COMPASS BLUEPRINT
new directions for growth

STRATEGIC FRAMEWORK & PRIORITIES

A Recommendations Report for the City of Coachella

SOUTHERN CALIFORNIA ASSOCIATION of GOVERNMENTS

Developed on behalf of SCAG as part of the Compass Blueprint Program

A VISION. A PLAN. A COURSE.

Compass Blueprint Program

This project was funded by the Southern California Association of Governments (SCAG) Compass Blueprint Demonstration Project Program. Compass Blueprint provides tools to cities to evaluate planning options and stimulate development consistent with the region's goals. SCAG provides cities with support to help with visioning, infill analysis, policy assistance, economic and marketing assistance, and developing communication tools for cities.

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COACHELLA

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Agriculture in Coachella

Introduction

Southern California offers an abundance of recreational, entertainment, and economic opportunities set in a gorgeous living environment that continues to attract new residents and jobs. The Coachella Valley alone is expected to grow 50 percent by 2030, to 511,126 permanent residents.* To accommodate this growth, policymakers and developers must explore the densification of existing areas and the development of new residential and commercial projects to provide additional housing and employment opportunities.

Compass Blueprint Strategy

In 2001, the Southern California Association of Governments (SCAG) started a regional visioning process that culminated in a strategy for regional growth that would accommodate the coming growth while providing for livability, mobility, prosperity, and sustainability. This strategy, called "Compass Blueprint," promotes a stronger link between transportation and land use planning at both regional and local scales so that growth is directed toward areas that offer mobility and transportation choices. Compass Blueprint encourages creative, forward-thinking, and sustainable development solutions that fit local needs and support shared regional values. The strategy is broadly based on four key principles, which can be referred to as the "Compass Principles."

Principle 1: Improve Mobility

Principle 2: Foster Livability in All Communities

Principle 3: Enable Prosperity for All People

Principle 4: Promote Sustainability for Future Generations

Compass Blueprint is now in the implementation phase and SCAG is partnering with cities and counties in southern California to realize this growth vision. A series of Compass Blueprint Demonstration Projects were conducted that exemplify the goals shared by the Compass Blueprint and unique visions of local communities. The City of Coachella applied for Compass Blueprint services and was selected to be one of these demonstration projects.

Demonstration Project Summary

Coachella is located in Eastern Coachella Valley within Riverside County. Once a small farming town, the City is experiencing tremendous growth and is currently the sixth fastest growing city in California. The City is poised to double in size through annexation of its sphere of influence. With tremendous growth pressures, the City is wrestling with key planning issues, which include:

- Transportation. The City is located along the I-10 and SR-86, both major routes for trucks and international trade. The Southern Pacific railroad also traverses the city. These transportation modes will likely shape the vision for community growth and change.
- Airport. The Jacqueline Cochran Regional Airport, a designated cargo airport, lies south of the City's sphere of influence and holds tremendous implications for industrial and higher paying job creation. The City recently completed an industrial utilization study.
- Economy. The City's economy is rooted in agriculture and industry, yet is also diversifying, with plans such as the Commercial Entertainment District. In addition, the City has Enterprise and Empowerment Zones.
- Creating Livable Neighborhoods. The City is facing the challenge of how to create sustainable neighborhoods that provide a higher quality of life for residents and benefit the City while avoiding the typical suburban development patterns in the valley. The pressure to convert industrialy zoned land to residential is high. Proposed "leap-frog" development is also providing challenges from a service and infrastructure standpoint.
- Adjacent Development. The County is developing the South Valley Implementation Plan, which could add 50,000 homes south of the city. Similar proposals are planned in Mecca and Oasis. These proposals call for minimal jobs, which will exacerbate a jobs-housing imbalance as well as create unacceptable traffic impacts on all north–south routes.

The City selected specific study areas for the Compass Blueprint project to examine these issues and generate planning recommendations. The study areas are located within the City's sphere of influence (see Regional Map, page 2), which the City is prepared to annex. This Compass Blueprint project is the first step in evaluating key planning issues and proposing appropriate and creative physical, policy, economic, and social solutions.

This recommendations report is a summary of the work completed under the Compass Blueprint project, and provides design concepts for circulation and land use within the study areas as well as policy recommendations. The recommendations report presents:

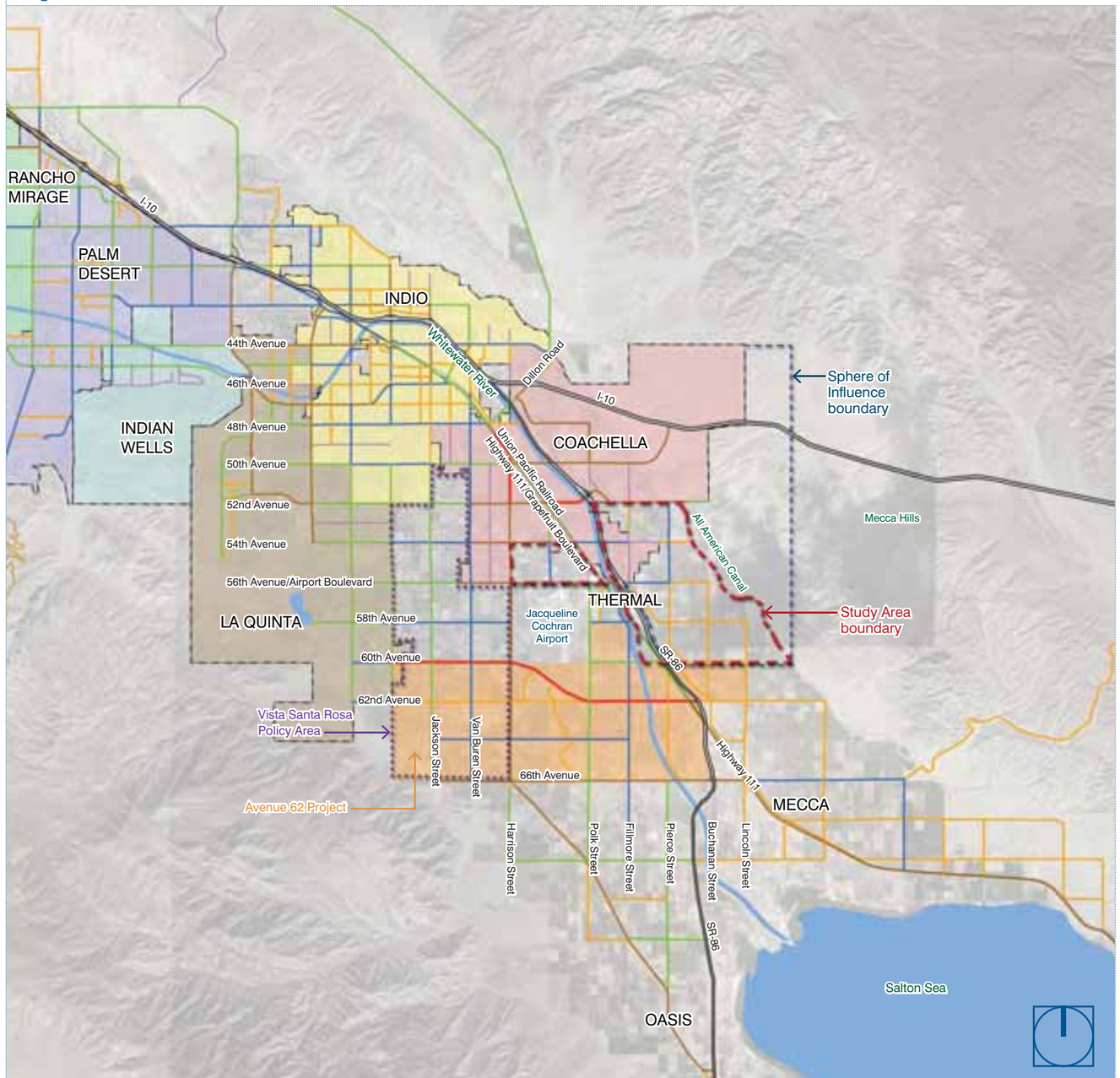
- Regional and site-specific background information for the City of Coachella and the selected study areas;
- Summary of the strategic framework session and the City's perspective with regard to growth;
- Synopsis of guiding principles for growth and the Report's recommendations;
- Circulation and land use concepts that integrate the various focus areas of the City; and
- Implementation principles and recommendations for managing and directing incremental growth over the next 20 years.

