

2025 AWARDS GALA

May 14, 2025 | Victoria Gardens Cultural Center
City of Rancho Cucamonga, California

APA INLAND EMPIRE SECTION



Digital Program



Please scan the QR code above via your smartphone camera to be directed to the digital program. Or visit our website:

[APA Inland Empire Website:](https://ies-apa.org/awards/)
ies-apa.org/awards/



Congratulations to the 2025 APA-IES Award Recipients

Welcome to the annual American Planning Association, Inland Empire Section (APA-IES) Awards Program! Tonight we recognize the region's innovative plans and projects, distinguished members of the planning profession, community members and elected officials enhancing quality of life, and outstanding student planners. Thank you for joining us to celebrate this year's exceptional projects and people.

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Kassie Vickers

Mairany Anaya, Co-Chair

Bryan Jones, P.E., AICP

Robert Flores

Suzanne Peterson

Tony Lopez

Luke Fannin

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*Judges on the Awards Jury Panel are required to recuse themselves during the review and voting of projects that involve their agency

Melissa Garrety

Josh Lee

Emily Elliott, AICP

Peter Minegar, AICP

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Adam Rush



2025 APA-IES

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Rancho Cucamonga Cultural Center

The APA-IES Board is happy to hold the 2025 Awards Program and festivities at the Victoria Gardens Cultural Center.

The Victoria Gardens Cultural Center in Rancho Cucamonga opened in 2006 as part of the larger Victoria Gardens lifestyle and retail center. It was developed to provide a cultural and educational hub for the growing community. The complex features the Lewis Family Playhouse, a 536-seat performing arts theater; the Rancho Cucamonga Public Library's Paul A. Biane Library, which serves as a major resource for residents; and meeting spaces designed to host a variety of community and private events.

The Center reflects Rancho Cucamonga's commitment to fostering arts, culture, and lifelong learning in a modern and accessible setting. It regularly hosts theatrical performances, concerts, lectures, and art exhibitions, becoming a cornerstone for cultural life in the city and surrounding region.



APA INLAND EMPIRE SECTION
2025 AWARDS GALA

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Key Note Speaker: Aaron Hake



Aaron Hake, Executive Director of the Riverside County Transportation Commission (RCTC), is the keynote speaker for the 2025 American Planning Association (APA) Inland Empire Awards Gala. With over 19 years of experience in transportation policy and public administration, Hake has been instrumental in advancing mobility solutions across Riverside County.

Hake's commitment to public service extends beyond his professional responsibilities. He has served as Chair of both the Riverside County and City of Corona Planning Commissions, Treasurer of the City of Corona, and Board Chair of the Inland Southern California United Way. In recognition of his efforts to advance women in the transportation profession, he received the 2022 Women in Transportation-Inland Empire chapter Secretary Ray LaHood Award.



2025 APA INLAND EMPIRE SECTION AWARDS GALA

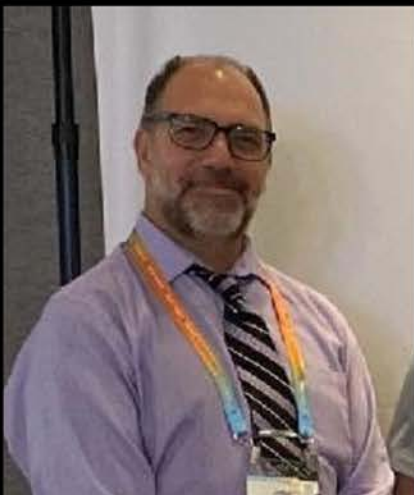
AWARD
WINNERS

APA Inland Empire Service Award (s)

John Hildebrand, Chris Gray, and Aaron Pfannenstiel



We are proud to recognize John Hildebrand, Chris Gray, and Aaron Pfannenstiel for their exceptional dedication and years of service to the APA Inland Empire Section. Each has played a vital role in strengthening our planning community—whether through mentoring emerging professionals, advancing regional planning initiatives, or leading with vision and integrity. Their contributions have left a lasting impact on the section's growth, visibility, and commitment to excellence. We thank them for their unwavering support and leadership, which continue to inspire planners across the Inland Empire.





2025 AWARDS GALA

APA INLAND EMPIRE SECTION

Congrats to our 2025 Award Winners

Merit Winners

Excellence Winners

Eileen Ramos

*Planning for the
Prestigious Poor*

ACADEMIC

**UCLA Institute of
Transportation Studies**

*Implications of
Freeway Siting in CA*

ACADEMIC

City of Jurupa Valley

*Permit Ready
ADU Outreach*

COMMUNICATIONS

Ground Series

Grounding

COMMUNICATIONS

**City of Montclair &
Rangwala Associates**

Montclair General Plan

COMPREHENSIVE PLAN

**Sagecrest Planning &
City of Perris**

Density Bonus Guidelines

PLANNING EXCELLENCE

City of Palm Desert

*Multifamily and Mixed Use
Objective Design Standards*

URBAN DESIGN

City of Wildomar

*Wildomar
General Plan*

COMPREHENSIVE PLAN

James Rojas

PLANNING PIONEER

Riverside Art Museum

Ride-Walk-Engage

COMMUNICATIONS

**Property One, LLC,
Redlands Railway District, LLC, and
the City of Redlands**

*Downtown Redlands
Redevelopment*

IMPLEMENTATION

Tomorrow's World
*Juneteeth Jam Active
Transportation Pop Up*

GRASSROOTS INITIATIVE

City of Rancho Cucamonga

PLANNING AGENCY

**Riverside Community Health
Foundation**

HEAL Zone

ADVANCING DIVERSITY AND SOCIAL CHANGE

Nabeeha Said

PLANNER 4 HEALTH

Bryan Jones

PLANNER 4 HEALTH

Town of Apple Valley
Highway 18 Access Plan

PLANNING EXCELLENCE

SBCTA

*Long Range Multimodal
Transportation Plan*

TRANSPORTATION

City of Rancho Cucamonga



PLANNING AGENCY | EXCELLENCE WINNER

The City of Rancho Cucamonga Planning Department exemplifies excellence in public-sector planning shown by a commitment to long-range, inclusive planning. Known to its residents as the “City with a Plan,” Rancho Cucamonga continues to elevate awareness of planning through sustained public engagement, staff development, and forward-thinking initiatives that integrate health, equity, and environmental stewardship.

