



2025 Countywide Policy Plan

General Plan Annual Progress Report



Land Use Services Department
Planning Division

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Introduction

San Bernardino County is over 20,000 square miles with 24 incorporated cities and over 80 unincorporated communities. The unincorporated population is over 311,000 divided between the Valley, Mountain, North Desert and East Desert regions.

The Land Use Services Department is comprised of Planning, Building and Safety, Land Development, Code Enforcement and Administration divisions. The Planning Division is responsible for updates and implementation of the General Plan in coordination with other Departments and Agencies.

This report reviews the implementation activities of the Countywide Plan, Policy Plan (General Plan update). This report fulfills a state requirement to measure progress in implementing the General Plan.

In 2014, the County began a seven year process to enhance and expand the General Plan into a comprehensive, online Countywide Plan (CWP) which was adopted by the Board of Supervisors on October 27, 2020. In addition, the 14 existing Community Plans were reimagined with the assistance of the unincorporated communities into 35 Community Action Guides. The 2007 General Plan's one-map system of a Land Use/Zoning map was moved to a two-map system of separate Land Use Map and Zoning Map. The final CWP package includes an Implementation Plan, which serves to support the Annual Reports.

With the aforementioned changes, including the implementation of the Countywide Plan and associated documents, the County is utilizing this annual report to assess the progress of the CWP.

Purpose of the Annual Progress Report

The California Supreme Court has called the general plan “the constitution for future development.” The general plan expresses the community’s development goals and embodies public policy relative to the distribution of future land uses — both public and private. California law [Government Code Section 65400(b)(1)] requires all jurisdictions to submit to their legislative bodies an annual report on the status of the general plan and progress achieved toward its implementation. The Planning Agency who is responsible for investigating and recommending reasonable and practical means for implementing the general plan, must submit the annual report to the governor’s Office of Planning Research (OPR) and the California Department of Housing and Community Development (HCD) each year. The County’s General Plan Annual Report explains how the adopted goals, policies, and programs in the General Plan are implemented in all land use decisions. It also identifies necessary “course adjustments” or modifications to the General Plan as a means to improve the County’s implementation.

Countywide Plan

Structure of the General Plan

Every city and county in California is required by law to have a general plan for its future development. A general plan is a blueprint that guides the “physical development of the county or

city, and any land outside its boundaries which bears relation to its “planning” (California Government Code §65300).

General Plan Elements

As required by state law, a general plan must include seven elements: Land Use, Circulation, Housing, Conservation, Open Space, Noise, and Safety. San Bernardino County has chosen to include Economic Development and Renewable Energy and Conservation, as additional elements.

The eleven elements of the San Bernardino County General Plan are as follows:

1. Land Use Element (LU)

- Designates the distribution, location, intensity, and balance of land uses for the unincorporated areas of the County.
- Establishes goals for where, when, and how the county grows, which is also guided by policies in other elements.
- Provides direction for new development on community design, land use compatibility, and interagency coordination.
- Provides guidance for orderly expansion of incorporated areas.

2. Housing Element (H)

- Identifies adequate sites to facilitate and encourage housing for households of all economic levels, including people with disabilities.
- Removes governmental constraints to housing production, maintenance, and improvement as legally feasible and appropriate.
- Assists the development of adequate housing for low- and moderate-income households.
- Preserves publicly assisted multiple-family housing developments in each community.
- Conserves and improves conditions in existing housing and neighborhoods, including affordable housing.
- Promotes a range of housing opportunities for all individuals and households consistent with fair and equal housing opportunities.

3. Infrastructure and Utilities (IU)

- Provides guidance on where, when, and how infrastructure and utilities are improved and expanded.
- Establishes goals and policies to maintain an adequate supply of potable water and the safe disposal, treatment, and recycling of wastewater, and the recycling and safe disposal of solid waste.
- Provides direction on system integration, resource conservation, and the protection of the natural environment.

4. Transportation and Mobility (TM)

- Establishes the location and operational conditions of the roadway network.
- Coordinates the transportation and mobility system with future land use patterns and projected growth.
- Provides guidance for the County’s responsibility to satisfy the local and subregional mobility needs of residents, visitors and businesses in unincorporated areas.
- Addresses access and connectivity among the various communities, cities, towns, and regions, as well as the range and suitability of mobility options: vehicle, trucking, freight and passenger rail, air, pedestrian, bicycle, and transit.