With current annexations and the sphere of influence expansion, the City of Coachella is in a position to define a new image and a new reality for itself. What image comes to the minds of other Valley residents and other Southern Californians when asked to describe Coachella? Through the strategic framework session, it is apparent that the City envisions itself becoming a balanced community with opportunities for all segment of society to live, work, play, and learn. The research and recommendations presented in this report provide planning tools for the City to achieve this vision and assist with General Plan update efforts.

Recently completed development project in Coachella

** Source: SCAG 2004 RTP Growth Forecast*

Regional Location



Legend

City Jurisdiction (1)

- City of Coachella
- Coachella sphere of influence

Circulation (2)

- Expressway
- Major
- Secondary
- Arterial
- Urban Arterial
- Mountain Arterial
- Collector

Development Areas

- Vista Santa Rosa Policy Area (3)
- Avenue 62 Project Area (4)

Sources:

1. *City of Coachella, GIS Database, 2007*
2. *SR-86 South, The Salton Sea Highway Corridor Study, 2003*
3. *Riverside County Integrated Plan (RCIP), Eastern Coachella Valley Area Plan (ECVAP), 2003*
4. *South Valley Implementation Program, PDF exhibit, 2006*

Context

Regional Perspective

The City of Coachella is located at the eastern end of the Coachella Valley in southern California. The Coachella Valley includes the cities of Cathedral City, Coachella, Desert Hot Springs, Indian Wells, Indio, La Quinta, Palm Desert, Palm Springs, and Rancho Mirage, as well as large areas of unincorporated Riverside County. The I-10 runs east–west through the Coachella Valley, linking the cities and unincorporated areas within Riverside County. The SR-86 breaks off from the I-10 and heads southeast through the City of Coachella towards the Salton Sea.

Development pressures have extended along these major transportation corridors east into the City of Coachella. From 2000 to 2007, Riverside County grew from 1,545,387 persons to 2,031,625, a 31.5 percent increase. Coachella Valley also increased in size from 255,788 to 350,879, a growth of 37.2 percent. Coachella has experienced growth at a much more intense rate than the rest of the region. Coachella grew from a population of 22,724 to 38,486 persons, a 69.4 percent growth.*

Currently, Coachella covers approximately 32 square miles. The pending annexations for the City's sphere of influence will increase the City's boundaries to approximately 64 square miles, and establish Coachella as the largest city within Coachella Valley. In light of this growth, the City of Coachella is faced with meeting the needs of many new residents who are looking for housing and employment opportunities.

The study areas for this report are located within the City's current sphere of influence, to the south and southeast of the City boundaries. The growth pressures throughout the region are affecting transportation networks and impacting the demand for different land uses within these study areas. The City of Coachella should define a vision for growth and guide development towards this vision as these study areas transition from agricultural and open space to residential, retail, and employment land uses.

** Source: 2007 Department of Finance Report*

Surrounding Communities

The study areas for this report are divided by SR-86 into the eastern and western study areas. The eastern study area covers approximately 7,224 acres, and is bounded on the west by the Whitewater River, which functions as the Coachella Valley stormwater channel, and on the east by the All American Canal. The western study area encompasses approximately 1,250 acres, and lies directly north of the Jacqueline Cochran Airport, and south of downtown Coachella.

In addition to the City of Coachella to the north, the cities of Indio and La Quinta lie west of the study areas. Riverside County has plans for a low density residential community within the Vista Santa Rosa area, directly west of the study areas and west of the Jacqueline Cochran Airport. The smaller, unincorporated town of Thermal is directly southwest of the study areas, with additional communities of Mecca and Oasis located further south toward the Salton Sea.

With Coachella's plans to expand into the study areas, it is important for the City to communicate with these surrounding communities and coordinate plans for growth to ensure cohesive rather than piecemeal development. In particular, as the City prepares to annex unincorporated Riverside County land, it is necessary to synchronize planning efforts to provide for organized development. Specific growth management recommendations are included at the end of this report. As these jurisdictions continue to grow, they have the opportunity to positively affect each other, and work together toward making Coachella Valley a prosperous environment for residents to live and work.

In addition to the surrounding communities and policy areas, there are a number of large, individual development projects proposed for the locale that will directly influence development within the study areas. These major projects are summarized in the following section.