A cornerstone of this approach is the Healthy RC initiative, which integrates community health and equity into planning and land use decisions. This effort helped transition toward walkable, mixed-use neighborhoods and directly influenced the award-winning Etiwanda Heights Neighborhood and Conservation Plan— which preserved over 3,000 acres of open space while creating a walkable, sustainable community of 3,000 homes. This plan, recipient of a Richard H. Driehaus Form-Based Code Award, reflect the City’s commitment to building strong, healthy, and connected neighborhoods. An implementation focused plan, the City is now in the early stages of working with a master developer.

In 2021, the City adopted PlanRC, a visionary General Plan update rooted in extensive community outreach—even amid pandemic restrictions. The plan sets a 20-year framework for growth, balancing diverse housing needs with economic development, cultural enrichment, and environmental preservation through strategies of suburban retrofits, connectivity, and fiscal sustainability. The award winning plan allows for 25,000 new units along transit corridors and realized 2,400 new entitled units since plan adoption.

Additional efforts—including the development of the HART District with a form-based code to lay the foundation for a new high-speed rail station, industrial code updates that integrate Good Neighbor Policies and paved the way for AB 98 implementation, and a robust training program for planning staff and commissioners—demonstrate a commitment to excellence across all aspects of the department’s work. Together, these efforts showcase a planning agency that delivers exceptional results with deep partnership with the community it serves.



Eileen Ramos

Planning for the Prestigious Poor

ACADEMIC | MERIT WINNER

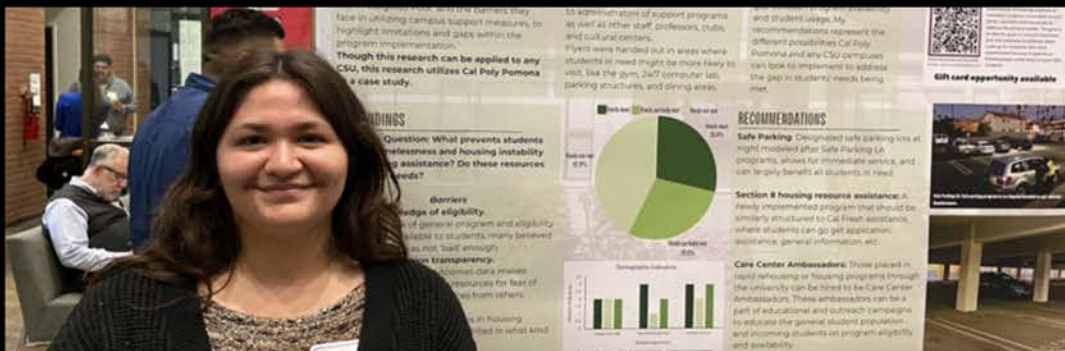


This project examines Cal Poly Pomona as a case study to assess the effectiveness of university programs for students experiencing housing instability. The research began with a survey using close-ended questions to evaluate program design, accessibility, and personal experiences. Participants were also invited to participate in structured interviews for deeper, qualitative insights. Interviews revealed gaps between policy intent and the actual impact on students' lives. The analysis combined both qualitative and quantitative data to provide a comprehensive understanding of the barriers and successes of university resources.

Eileen used university resources, such as Counseling and Psychological Services, the Educational Opportunity Program Renaissance Scholars, and campus clubs and cultural centers, to recruit participants. She launched an email outreach campaign to connect with students facing housing instability and started a GoFundMe campaign to fund \$10 gift card incentives for interview participants, demonstrating her commitment to ethical research practices. All student data was anonymized and encrypted to ensure privacy.

While the senior capstone project didn't require Institutional Review Board (IRB) approval, this limitation prompted Eileen to refine her research questions. Unable to contact other campuses or post on formal platforms, she focused on Cal Poly Pomona, gathering participants through in-person outreach. Eileen sought optional IRB approval but faced bureaucratic obstacles. She overcame this by adhering to IRB-inspired guidelines and using a survey platform with encrypted responses to protect anonymity.

The growing prevalence of housing instability among college students demands urgent attention. A 2018 study found that 10.9% of California State University students experienced homelessness within a year. The study highlighted the need for initiatives to support this vulnerable population. One recommendation was to implement a designated safe parking program, modeled after Safe Parking LA, offering immediate relief and resources for students living in their cars, bridging the gap to long-term stability.



UCLA Institute of Transportation Studies *Implications of Freeway Siting in CA*



ACADEMIC | MERIT WINNER

California's freeway system has historically had disproportionately negative impacts on communities of color. A comprehensive study utilized both quantitative and qualitative methods to examine these effects, focusing on Colton, California. The team encountered the challenge that block-level census data from the decades before and during freeway construction were not available in databases online. Researchers found paper or PDF census records and in some cases manually digitized and cross-checked their data.

Neighborhoods of color were often chosen as sites for freeway projects. Freeways brought demolition, destruction, toxic pollution, noise, economic decline, and stigmatization. These case studies expose flaws in participatory planning processes. In suburban areas, white, affluent interests often succeeded in pushing freeways to more powerless neighborhoods. Massive roadway construction complemented other harmful practices such as urban renewal and redlining. These projects separated neighborhoods of color from job centers and fueled a decline in available transportation options to overcome that mismatch.

The freeway project included three alternatives, one through the white neighborhoods, another through the Latino/a neighborhoods, and a third between the two along the railroad tracks—the state and city ultimately chose and built the third option. Despite protests and organizing, the route's lower cost, rather than public participation, motivated the selection. The ultimate path displaced an estimated 28 individuals.

The research findings have been disseminated through reports, policy briefs, and presentations to various stakeholders, including Caltrans and regional planning organizations. Interactive storymaps have been developed to make the findings more accessible to the public. These efforts aim to inform restorative justice initiatives and the development of equitable transportation policies, with policymakers already utilizing the research to plan and implement strategies to reconnect communities affected by freeway construction.



Riverside Community Health Heal Zone

ADVANCING DIVERSITY AND SOCIAL CHANGE | EXCELLENCE WINNER



The Eastside HEAL (Healthy Eating Active Living) Zone Initiative is a community-driven effort to improve health equity in one of Riverside's oldest and most historically underserved neighborhoods. The Riverside Community Health Foundation in collaboration with the Residents of Eastside Active in Leadership, the City of Riverside, Riverside University Health System-Public Health, the Riverside Art Museum, and the Resident with funding from Kaiser Permanente, the initiative focuses on addressing obesity and chronic disease. The HEAL Zone prioritizes the needs of disadvantaged groups, and promotes inclusive and ethical planning practices that uplift residents often excluded from traditional public health and planning systems.