5. Hazards Element (HZ)

- Identifies potential natural and human-generated hazards, including increased risk due to climate change.
- Provides direction to address risks to residents, businesses, workers, and visitors.
- Prioritizes resources and reduce pollution exposure in unincorporated disadvantaged communities.

6. Personal Property and Protection (PP)

- Promotes continuous improvement in the provision of public safety and administration of justice.
- Supports coordinated and effective inter-agency response to emergencies and natural disasters.
- Provides policy direction to engage communities and respond to identified needs.
- Fosters collaboration among the Board of Supervisors-directed agencies and departments and the elected Sheriff and District Attorney.
- Augments, rather than replacing state- and federally mandated goals and objectives.

7. Natural Resources (NR)

- Establishes policies that preserve and enhance the beauty and resiliency of our natural resources.
- Provides guidance on coordinating with others to manage, conserve, and protect natural resources such as watersheds, wildlife habitat areas and corridors, and other natural and open space areas.
- Promotes clean air and a supply of water for human consumption and the natural environment.
- Supports the maintenance and enhancement of a countywide system of open space, parks, and recreation assets.
- Provides guidance and support for mining operations and the preservation of agricultural lands.
- Provides guidance on the location and distribution of new development to protect natural resources.

8. Renewable Energy and Conservation (RE)

- Clarifies the County's collective community, environmental, and economic values for RE development and conservation.
- Articulates what the County will strive to achieve and avoid through energy conservation, energy efficiency, and RE development.
- Establishes goals and policies to manage RE development and conservation of the natural environment.
- Sets a framework for Development Code standards for RE development.

9. Cultural Resources (CR)

- Establishes direction on notification, coordination, and partnerships to preserve and conserve cultural resources.
- Provides guidance on how new development can avoid or minimize impacts on cultural resources.
- Provides direction on increasing public awareness and education efforts about cultural resources.

10. Economic Development (ED)

- Provides direction for County efforts to attract private investment in non-residential development in unincorporated areas of the county.
- Focuses countywide investments in workforce development on growing occupations and industries.
- Establishes the County's intent to invest in economic development to improve the countywide job-housing ratio.
- Identifies the means through which the County promotes countywide economic development.

11. Health and Wellness (HW)

- Provides guidance on addressing issues that by their nature require extensive coordination and collaboration within the County and with outside agencies and organizations.
- Establishes a holistic approach to the continuum of care.
- Identifies the County's policy focus regarding its use of state and federal funds to improve the physical and behavioral health of residents.
- Describes the County's priorities and roles in serving the health and social needs of vulnerable populations.

The Countywide Plan (General Plan) consists of the Policy Plan text, Business Plan (governance element, tracking and feedback, and implementation plan), 35 Community Action Guides, and the separately bound Housing Element and Renewable Energy and Conservation Element. The General Plan is accompanied by a series of PDF and Web maps. These documents are listed and briefly described as follows:

Policy Plan Text

The County Policy Plan contains the long-term goals and policies that will guide County decisions, investments, and improvements toward achieving the Countywide Vision. The Policy Plan represents a unique approach to county planning. It serves as the County's General Plan for the unincorporated areas, which is mandated by state law, but it also includes policy direction for adult and child supportive services, healthcare, public safety, and other regional services the County administers in both incorporated and unincorporated areas.

Business Plan

The Business Plan provides overarching and ongoing guidance for existing County processes (i.e., budget, goals and objectives, performance measures, etc.). The Business Plan consists of a policy-based governance element and an action-oriented implementation plan and two new implementation tools: a tracking and feedback system and a fiscal analysis model. Combined, these sections and tools provide clarity and transparency to the public regarding County governance while ensuring the Countywide Plan remains meaningful and current.

Community Action Guides

The Community Action Guides were created by the community members who attended workshops, provided comments online or sent in written comments. The Action Guides are written in the words of those participating in the public engagement process. Therefore, the Community Action Guides retain the voice and future image of the community presented by the community members participating in the public engagement process. However, the implementation of each Action Statement is an opportunity for additional discussion by community

members and modification of the statement and action steps may be made by the community and Action Teams.