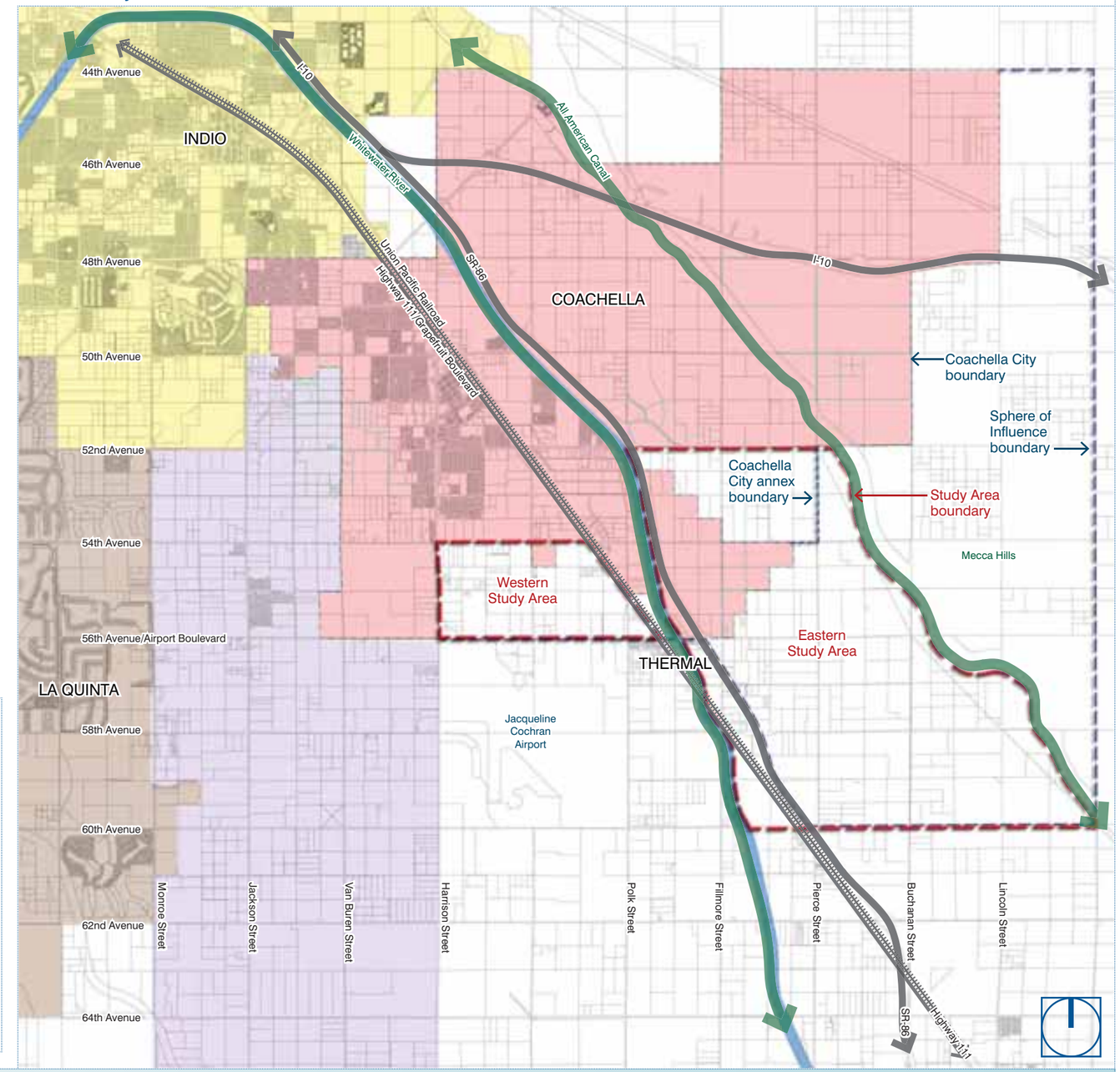
Legend

Policy Areas

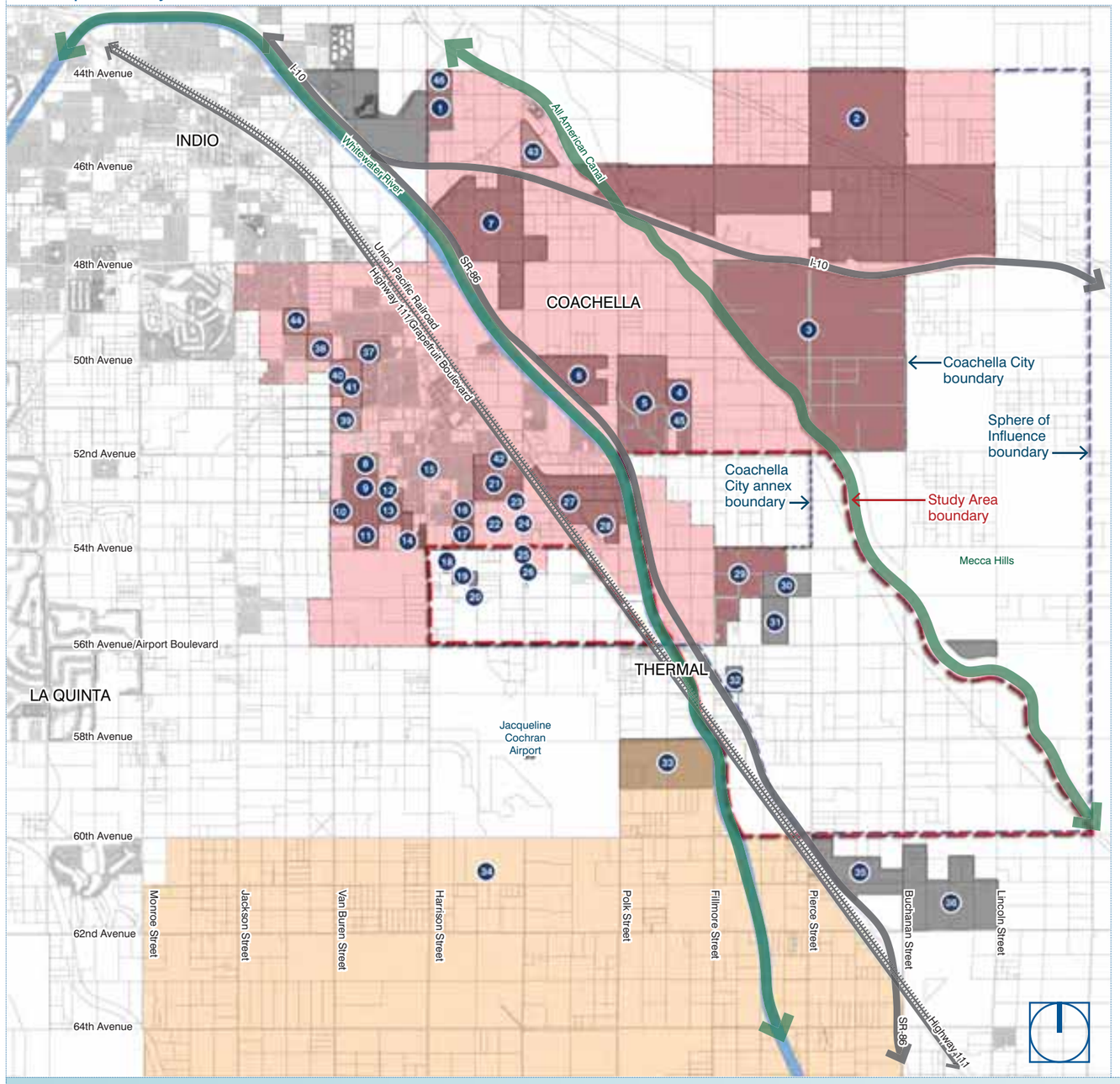
- Coachella
- Indio
- La Quinta
- Vista Santa Rosa Policy Area (2)

Sources:
1. *City of Coachella, GIS Database, 2007*
2. *Riverside County Integrated Plan (RCIP), Eastern Coachella Valley Area Plan (ECVAP), 2003*

Local Vicinity



Development Projects



Legend

Policy Areas

- City of Coachella (1)
- Avenue 62 Project Area (2)

Proposed Projects (3)

- Proposed Project Boundaries
- 1 Project Reference Numbers

Sources:

1. *City of Coachella, GIS Database, 2007*
2. *South Valley Implementation Program, PDF exhibit, 2006*
3. *Multiple sources: City of Coachella, GIS Database, 2007; Riverside County, GIS Database, 2007*

Proposed Development

The City of Coachella is currently faced with a large number of proposed projects within and surrounding the city limits. The development projects map illustrates the quantity of proposed projects within and around the city. Each circled number denotes a proposed or approved project as of August 2007:

1. Cabazon Band of Mission Indians development: 295 single-family units, golf course, commercial
2. Lennar Desert Lakes: 7,300 single-family units, golf course, commercial uses
3. Lomas del Sol Specific Plan, 1,877-acres: 8,000 units on 919 acres, 175 acres commercial, 75 acres hotel, 708 acres recreation
4. 129 single-family unit subdivision
5. 348.5-acre Specific Plan: 842 single-amily units, 244 multifamily units, school
6. 477 single-family unit subdivision
7. Shadow View Specific Plan: mixed-use development
8. 160 single-family unit subdivision
9. 169 single-family unit subdivision
10. 369 single-family unit subdivision
11. 152 single-family unit subdivision
12. 115 single-family unit subdivision
13. 80 single-family unit subdivision
14. 95 single-family units & 14 acres commercial
15. 2 medical buildings
16. 125 single-family units on 30 acres
17. 282 unit subdivision
18. RC PP21358
19. RC PM35408
20. RC PP22498
21. 269 single-family unit subdivision
22. 349 single-family unit subdivision
23. Armtec Defense Products
24. Precision Gunite
25. Santa Rosa Design Center
26. California Plastering
27. Enterprise Way Business Park
28. Rancho Coachella Business Center, includes Fulton Distribution Center and offices
29. Coachella Vineyards Specific Plan: 807 units
30. Van Buren: 272 single-family unit subdivision
31. Future Coachella Valley Unified School District (CVUSD) School
32. RC PM32036

33. RC SP00369
34. Avenue 62 project
35. RC SP00350
36. College of the Desert (COD) East Valley Educational Center
37. 112 unit subdivision
38. 171 unit subdivision
39. 252 unit subdivision
40. 108 unit subdivision
41. 232 unit subdivision
42. 150 unit subdivision
43. 387 unit subdivision
44. 138 unit subdivision
45. 212 unit subdivision
46. 140 unit subdivision

Of these projects, most are master planned residential communities or stand-alone tracts of residential development. The cumulative total will significantly impact the existing City of Coachella by adding thousands of units and establishing new communities within and around the City. The following projects are of particular important to the City of Coachella:

2 **Lennar Desert Lakes:** Located along Coachella's Eastern boundary, this master-planned development proposes 7,300 square foot units, a golf course, and various commercial uses. Although this project has not yet been approved, the large area covered by this development will influence much of the City's planning efforts within the northeast portion of the City.

