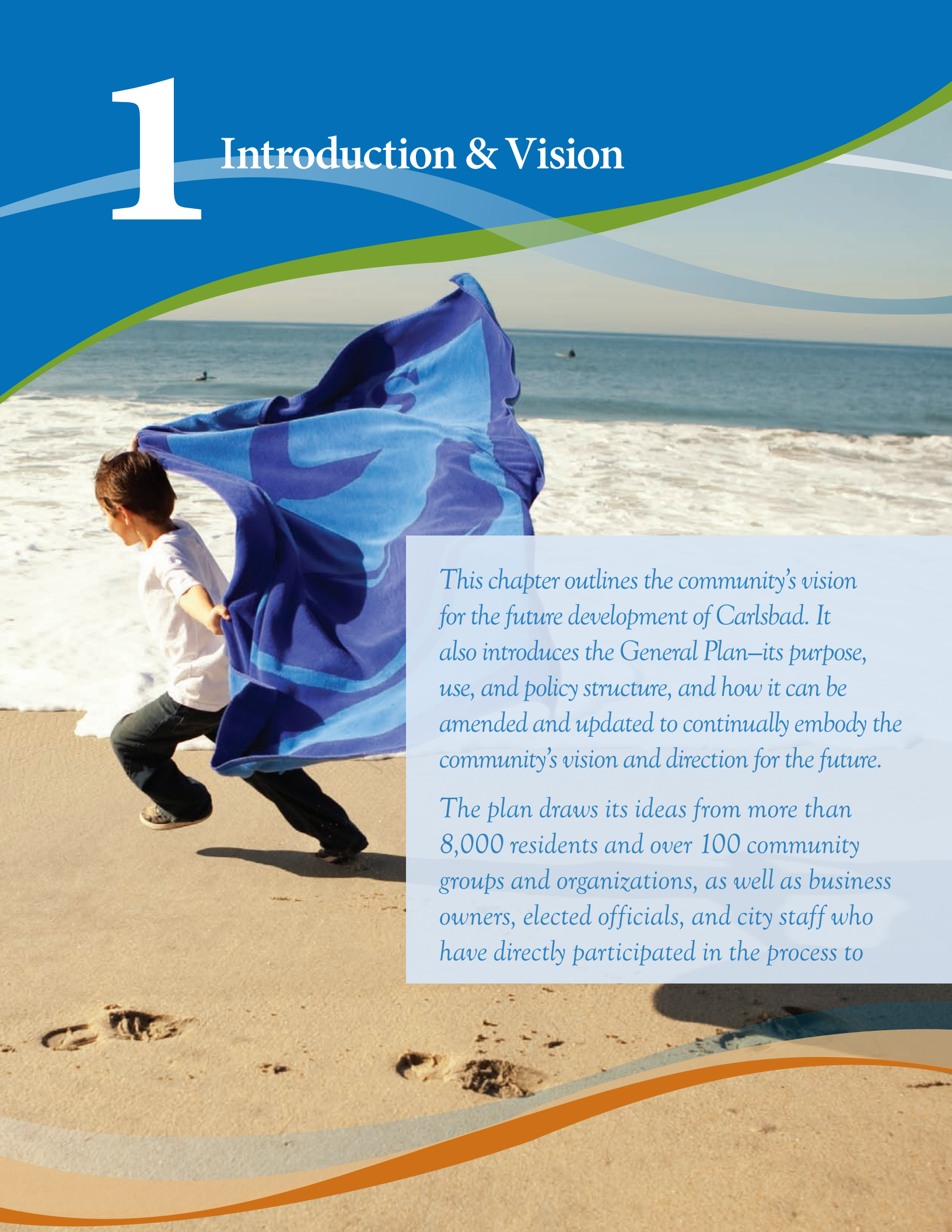
1 Introduction & Vision



This chapter outlines the community's vision for the future development of Carlsbad. It also introduces the General Plan–its purpose, use, and policy structure, and how it can be amended and updated to continually embody the community's vision and direction for the future.

The plan draws its ideas from more than 8,000 residents and over 100 community groups and organizations, as well as business owners, elected officials, and city staff who have directly participated in the process to

create the Carlsbad Community Vision, which is the foundation for this plan. The plan is comprehensive and long-range and will be used on an ongoing basis, reflecting the city's commitment to the Carlsbad Community Vision and the state law requirement that all actions related to the city's physical development—from transportation and park plans, to facility plans, as well development regulations and fee programs—should be consistent with the General Plan.

1.1 Background: Carlsbad Setting and Evolution

Carlsbad occupies approximately 39 square miles of rolling hills, beaches and bluffs along the northern coast of San Diego County. The city is located about 30 miles north of San Diego and about 90 miles south of Los Angeles. In addition to the Pacific Ocean coastline along its western boundary, the communities surrounding Carlsbad include the city of Oceanside to the north, the city of Encinitas to the south, and the cities of Vista and San Marcos and unincorporated areas of San Diego County to the east. Along Carlsbad's northern edge, urban development abuts Highway 78, with the highway and Buena Vista Lagoon acting as a boundary between Carlsbad and Oceanside. Similarly, Batiquitos Lagoon along the city's southern edge defines the boundary between Carlsbad and Encinitas. To the east, city boundaries are less distinctive, as a mix of hillsides and urban development are located adjacent to the cities of Vista and San Marcos and unincorporated lands. The city's regional location is depicted in Figure 1-1: Regional Setting.

From the city's incorporation in 1952 and for many years thereafter, Carlsbad existed as a "quaint village-by-the-sea." In 1952, the city consisted of about 7.5 square miles centered on the Village. Figure 1-2: City Evolution shows that over time a series of annexations gradually expanded the city's land area south and east to its current size of 39 square miles. The Village, once the geographic center of the community, and what would be considered the city's "downtown", is now at the city's northwest corner, almost a 10-mile drive from the city's southeastern edge.