The collaborative includes planners, health professionals, educators, artists, and community-based organizations. Engagement is prioritized by empowering residents through bilingual Resident Leadership Academies, Promotoras (trained peer health educators), and hands-on activities such as the Community Altar Project, which engaged justice-involved youth and multigenerational families.

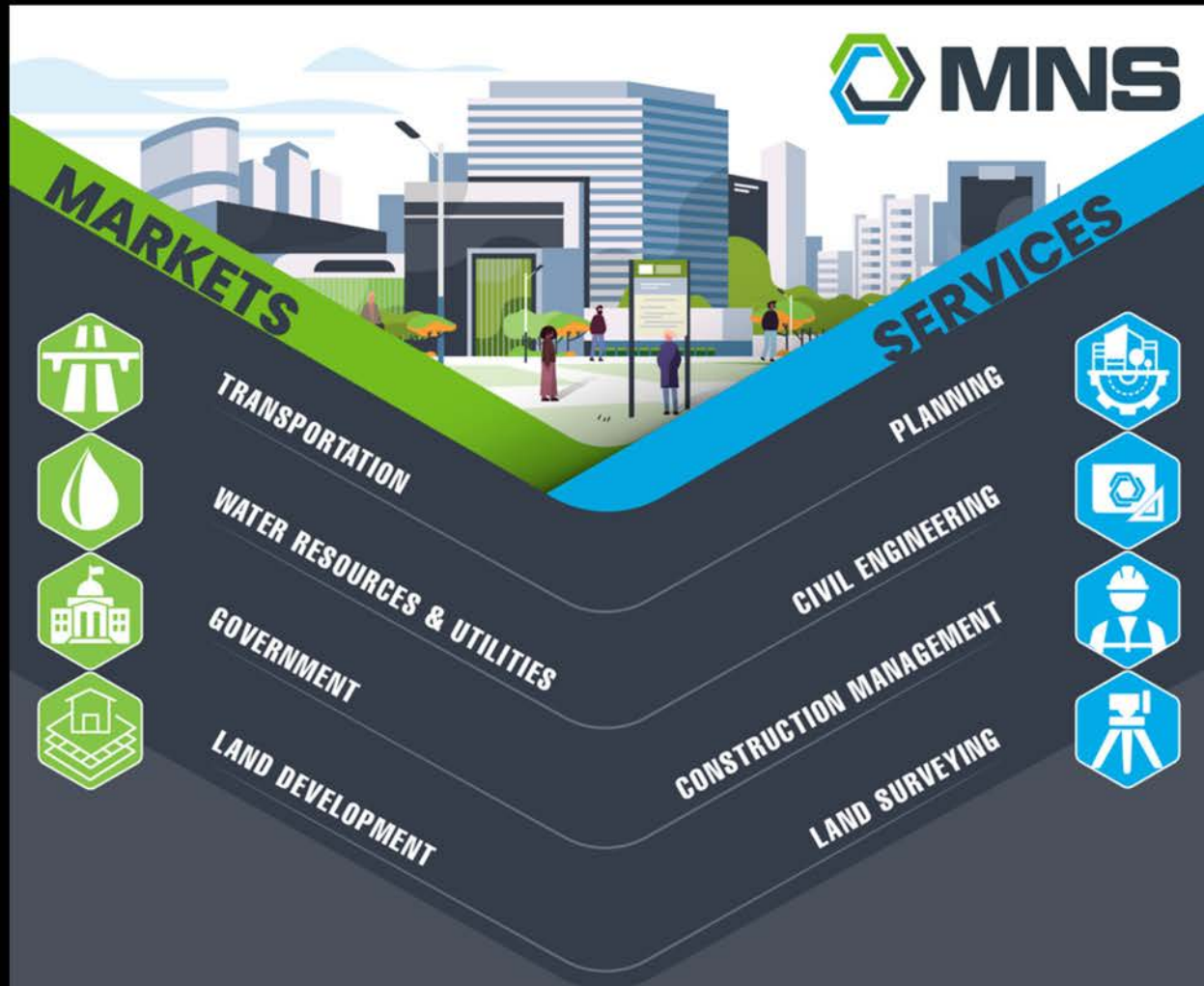
This inclusive approach has led to tangible improvements in community health and built environment conditions. Resident-led community improvement projects have enhanced walkability, created safer parks, and promoted healthier school zones. In partnership with local clinics, the initiative has also established referral systems linking patients with community-based programs that support nutrition, physical activity, and chronic disease management. These outcomes demonstrate a successful model of health-centered, grassroots planning that brings measurable benefits to at-risk populations.

The Eastside HEAL Zone has elevated the role of community-based planning and shown how cross-sector partnerships can dismantle health disparities. Its success has inspired deeper investment in the Eastside and serves as a replicable model for communities seeking to connect planning, public health, and equity. By shifting power to residents and embedding health in everyday decisions, the HEAL Zone is transforming both systems and lives.



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Ground Series
Grounding



COMMUNICATIONS | MERIT WINNER

"Grounding" is a site-specific dance and social justice project that brings planners and communities into conversation with civil rights history through movement and storytelling. The performance premiered outside the Riverside Main Library, across from the Civil Rights Institute. Originally planned for the 2020 APA California Conference and delayed by the pandemic, the project overcame logistical and social challenges through sustained collaboration and a shared commitment to reimagining planning engagement in public space.

Innovative in form and intention, "Grounding" uses dance as a planning tool—activating sites of memory and fostering collective reflection. The performance combined improvisation, social dance, and spoken word to enliven civil rights narratives and connect them to current justice movements. By transforming a traditional planning session into an embodied, place-based experience, the project offered a unique model for engaging audiences across disciplines and backgrounds.

The result was a powerful demonstration of how art can humanize planning and expand its relevance. "Grounding" created space for planners, residents, and artists to share, witness, and move together—amplifying voices often left out of civic processes. The performance deepened understanding of spatial justice, inspired civic dialogue, and elevated awareness of planning's role in shaping equitable narratives.

