

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

1.0

## 1.0 EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

### 1.1 PROJECT DESCRIPTION & LOCATION

The Gateway Specific Plan Project Area (the "Project Area") encompasses approximately 317 gross acres and is approximately 74 percent developed. The majority of existing buildings are single or two story, varying in age and condition. Generally, effective implementation of the Gateway Specific Plan (the "Plan") will achieve the following goals:

- Goal: To expand the economic base of the Project Area and the community as a whole through the active promotion and encouragement of commercial and industrial development in appropriate parts of the Project Area.
- Goal: To encourage the development and revitalization of economically viable commercial land uses along Hamner Avenue.
- Goal: Provide a high level of public services and facilities to all properties within the Project Area.
- Goal: Develop a circulation system which facilitates efficient and safe vehicular, equestrian, and pedestrian traffic, along with the enhancement of the community design character.
- Goal: Create a community design image for the Project Area that expresses and enhances the unique character and identity of Norco.
- Goal: To improve the relationship of differing land uses through physical and functional separation.

The Gateway Specific Plan Project Area (Exhibit 1) is located within the southern most portion of the City of Norco and incorporates territory east and west of Hamner Avenue; the Project Area lies directly west of the new I-15. Exhibit 2 shows the location of the City in its regional context.

Existing land uses within the Project Area include residential, commercial, industrial, park, pasture/agricultural, quasi-public and vacant land. Land uses adjacent to the Project Area generally include residential, commercial, industrial and vacant land.

### 1.2 PLAN AUTHORITY, DIRECTION AND SCOPE

The California Government Code authorizes cities to adopt specific plans by resolution as policy or by ordinance as regulation. Hearings are required by both Planning Commission and City Council, after which the Specific Plan must be adopted by the City Council to become operative.

# Gateway Specific Plan



## GATEWAY SPECIFIC PLAN PROJECT AREA MAP

XXXX NOT A PART

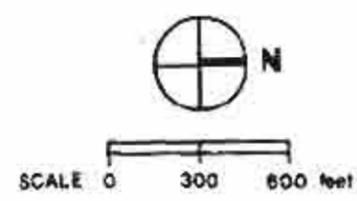


EXHIBIT 1

# Gateway Specific Plan



## REGIONAL LOCATIONAL MAP



The adoption of the Gateway Specific Plan as a regulatory plan will establish it as the zoning ordinance for the property within its boundary. Proposed development plans or agreements, tentative tract or parcel maps and any other development proposals and approvals must be consistent with the Gateway Specific Plan. Projects consistent with the Gateway Specific Plan will be deemed consistent with the Norco General Plan.

The regulations contained herein shall apply to the boundaries described in Appendix A to this plan.

Development of the Gateway Specific Plan was guided by the six major elements listed below:

- o Relationship to the Norco General Plan (see Section 6.0 for a summary of General Plan consistency);
- o Direction provided by the City Council/Community Redevelopment Agency and Planning Commission;
- o I-15 Corridor Study;
- o Staff participation;
- o Public participation; and
- o Existing conditions.

Each of these factors is discussed on the following pages in order to clearly illustrate the methodology for the Plan, its policies and its regulations.

#### Norco General Plan

A specific plan may not be adopted or amended unless the proposed plan or amendment is consistent with the city's general plan. Furthermore, a specific plan must evolve to conform to pertinent changes in the general plan. According to section 65359 of the California Public Resources Code, "Any specific plan...of the city or county that is applicable to the same areas or matters affected by a general plan amendment shall be reviewed and amended as necessary to make the specific...plan consistent with the general plan." A specific plan's statement of its relationship to the general plan is one means of demonstrating consistency.

The 1987 General Plan Guidelines sets forth the following general rule for determining consistency: "An action, program, or project is consistent with the general plan if, considering all its aspects, it will further the objectives and policies of the general plan and not obstruct their attainment."

If a specific plan is primarily a planning policy document, its provisions should be refinements of, or derived from the general plan's goals, objectives, policies, and plan proposals (i.e., the general plan's statement of development policies). A policy-oriented specific plan conforms to the general plan if a decision making body can reach the same conclusions using either plan. If the city or county uses the general plan alone, however, its staff may have to make detailed site investigations as a prerequisite to a decision.

If a specific plan is regulatory in nature, the plan's regulations must likewise promote the general plan's statement of development policies. In particular, the regulations must be enactments resulting from and complying with the directives of the general plan's policies, plan proposals, or action programs.

Policy-oriented and regulatory specific plans differ in their approaches to implementing a general plan. Policy plans propose implementation measures while regulatory plans impose them. The most important point here is that a specific plan's provisions result directly from and conform to the general plan's policies and proposals.