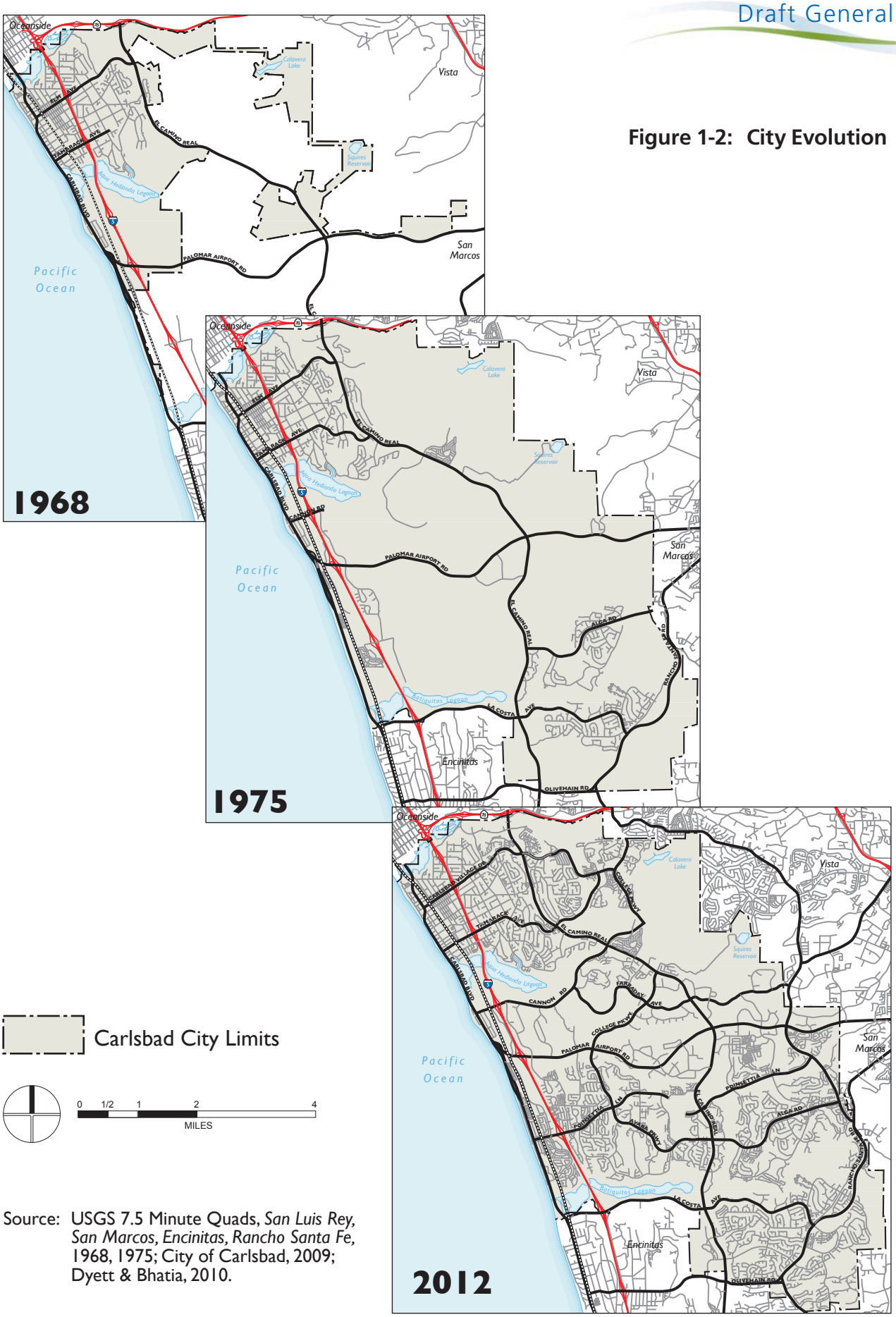
As a relatively young city, much of Carlsbad's early economic growth can be traced back to the city's proactive planning efforts to attract and develop Plaza Camino Real and Car Country Carlsbad in the late 1960s and early 1970s. Both have served as regional retail centers for North San Diego County. The city today is a major job center, home to several internationally leading companies in high- and bio-technology, action sports manufacturing, and other sectors, a regional retail destination, and the "golf capital of the world", with numerous golf courses and resorts as well as major golf-equipment manufacturers.

Given Carlsbad's rapid economic growth and development in the 1980s, city leaders and residents took measures in 1986 to proactively manage the city's growth, fiscal health and levels of service by passing Proposition E, which established the City's Growth Management Plan. The Growth Management Plan limits the total number of residential dwelling units in the city to 54,599, with dwelling unit limits established for each of the city's four geographic quadrants, and requires performance standards for the provision of public facilities.

Other recent planning efforts include the preparation of the Village Master Plan and Design Manual that established a vision for the future character and development of the Village, and other redevelopment efforts focusing on the Ponto Beach and Power Plant areas. In 2008, Carlsbad residents voted to approve Proposition D, where Carlsbad is now governed by its own charter document.

Figure 1-1: Regional Setting
0 5 10 20 Miles
Source: ESRI, 2013; City of Carlsbad, 2013; SANDAG, 2013; USGS, 2002; Dyett & Bhatia, 2013.
LOS ANGELES
Los Angeles Metropolitan Area
Pomona
FONTANA
ONTARIO
RIVERSIDE
FULLERTON
CORONA
ANAHEIM
LONG BEACH
SANTA ANA
ORANGE
IRVINE
HUNTINGTON BEACH
COSTA MESA
Newport Beach
Laguna Beach
Mission Viejo
Lake Elsinore
Lakeland Village
Sun City
Hemet
RIVERSIDE
Temecula
San Clemente
Fallbrook
SAN DIEGO
Vista
OCEANSIDE
CARLSBAD
San Marcos
ESCONDIDO
Encinitas
Solana Beach
Del Mar
Ramona
Poway
SAN DIEGO
Santee
San Diego Metropolitan Area
SAN DIEGO
El Cajon
La Mesa
National City
Coronado
CHULA VISTA
Imperial Beach
MEXICO
Pacific Ocean
Interstate Highways
Other Highways
Passenger Rail Lines
Coastal Zone Boundary
County Boundary
City of Carlsbad
Urban Areas*
*The urban areas data provided by ESRI does not depict city limits. Its purpose is to show the general areas of higher population and should be regarded as an illustrative feature on the map.

