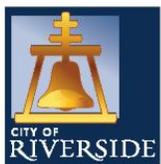


CITY OF RIVERSIDE

GENERAL PLAN

ANNUAL PROGRESS REPORT



CALENDAR YEAR

2023

General Plan
Annual Progress Report

Calendar Year 2023

City of Riverside, California

3900 Main Street, Riverside, CA 92522

Submitted to:
Governor's Office of Planning and Research (OPR) and
California Department of Housing and Community Development (HCD)

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Pursuant to Government Code § 65400

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I. Annual Report Introduction

The City of Riverside has prepared and submits this annual progress report (APR) to the Governor’s Office of Planning and Research (OPR), and the California Department of Housing and Community Development (HCD). This report satisfies Government Code Section 65400(a)(2), and reflects the programs and actions undertaken to implement the City’s “General Plan 2025” (General Plan) between January 1, 2023, and December 31, 2023. The State of California Government Code Section 65400 requires jurisdictions provide an annual review to their legislative body (in this case City Council), the Governor’s Office of Planning and Research (OPR), and California Department of Housing and Community Development (HCD) on the status of the City’s General Plan and progress in implementing the goals, policies and objectives outlined therein. The report highlights completed areas of the General Plan and future priorities and amendments. State law requires that the annual report be completed and submitted to the State by April 1 of each year.

The City of Riverside’s General Plan was adopted in 2007 and has been updated periodically as needed or as required by state law. In October 2021, Phase I of the General Plan Update was completed and included the update to the Housing Element and Public Safety Elements concurrent with the Sixth Cycle Regional Housing Needs Assessment (RHNA). Additionally, Environmental Justice Policies were added throughout the General Plan to ensure compliance with Assembly Bill 686 (Santiago, 2018) and a new Action Plan was approved to facilitate implementation of the newly adopted elements.

The General Plan contains twelve (12) elements, including the seven (7) required by the California Government Code and consistent with the OPR guidelines, and incorporates two (2) neighborhood plans as appendices. Table 1 lists the elements included within the General Plan and identifies the required or optional elements:

Table 1 - Contents of General Plan

General Plan Element	Required or Optional
Land Use and Urban Design	REQUIRED
Circulation and Community Mobility	REQUIRED
Housing	REQUIRED
Public Safety	REQUIRED
Noise	REQUIRED
Open Space and Conservation (2 elements combined)	REQUIRED
Environmental Justice Policies ¹	REQUIRED
Arts and Culture	OPTIONAL
Education	OPTIONAL
Air Quality	OPTIONAL
Public Facilities and Infrastructure	OPTIONAL
Park and Recreation	OPTIONAL
Historic Preservation	OPTIONAL
*University Neighborhood Plan (General Plan Appendix C)	OPTIONAL
*Eastside Neighborhood Plan (General Plan Appendix D)	OPTIONAL

¹Environmental Justice Policies are incorporated throughout each of the other General Plan Elements consistent with the provisions of Government Code §65302(h)(1).

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On September 24, 2022, the City received notification that HCD had certified the revised adopted Sixth Cycle Housing Element Update as fully compliant with the requirements of State Housing Element Law. The City continues to pursue implementation of the Housing Element and associated implementation actions outlined in the adopted Action Plan, including efforts funded by SB 2 and LEAP Planning Grants awarded to the City.

The overall goals of the updated Housing Element include:

1. Removing barriers to housing development in the City;
2. Aligning City priorities with government processes;
3. Reducing administrative/government redundancies; and
4. Identifying implementation programs that enhance key public services.

The City initiated an update to the remainder of the General Plan (Phase 2 General Plan Update and Climate Action & Adaptation Plan) with the issuance of an RFP for a master consultant to lead the Phase 2 Update. The funding for the Phase 2 Update includes Measure Z, a one-cent transaction and use tax adopted in November 2016 to help pay for critical unfunded city programs and services. The Phase II General Plan Update will include:

1. A comprehensive update of the City's General Plan;
2. Revision of the Zoning Code and update of other development-related codes;
3. An evaluation of, and revisions to, the Citywide Design and Sign Guidelines and the Citywide Residential Historic District Design Guidelines;
4. An evaluation of the City's 19 existing Specific Plans, including plans that may be eliminated or revised; and
5. A Program Environmental Impact Report.