Participation was inclusive by design. Local dancers, cultural leaders, and APA conference attendees engaged both in the performance and the dialogue it generated. By connecting site, story, and movement, "Grounding" fostered a new model of planning outreach—one that is replicable, emotionally resonant, and grounded in community voice and shared history.



City of Jurupa Valley *Permit Ready - ADU Outreach*

COMMUNICATIONS | MERIT WINNER



The City of Jurupa Valley adopted their 6th Cycle Housing Element in 2022, which projected 120 total ADUs in the eight-year planning period. The City was awarded a Local Action Planning Grant (LEAP) in the same year, aiming to accelerate housing production and facilitate compliance to implement the 6th Cycle Housing Needs Assessment (RHNA). With the LEAP grant, the City established the Permit Ready ADU (PRADU) Program and Outreach to facilitate awareness and incentivize the construction of ADUs within the City. In partnership with RRM Design Group, four ADU architectural plans were created, including a 500 sf studio, a 730 sf one-bedroom, a 1,000 (square shaped) two bedroom, and a 1,000 (linear shaped) two bedroom. These plans also include three different architectural styles.

In conjunction with the ADU plans, the PRADU Program included the preparation of an ADU Handbook to educate the public about the process to incorporate an ADU into their program utilizing the program. The Handbook was also translated to Spanish to reflect the City's demographics, which includes roughly 70% Hispanic residents. Avoiding overly technical language and including easy to understand graphics were also widely considered in the implementation. This would allow the widest extent possible to be able to utilize the Program.

ADUs are projected to play a significant role in addressing the need for increased housing production within the City of Jurupa Valley. The PRADU Program provides a simplified process for ADU permitting, allowing those unfamiliar with construction and development to save time and money. Applicants also have a reduced need to hire an architect and a reduced uncertainty in the design and permitting phases. Combined, these savings increase the affordability of ADUs and accessibility of permitting. Since its launch in 2024, the PRADU program has received five (5) applications to use the permit ready plans



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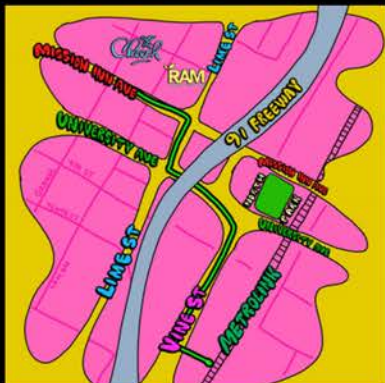
Riverside Art Museum *Ride-Walk-Engage*



COMMUNICATIONS | EXCELLENCE WINNER

The Riverside Art Museum (RAM) implemented the Ride-Walk-Engage project, including the production of a video and marketing campaign to promote the safety and comfort for people walking and biking between the Riverside Metrolink Station and downtown. The project thoughtfully engaged the Inland Empire community through a safety-focused marketing campaign and a traffic safety educational video for their annual community festival, Arte Nuestra, reaching more than 6,000 attendees from across the region. Through meaningful collaboration with community members and regional partners, RAM identified and shared car-free options to access downtown destinations. Funded by a Go Human Community Streets Grant award in 2024 from the Southern California Association of Governments (SCAG), with support from the California Office of Traffic Safety, RAM developed a traffic safety campaign that prioritized language and physical accessibility. The campaign included materials in Spanish, ASL, and English and focused on how visitors could safely access and navigate between transit and museum sites. The campaign highlighted safety tips for people walking, biking, and rolling in downtown Riverside and used wayfinding signage highlighting safe routes from the Riverside Mobility Hub (MetroLink & Riverside County Transit Commission station) that included accessible curb ramps and marked crosswalks.

The campaign represents a unique and innovative partnership between one of the Inland Empire's premier art hubs, SCAG, and regional and local transit centers (Metrolink & RCTC). RAM's campaign successfully addressed and, in some cases, reversed the community's perception of downtown Riverside as unsafe and unenjoyable to walk through. The campaign achieved significant impact, including: (1) 30,000 email recipients; (2) 24,000 organic impressions on Facebook, Instagram, YouTube, and Google; (3) KCAL/KOLA – 54 Radio ads, 41,667 streaming TV ads; (4) KVCR – 75 Radio Spots (Across Riverside and San Bernadino Counties). The Ride-Walk-Engage campaign leveraged one of downtown Riverside's most beloved cultural assets to gather the community and increase awareness of local traffic safety issues and resources.



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City of Montclair & Rangwala Associates *Montclair General Plan*



COMPREHENSIVE PLAN | MERIT WINNER

The City of Montclair's updated General Plan took inspiration to Burnham's call to "make no little plans." As such, the plan confronts the pressing challenges of housing shortages, climate change, and fiscal stability. Through a holistic, systems-based approach, it prioritizes efficiency, resilience, equity, and the overall health of Montclair, all while being deeply informed by authentic and inclusive community engagement.

At the heart of this vision lies an interconnected green network, complemented by reimagined streets that prioritize both ecological health and the needs of people. Key corridors are set to transform into vibrant, mixed-use destinations, fostering economic activity and community interaction. Simultaneously, existing neighborhoods will be enhanced with increased walkability and a diverse range of housing options. The creation of a new transit-oriented downtown and the revitalization of the Montclair Place mall into a dynamic mixed-use center are pivotal elements, alongside dedicated support for local manufacturing and innovation.

The overarching policies of the General Plan are meticulously translated into tangible spatial strategies through the physical plan, guiding Montclair's development over the coming decades. This unified vision, which incorporates specific strategies for housing and key corridors, directs the city's evolution towards sustainable restorative infill. By strategically integrating economic, environmental, and community development principles, Montclair is laying the groundwork for a thriving and equitable future.

Ultimately, Montclair's comprehensive and community-driven approach aims to establish a sustainable, walkable, and economically vibrant city. By strategically weaving together green infrastructure, diverse development, and enhanced public spaces, this plan ensures that Burnham's powerful directive continues to shape Montclair's journey towards becoming an even more thriving and resilient urban center for all its residents.