Figure 1-2: City Evolution



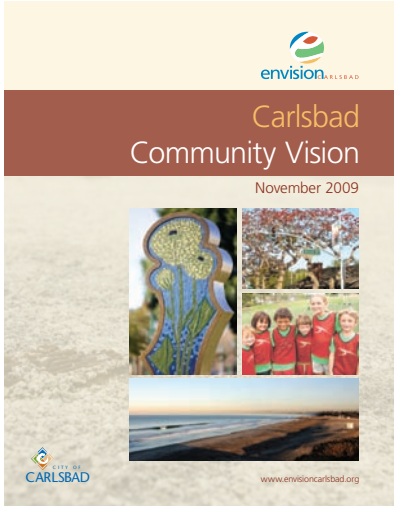
Source: USGS 7.5 Minute Quads, *San Luis Rey, San Marcos, Encinitas, Rancho Santa Fe,* 1968, 1975; City of Carlsbad, 2009; Dyett & Bhatia, 2010.

1.2 Vision for the Future

Envision Carlsbad

For over two decades, Carlsbad has been developing and changing based on the premise of available land to accommodate a growing population. Carlsbad's basic guiding documents, such as the previous General Plan (1994), were created on that premise. Today (2013), however, with the city approaching build-out, development will mostly occur through infill and redevelopment, which will shape the community in new and perhaps unexpected ways. In recent years, challenges have also emerged related to the protection and enhancement of the city's attractive setting, natural resources, and the quality of life that residents cherish.

Carlsbad faced these challenges head-on and initiated Envision Carlsbad in 2008 to engage the entire community in a process of envisioning (Phase 1) and planning for the future (Phase 2 – General Plan update). The Envision Carlsbad process helped define a set of widely shared community values, but also exposed areas of tension and competing ideas, which were reconciled through the planning process with careful balancing of perspectives. Community participation in Envision Carlsbad included:



Envision Carlsbad Citizens' Committee. The Envision Carlsbad Citizens' Committee (EC^3) was created to promote balanced consideration of the broad range of perspectives that would be heard through the Envision Carlsbad process. The EC^3 met 18 times over a three-year period, helping to mold the community input into a vision, reviewing and brainstorming issues and ideas, and recommending a preferred land use plan (Preferred Plan) to the Planning Commission.

Community-Wide Surveys. At the outset of the process, a 15-minute survey was mailed to every household within the city (41,643 households), giving them the option of returning the enclosed survey (postage paid) or completing it online. A Spanish version of the survey was also made available. In total, 7,167 completed responses were received, for an exceptionally high response rate of 17.2 percent. All survey responses were coded into a database and analyzed, and results normalized for Carlsbad's population.

A second focused survey was conducted during the land use alternatives phase of the General Plan update, made available during workshops and on line. Approximately 350 completed responses were received.

Community Workshops. Community-wide workshops were held at two stages in the process—during visioning and for land use alternatives. Four workshops were held during the visioning stage, with participants numbering 370. During the land use alternatives stage two evening workshops were held, which were attended by 395 people.

Stakeholder Meetings. Meetings were held with over 80 organizations focusing on topics most germane to the mission of the organization represented. Organizations included local businesses in fields such as biotechnology, automobile sales, real estate, retail, entertainment, hospitality, and manufacturing. Other organizations interviewed represented interests such as environmental and lagoon preservation, youth clubs, arts and culture, libraries, medical centers, bicycling, sports leagues, specific neighborhoods, affordable housing, homelessness, people with disabilities, local schools, parent-teacher associations, and religious communities.

Envision Carlsbad Website. Information on the process and progress of Envision Carlsbad activities was provided for easy reference on the city's website. Community members were able to access the website and take a community survey on the land use alternatives.

Carlsbad Community Vision

A vision is sometimes described as an ideal picture of the future. However, it is much more than this – it is a community's aspiration, and its inspiration. It is a description of what Carlsbad would like to achieve or accomplish, and serves as the framework for detailed policies. The vision answers the question, "Where do we want to go?"

A vision is not just an answer, it is also a process. An extensive collaborative process in which 8,000 residents directly participated and contributed ideas, and dreams and hopes for the future has shaped the Carlsbad Community Vision, incorporated here as the vision for the General Plan. By undertaking the process of creating a vision for Carlsbad as part of preparing the General Plan, community members also enhanced their own perception of future challenges, opportunities, and possibilities.

The Carlsbad Community Vision reflects the community's aspirations for Carlsbad's future; it is a clear and motivational synthesis of the ideas expressed by community members during the first phase of Envision Carlsbad. The Carlsbad Community Vision is based upon nine core values that were commonly expressed by the community. These values represent the qualities and characteristics of Carlsbad that community members aspire to protect, maintain, improve, change, or achieve in the future.

In many respects, the Carlsbad Community Vision reflects the values of the community that are under threat—that is, there is some sense that the particular value must be protected, or needs to be adjusted to meet the desires of the community. As a result, some aspects of Carlsbad that are valued by the community today may not be perceived to require protection or adjustment, and therefore, may not be fully expressed in the Carlsbad Community Vision.

In some instances, the Carlsbad Community Vision reconciles competing desires. For example, "open space and the natural environment" is a core value of the vision, and some community members desire open space areas to remain undisturbed in their natural state, while others desire open space areas to be more accessible for recreational opportunities such as hiking, biking, or nature study. The Carlsbad Community Vision seeks to find the common ground between competing values, which are further articulated in the General Plan goals, and carried out through the General Plan's policies and regulatory documents such as the Local Coastal Program, the Zoning Ordinance, as well as other policies and practices that guide the city's operations.

Timeframe

The Carlsbad Community Vision portrays broad themes and aspirations for Carlsbad's future. While some of these may be realized in the short- or medium-term (five or 20 years), others are ideals toward which the community will continually strive.

The Carlsbad Community Vision represents community consensus on what Carlsbad hopes to achieve in the future. It is described using the word "will" to represent the community's commitment to the vision and their intent to achieve it. The Carlsbad Community Vision is dynamic, far-reaching, and incorporates careful balancing of environmental, social, and economic considerations.

"We need to inspire people to believe they can help co-create a better future."

WORKSHOP PARTICIPANT
ENVISION CARLSBAD

Core Values

Eight thousand Carlsbad community members participated in the city-sponsored Envision Carlsbad program to create a community vision for Carlsbad's future. The core values and vision statements emerging from this process were endorsed by the City Council and serve as a guide for city leaders as they carry out their service to all who live, work and play in the City of Carlsbad, and for city departments as they implement this vision. The following pages include the core values followed by vision statements.