The Phase II General Plan Update will also be paired with the development of a CEQA-certified Climate Action & Adaptation Plan. These will comprise separate, but interrelated, parallel comprehensive planning efforts that will result in a once-in-a-generation roadmap for the future of the City and its people. The City anticipates to kick-off the Phase 2 of the comprehensive General Plan Update in Spring of 2024.

II. General Plan Implementation

The General Plan contains an Implementation Plan that includes "tools" that help the City achieve the objectives and policies within several General Plan Elements. This Implementation Plan, which was largely prepared in 2007, or shortly thereafter, includes some programs, projects, and activities that have been completed or are no longer relevant. With the recent adoption of the updated Housing Element, Public Safety Element and Environmental Justice Policies, the existing Implementation Plan was amended to remove any Implementation Tools related to the previous Housing Element and Public Safety Element. A new supplemental, yet separate, Action Plan was approved alongside the Sixth Cycle Housing Element and Public Safety Element adoption. For this Annual Progress Report, both the original Implementation Plan and the recently approved Action Plan have been evaluated for progress during the 2023 reporting period.

Appendix A is comprised of two parts. Part 1 includes the key activities and projects occurring in 2023 that relate to specific tools within the General Plan 2025 Implementation Plan. Part 2 identifies any 2023

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activities that relate to the recently updated Housing and Public Safety Elements and Environmental Justice Policies. Information on the progress of the 6th Cycle Housing Element programs can be found in Appendix B of this report. On-going efforts, or those which rely on standardized processes (i.e., CEQA compliance; building permit review, etc.), are generally not included, unless a noteworthy achievement was accomplished in 2023 or there was a significant change in responsibility. The list of tools provides a snapshot of significant programs or targeted efforts achieved during the reporting period.

Housing Element Reporting and RHNA Requirements

State law requires that the City report on the number of new housing units produced each calendar year and track the progress towards meeting the Regional Housing Needs Allocation (RHNA) assigned to the City for the RHNA Reporting Cycle.

Appendix B includes the completed Department of Housing and Community Development (HCD) forms which provides status updates regarding Housing Element implementation. These forms will be submitted to HCD through the State’s Housing Element Tracking System portal and are only provided in this report as reference.

RHNA Obligation

For the 6th Cycle 2021-2029 RHNA, the City saw a significant increase in the housing obligation of 18,458 total units, broken down by income level per Table 5 below.

Table 2 – 6th Cycle Regional Housing Needs Allocation by Income Levels

Income Level	Income Limit – Percent of Riverside County Median Family Income (\$75,300/year)	Total Number of Units
Very Low Income	Less than 50% (\$37,650/year)	4,861
Low Income	50-80% (\$60,250/year)	3,064
Moderate Income	80-120% (\$90,360/year)	3,139
Above-Moderate Income	More than 120% (over \$90,360/year)	7,394
Total 6th Cycle RHNA Obligation		18,458

The City’s 6th Cycle Housing Element includes a sites inventory that identifies sites that can accommodate greater density to ensure compliance with the RHNA requirement. To ensure the City can accommodate the minimum of 18,458 units, staff identified a buffer to ensure the City meets the “No Net Loss” requirement so that at all times the City can meet the RHNA obligations. This buffer ensures that if sites are not developed at the anticipated density, are developed with uses other than housing, or otherwise become unavailable during the eight-year cycle, there are enough appropriately zoned sites in reserve to ensure the RHNA obligations are continuously met.

RHNA Progress 2023

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RHNA progress is tracked and monitored annually by collecting data on the number of permitted units during the reporting period. Appendix B of this report details the progress made towards meeting the 6th cycle RHNA by income level. From the Start of the 6th Cycle in October 2021 to the end of 2023, The City permitted 2,152 units. Of these units, 1,094 were permitted during the 2023 calendar year. This includes 209 single family units, 615 multifamily units, and 270 accessory dwelling units. Table 3 shows the progress so far made towards the City’s RHNA obligation by number of units issued permits.