#### Specific Plan Diagram Consistency

By law every specific plan must have a diagram or diagrams. Each diagram must be consistent with the general plan. Naturally, there is a question as to how closely a specific plan's diagram should match a general plan's. The consistency question is especially pertinent to a specific plan that has multiple development phases. Interestingly, a multiphased specific plan might meet the consistency requirement even though its illustrations of initial development phases do not match the general plan's long-term land use diagram.

For example, the general plan might call for the conversion of farmland to residential uses when contiguous parcels are urbanized. Although the general plan's land use diagram would designate the area for residences, the initial phases of the specific plan would map the area for continued agricultural use. The specific plan's latter phases, however, would show residential uses. The specific plan would be consistent with the general plan on both a short- and long-term basis.

The timing of development is obviously an important specific plan issue. To avoid diagram consistency questions, the general plan's policies should provide clear guidance for the pace of future development, perhaps by phasing plan proposals in five-year increments. Alternatively, a general plan might set forth conditions to be met before an area would be ready for particular types of uses.

There remains, however, a question as to the degree to which a specific plan's land use designations must duplicate those of a general plan when the diagrams of both plans address the same development phase. There is no explicit statutory answer. Nevertheless, the basic characteristics of the two plan types offer some clues.

A specific plan specifies in detail the distribution, location, and extent of land uses. In doing so it takes into account the individual features of a site on a parcel-by-parcel basis. By contrast, a general plan's land use element diagram need not be parcel-specific. Rather, it reflects jurisdiction-wide planning policies. It functions more as an illustration of appropriate land use relationships than as a precise map locating permitted activities. The boundaries of a specific plan's land use designations need not precisely match the generalized boundaries delineated on a general plan diagram.

A specific plan diagram, however, should reflect a reasoned approximation of a general plan's land use designations. Furthermore, the specific plan's land use relationship should not vary from those proposed by a general plan. If the latter shows only multiple family, neighborhood commercial, and open space uses adjacent to a single-family residential area, so should the specific plan. Industrial uses in that area would be inconsistent with the general plan.

In other words, a specific plan's diagram does not supersede a general plan. Rather, it adds detail to a general plan's statement of development policies.

The Gateway Specific plan is consistent with the City of Norco General Plan, as amended.

#### City Council/Redevelopment Agency and Planning Commission Direction

The City of Norco City Council/Community Redevelopment Agency and Planning Commission have given the following direction affecting this Plan:

- 1) Do not promote commercial/industrial development east of the I-15;
- 2) No multi-family housing;
- 3) The Project Area should be treated as the economic nucleus of Norco; and
- 4) Dislocate as few residential properties as possible while pursuing the economic development potential of the Project Area.

#### I-15 Corridor Study

The primary objective of this study was to provide the framework to assist City officials in guiding the long-term economic, land use and infrastructural development strategy for the entire I-15 Corridor Study Area; the Gateway Specific Plan Project Area is located at

the southern end of the I-15 Corridor Study Area. The I-15 Corridor Study should be referenced for detailed information related to the composite I-15 Corridor Study Area.

### Staff Participation

Generally, City staff provided technical assistance and assisted the Project Team in gathering data, attending City Council/Redevelopment Agency and Planning Commission meetings, and public workshops.

### Public Participation

Public workshops were held on the following days:

Thursday, September 7, 1989  
Tuesday, September 12, 1989  
Thursday, September 14, 1989

At these meetings "Steering Committees" were formed to work with the Project Team for the duration of the Project. Steering committee meetings were held on the following days:

Monday, October 9, 1989  
Thursday, October 12, 1989  
Monday, October 30, 1989  
Thursday, November 2, 1989  
Tuesday, November 28, 1989  
Monday, December 11, 1989

It was clear that the people who attended the first three public workshops on the Specific Plan were confused as to the need for a specific plan. Most property owners and merchants in attendance did admit to circulation and parking problems as well as a general discontentment with current zoning restrictions, which, in fact they felt had served to lower property values and create an artificially slow market condition. The public stated that they wanted the Project Team to look closely at land uses which would have a beneficial effect on property values. Generally, those in attendance acknowledged the potential strength of the Project Area to provide the City with additional sales and property tax revenues, and themselves economic gain, because of the Project Area's location next to the newly opened I-15.

The Gateway Specific Plan Project Team has incorporated, to the best of its ability, the recommendations of all participating affected property and business owners.

### 1.3 BACKGROUND

With the recent completion of the I-15 Freeway, the City is now facing a challenge to ensure that inevitable future development will be complimentary to Norco. Because of this situation, the City has committed itself to the development of the Gateway Specific Plan. The Plan will optimize the long-term benefits for residents, land and business owners, the City of Norco and the community at large by formulating a market supportable development strategy, encouraging compatible land uses and generating property and sales tax monies to support City services such as Police and Fire Protection, trail improvements, etc., and tax increment funds to be used for infrastructure and roadway improvement projects, small business assistance programs, marketing strategies, etc.