PT C: CORE FOCUS
Concept C: Core Focus
Common Themes
Fun things to do
Open Space
High Quality of Life
Open Space
Safe Community
Visual Beauty
Family Oriented
Thriving Arts & Culture
New Energy Sources
Sustainability
CONCEPT A: CENTERS

Core Value

Small Town Feel, Beach Community Character, and Connectedness

Vision Statement

Enhance Carlsbad's defining attributes–its small town feel and beach community character. Build on the city's culture of civic engagement, volunteerism, and philanthropy.

Character and Quality of Life

Carlsbad's small town feel and beach community character are defining attributes of the city. The combination of the city's sophisticated cultural ambience and "beach community feel" create a traditional, small-town identity without feeling old-fashioned. With nature's added benefits of sunshine, scenery, coastline, and weather—"the best climate in the world"—Carlsbad's overall image is both a testament and a contributor to the City's success. The community is united in desiring that Carlsbad remains beautiful, well-kept, clean, quiet, safe, and well-planned. Carlsbad will work to maintain both community character and quality of life by "embracing the past with a vision for the future."

Social Connectedness

Carlsbad is full of caring, friendly people with a sense of volunteerism and pride. The social atmosphere in the city is family-oriented, progressive, multi-generational, and stable. Residents share a community spirit and culture of giving and philanthropy, making relationships one of the most valuable aspects about the Carlsbad community. Community members value the cultural acceptance and diversity in the city, and the way old and new lifestyles come together. In the future, cultural and generational diversity and social connections will be enhanced through opportunities for volunteerism and civic engagement; more public gathering places, family-friendly activities, and open spaces within walking distance of people's homes and workplaces; and more events that connect residents to one another and keep them active in the community.

Managed Growth

The City has been successful in managing growth through good land use decisions and planning. Opinions on how best to manage growth in the future are plentiful—with "less" growth and "balanced" growth representing two popular positions. Regardless of the ultimate growth strategy, Carlsbad will strive to maintain the city's desirable characteristics while enabling infill development and redevelopment where appropriate. The suitability of higher densities is another topic on which the community has diverse viewpoints. In the future, any higher density development will be located carefully, in places with ready access to transit, infrastructure, and services, and in harmony with existing development patterns.

"Maintain the community feel... opportunities for multiple generations to live here and understand one another's needs."

Core Value

Open Space and the Natural Environment

Vision Statement

Prioritize protection and enhancement of open space and the natural environment. Support and protect Carlsbad's unique open space and agricultural heritage.

The Carlsbad community values its open space for visual beauty, ecological functions (for example, clean air and water, habitats, and wildlife movement corridors), and for some, as a way to control growth.

Protecting natural habitats in and around Carlsbad is a high priority for residents. The community is proud of the exceptional amount of open space in the city, and envisions a future of continued City commitment to open space protection and strategic acquisitions to further the city's open space system.

The Ocean, Beaches, Lagoons, and Habitat

The ocean, beaches, lagoons, other waterways, and natural habitat are critical natural resources and vital components of the city's setting. They provide habitat for wildlife, recreation opportunities, and aesthetic value, and are also engines of the tourism side of the economy. Community members look forward to continued enjoyment of clean, healthy, and accessible lagoons, beaches, and natural habitat areas due to ongoing conservation, restoration, and active maintenance efforts.

Open Space Heritage and Partnerships

The open space network can help the city celebrate its history, including its agricultural and horticultural heritage. Examples of Carlsbad's open space resources that connect the city to its past include the lagoons, the Strawberry Fields, and the Flower Fields. In the future, Carlsbad will continue to support efforts that promote the economic viability of the Strawberry Fields and the Flower Fields. Protection and enhancement of the city's open space resources and heritage will be achieved through partnerships with regional and State agencies, advocacy and preservation organizations, and the active volunteer base of the community. Partnerships with the lagoon nature centers and foundations to provide educational programs will ensure that current and future generations have an awareness of the history and natural environments of Carlsbad's three lagoons.

"Connecting with nature is important. The trails provide a link to nature. It is about quieting down enough to hear the sounds of nature."

"We need to preserve archaeological, biological, geologic, and open space resources."

Core Value

Access to Recreation and Active, Healthy Lifestyles

Vision Statement

Promote active lifestyles and community health by furthering access to trails, parks, beaches, and other recreation opportunities.

Carlsbad is an active community with valuable recreation resources, such as the beach, numerous parks and sports fields, and proximate hillsides.

Recreation programs and outdoor special events, such as world-class golf and tennis tournaments, and marathons, are popular and widely supported. Outdoor recreation and active lifestyles will continue to be a priority for Carlsbad in the future, and therefore it will be a priority to maintain and improve these resources.

Parks, Fields, and Facilities for All Ages

The network of parks and recreation facilities will be improved to meet the community's active lifestyle needs. Such improvements may include the strategic addition of more parks, sports fields and courts, swimming pools, a teen center, dog parks, children's play areas, and increased availability of school parks through expanded joint-use programs between the City and local school districts. New facilities will be located to maximize use and access by all neighborhoods, tailored to the needs of local populations, and designed with all ages in mind.

Well-Connected Trails for Every Use

Carlsbad will have active open space areas for hiking, biking, dog-walking, exploring, education, and even ecotourism. New and enhanced walking and biking paths, designed in collaboration with the community, will provide convenient connections to destinations. A spectrum of clearly designated trails will meet the unique needs of walkers and cyclists. This enhanced, fully connected trail system will not only provide more opportunities for active living, but also create new, non-vehicular connections between neighborhoods, open spaces, lagoons, and the beach, and potentially even commercial areas. In this way, people of all ages will be able to get around town safely, comfortably, and conveniently.

Beach Uses and Improvements

The beach is an important outdoor recreational resource, and protecting and enhancing access to the beach and the quality of the beach experience is a top community priority. In the future, the beach will be maintained as a safe, accessible, and attractive recreational resource through partnerships with regional and State agencies, and other organizations. Access to the beach and the quality of the beach experience will be improved through new compatible and supportive uses on or in close proximity to the beach, which may include food vendors, ocean view restaurants, a dog beach area, a park or outdoor venue for community events, enhanced trail networks, preserved parking areas, and increased services.

A visible trails system to link the three lagoons to the coaster stations, El Salto Falls to the ocean... to connect our environmental resource areas to public transportation.