3 **Lomas del Sol Specific Plan:** This 1,877-acre development proposes 8,000 units on 919 acres, 175 acres of commercial uses, a 75-acre hotel, and 708 acres of recreation. Again, although this project is not yet approved, the area covered by this development will impact planning efforts east of the All American Canal.

29 **Coachella Vineyards Specific Plan:** This approved Specific Plan provides for 807 units. Because of the project's placement within the eastern study area, this Recommendations Report will incorporate Coachella Vineyards within the context of the land use concepts, provided in the subsequent pages.

34 **Avenue 62 Project:** This large development projects a range of 30,000 to 50,000 new housing units. The project area is west of the proposed COD Eastern campus, and includes some commercial areas that will provide employment opportunities for local residents. However, using the assumption that each household can be expected to generate demand for two jobs, only a small proportion of such demand would be generated within the proposed project area. Therefore, this project as planned will function more as a bedroom community with residents commuting to jobs elsewhere in the Valley.

36 **College of the Desert Eastern Valley Center**: One of the top destinations for Coachella Valley residents in 2006 was the College of the Desert and Town Center Mall within the City of Palm Desert. The COD is planning for a new College of the Desert Eastern Valley Center, to be located along Highway 86 at the proposed Avenue 62 interchange. The COD's new facilities are projected to open in 2008, with projected enrollments at 4,000 by 2010, 6,000 by 2015, and 8,000 by 2020. The campus is planned to provide nearly one-fourth of COD's instruction and services by 2015.

While not all of the proposed projects are located within City boundaries, these projects will have a considerable impact on Coachella's future development. As the City proceeds with the General Plan update and plans for areas within the City's sphere of influence, coordination with the County is paramount to ensure that on- and off-site impacts are addressed and a comprehensive approach to planning is undertaken.

Strategic Framework Session

On July 10, 2007 a strategic framework session was held to facilitate dialogue regarding Coachella's future growth. The session included a panel discussion between members of the City Council, Planning Commission, City Mayor, and professionals within the building industry. The panel was open to the community, and approximately 40 citizens and members of adjacent communities and organizations were present.

The session focused discussion on different topics related to growth within and surrounding the City, including planning for growth, communication, jobs, housing, transportation, infrastructure, and land use. The session also gave the City an opportunity to discuss a future vision and growth strategy for Coachella. The input received by the elected officials should be incorporated into the General Plan update.

General Summary

The strategic framework session provided an environment for City officials to consult with professionals within the building industry regarding future development within Coachella. The following points set the framework for discussion:

- Benefits of planning for future development: the City can look at the experiences of similar cities to explore different growth and development scenarios.
- Need to plan for a specified population buildout: future growth will require an increase in infrastructure and amenities such as parks and schools.
- Importance of coordinating all aspects of planning: transportation, infrastructure, and land use must work together to meet the needs of the City's future buildout population. When these factors come together and are planned in unison the City can reach its greatest potential.
- Plan for the needs and quality of life for future residents: go beyond the delineation of land uses and plan for a city of districts that work together harmoniously.

Strategic framework session panel

Strategic framework session panel

Provide a variety of housing opportunities

Ensure adequate infrastructure for future growth

The City's Perspective

In addition to providing a forum for the exchange of ideas, the strategic framework session also provided insight into the City's perspectives on growth. The following list summarizes comments made by City officials with regard to the future growth for Coachella:

- Transparent planning: the City stated a desire to open dialogue with developers and surrounding jurisdictions to coordinate planning efforts.
- Jobs/housing balance: the City expressed strong aversion to becoming a bedroom community, and recognized the benefit for reserving land for nonresidential uses. The vision for Coachella as a balanced community with employment and housing opportunities was established.
- Residents: City officials maintained the need to be cognizant of current residents while planning for the quality of life for future residents.
- Homeownership: City officials acknowledged the limitations of Coachella's current housing stock, and expressed the priority to diversify and expand the range of housing types within the City. A variety of housing options would support a range of resident income levels.
- Education: the City stated the desire to take advantage of the proximity of the COD Eastern campus, and the anticipated educational training programs for residents to improve their skills.
- Infrastructure: the City recognized a need for financing mechanisms to provide for the necessary infrastructure and services to accommodate future growth.

Guiding Principles

Building on the panel discussion and incorporating the City's visions expressed at the strategic framework session, these guiding principles provide a foundation for the recommendations provided in this report.

1. Strategically plan for the future:
   - Create a vision for the sphere areas to guide Coachella's future growth.
   - Establish economic development goals to assure fiscal stability and plan for economic transitions.
   - Develop a strategy to meet future infrastructure needs and plan for a balance of jobs and housing within Coachella.
   - Maintain flexibility to respond to changes in the market and plan for a range of development scenarios.

2. Create a great place to live:
   - Go beyond the delineation of land uses to create a series of identifiable districts, within which a system of villages can provide a more intimate living environment.
   - Provide community amenities throughout Coachella: disperse parks, schools, churches, medical facilities, and community centers to strengthen the social infrastructure.
   - Plan for a variety of residential neighborhoods to serve a diverse resident population and supply a range of rental and homeownership opportunities.
   - Provide opportunities for businesses within Coachella to concentrate regional employment centers or disperse neighborhood employment divisions based on production and transportation needs.
   - Protect and build upon the scenic and recreational opportunities offered by the existing natural features through sustainable practices to foster an appreciation for the land.
   - Establish a City-sponsored event to cultivate a sense of community and promote Coachella's image.
   - Identify branding opportunities for the City to differentiate it from other cities in the Valley.

3. Build effective transportation systems:
   - Use roadways to connect rather than divide communities and districts within and around Coachella.
   - Explore business opportunities offered by the Union Pacific Railroad, Jacqueline Cochran Airport, and highway 86 (NAFTA highway).
   - Work with the appropriate agencies to maximize the potential for the Jacqueline Cochran Airport, and ensure adequate access to support these goals.
   - Recognize future transportation issues and the need to plan for a well-connected roadway system within the City's sphere of influence.
   - Plan for public transit to provide a viable transportation alternative for Coachella residents.

4. Be proactive:
   - Communicate and coordinate with adjacent jurisdictions to build common policies regarding development.
   - Communicate with transportation entities to synchronize vision and plans for the Union Pacific Railroad, Jacqueline Cochran Airport, and highway 86 (NAFTA highway).
   - Build off of existing services and amenities: coordinate education and training needs with the College of the Desert Eastern Coachella Valley campus; sponsor local and regional economic development marketing efforts; and cooperate with housing providers to promote the development of affordable housing.
   - Identify the utility services and needs necessary to serve Coachella's future population.
   - Put financing mechanisms in place to fund future infrastructure needs by linking public financing to the achievement of public goals.

Land Use Recommendations

The land uses recommendations provided in this report take into consideration the major projects within and around Coachella, the environmental context, and the current General Plan land use and circulation plans influencing the study areas. The major projects highlighted in the previous pages are incorporated within the recommended design concepts.

Environmental Context

Although the Multiple Species Habitat Conservation Plan (MSHCP) has not cited any important natural resource areas directly within the boundaries of the study areas, the following points summarize other major environmental considerations for development specific to the study areas. Additional information pertaining to environmentally conscious planning and principles of sustainable development are located on page 17.

- There are high seismic hazards within and around Coachella, with the San Andreas fault zone running directly east of the study areas. Planning should be mindful of earthquake hazards and enforce seismic safety through compliance with the California Building Code.
- The Whitewater River and All American Canal have been modified to function as drainage and irrigation channels, eliminating most flooding risks within the study areas. However, future development should be encouraged to maintain natural drainage courses and incorporate systems to contain and percolate most drainage on-site.
- The City is currently preparing an ordinance to address water conservation. Methods such as requiring natural landscaping and other water-saving methods should be enforced to reduce demands on the water supply.
- Planning strategies should disperse employment and residential land uses to reduce the average daily commute time for residents. Once the population reaches a critical mass, public transit should be encouraged as an alternative mode of transportation.