Overall, the Community Action Guides are a framework for communities to create their future character and independent identity through completion of community actions, as identified in the workshops as community values and aspirations. As stated in the community workshops, the Community Action Guides replace any 2007/2014 Community Plans, with a greater focus on community self-reliance, grass-roots action, and implementation. Goals, policies, land use, and infrastructure information presented in 2007 Community Plans have been incorporated within the Policy Plan of the Countywide Plan. The County Development Code will continue to regulate zoning and land use development.

The Community Action Guides are strategic in nature which provide clear Focus Statements and Action Statements identified by the community that led to the creation of an Action Plan that can be implemented at the grass-roots level within each community. Some actions may require assistance by a County department, however the community will take the lead in moving the action forward, identifying funding or scheduling meetings or requesting information from specific County departments.

A detailed implementation plan and training module was set up by the County to guide communities in identifying Champions, setting up Action Teams, contacting County departments and answering questions. In addition, the County's role was clarified. This information was included on the website for easy reference by communities.

Valley	Mountain	East Desert	North Desert
Bloomington	Angelus Oaks	East Desert	Baker
Devore	Bear Valley	Homestead Valley	Daggett
Mentone	Crest Forest	Joshua Tree	El Mirage
Muscoy	Hilltop	Morongo Valley	Helendale
San Antonio Heights	Lake Arrowhead	Pioneertown	High Desert
	Lytle Creek	Route 66	Lucerne Valley
	Mountain	Wonder Valley	Newberry Springs
	Mt. Baldy		North Desert
	Oak Glen		Oak Hills
	Wrightwood		Oro Grande
			Phelan/ Pinon Hills
			Trona
			Yermo

Specific and Area Plans

The purpose of Specific Plan Land Use Zoning Districts is to designate an area that encompasses the boundaries of an adopted Specific Plan. They are also intended to allow joint planning efforts among adjacent land owners and jurisdictions. Specific Plans usually provide sites for a combination of residential, commercial, industrial, agricultural, open space, recreational and similar and compatible uses as determined by the Specific Plan. The East Valley Area Plan contains detailed land use regulations to guide growth and development within the boundaries of the plan for the East Valley. The Plan contains maps which delineate land use

designations and the circulation network within the area, along with establishing a Land Use Zoning District designation for each parcel, establishing the circulation design guidelines and the site design standards and guidelines.

The Specific and Area Plans are also a part of the overall General Plan. They are as follows:

- Aqua Mansa Specific Plan (AMSP)
- East Valley Area Plan (EVAP)
- Glen Helen Specific Plan (GHSP)
- Kaiser Specific Plan (KSP)
- Hacienda Fairview Valley Specific Plan (HFVSP)
- Valley Corridor Specific Plan (VCSP)
- Speedway Commerce Center II Specific Plan (SCCSP)
- Bloomington Business Park Specific Plan (BBPSP)

General Plan Mapping Series

Land Use Zoning District Maps

The County has elected to change from a “one-map” system to a two-map system. Previously, there was one map to show the General Plan and Zone designation. Now, there is a map showing Land Use Designations, or Land Use Categories, and another map showing the zoning designation. The Land Use Designation Map is published as a PDF and is also available as an interactive webmap. The maps are parcel-specific in that they show the designated land use zoning district for each parcel. Three overlays – Additional Agriculture, Agricultural Preserve, and the Sign Control are shown on the zoning map as a suffix to the land use zoning district.

Infrastructure and Utilities

A series of seven maps that are published online and are also available as a PDF. They are parcel specific and cover a range of infrastructure and utility topics like regional wastewater and waste disposal facilities and utility service providers.

Transportation and Mobility

A series of six maps show the road designations for all roads with the following classifications throughout the County: Freeway, Major Arterial Highway, Major Divided Highway, Major Highway, Secondary Highway, Controlled/Limited Access Collector, Mountain Major Highway and Mountain Secondary Highway. This series also includes mobility focus areas, airports, and adopted transportation plans.

Natural Resources

A series of five maps that show air districts and basins, parks and open space resources, scenic routes and highways, mineral resources zones, and agricultural resources. Some of these maps are not parcel specific because the delineations of the various resources are not intended to be parcel-specific.

Hazards

A series of 11 maps, these maps are published online and available as a PDF. Unlike the Land Use Zoning District Maps, some of the Hazard Overlay Maps are scale dependent, and do not show parcel specific information because the delineations of the various hazards are not intended to be parcel-specific. The hazards on these maps include airport safety, dam inundation, fire, flood, and noise, earthquake, liquefaction and landslides, Environmental Justice Focus Areas, and wind hazards.