Core Value

The Local Economy, Business Diversity, and Tourism

Vision Statement

Strengthen the city's strong and diverse economy and its position as an employment hub in North San Diego County. Promote business diversity, increased specialty retail and dining opportunities, and Carlsbad's tourism.

Current economic conditions are challenging for many, but by striving for a strong, balanced, and diverse local economy, the City will be able to support the facilities and amenities the community desires.

Business and Jobs

Carlsbad is home to internationally recognized companies that are industry leaders in sectors as diverse as golfing and bio- and advanced technology. These companies have a highly-educated workforce whose corporate travel needs are supported by Carlsbad's McClellan-Palomar Airport. Successful partnerships with businesses will increase opportunities for local, high quality, and well-paying jobs; support the cutting-edge sectors in the city; and attract emerging technologies such as green industries. Family-owned ("mom and pop") stores will be supported and obstacles removed to ensure their continued economic success. Carlsbad will work to maintain a positive business environment and remain an attractive location for new business, expansion, retention, and improvement.

Shopping and Dining

Carlsbad residents will be able to shop locally for most of their day-to-day needs at high quality shopping areas such as The Forum at Carlsbad, Carlsbad Premium Outlets, and an enhanced Westfield/Plaza Camino Real mall, and at an increasing number of small, independent, and specialty retail stores and services, particularly in the Village. The array of dining opportunities in the city will be expanded, and residents will have access to new upscale grocery stores and more restaurant choices.

Tailored Tourism Strategy

Tourism is an important component of the city's economy today, and it remains an attractive economic sector for the future since it emphasizes the very resources that make the city attractive to existing residents—the ocean and beach; lagoons; shopping and dining; and arts, sports, and cultural events. In particular, Carlsbad will take advantage of synergistic opportunities to meet the needs of tourists and residents through the protection and enhancement of Carlsbad's natural environments such as the beaches and lagoons, the provision of world class shopping and a wide variety of arts and cultural events, the hosting of more national-scale events, and the improvement of travel options through enhanced walking, bicycling, and public transportation systems. Opportunities for promoting ecotourism will be explored for their potential to help preserve the natural resources that the community values. Looking ahead, Carlsbad will enjoy a balance of businesses that provide tourism services and establishments that serve the needs of residents.

"More diversity of businesses will create a variety of income sources for the city."

Core Value

Walking, Biking, Public Transportation, and Connectivity

Vision Statement

Increase travel options through enhanced walking, bicycling, and public transportation systems. Enhance mobility through increased connectivity and intelligent transportation management.

Personal automobiles are the most common means of transportation in Carlsbad today. This is in part because the development pattern is dominated by suburban residential neighborhoods, single use districts, and a discontinuous street system. Along with rolling topography, these present major challenges for walking and bicycling. Traffic on main roads—which in many cases are the only connections between destinations—moves quickly, making bicyclists and pedestrians feel unsafe.

Community members see these challenges as opportunities to provide safer and more convenient mobility through a variety of modes. Carlsbad's future transportation network will be a balanced blend of safe and connected walking and biking facilities; convenient, comfortable, and efficient public transit; and intelligent traffic management systems that move cars safely to their destinations.

Pedestrian and Bicyclist Needs

While the automobile will remain a dominant mode of transportation, better pedestrian and bike connectivity will help reduce auto-dependency and increase accessibility and healthy activity levels. Carlsbad will have an enhanced and fully connected system of sidewalks, paths, bike lanes, and trails. Easy and convenient pedestrian connections will be available from every neighborhood to help children get safely to schools and parks. New pedestrian and bicycle connections across the railroad tracks and I-5 will connect neighborhoods to the beach and ocean. Sidewalks will be more appealing and accessible to residents of all ages and physical abilities. Businesses will facilitate biking for routine activities such as going to work, school, shopping, or going to a restaurant to eat, by providing bike parking and supportive amenities such as changing rooms, showers, and lockers.

Transit as a Real Alternative

In the future, public transportation will connect the beaches, lagoons, parks, libraries, shopping areas, the Village, major employment areas, medical facilities, the airport, and the train stations to increase accessibility and decrease traffic congestion and parking problems. Public transportation will be frequent, reliable, quiet, and comfortable, and will be powered by renewable energy sources. With participatory community design of the routes, stops will be sensible and convenient to (almost) everyone.

"We should have a much more walkable, bikable city."

Sustainability Core Value

Vision Statement

Build on the City's sustainability initiatives to emerge as a leader in green development and sustainability. Pursue public/private partnerships, particularly on sustainable water, energy, recycling, and foods.

The City will continue ongoing public dialogue to gather sustainability ideas, and foster public/private partnerships on sustainability initiatives, in particular on the issues of sustainable water, energy, and foods.

Water Conservation, Recycling, and Desalination

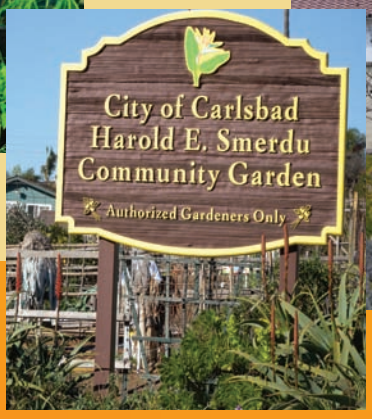
Carlsbad is a national pioneer in water desalination, and will strive for continued water sustainability by instituting cutting-edge practices in water conservation and recycling. Recycling efforts will build on the city's existing "purple pipes" (the reclaimed water system) and will look ahead to future opportunities to improve and expand water recycling and conservation. Through these efforts, the City will be a leader in conservation coordination at the local level, and by participating at the regional watershed level as well.

Energy Security and Independence

Carlsbad could be the Silicon Valley of energy, and become an incubator for alternative energy research. Carlsbad, will strive to be energy self-sufficient. Renewable energy options will be widely available to residents, through education about technologies such as solar roofs and wind turbines, and through sensible financial incentives and convenient technical assistance.

Food Sustainability and Waste Reduction

The community's agricultural heritage will be celebrated through educational programs and seasonal festivals that bring income to area farmers. The community will organize and initiate farmers' markets in major accessible locations, and local leaders will help to partner restaurants and growers to increase availability of local produce on menus around town. The waste stream will be reduced with the help of a citywide effort to promote recycling and composting. A new, efficient system for collection and redistribution of local compost back to area farms will form a sustainable life cycle for organic material in the community.