Legend

- Existing roadways
- Proposed roadways
- Existing and proposed interchanges

Flood Hazards (1)

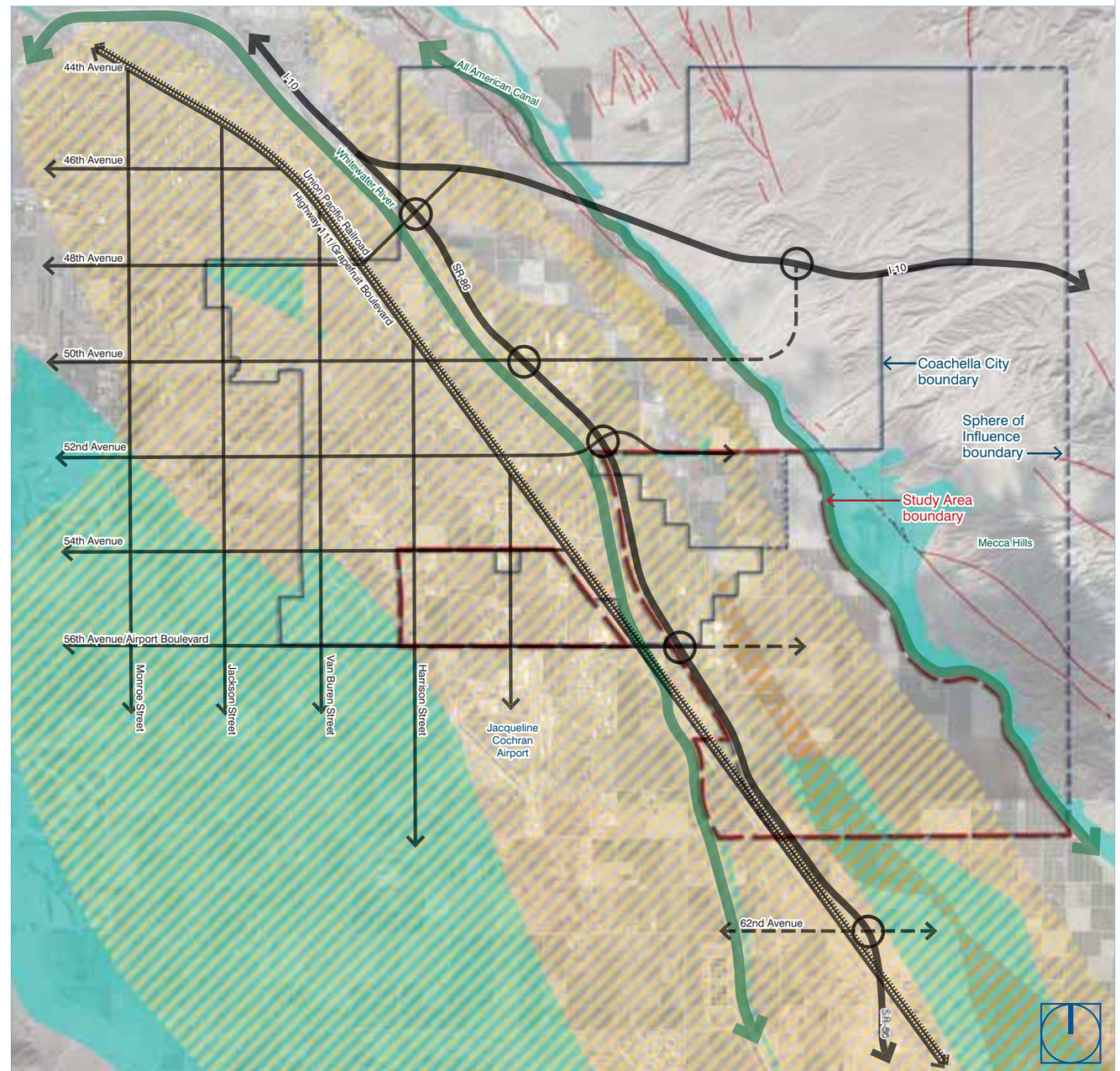
- Waterways
- 100-year flood zone

Seismic Hazards (1)

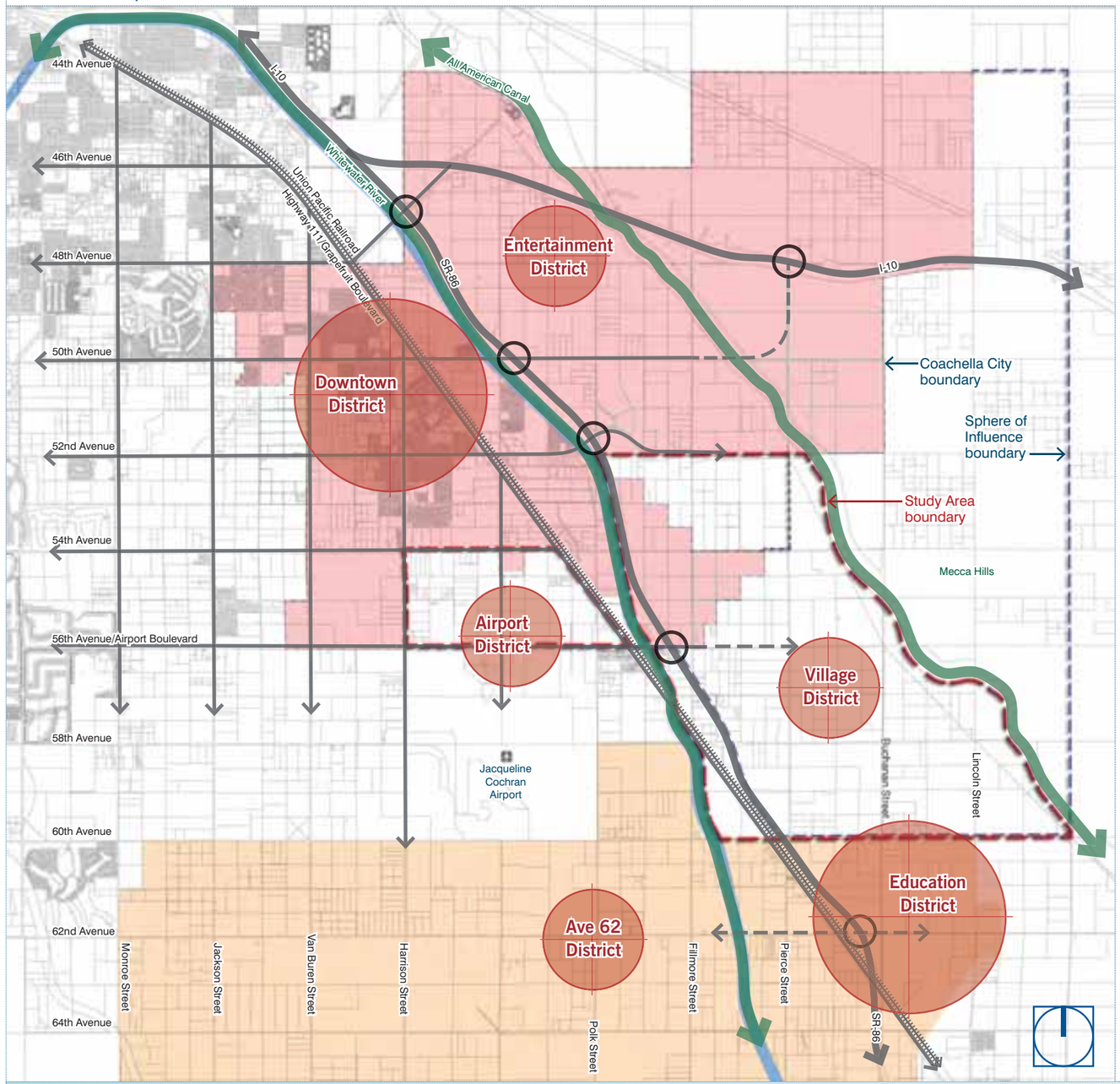
- Faults
- Very High Susceptibility
- High Susceptibility

Sources:
1. Riverside County Integrated Plan (RCIP), Eastern Coachella Valley Area Plan (ECVAP), 2003

Environmental Context



District Concept



District Concept

The delineation of land uses within a general plan or specific plans is one method for guiding development. During the strategic framework session, the idea of districts was introduced as a way to organize land uses within Coachella. A district is a conceptual term used to define smaller communities within the overall Coachella community.