Personal Property

A series of three maps that are available online as webmaps and hardcopy as PDF. These maps depict critical facilities, evacuation routes, and sheriff operations.

Economic Development

This webmap and PDF shows commercial, employment, and industrial redevelopment focus area.

Health and Wellness

A series of two web and PDF maps, that depict educational and public facilities located within the unincorporated areas of San Bernardino County.

Major Completed Activities

Zoning Amendments

Bloomington Commercial Center//D5

The amendment changes the Zoning from Rural Living 5-Acre Minimum Lot Area (RL-5) to General Commercial (CG). The General Plan, adopted in October of 2020, already designated the site as Commercial (C). However, the comprehensive zoning map has not yet been completed. This amendment addresses this discrepancy and as such has been found to be consistent with the General Plan goals and policies.

Development Code Amendments

Environmental Justice Focus Area

County staff has been working on an amendment to the Development Code to reflect the policies from the General Plan that relate to Environmental Justice Focus Areas. The proposed amendment will increase notification requirements for certain types of projects that are located near or within an Environmental Justice Focus Area. The amendment also expands on Policy HZ 3.18 which requires certain types of applications to include documentation of how the project will address the environmental justice concerns potentially created as a result of the project, and an outreach plan for nearby residents and business owners to share public input on the project. The ordinance was reviewed by the Planning Commissioners and will be heard by the Board of Supervisors in 2025.

Pro Housing Initiative

County staff has initiated a comprehensive review of the Development Code to ensure compliance with state housing laws and enhance pro-housing policies. As part of this effort, draft updates to the Accessory Dwelling Unit (ADU) ordinance and amendments aligning the code with state legislation, including SB 9, are anticipated to be presented to the Planning Commission in 2025.

Additional early actions will likely include the adoption of a ministerial permit process under SB 35 (Housing Element Program 14) and updates to regulations for employee housing, supportive and transitional housing, and residential care facilities (Housing Element Program 12).

Housing Element

The County adopted the 6th Cycle Housing Element in September 2022. The Element was certified in November 2022. This General Plan Element is one of nine state-mandated elements. The Housing Element identifies the County's housing conditions and needs, establishes the goals, objectives and policies that are the foundation of the County's housing strategy as well as programs and actions to implement the Element by accommodating growth, producing an opportunity for the development of new housing units and preserving existing housing stock. It is accompanied by 27 programs.

In 2024 the County focused on Program 5 - Identify and Mitigate Government Constraints to Housing Development. In late 2024 the County started working to identify unnecessary

constraints towards housing development within our Code. San Bernardino County is grappling with the challenge of there being a lack of “middle housing,” which includes unit types such as duplexes, triplexes, townhomes, and other mid-density housing options intended to fill the gap between low-density single-family and high-density multifamily residential developments. This shortage aims to be addressed by reducing the barriers to establishing multi-family zoning, developing infrastructure, and removing unnecessary constraints within the development code. We are looking to bring our findings and recommendations, informed by the latest data we have internally and from public stakeholders, to the public and our Board of Supervisors in 2025.

Program 11 – Manufactured Homes has been a key point of focus in late 2024. County staff has identified the need to enhance the efficiency of the approval process and provide clearer guidance for current and prospective owners of manufactured homes. To address this, County staff has initiated the development of a comprehensive guide, an FAQ document, and a revised application process aimed at significantly reducing processing time and administrative burden. These resources are expected to be completed by early 2025.

Program 4 - The Short-Term Rental Study was finalized and presented to the Board on June 11, 2024 (Item No. 121). The Board approved the recommended action to receive the report, which evaluated the impact of short-term rentals on the housing supply in unincorporated San Bernardino County. This was submitted to and accepted by the California State Housing and Community Development Department with no further action required.

Other Initiatives

In the calendar year 2024, the County funded the Kern St project, designed to assist justice-involved homeless individuals. As part of this initiative, two manufactured homes were purchased, increasing the bed capacity at the site from 10 to 30. The 30 beds will be available for occupancy in 2025.

Ongoing Implementation

2024 Development Code Update Program

Status

Upon completion and adoption of the Countywide Plan (CWP) in October of 2020, the County began an update of the Development Code (Code). The update became necessary with the adoption of new policies that are implemented through the Development Code. To ensure consistency with the new Policy Plan and Business Plan, a program to review, update, and create new standards and processes for the Development Code was undertaken. A major part of this program was the creation of a two-map system instead of the single-map system employed by the County since 2007. As part of the CWP, the Board adopted a new Land Use Designation map (LU-1) which required the creation of a new Zoning Map.

