: Continue to coordinate with CVWD to expand and strengthen educational materials and programs that inform developers and residents of

the methods and benefits of available water-saving techniques.

Policy I-2.4: Encourage the expanded use of recycled wastewater for irrigation, dust control, soil compaction, fire protection, and other uses as they are developed, as a means of reducing impacts on ground water resources.

Policy I-2.5: Prohibit the use of septic tanks and private water wells, and require all new development to connect to the community sewer and water systems.

Policy I-2.6: Require development and maintenance of project-specific, on-site storm water retention/detention facilities in a manner consistent with local and regional drainage plans and community design standards.

Policy I-2.7: Incorporate recreational trails in improved channels and use detention basins for parks, ball fields and equestrian areas, where appropriate.

Goal I-3: Ensure that an adequate infrastructure system is in place for future development in North City.

Policy I-3.1: As a condition of development approval, ensure that utilities are adequately sized to accommodate the proposed development and, if applicable, are sized for other future developments.

Policy I-3.2: Require individual projects to provide comprehensive infrastructure plans for City review and approval as part of a development application.

Policy I-3.3: Require new development to contribute its fair share of the cost of on- and off-site public infrastructure and services. This could include installation of public facilities, payment of developer impact fees, and participation in a Capital Improvement Financing Program (CIFP).

Policy I-3.4: Consider requiring developments to install off-site facilities that are in excess of a development's fair share in order to accommodate future anticipated growth, with a funding mechanism established by the City to reimburse the developer for the amount in excess of the fair share costs.

Policy I-3.5: Apply for State, Federal and regional funding sources to finance infrastructure costs.

Goal I-4: Minimize the impacts of new utilities on view corridors and the natural and built environment.

Policy I-4.1: Design and site major utility facilities, such as well sites and substations, to minimize environmental and visual impacts.

Policy I-4.2: Require undergrounding of new utility lines, with priority given to the undergrounding of utility lines along major streets and scenic roadways.