Planning for a series of districts allows the City to go beyond the delineation of land uses to establish micro-communities and community centers serving adjacent neighborhoods within the larger city. Organizing land uses according to districts allows for the dispersal of land uses throughout the City rather than concentrating large areas for single uses. Planning for a range of uses within each district presents a way to distribute community amenities such as parks, churches, and schools.

Examining the study areas within the context of existing and proposed development, the land uses and proposed projects establish a series of possible districts within the City of Coachella and surrounding areas. The location of the districts within this recommendations report is conceptual. District boundaries are not delineated and the circled areas focus on the center or core of each district. The circles have either a 1/2- or 1-mile radius to give a sense of scale to each map. These illustrations should be used as guides for future development plans.

The concepts behind each district area define unique functions based on location and land use:

- The Downtown District is centered around downtown Coachella, and has the potential to develop into one of the major nodes within the City due to its historic attributes and the location of City Hall.
- The Entertainment District takes advantage of the major transportation corridors in this area within the City, and highlights this area's potential for entertainment uses.
- The Airport District may evolve with an emphasis on employment uses, with office and industrial uses, reflecting its location adjacent to the airport and railroad.
- The Village District symbolizes the idea of a series of residential villages located east of SR-86.

- The Education District is located at the proposed COD Eastern campus, poised to become a major educational node for the surrounding region.
- The Avenue 62 District reflects a number of proposed residential projects in this area that have organized under the Avenue 62 project, with a proposed town center at the intersection of Avenue 62 and Polk Street.

The concept of organizing land uses within a framework of districts is a tool that can be used for the General Plan update. It is a structure for tailoring land uses, development policies, open space and conservation policies, and economic development strategies for district areas in the City and sphere of influence. By overlaying the series of conceptual districts on the City's General Plan Land Use map, it is apparent that the mix of land uses applied to the Downtown District is more detailed than the land uses applied to the remaining districts.

Legend

Coachella General Plan Land Use (1)

- Very Low Density Residential
- Low Density Residential
- Medium Density Residential
- High Density Residential
- General Commercial
- Entertainment Commercial
- Heavy Industrial
- Light Industrial
- Open Space
- Agriculture
- Public Use
- Airport

Adjacent Projects

- Avenue 62 Project
- COD Eastern Campus

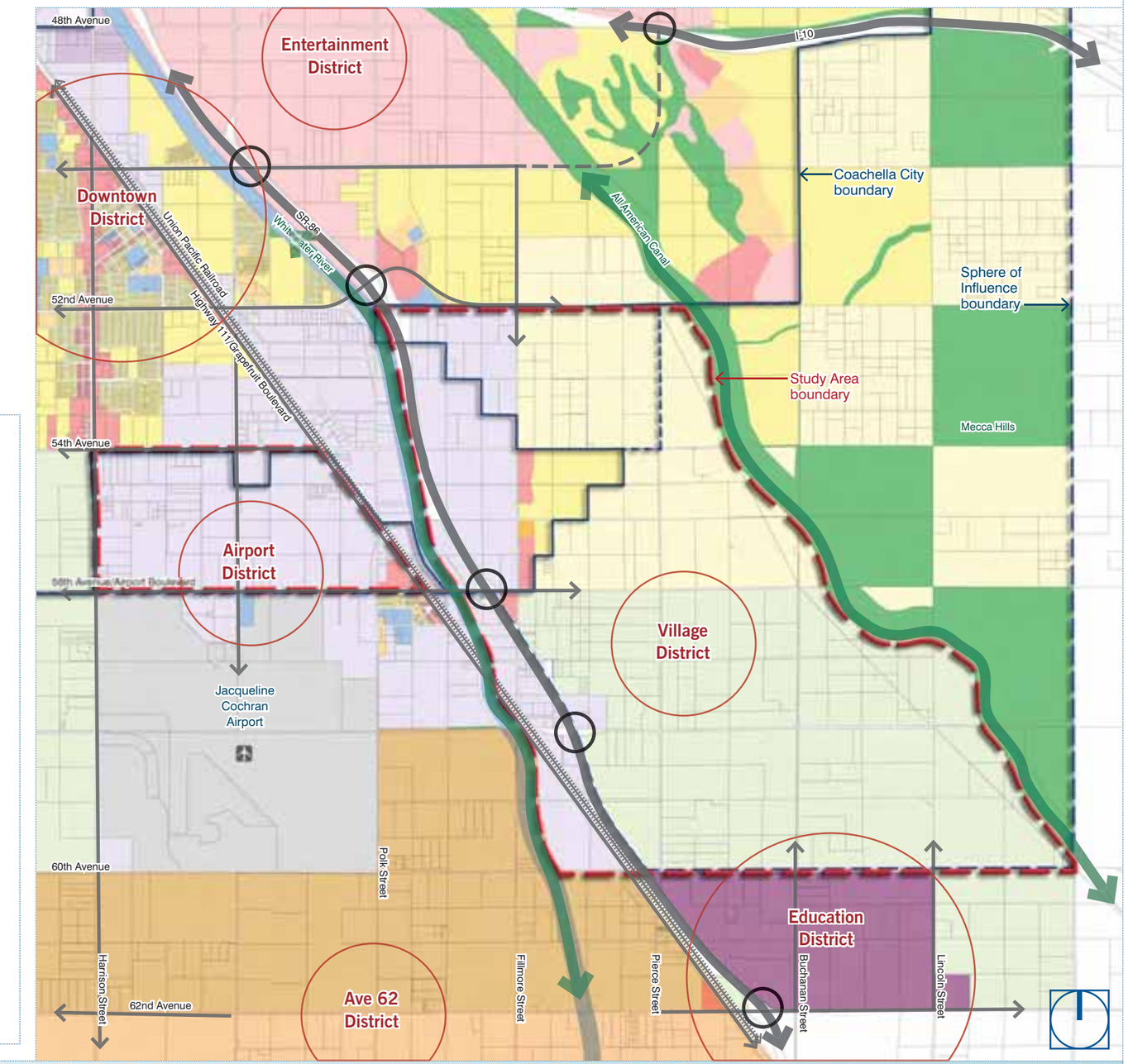
Conceptual Districts

- District areas: 1-mile radius for major nodes and 1/2-mile radius for minor nodes*