The major future tasks for the Development Code Update program are:

- Update existing zone descriptions and add new zones pursuant to the CWP, Policy Plan’s land use designations.
- Develop context-sensitive standards to implement Community Action Guides.
- Create a new web-based Zone Map.

- Reorganize and update the uses section of the Code to comply with the policies relative to land use compatibility.
- Review land use zoning districts and Code overlays for consistency and linkage to policy maps contained in the Policy Plan
- Modify existing or add new procedures and standards as needed to comply with new state laws (i.e.: Housing, Environmental Justice, Sustainable Communities Strategy, Climate Adaptation and Resiliency, Wildfire Assessment, etc.).
- Modify or add new development standards for all new zones created as part of this program, review development standards of existing land use categories (zones) to make consistent with Policy Plan provisions.
- Develop objective design standards to meet permit streamlining and community design goals. State housing law limits when jurisdictions can require discretionary review and use subjective design guidelines. Where discretion is limited, objective design standards provide a way for the County to continue to regulate development design.

The County also articulated the following goals for the Development Code Update, apart from the Policy Plan implementation items mentioned above:

- Update the definitions chapter.
- Review and, where necessary, make improvements to the development process and related applications to ensure they are clear, concise, and easy to understand and implement.
- Strengthen visual aids for better understanding of development standards and procedures.

Next Steps / Schedule

Draft updates to the ADU and additional selected housing-related sections of the Development Code, which implement components of the Housing Element and State Laws, will be brought to the Planning Commission for review in 2025. Drafting additional Development Code amendments will continue to foster permit streamlining, reduce the barriers to high-density residential development, and implement additional state housing laws. The comprehensive Development Code will continue to move forward strategically to group related items and facilitate public input in the process.

Housing Element Annual Progress Report

Government code section 65400 requires that each city and county in California prepare an annual progress report (APR) on the status of its general plan's Housing Update and its implementation progress using the forms and definitions adopted by the Department of Housing and Community Development (HCD). Once complete, the Housing Element APR must be submitted to the Department of Housing and Community Development and the Governor's Office of Planning and Research (OPR) on or before April 1st of each year. The full report submitted in 2025, reporting on the 2024 calendar year, has been submitted separately. Below is a summary of the number of units built which have received final occupancy in the reporting year.

Figure 1. 2023 Building Permits Issued by Affordability

Income Level	Reporting Year 2023
Very Low	6
Low	26
Moderate	117
Above Moderate	439
Total Units	588

LEAP Grant

The County received a LEAP grant in 2020 for \$750,000 to accelerate housing production. The County used these funds to prepare the 6th Cycle Housing Element and complete a Sewer Study for the Community Planning Area of Bloomington. The Housing Element was adopted in September 2022, and the Land Use and Sewer Study was completed in September 2024.

The Sewer Study determined that portions of Bloomington already had appropriate zoning and needed no additional financial or other incentives to support new housing. It was also found that improvements in other portions of Bloomington would be cost-prohibitive, even with substantial upzoning. Although no further action was required as a result of the study, the County is moving forward with a similar study (funded by the County) to expand housing capacity in the unincorporated Sphere of Influence of Fontana (immediately adjacent to Bloomington).

Completed Housing Element Effort: Program 4 – Short-Term Rental Study

The Short-Term Rental Study was finalized and presented to the Board on June 11, 2024 (Item No. 121). The Board approved the recommended action to receive the report, which evaluated the impact of short-term rentals on the housing supply in unincorporated San Bernardino County.

Status update

Task 1- 6th Cycle Housing Element

The 6th cycle Housing element is adopted and certified. The adopted element and land inventory are available online. Implementation of the 27 housing element programs has begun.

Future Annual Reports

The fully web-based, comprehensive Countywide Plan (CWP) was developed to address some of these issues by being inclusive of every County Department and Agency participating and ensuring all policies were at the higher level with action items in the Implementation Plan or in the Community Action Guides. The CWP has about 350 policies, which are prioritized in the Implementation Plan. The County is working on the immediate actions listed in the Implementation Plan which includes updating the Development Code to be consistent with the County Policy Plan.