Table 3 – RHNA Progress

Income Level	6th Cycle RHNA Progress – Number of Units Issued Building Permits by Year				
	RHNA Allocation	2021	2022	2023	Remaining 6 th Cycle Obligation
Very Low	4,861	25	0	0	4,836
Low	3,064	25	226	33	2,780
Moderate	3,139	83	176	0	2,880
Above Moderate	7,394	340	183	1,061	5,810
<i>Total</i>	18,458	473	585	1,094	16,306

III. Streamlining Housing Production

Since the adoption of the City’s 5th Cycle Housing Element Update rezoning program in 2017, all multi-family residential is permitted by right in corresponding higher density residential zones, which reduces development costs, uncertainty, and time. Additional revisions that were adopted at the time included adjustments to parking standards, open space requirements, setbacks, and other criteria that impacted the ability to maximize densities specified by the Zoning Code.

Building upon the previous streamlining efforts, the 6th Cycle Housing Element also included a wide variety of policy and regulatory changes aimed at reducing barriers to housing and encouraging the development of high-density residential projects as facilitated by adopted Zoning and the General Plan Land Use. The General Plan Land Use map was updated and amended to accommodate future housing development of the opportunity sites. Seven specific plans were amended to accommodate new high density residential and mixed-use developments where previously prohibited or limited. Additionally, a number of Zoning Code Text Amendments were adopted to reduce barriers to residential development including modifications to residential standards to include objective design standards, amendments to the Permitted Uses Table to permit Low Barrier Navigation Centers in mixed-use zones, addition of a new mixed-use Innovation District for an aging industrial area, updates to the Density Bonus Ordinance, reductions in parking requirements for affordable housing, and a more flexible review process for mixed-use projects.

In 2019, the City submitted and was awarded a \$625,000 planning grant under the SB 2 Planning Grant Program (PGP). The SB 2 PGP was specifically created to assist cities with planning projects that streamline the production of housing. The City’s original grant application outlined nine (9) streamline projects that would be partially funded by the SB 2 PGP. In late 2020, the City requested a number of changes to the

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approved projects, including the elimination of two projects and the addition of 4 new projects. These changes were accepted by HCD. The currently approved projects and their progress are described as follows:

1. Streamline Accessory Dwelling Units (ADU) - The City continues to update and streamline existing ADU regulations, review fees and create pamphlets and education materials to help residents understand the differences in unit types. In 2023, the City and consultant team worked to create ADU standard plans to facilitate ADU construction and reduce permitting costs. A public hearing for these ADU Streamlining efforts is anticipated in mid-2024.
2. CEQA for Streamlined GP/Zoning Consistency - This proposal amends the General Plan and Zoning to create an avenue for determining project consistency with both the General Plan and Zoning Code, although the General Plan land use designation and Zoning are not consistent on their face. (This project was completed on August 20, 2019 by General Plan Amendment P19-0054, as required by SB 1333).
3. Streamline Density Bonus Regulations – This project evaluates new density bonus legislation to create clear and concise regulations and streamlining opportunities, eliminate inconsistencies with State law, and expedite processes to grant by-right density bonuses to affordable housing, senior housing, and qualified student housing projects. In 2023 California’s Density Bonus Law was amended to clarify the definition of “maximum allowable residential density” and include the ability for additional density bonus, amongst other changes. The City continues to monitor and implement State Density Bonus law and includes necessary changes with regular Zoning Code Omnibus Amendments throughout the year.
4. Update the Zoning Code (Title 19) to streamline housing development– These changes were completed through a series of Zoning Code Amendments adopted in 2022 and 2023. Specific changes included:
 - Adjustment of parking standards and potentially introducing maximum parking requirements for housing projects in certain locations;
 - Development of objective design standards for “by right” housing for sites identified in the Housing Element update; and
 - Common and private open space requirements to help increase housing densities.
5. Promote Housing on Small and Infill Lots – In 2023, the City worked with the Consultant team to bring several infill development strategies to the City Council Committee for Land Use, Sustainability, and Resilience for their consideration. The Committee directed staff to bring forth an infill development ordinance for undersized lots, a small lot subdivision ordinance, and explore the potential for a Density Transfer Program. The City is in process of conducting outreach and education on Infill Development and Small Lot Subdivisions in preparation of an ordinance to streamline development on underutilized lots, and anticipates these ordinances to go before the City Council in the summer of 2024.
6. Update Housing Element – In October 2021 the City adopted Phase I of the General Plan update including the Housing Element. The Housing Element includes a housing inventory, implementation plan, and associated environmental documents to meet RHNA requirements.
7. Dashboard to Track Housing Sites – The City will update its Building Permit software system with a geographic information systems (GIS) module and integrate an automated tracking of housing projects. The tracking program will include a publicly viewable dashboard to allow the City to evaluate progress made toward housing initiatives (e.g., ADU regulations, Small Lot Ordinance).