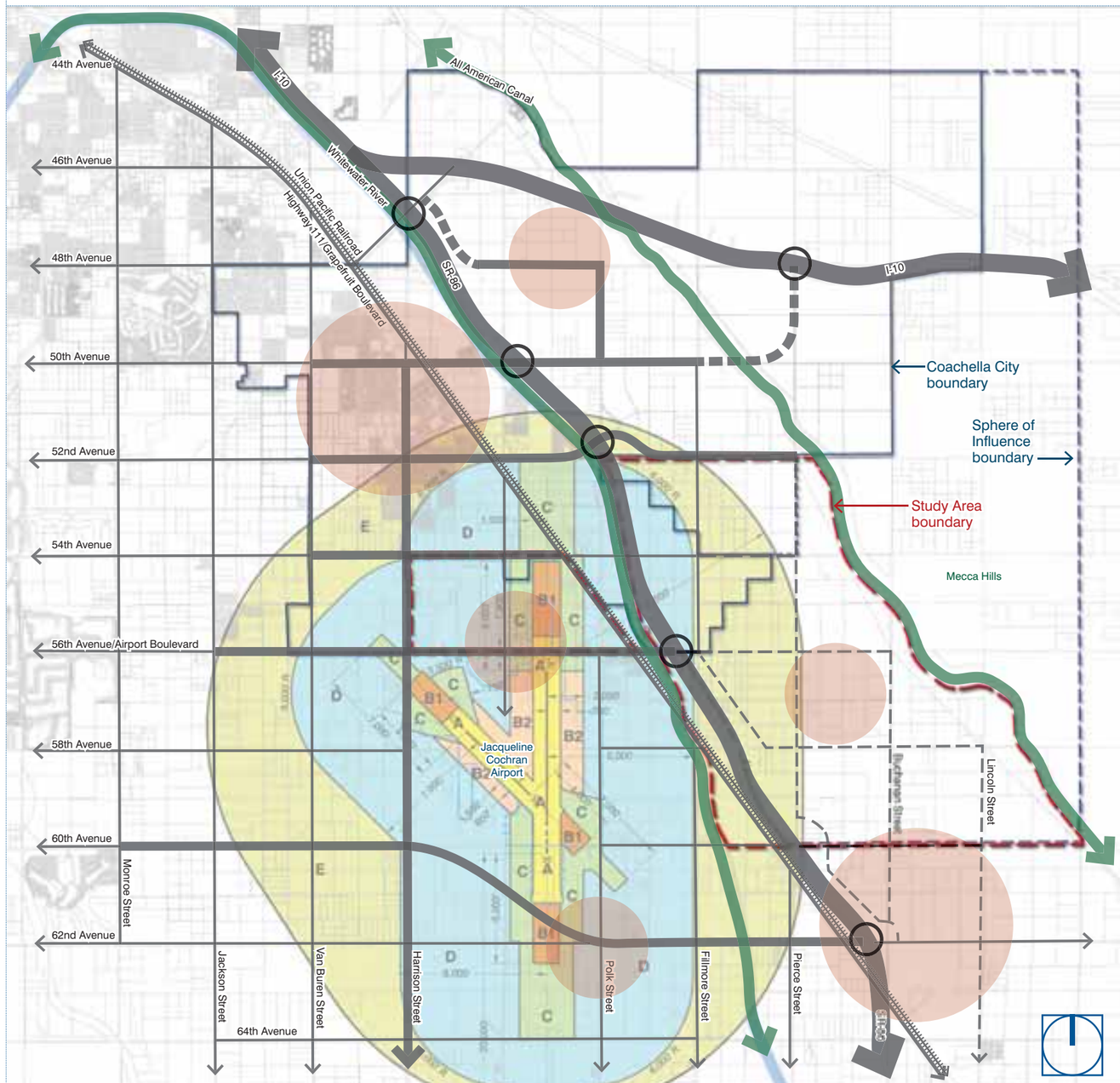
** Note: The placement of these elements is conceptual.*

Sources:
1. City of Coachella, GIS database, 2007

Coachella General Plan Land Use



Circulation Context



Legend

- State and interstate highways
- 6-lane roads (expressways and urban arterial roadways)
- 4-lane roads (arterial, major, and secondary roadways)
- Existing roadways
- Proposed roadways
- Proposed interchanges
- District areas*

Airport Overlay Zones (1)

- A: Runway protection zone
- B1: Inner approach/departure zone
- B2: Adjacent to runway
- C: Extended approach/departure zone
- D: Primary traffic patterns and runway
- E: Other airport environs

** Note: The placement of these elements is conceptual.*

Sources:
1. Riverside County Airport Land Use Compatibility Plan, 2003

Circulation Context

With development increasing within and surrounding the City of Coachella, the existing transportation network will be progressively impacted. The following points summarize transportation improvements and zones that will have an impact on future development within the study areas. These current improvements and zones have been proposed to accommodate future growth in the region.

- SR-86 is designated as a NAFTA highway, and will be experiencing increasing levels of truck traffic in addition to traffic generated by the growing communities of Mecca, Oasis, the Avenue 62 project, and future COD campus. To accommodate the future growth, current plans may expand SR-86 up to 8-10 lanes.
- The proposed interchange for SR-86 that will directly provide access to the study areas is located at Airport Boulevard.
- The proposed circulation system shown in the eastern study area reflects the traditional grid pattern with two minor roads adjacent to SR-86 redirecting traffic to the Airport Boulevard and Avenue 62 interchanges.
- Harrison Street is projected to be the major north–south transportation corridor serving development west of SR-86. To accommodate growth south of the City, this roadway is planned to expand to six lanes.
- The Jacqueline Cochran Airport Master Plan includes extended runway zones for the north–south runway, impacting the western study area. The airport zones include the following building restrictions (for a more detailed description of building restrictions, see the *Riverside County Airport Land Use Compatibility Plan*):
  - Zone A: Runway protection zone; prohibits any structures to be built within this zone.
  - Zone B1: Inner approach/departure zone; restricts buildings to 35 feet in height; prohibits schools, libraries, hospitals, and similar uses.
  - Zone B2: Adjacent to runway zone; shares same restrictions as Zone B1.
  - Zone C: Extended approach/departure zone; restricts building height to 70 feet; prohibits schools, libraries, hospitals, and similar uses.
  - Zone D: Primary traffic patterns and runway buffer zone; restricts buildings to 70 feet in height; prohibits noise-sensitive uses.
  - Zone E: Airport environs zone; restricts building height to 100 feet; prohibits uses hazardous to flight.

Circulation Concept

Looking within the context of the series of districts, the location of these conceptualized centers of concentrated development are placed generally along SR-86. With the placement of these nodes, it is possible to anticipate future traffic patterns. For example, as the Airport District evolves as an employment-oriented district, this area may become a destination for future residents living in the Avenue 62 District. Similarly, the Education District may also develop as a traffic destination for the region.

It is important to reserve necessary access points and rights-of-way for adequate transportation infrastructure to provide for future growth. Additional circulation recommendations below highlight transportation concepts more specific to the study areas.

- Update the master plan of arterials in the General Plan to include a conceptual network system within the eastern study area. Arterial roadway patterns should not be established on a piecemeal basis by individual tracts of development.
- Provide an additional parallel route east of SR-86 to serve development located east of SR-86 and relieve traffic along the SR-86.
- An expansion of SR-86 has the potential to divide the east and west areas of the City. To alleviate the possible congestion at proposed interchanges, an additional interchange may be needed between the Airport Boulevard and Avenue 62 interchanges.
- Explore the extension of a railroad spur from the Union Pacific Railroad to serve adjacent industrial areas. For additional recommendations regarding railroad spur locations, see page 21.
- Take advantage of the opportunities for freight and/or passenger transportation with the Jacqueline Cochran Airport. Identify the future role of the airport and coordinate with the interrelated transportation entities to work towards this vision.

Public Transit

Coachella should also consider public transit opportunities when planning for future growth. The following public transit improvements are also delineated on the circulation concept map.