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2025 AWARDS GALA

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City of Wildomar Wildomar General Plan

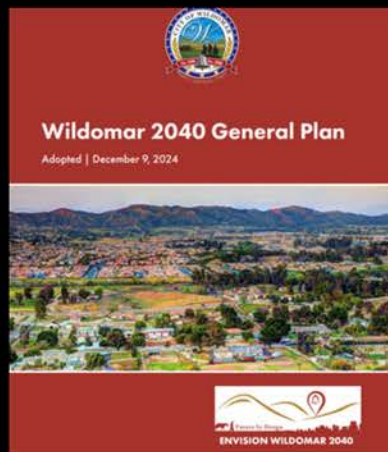
COMPREHENSIVE PLAN | MERIT WINNER



As the first comprehensive General Plan to address Wildomar's unique attributes and aspirations since the City incorporated in 2008. Envision Wildomar 2040 provides a roadmap for the City's evolution while protecting those characteristics that are most important to residents. With Wildomar's rural history, the plan had to balance meeting the need for greater diversity of housing types with the large-lot residences that reflect the city's history. The plan also looks to improving infrastructure, city services and compact centers of community activity, all without harming the natural environments and scenic vistas treasured by residents.

Envision Wildomar 2040 was shaped by an extensive public outreach process at every stage of the process. This process utilized a suite of innovative in-person and online approaches in English and Spanish for reaching a diversity of stakeholders, particularly those traditionally left out of the planning process. This included innovative techniques for facilitating "pop-up" engagement at community gatherings while increasing awareness in the community of planners and planning. These results were shared on the City's Website, alongside a "Story Map" a narrated tour of the City using interactive 360-degree video technology, digital surveys and an interactive citywide map of land uses and proposed land use changes for every parcel.

The General Plan stands out for its clear focus on the guiding vision, planning approach and policies for each element, including two optional elements of local importance—Economic Development and Recreation and Community Services. A number of other cutting-edge topics are addressed in multiple sections of the General Plan including environmental sustainability, health and equity. The final chapter of the General Plan includes a prioritized roadmap of specific actions and programs for implementing its goals and policies. These actions will work in tandem with a comprehensive update to the City's Zoning Code that was developed and adopted together with the GP to ensure the Plan's effectiveness over time.



ENVISION WILDOMAR 2040

Future by Design

5 Public Workshops

75+ participants submitted comments, suggestions, and ideas

Workshop 1: 5/14/22

Workshop 2: 5/18/22 (Virtual)

Workshop 3: 11/10/22

Workshop 4: 11/15/22 (Virtual)

Workshop 5: 1/23/24

461 submissions

in response to 2 surveys covering community values, concerns, aspirations, and land use preferences

3,800 Unique Website Visitors

15 Stakeholder Interviews

4 Study sessions with Planning Commission and City Council

4 Community "Pop-ups"

300+ comments collected at:

Coffee with the City - June 14, 2022 and August 16, 2023

Wildomar's 14th Birthday Celebration - July 19, 2022

Mariachi Night - September 17, 2022

8 community members

in the General Plan Advisory Group (GPAG) held 6 meetings to provide input, feedback, and recommendations

Tomorrow's World

Juneteenth Jam Active Transportation Pop Up



GRASSROOT INITIATIVE | EXCELLENCE WINNER

On June 19, 2024, DEV Partnerships, operating as Tomorrow's World, showcased active transportation safety infrastructure at the annual Rialto Juneteenth Jam to collect resident feedback on bike and pedestrian improvements. The temporary pop-up demonstration allowed the 5,000+ participants to test out and provide feedback on a creative crosswalk, median refuge island, and curb extension. With support from Southern California Association of Governments (SCAG) totaling about \$20,000, Tomorrow's World used the Go Human Kit of Parts lending library of demonstration materials to increase awareness of potential infrastructure improvements and promote bicycle and pedestrian safety, in support of safer and more complete streets. Prior to the event, Vickie Davis, founder of the Juneteenth Jam celebration, was struck by a car while riding a bike. As a result of the crash, Vickie's physical mobility and quality of life significantly shifted. This spurred the incorporation of traffic safety education and infrastructure designs into the 2024 Juneteenth Jam celebration.

With the City of Rialto's support, Tomorrow's World demonstrated transformative traffic calming infrastructure that could potentially be installed around Rialto. Their tactical urbanism demonstration resulted in 32 surveys collected from participants. Their surveys found that 47% of respondents had never attended a community meeting to discuss transportation, 100% of those surveyed indicated that the demonstration helped them understand the value of safety infrastructure, 91% indicated support for the permanent installation of median refuge islands, 84% support for the permanent installation of curb extensions, and 97% of indicated support for the permanent installation of creative crosswalks.

The demonstration at the Juneteenth Jam allowed Tomorrow's World to collect feedback that showcased the community's desire for safety improvements and further engagement. Moreover, it represented a unique and accessible opportunity to engage residents around transportation planning opportunities, who had never otherwise previously engaged with City transportation planning decisions.



Sagecrest Planning & City of Perris *Density Bonus Guidelines*

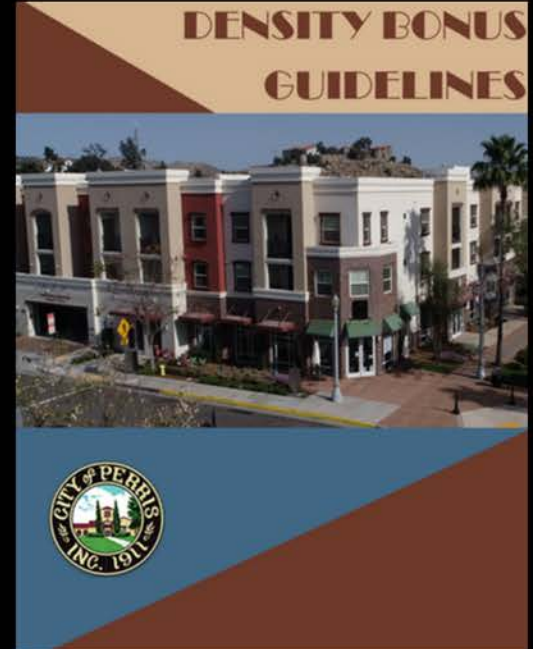
PLANNING EXCELLENCE | MERIT WINNER



The City of Perris created Density Bonus Guidelines to assist the public and City staff on how to obtain density bonuses for housing projects. State density bonus law is complicated filled with complex references to other laws that can be difficult to understand. While many cities rely on zoning codes to interpret State density bonus law, Perris's zoning code acknowledges they will comply with State law and the City uses the Density Bonus Guidelines to interpret and implement density bonus. A key advantage to this approach is that the City can avoid the lengthy public hearing process to incorporate annual updates into their code. This innovative and comprehensive guidelines tool allows City staff to immediately update the guidelines to integrate new regulations and therefore make them readily available to the public quicker and more efficiently.