As a basis for preparing the Plan, a number of problem conditions within the Project Area were identified by the Project Team and verified with City officials, property and business owners. Generally, these problem statements address: 1) the overall decline in the quality and market potential of the Project Area, 2) the underutilization of many parcels, 3) the large number of deteriorating structures and parcels, 4) the lack of adequate circulation system, 5) the large number of small and disaggregated parcels, 6) flood control and drainage problems, 7) inadequate utilities infrastructure, and 8) general uncertainty about land use policies, development standards and development direction for the Project Area. The Gateway Specific Plan addresses these concerns and others and provides a means to correct identified deficiencies while exploiting Project Area opportunities.

### 1.4 PURPOSE

The Gateway Specific Plan, when adopted by City Ordinance, serves both a policy function and regulatory function. It will be the device for implementing the long-term goals and objectives of the City of Norco General Plan within the Project Area. The Plan will also contain all applicable land use regulations and will thus constitute the zoning for the Gateway Specific Plan Project Area.

### 1.5 ORGANIZATION OF THE PLAN

Generally, the most important section of this Plan is Section 4.0, Development Regulations. It contains the rules by which certain uses will be permitted or prohibited, development standards which specify how structures must be located on building sites and presents design guidelines which define, for purposes of this Plan, what "quality" means as it is used in various policies guiding the Plan.

The legal foundation and context for the Plan is found in Section 1.2, Plan Authority, Direction and Scope.

Section 2.0, the Specific Development Plan, provides an overview of the Primary Concepts constituting the Plan and sets the policy direction for the detailed regulations found in Section

4.0. An important feature of this section is the summary of key policy direction and rationale of the Plan. These portions enable the reader to quickly grasp the essential ideas which make the Plan unique and responsive to the issues within the Gateway Specific Plan Project Area. This section of the Plan also provides the analysis of existing Project Area conditions, e.g., demographic, land use, economics, infrastructure and circulation.

Section 3.0, General Design Guidelines and Development Standards, outlines design guidelines and development standards that will govern future development within the Project Area. These general guidelines will govern architecture, landscape architecture, streetscape design, site planning, riding trails, and signage requirements; specific development projects will use these general guidelines as a starting point to generate more detailed design concepts.

The Plan Implementation section, Section 5.0, identifies the steps necessary to monitor progress in carrying out the Plan as well as actions which will facilitate implementation such as economic development strategies, infrastructure development and improvement funding mechanisms, small business assistance programs and maintenance districts.

Section 6.0, General Plan Consistency, describes the goals of each element of the Norco General Plan and how the Gateway Specific Plan implements those goals.

Section 7.0 consists of appendices pertinent to development and implementation of the Plan.

## 1.6 CALIFORNIA ENVIRONMENTAL QUALITY ACT (CEQA) COMPLIANCE

The Gateway Specific Plan is accompanied by a complete Environmental Impact Report as an integral component of the planning process. It has been prepared in accordance with the most recently adopted guidelines established by the State of California.

As a Program EIR, this document will address issues related to the ultimate development of the Project based on the most definitive Project data available. At each of the subsequent discretionary levels of project review, the program EIR will serve as the master environmental document for the conceptual land use plan being submitted as a part of this Specific Plan.

All subsequent approvals requested will be examined in light of the Program EIR to determine whether additional or more-detailed environmental analysis is necessary based upon the following:

- o If it is determined that the Program EIR adequately addressed environmental impacts associated with the proposed activity, no new environmental documentation would be required.
- o If the proposed project could potentially have a significant impact on the environment which was not addressed in the Program EIR, but the potential impact will be effectively mitigated, a Negative Declaration can be prepared.

- o In the case where specific issues associated with an activity were not adequately addressed in the Program EIR, but only minor additions or changes are necessary to make the EIR adequate, a supplement/addendum to the EIR need contain only the information necessary to make the Program EIR adequate for the proposed project.
- o Further environmental review at more specific levels of project implementation may reveal additional mitigation measures which will be incorporated into project phases as they are implemented.

These options are in accordance with the provisions of the California Environmental Quality Act Guidelines, Section 15162, and are encouraged by the State, to be utilized in avoiding duplicative reconsideration of basic policy considerations.

Technical Appendices are included as Volume II of the Gateway Specific Plan Program EIR. The Appendices include technical data/analyses with regard to the following:

1. Civil Engineering
2. Traffic/Circulation
3. Geology
4. Acoustical Engineering
5. Air Quality
6. Economics
7. Biological Resources
8. Archaeological/Historical Resources

This document should be referenced to obtain detailed technical data/analyses pertinent to preparation and implementation of the Gateway Specific Plan.