"Long range planning for sustainability means more than just environmental. We have to look at social and economic conditions as well, and work together toward solutions."

Core Value

History, the Arts, and Cultural Resources

Vision Statement

Emphasize the arts by promoting a multitude of events and productions year-round, cutting-edge venues to host world-class performances, and celebrate Carlsbad's cultural heritage in dedicated facilities and programs.

Community Events and Activities

Events such as ArtSplash, Jazz in the Parks, and Fiesta del Barrio provide outlets for the arts and cultural community. In the future, there will be an even greater variety of arts and cultural activities and events throughout the year and across the city. Event announcements will be visible and easy to find, and there may even be multiple activities to choose from on any given weekend. The city's flourishing art and cultural scene will attract visitors from afar. Some activities will bring the arts and culture straight to schools, neighborhoods, and families with children, thereby ensuring the next generation cares as much about arts and culture as this one.

Libraries, Venues, and Art Space

While Carlsbad residents are proud of their libraries and other arts and cultural venues, they look forward to new arts and cultural facilities, too. In the future, venues and space for arts and cultural activities will be enhanced to draw local and regional crowds, and to facilitate local art production. Such enhancements may include a new multi-purpose venue capable of hosting large indoor and outdoor performances, and the provision of small, affordable spaces for local artists to produce and display their art. Warehouses and other older buildings will be studied for redevelopment and reuse as art studios or live-work spaces, mingling cultural production and appreciation with commercial office use.

Cultural Facilities and Partnerships

Protecting and celebrating Carlsbad's rich history and cultural heritage is of high importance to the community. Examples of Carlsbad's historic and cultural resources include Rancho Carrillo, the Marron Adobe, the Barrio neighborhood, Magee House, the Village, and Carlsbad's Native American history. In the future, Carlsbad will continue to recognize and celebrate its history and cultural heritage by supporting facilities, programs, and activities that provide education and information about Carlsbad's heritage. Examples of such facilities, programs, and activities may include events and festivals to celebrate the city's heritage, partnerships with local schools to educate students about the city's history and culture, an enhanced Barrio Museum to curate and share the cultural history of the Barrio neighborhood, and a new Native American Cultural Center to provide information and activities related to local tribal heritage. Carlsbad will work with local tribes to partner in new ways to promote and display information about local Native American tribal history.

"Educate people in the community in an artistic way about the Native American culture in Carlsbad– connecting the culture to the place... mixing history with art."

Core Value

High-Quality Education and Community Services

Vision Statement

Support quality, comprehensive education and life-long learning opportunities, provide housing and community services for a changing population, and maintain a high standard for citywide public safety.

Schools and Education

Carlsbad has an excellent public and private school system, including such institutions as the Army and Navy Academy, Pacific Ridge School, and the Gemological Institute of America. Maintaining the high quality of education is a priority for residents. In the future, all schools that serve Carlsbad (public and private) will boast exemplary facilities and educational achievements. Carlsbad will enjoy the fruits of new partnerships that expand educational opportunities for all ages, including: the development of an institute of higher learning at the college or university level; partnerships between businesses and schools to encourage learning projects and specialized courses in up-and-coming trades (green business and design, for example); and more adult learning opportunities, particularly for the retired, parents, and those who speak English as a second language. Carlsbad will be known as a community that values lifelong learning and education for all.

Changing Demographics

The City and other local and regional organizations have done a commendable job providing critical services and opportunities to Carlsbad residents over the years. Community members look forward to planning to accommodate the needs of an increasingly aging and diverse population.

In the future, Carlsbad will be a multi-generational community, with supportive services that accommodate the needs of the elderly as well as families with young children. Carlsbad will uphold universal design standards that foster accessibility, and will be a leader in innovative financing and design approaches to enhance availability of high-quality housing for all income levels. The housing supply will match the diverse population and workforce needs, essential to a sustainable economic future.

Public Safety

Carlsbad's safe neighborhoods and streets are highly valued by community members. In the future, Carlsbad will continue to enjoy a low crime-rate and safe neighborhoods and streets. Support of safety programs, such as neighborhood policing and the provision of adequate lighting along sidewalks and alleys, will help to ensure the community's continued safety. The City will work closely with businesses, especially those in the Village, to promote evening activities and an atmosphere of safety, even after dark. Plaza Camino Real and the beach will benefit from enhanced crime prevention efforts.

"Encourage local businesses to partner with the district for student apprenticeships and partnerships."

Core Value

Neighborhood Revitalization, Community Design, and Livability

Vision Statement

Revitalize neighborhoods and enhance citywide community design and livability. Promote a greater mix of uses citywide, more activities along the coastline, and link density to public transportation. Revitalize the Village as a community focal point and a unique and memorable center for visitors, and rejuvenate the historic Barrio neighborhood.

Community Design and Livability

Community members envision a future in which there is a greater mix of uses, density is linked to public transportation, services are available closer to existing neighborhoods, and more activities and facilities are located along the coastline. This mix of activities in closer proximity to one another, rather than isolated single uses, will reduce distances to destinations. Recreation facilities will be developed closer to or within existing neighborhoods, and new neighborhood-scale services will be provided in convenient and sensible locations compatible with the surrounding residential uses.

To achieve this, future development will be guided by principles of smart growth planning that include providing housing and activities near public transportation and services, as well as considering appropriate opportunities for vertical mixed-use development (such as housing or offices above retail). These community design approaches will accommodate more people while protecting open space, community character, and quality of life, and recognizing that change may be limited in established neighborhoods.

Village (Downtown) Revitalization

Revitalizing the Village is integral to promoting the city's identity. Community members appreciate the Village's charm, its quaintness, and its connection to the past; however, revitalizing the Village will help to achieve its potential to serve as a community focal point and major tourist draw. Downtown has good "bones"—a walkable grid street system, proximity to the ocean, presence of historical buildings, and access from the freeway and rail transit. Carlsbad will capitalize on the Village's potential as a place for people to live, work, and play, helping it emerge as a unique and memorable center in San Diego

"The downtown bones are good and it has good mixes. There is opportunity for people to live, work, and play there."