The City partnered with Sagecrest Planning + Environmental to create a tool explaining the benefits of using density bonus and how to process an application in terms that are simple, straightforward, and beneficial to both the City and the public. Using easy to understand phrasing, tables, and graphics, the guidelines explain what projects are eligible for density bonus, what are the allowed increases in density, what is a concession/incentive, and what is a development standard waiver. The guidelines further explain the City's process to obtain approval of a density bonus.

The City's Density Bonus Guidelines represent an innovative planning tool that will increase public and staff knowledge on density bonuses. This has already been proven to streamline processes and will continue to grow into an effective tool over time. Additionally, should the City lose their institutional knowledge, this tool is in place to bring new planners up to speed quickly and seamlessly. Making density bonus allowances and regulations easier to understand removes a governmental constraint and is anticipated to increase the number of affordable dwelling units in the City.



Property One, LLC, Redlands Railway District, LLC, and the City of Redlands
Downtown Redlands Redevelopment



IMPLEMENTATION | EXCELLENCE WINNER

The Downtown Redlands Redevelopment project exemplifies planning excellence by revitalizing the city's historic core through adaptive reuse, infill development, and transit-oriented design. Spearheaded by Property One, LLC in partnership with the City of Redlands, the project addressed longstanding disinvestment by restoring 3 historic buildings, improving 2 underutilized buildings, and constructing new buildings on eight sites around the Santa Fe Depot. The project aligned with and helped shape evolving city policies, transitioning from the Downtown Specific Plan to the Transit Villages Specific Plan. The effort was innovative in both scope and engagement, featuring public outreach for public art selection and a unique online visualization tool that allowed residents to explore 3D renderings of the project in real time.

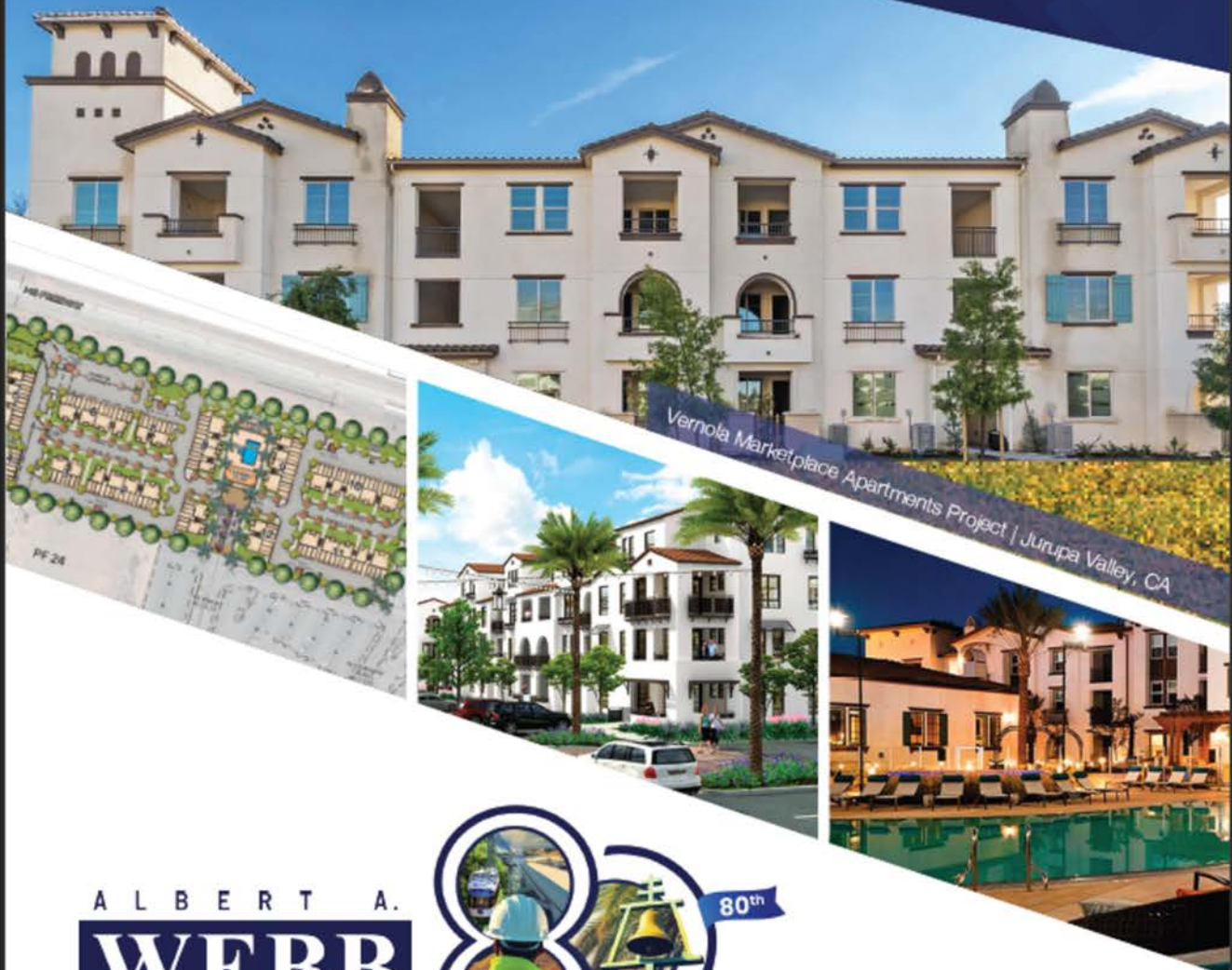
Covering several projects, the project spanned from 2015 to 2025. Community engagement was central to the art selection process, including in-person workshops, an online survey, and targeted outreach in North Redlands, a disadvantaged area within the project boundary. The partnership also supported new transportation infrastructure, including a multi-modal transit hub and public parking facility. The project's measurable outcomes include revitalization of five vacant or underutilized parcels, seismic retrofits to historic buildings, and major reinvestment in the urban core. With expanded access to jobs, retail, transit, public art, and improved public spaces, Downtown Redlands is now positioned for a more vibrant, equitable, and resilient future. This project demonstrates how thoughtful, collaborative planning can catalyze private investment while advancing public goals—and serves as a model for downtown redevelopment throughout the Inland Empire and beyond.