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The accurate tracking of development will allow the City to initiate multi-family rezoning, pursuant to SB 166, in a thoughtful and deliberate manner, months in advance of any mandated SB 166 rezoning. Development of software upgrades is underway and testing is anticipated to begin in spring of 2024.

8. VMT Mitigation Analysis and Fee Program – The City is participating as one of the key stakeholders for the Western Riverside Council of Governments (WRCOG)’s development of a regional Vehicle Miles Traveled (VMT) Mitigation Program. The City, along with other participating local agencies, will use the WRCOG program to establish VMT impact thresholds and mitigation measures for development proposals. The City is simultaneously developing its own VMT Mitigation Analysis and establishing a Mitigation Fee Program. The city’s VMT mitigation program will correlate a project’s VMT impacts with the City’s Active Transportation Program (ATP) and coordinate with RTA to improve bus services. The City expects the VMT Mitigation Program to minimize fees where projects are served by High Quality Transit Areas (HQTA) and to streamline development projects with VMT impacts.
9. Prepare Prescriptive Sound Transmission Control Standards – as part of our Noise, Zoning and Building Codes, to follow in lieu of requiring noise studies to facilitate our GP and streamline the development process. This has been completed by the Building & Safety Division and saves both time and money for housing applicants.
10. Develop a public plan to address the homeless shelter crisis to include development of homeless shelters and permanent supportive housing, provide onsite supportive services, and a way forward to transition residents from homeless to permanent housing as required by Assembly Bill 2553. This plan was completed in 2021.

IV. Grant Activity

In 2023 the City was awarded a total of \$212,116,067 in funding for various projects and initiatives across all City Departments.

	CY 2023 Grant Activity
Competitive Funded Applications	\$172,353,014
Competitive Earmarks	\$29,500,000
Entitlements	\$10,263,053
TOTALS:	\$212,116,067

On March 30, 2023, the California Department of Housing and Community Development designated the City of Riverside a Prohousing Jurisdiction. With this designation the City became eligible for \$2,500,000 in funds to be used towards the development of 150 affordable housing units, 59 affordable senior housing units, and 23 permanent supportive housing units.

V. Major Planning Initiatives

Infill Housing: In September 2019 the City of Riverside applied for and received a package of Senate Bill (SB) 2 Planning Grant Program (PGP) funds from the California Department of Housing and Community Development (HCD) to facilitate projects that will assist with implementation of Housing Element policies and actions. These funds allowed staff to partner with a consultant team to present a broad range of infill development strategies to the City Council Housing and Homelessness Committee in 2023. The City continues to work toward developing infill development strategies as a solution to the region's housing challenges. Draft ordinances for substandard lot development and small lot subdivisions are anticipated to move forward to public hearings in 2024.

Industrial Development Standards: In response to community concerns, the City began the process of evaluating current industrial development standards to determine best practices, ongoing regional and state regulatory efforts, and available tools for community benefits and sustainability standards. After several community workshops with residents, grassroots organizations, and the development community, staff explored potential changes to Title 19 to address sensitive receptors, floor area ratio, and building size among others. Staff continues to work with the community and anticipates moving any potential amendments forward in 2024.

Arlington Village: The City continues to evaluate and study existing neighborhoods that may leverage adaptive reuse to catalyze economic development. In late 2023, the City began work with the Arlington Village Business Partnership for immediate economic development and public safety solutions. The City plans to study the project area in 2024 for potential land use solutions including adaptive reuse to support and promote the existing neighborhood.

VI. General Plan Updates

Appendix C lists the amendments to the City's General Plan since 2007. The City did not adopt any General Plan Amendments in 2023.

Appendix A - 2023 Activities Related to Implementation Plan & Action Plan

Appendix B - 2023 HCD Annual Progress Report Table B and Table D

Appendix C - General Plan Amendment List Post 2025 Program

Appendix D - Capital Improvement Program (CIP) FY 2022-20