County. The Village will provide opportunities for aging Carlsbad residents to move from remote neighborhoods to a district with walking access to services and amenities, and serve as an attractive location for younger residents too. New stores and restaurants that cater to residents and stay open late, cultural and arts activities that draw people from afar, and an increased village resident population base will infuse the Village with vitality that will also draw new businesses. The Village will accommodate new activities and buildings while still maintaining its small-town feel and charm.

Rejuvenation of the Barrio Neighborhood

Much like the Village, community members envision the Barrio as a historic neighborhood rejuvenated by care, attention, and investment. The Barrio will be safe, traffic will move more slowly, and streets and sidewalks will be better lit. In the future, there will be safe pedestrian beach access from the Barrio, and the City will help to celebrate the history and culture of the Barrio through ongoing support of cultural celebrations, neighborhood beautification efforts, and heritage education institutions such as the Barrio Museum. Organizations and community members will contribute ideas to rejuvenate and celebrate the history and culture of the neighborhood.

"We need to allow for innovation in the design process. People are living in different ways."

1.3 General Plan Scope and Purpose

General Plan Purpose

The General Plan governs all city actions relating to Carlsbad's physical development. The General Plan is mandated by and derives its authority from California Government Code Section 65300, which requires each city and county in California to adopt a General Plan, "for the physical development of the county or city, and any land outside its boundaries which…bears relation to its planning." The Carlsbad General Plan is a document adopted by the City Council that serves several purposes:

- To outline a vision for Carlsbad's long-term physical and economic development and community enhancement;
- To provide strategies and specific implementing actions that will allow this vision to be accomplished;
- To establish a basis for judging whether specific development proposals and public projects are in harmony with General Plan policies and standards (such as for density, parks, and mobility);
- To allow city departments, other public agencies, and private developers to design projects that will enhance the character of the community, preserve and enhance important environmental resources, and minimize hazards; and
- To provide the basis for establishing priorities for implementing plans and programs, such as the Zoning Ordinance, the Capital Improvements Program, facilities plans, and specific and area plans.

State law requires that a variety of city actions be consistent with the General Plan; thus, regular ongoing use of the plan is essential. The plan is both general and long-range and there will be circumstances and instances when detailed studies are necessary before General Plan policies can be implemented.

General Plan Requirements

A city's general plan has been described as its constitution for development—the framework within which decisions must be made on how to grow, provide public services and facilities, and protect and enhance the environment. California's tradition of allowing local control over land use decisions means that the state's cities have considerable flexibility in preparing their general plans.

While they allow considerable flexibility, state planning laws do establish basic requirements about the issues that general plans must address. The California Government Code establishes both the content of general plans and rules for their adoption and subsequent amendment. Together, state law and judicial decisions establish three overall guidelines for general plans; they should be:

- **Comprehensive.** This requirement has two aspects. First, the general plan must be geographically comprehensive. That is, it must apply throughout the entire incorporated area and it should include other areas that the city determines are relevant to its planning. Second, the general plan must address the full range of issues that affect the city's physical development.
- **Internally Consistent.** This requirement means that the general plan must fully integrate its separate parts and relate them to each other without conflict. "Horizontal" consistency applies as much to figures and diagrams as to the general plan text. It also applies to data and analysis as well as policies. All adopted portions of the general plan, whether required by State law or not, have equal legal weight. None may supersede another, so the general plan must resolve conflicts among the provisions of each element.
- **Long-Range.** Because anticipated development will affect the city and the people who live or work there for years to come, state law requires every general plan to take a long-term perspective.

1.4 General Plan Horizon and Buildout

The time horizon (i.e., long-term perspective) of this General Plan is year 2035. The goals and policies within each General Plan element are intended to guide development and city actions over the course of the next 22 years. Some General Plan elements directly guide the physical development of the city (e.g., the Land Use and Community Design Element and Open Space, Conservation and Recreation Element); these elements estimate the amount of various land uses (e.g., residential, commercial, open space) that will develop during the horizon of this General Plan. For purposes of future planning, it is assumed that all uses planned on the General Plan Land Use Map (found in the Land Use and Community Design Element) will develop and the city will reach "buildout" during the horizon of this General Plan. However, actual buildout of all planned land uses may occur at a later year.

1.5 General Plan Key Strategies

The General Plan is shaped by strategies to achieve the core values of the Carlsbad Community Vision. The key strategies include:

- **Active Waterfront.** New development will be located along the ocean waterfront, together with a new public promenade and open spaces, enabling residents and visitors to recreate along the ocean, and enjoy dining, shopping, and recreating along the waterfront.
- **Accessible Walkable Centers.** The General Plan seeks development of pedestrian-oriented shopping centers that are located to maximize accessibility from residential neighborhoods Where appropriate, these centers would also include high and medium density housing surrounding the retail uses or integrated in mixed-use buildings.
- **Revitalized Older Neighborhoods.** The General Plan seeks revitalization of older neighborhoods. In the Village, new stores and restaurants that cater to residents and stay open later, cultural and arts activities that draw people from afar, and an increased population base will infuse the Village with vitality that will also draw new businesses and visitors. Care, attention, investment, and new housing and businesses will rejuvenate the Barrio. The Barrio's heritage and culture will be celebrated, and improved streetscapes, traffic calming, and safe pedestrian beach access from Chestnut Avenue will enhance the public realm and neighborhood livability.
- **Appropriate-Scaled Development.** New development will be scaled and designed to provide appropriate transitions to adjacent neighborhoods.
- **Reinforced Industrial/Research and Development Core.** The Palomar Airport Road corridor has emerged as one of the principal regional employment centers and is home to several globally-leading establishments; the corridor has been shaped by the city's foresight and business-friendly climate, proximity to the airport and regional connections, and availability of a highly skilled workforce. The General Plan reinforces continued growth and development of this core.
- **Housing Close to Jobs.** The General Plan locates new residential development proximate to the principal employment core along the Palomar Airport Road corridor, as well as the Village, the Barrio, other commercial and office areas, and the two Coaster stations for easy access to regional jobs and services.
- **Increased Street Connectivity.** A principal feature of the plan is improved street connectivity. A connection is proposed for College Boulevard through Sunny Creek Commercial. Also proposed is the connection of Poinsettia Lane through Aviara.