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TO COMPLETION*



Vernola Marketplace Apartments Project | Jurupa Valley, CA

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Nabeeha Said

PLANNER 4 HEALTH | EXCELLENCE WINNER



Nabeeha Said is a rising leader in public health whose work is deeply rooted in advancing health equity and improving outcomes in underserved communities. With a strong foundation in community health education, coalition-building, and cross-sector collaboration, Nabeeha brings a fresh, inclusive, and people-centered approach to building healthier communities.

Her recent work as a CivicSpark Fellow with Riverside University Health System – Public Health (RUHS-PH) illustrates her unique ability to bridge disciplines, particularly between planning and public health. In this role, she supported the Healthy Cities Network by coordinating efforts that integrated urban planning frameworks into public health strategies—ensuring cities could better address the social determinants of health. Nabeeha also played a key role in the Arts & Health Collective pilot project, where she convened planners, artists, and community members to explore creative approaches to embedding health into the built environment. Through these efforts, she championed belonging, community cohesion, and policy innovation grounded in lived experience.

Nabeeha's recent Master of Public Health thesis, *A Planner's Role in Public Health & Tobacco Control*, exemplifies her thought leadership and her belief in breaking down silos to achieve collective impact. Her ability to translate data into stories, engage residents, and navigate complex partnerships reflects a deep understanding of how to build systems that prioritize health, equity, and sustainability.

Nabeeha Said is a powerful example of the next generation of public health professionals who are not only supporting the role of planners in health—but reimagining it. Her work demonstrates that lasting community health comes from collaboration, creativity, and a commitment to inclusion.



Bryan Jones, P.E., AICP

PLANNER 4 HEALTH | EXCELLENCE WINNER



Bryan Jones is a visionary leader whose career has consistently advanced the creation of healthier, more connected communities. With a diverse background, Bryan understands that the health of a community is shaped not only by access to healthcare, but by how we design our streets, neighborhoods, and public spaces.

In every role, Bryan has championed policies and projects that place community well-being at the center. He brings together planners, public health professionals, engineers, and residents to co-create environments that support physical activity, safety, inclusion, and resilience.

Bryan's leadership has produced tangible results. For example, in Eastvale, he launched a citywide trail vision, expanded public safety services, and invested in civic spaces that invite gathering, movement, and healing. He helped secure millions in funding for active transportation and created meaningful platforms like Engage Eastvale and the Clear Vision Speaker Series, connecting health, housing, mobility, and inclusion. These efforts brought public health into everyday planning conversations.

What sets Bryan apart is his ability to translate complex planning and infrastructure systems into community-focused outcomes. His Four C's framework—Creativity, Collaboration, Communication, and Connectedness—has helped cities integrate health into everything from capital projects to economic development strategies.

By aligning land use, mobility, and public engagement around the goal of community health, Bryan Jones has increased understanding of what healthy communities truly mean—and has delivered results that make a difference in people's lives. He is a powerful example of how planners can lead the way toward stronger, healthier futures.



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James Rojas



PLANNING PIONEER | EXCELLENCE WINNER

James Rojas has profoundly transformed urban planning in California through his innovative, hands-on approach to community engagement. As the creator of the "Place It!" method, Rojas has conducted over 500 workshops worldwide, utilizing storytelling, art-making, and model-building to empower individuals—particularly those from marginalized communities—to actively participate in shaping their environments. By replacing traditional planning tools with interactive models made from everyday objects, he has made the planning process more accessible and inclusive, allowing participants to visualize and articulate their visions for their communities.

Rojas's work emphasizes the importance of cultural identity and lived experience in urban planning. His workshops often begin with participants recalling personal memories, which then inform the creation of models representing their ideal community spaces. This approach not only fosters a deeper connection between individuals and their environments but also ensures that planning outcomes reflect the diverse needs and values of the community. By engaging residents in this manner, Rojas has challenged the conventional top-down planning paradigm, advocating for a more democratic and empathetic process.

The impact of Rojas's methodologies extends beyond individual workshops; they have influenced urban planning practices and education across California and internationally. His techniques have been adopted by municipalities, non-profits, and educational institutions, demonstrating their versatility and effectiveness in various contexts. By bridging the gap between professional planners and community members, Rojas has not only enhanced the inclusivity of the planning process but also inspired a new generation of planners to prioritize community engagement and cultural sensitivity. His contributions have undeniably redirected planning practices toward a more participatory and human-centered approach, making him a deserving recipient of the Planning Pioneer Award.



Town of Apple Valley *Highway 18 Access Plan*



PLANNING EXCELLENCE | EXCELLENCE WINNER

Apple Valley's Highway 18 Access Plan focuses on creating new opportunities for bicyclists and pedestrians to access over a dozen key destinations along Highway 18 between Apple Valley Road and Bass Hill Road, including Thunderbird Road between Rancherías Road and Dale Evans Parkway. The majority of the corridor has minimal sidewalk coverage and does not have dedicated bicycle facilities. On these rights of way, bicyclists and pedestrians with limited mobility face significant challenges when traveling along the corridor. Through extensive community engagement and an analysis of existing roadway conditions and collision data, the Plan was developed to identify roadway, pedestrian, and bicycle improvements.

Apple Valley, in partnership with KOA, David Evans and Associates, and Leslie Scott Consulting, worked together to create a set of projects that include frontage road relocation/removal, new crosswalks, sidewalks, curb ramps, and pedestrian refuge islands. Five (5) priority projects were identified based on community feedback at key intersections along the corridor, with a sixth additional priority project included to address safety improvements along Thunderbird Road. The most challenging of these is the Corridor-Wide Path which spans the entire corridor and provides a space that is not shared with vehicles. Three design alternatives were created to address the corridor's diverse land use typologies, allowing Town staff the ability to explore each alternative during the project's design stage.

The two-year planning effort that engaged over 600 community members will provide decades-worth of active transportation benefits. These projects will help to create an active transportation network that will improve access to local and regional destinations and set the stage for future development. Future improvements will help support the Town's goals of a Townwide Complete Streets network to connect to regionally significant amenities such as the Mojave Narrows Trail, Victor Valley College, and the future Victor Valley Rail Station of Brightline West. Ultimately, the Highway 18 Access Plan will help to create a more sustainable, livable, and well-connected Highway 18 corridor.



SBCTA

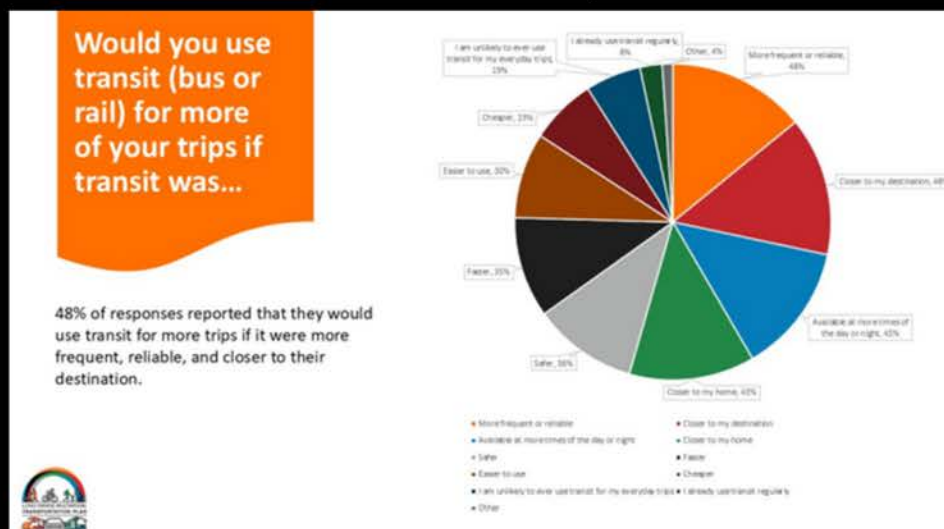
Long Range Multimodal Transportation Plan

TRANSPORTATION | EXCELLENCE WINNER



The San Bernardino County Long Range Multimodal Transportation Plan (LRMTP) is a roadmap prioritizing over 1,100 projects to shape the County's mobility future through 2045. SBCTA's Planning Department worked closely with community members, jurisdictions, Caltrans District 8, transit and rail operators, and regional partners like SCAG to create a plan using innovative analytical tools and subject matter expertise. The LRMTP supports the California Climate Action Plan for Transportation Infrastructure (CAPTI) by integrating resilience strategies addressing climate risks. The LRMTP deployed data-driven tools to formulate solutions that overcome barriers such as disinvestment and congestion. The resulting strategy aligns with local General Plans, SCAG's Connect SoCal, and statewide GHG reduction goals, ensuring transportation improvements support both community development and regional economic vitality.

Public engagement was a cornerstone. SBCTA conducted over 50 community events and stakeholder meetings, hosted 10 virtual workshops, and distributed 1,500 multilingual surveys in English and Spanish. SBCTA also offered an interactive online platform where over 1,300 participants contributed input via mapping tools and comment forums. Key engagement moments included the Inland Empire Freight Forum, pop-up events at transit hubs, and workshops focused on disadvantaged communities. SBCTA also led targeted workshops in Victorville, Barsto, Ontario, Redlands, and Needles alongside pop-up booths at farmer's markets. Community feedback directly influenced project prioritization, elevating pedestrian safety, safe routes to school, and expanded transit access in under-served neighborhoods. The impact is already evident. It informs applications for major and state funding streams that can accelerate the delivery of key projects and positions the County for future success. Designed as a replicable framework, it serves as a model for peer counties, blending technical rigor with authentic community engagement. Its project selection, equity integration, and climate resilience methods will foster healthier, more connected communities for years to come.



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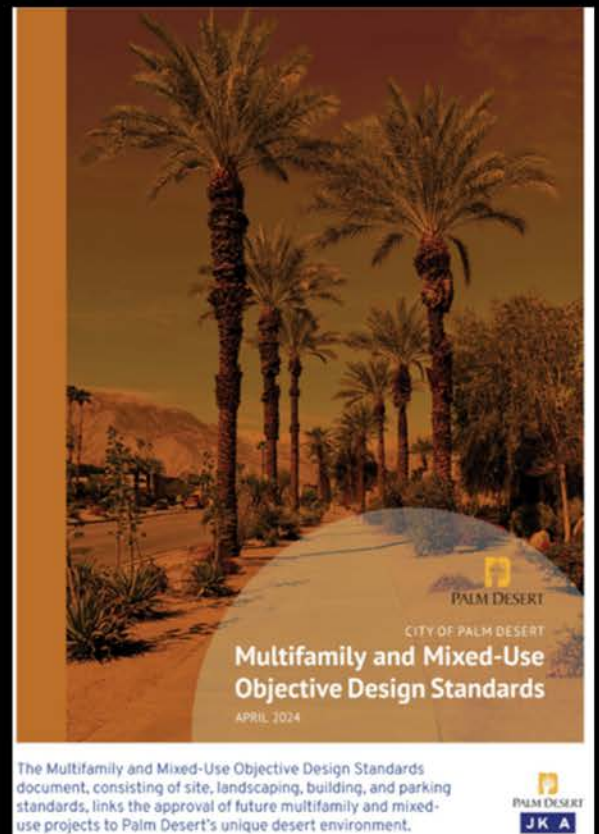
Multifamily Mixed Use Objective Design Guidelines



URBAN DESIGN | MERIT WINNER

Traditionally, Palm Desert relied on discretionary design review to ensure high-quality development. However, recent State legislation now requires cities to use objective design standards—clear, measurable criteria—especially for multifamily and mixed-use projects. In response, the City adopted the Multifamily and Mixed-Use Objective Design Standards, providing a consistent, quantifiable framework for applicants and City staff that reflects Palm Desert's unique character and Sonoran Desert identity.

To develop these standards, the City partnered with John Kaliski Architects and Tajima Open Design Office. Guided by input from the Architectural Review Commission, the consultants identified region-specific design and landscape precedents, which were refined through public workshops, developer sessions, and meetings with City officials. The resulting standards emphasize native landscaping, appropriate buffers, shaded spaces, and a cohesive material and color palette. A companion checklist guides applicants and ensures Staff consistency, streamlining approvals while reinforcing the community's design expectations and values.



The Multifamily and Mixed-Use Objective Design Standards document, consisting of site, landscaping, building, and parking standards, links the approval of future multifamily and mixed-use projects to Palm Desert's unique desert environment.



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