- **Promotion of Walking and Bicycling (livable streets).** The General Plan outlines improvements to pedestrian and bicycle systems. Opportunities for safe pedestrian crossing of the railroad, in addition to the one at Chestnut Avenue mentioned earlier, will be explored. Pedestrian Priority Zones around key centers and other places—such as schools—are outlined, to foster pedestrian comfort and safety.
- **Continued Commitment to Open Space Development.** The General Plan supports continuation of the open space and park planning efforts by the city. Any future development located in areas adjacent to sensitive biological resources, such as lagoons and hillsides, must comply with the city's Habitat Management Plan and open space regulations to ensure that habitats are preserved and open space is provided.
- **Preservation of Existing Neighborhoods.** More than 90 percent of the city will not see a change to the land uses planned by the General Plan.
- **Consistency with the Growth Management Plan.** The General Plan is consistent with the city's Growth Management Plan.

1.6 General Plan Organization

Elements-Core Value Relationship

The General Plan is organized into elements structured around the core values of the Carlsbad Community Vision, while meeting state law requirements for comprehensiveness. Table 1-1 shows the relationship of each General Plan element to the core values of the Carlsbad Community Vision.

TABLE 1–1: GENERAL PLAN AND CORE VALUE RELATIONSHIP

CALSBAD COMMUNITY VISION CORE VALUE	GENERAL PLAN ELEMENT								
	Land Use and Community Design	Mobility	Open Space, Conservation and Recreation	Noise	Public Safety	Arts, History, Culture, and Education	Economy, Business Diversity, and Tourism	Sustainability	Housing
1. Small Town Feel, Beach Community Character, and Connectedness	●	●						○	●
2. Open Space and the Natural Environment			●					○	
3. Access to Recreation and Active, Healthy Lifestyles	●	●	●					○	○
4. The Local Economy, Business Diversity, and Tourism	○					○	●	○	
5. Walking, Biking, Public Transportation, and Connectivity	○	●						○	○
6. Sustainability	●	●	●	○	○	●	●	●	●
7. History, the Arts, and Cultural Resources			○			●	○		
8. High Quality Education and Community Services		○			●	●	○		○
9. Neighborhood Revitalization, Community Design, and Livability	●	○	○	●				○	●

● Most Closely Related to Core Value ○ Closely Related to Core Value

Organization of the Elements

Each chapter of this General Plan includes brief background information to establish the context for the policies in the chapter. This background material is not a comprehensive statement of existing conditions nor is it considered adopted policy, unless noted otherwise, such as with land use classifications. (Readers interested in a comprehensive understanding of issues related to a particular topic should refer to the working papers described in Section 1.6.) This background information is followed by goals and policies:

- Goals are the city's statements of broad direction, philosophy, or standards to be achieved.
- Policies are specific statements that guide decision-making. They may refer to existing programs or development standards or call for establishment of new ones.

Together, these goals and policies articulate a direction for Carlsbad, in alignment with the Carlsbad Community Vision and state law, that the General Plan seeks to achieve. They also provide protection for the city's resources by establishing planning requirements, programs, standards, and criteria for project review. Policies are sometimes followed by explanatory text in italics; these provide a greater context for the policies, but in themselves do not represent adopted policies of the General Plan.

Numbering System

Goals and policies are organized using a two-part numbering system. The first part refers to the element number and the second is the order in which the goal, policy, or action appears, with a letter to distinguish goals and policies. For example, the first goal in the Land Use and Community Design Element is 2-G.1 and the first policy is 2-P.1.

1.7 Related Documents

Background Documents

As part of the General Plan update process, existing conditions, trends, issues, and opportunities were evaluated in six working papers, structured around the core values identified in the Carlsbad Community Vision. The working papers provide background information and technical analysis that were relied upon for subsequent tasks. They also raised policy issues to help the EC[3] brainstorm how these issues may shape potential alternatives or policies.

The six working papers focus on the following community core values:

1. Sustainability
2. The Local Economy, Business Diversity and Tourism
3. Open Space and the Natural Environment; Access to Recreation and Active, Healthy Lifestyles
4. History, the Arts and Cultural Resources; High Quality Education and Community Services
5. Walking, Biking, Public Transportation and Connectivity
6. Small Town Feel, Beach Community Character and Connectedness; Neighborhood Revitalization, Community Design and Livability

Following these analyses, a Land Use Concepts report was prepared, which presented land use concepts for future development and their transportation, infrastructure, and fiscal implications. The concepts presented a range of strategies—Centers, Active Waterfront, and Core Focus—to guide future development, addressing goals for conservation, economic development, and walkable/livable neighborhoods.

Environmental Impact Report

The General Plan is accompanied by an Environmental Impact Report to inform the community and decision-makers on the environmental implications of the General Plan and a range of potential alternatives. The General Plan is "self-mitigating" in that it includes policies and programs to mitigate adverse impacts of growth.

Local Coastal Program

Carlsbad includes about 14.4 square miles of land within the state-designated Coastal Zone. The California Coastal Act requires every city and county lying partly or wholly within the Coastal Zone to prepare a Local Coastal Program (LCP). The LCP consists of a coastal Land Use Plan (LUP) and an implementation plan (IP). The LUP serves as the land use plan for the Coastal Zone. Coastal Act §30513 requires that an IP be fully consistent with and adequate to carry out

the certified LUP. Carlsbad's LCP is contained in a separate document; the most recent Coastal Commission certified LCP establishes policies and regulations on sites within the Coastal Zone.

Other Plans and Implementing Programs

The city maintains several specific, area, and master plans. These may cover a specific geographic area, such as the Village; a specific topic, such as bikeways or habitat protection; or facilities, such as parks or sewers. As per state law, these documents, as well as implementing programs such as the Capital Improvements Program, are required to be consistent with the General Plan. As a charter city (since 2008), consistency between the General Plan and the Zoning Ordinance is not required; however, this General Plan affirms the city's commitment to maintaining consistency between the two documents.

1.8 Administration of the Plan

The General Plan is intended to be a dynamic document. As such, it may be subject to amendments over time to address site-specific or comprehensive needs, to respond to changes in state or federal law, or to modify policies that may become obsolete or unrealistic over time.

Amendments to the General Plan

While Government Code Section 65358 limits the number of times a general plan element can be amended to four per year, as a charter city Carlsbad is exempt from this limitation. Thus, the City Council may carry out any number of amendments from time to time as it determines to be in the best interest of the community.