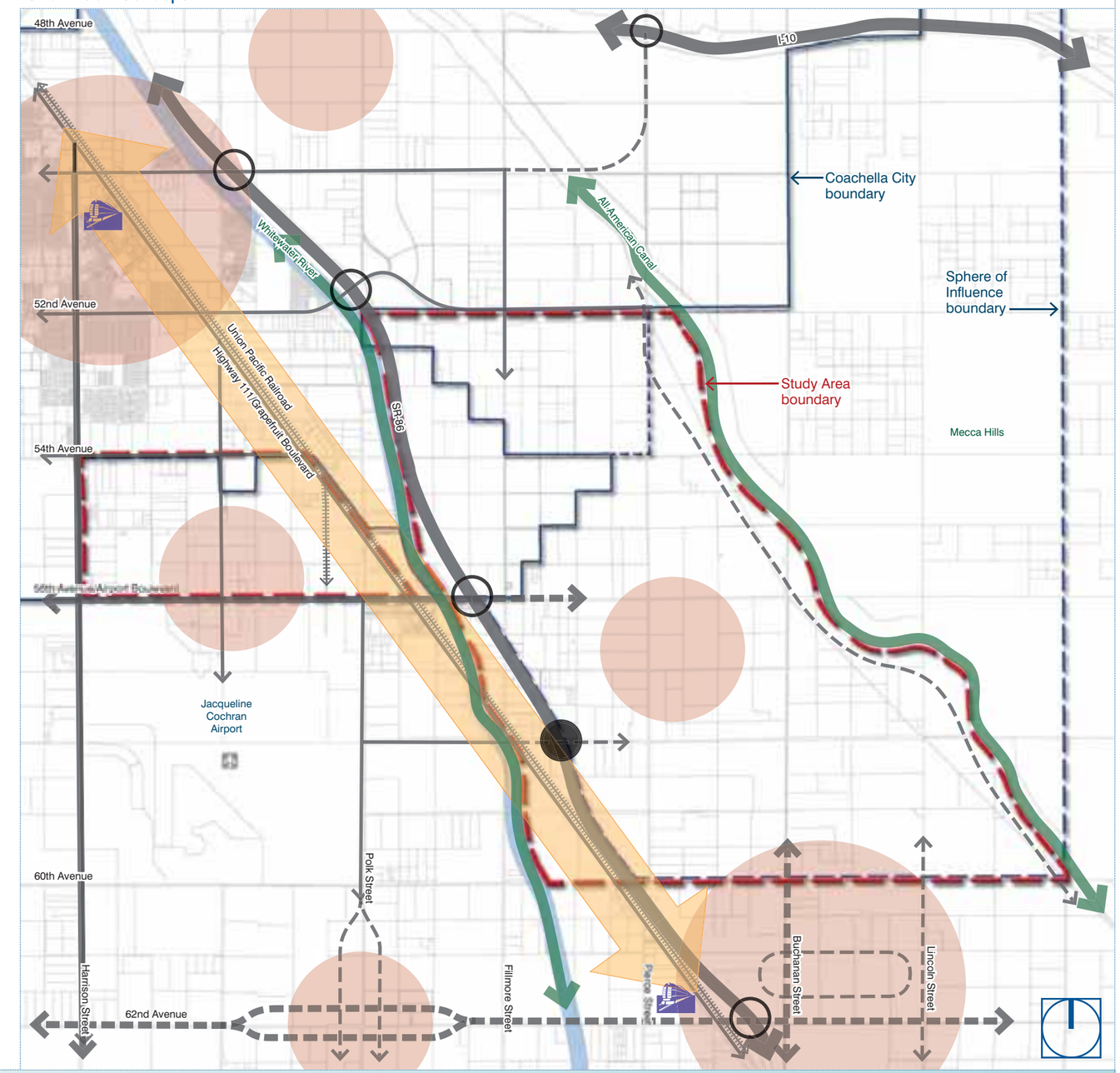
- SunLine Transit has proposed an extension of Line 92 to connect to Line 111, which stretches from downtown Coachella to Indio along Highway 111, and an extension of Line 111 from Highway 111. A long-range plan also includes an establishment of a BRT line along Highway 111.
- Allow for an extend Metrolink line to Coachella by reserving land for future Metrolink stations. Possibly pursue stations at both the downtown and COD locations.

Legend

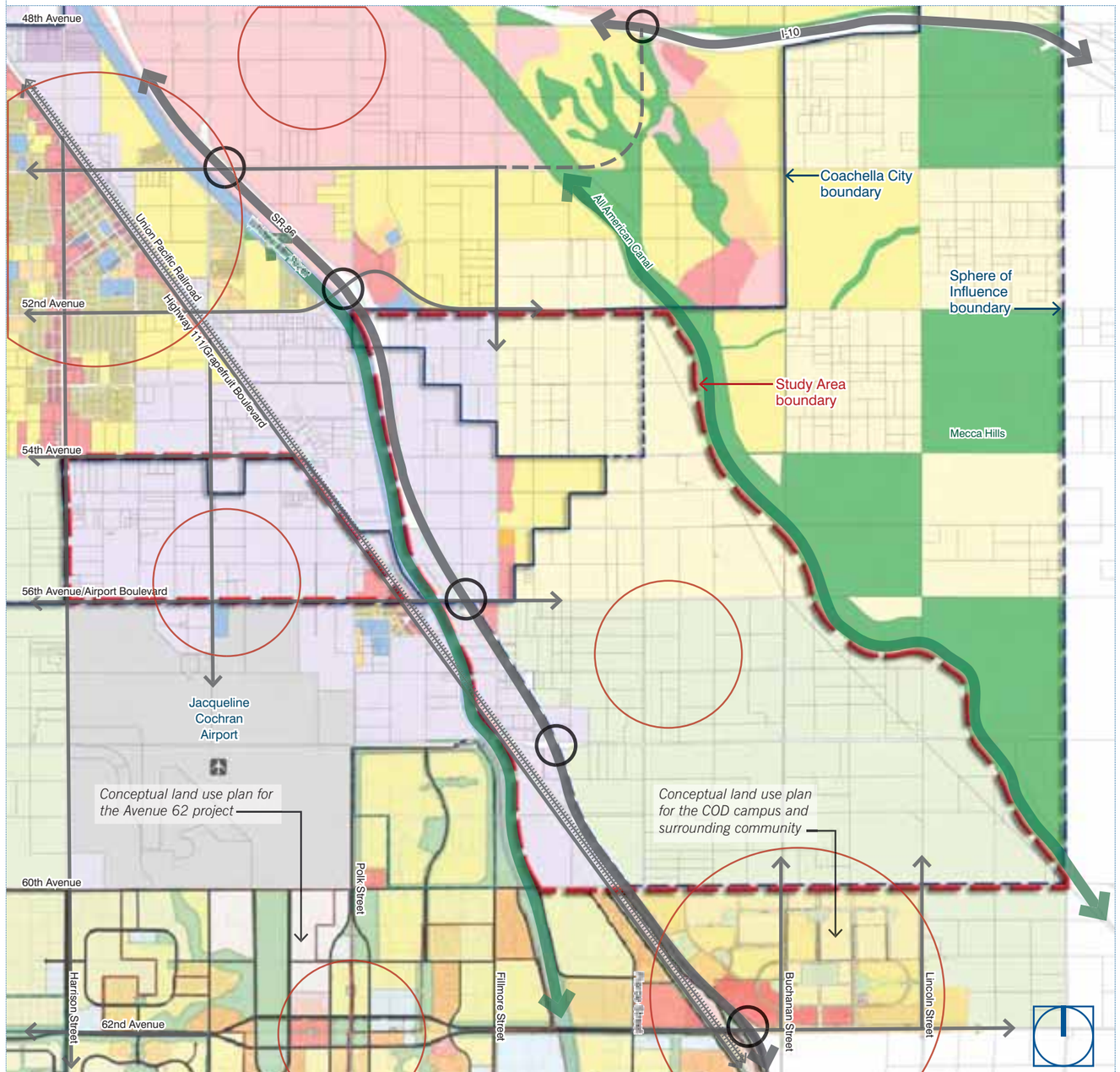
- Existing roadways
- Proposed roadways
- Proposed interchanges
- Recommended interchanges
- Proposed Sunline BRT route
- Recommended Metrolink stations*
- District areas*

** Note: The placement of these elements is conceptual.*

Circulation Concept



Land Use Context



Legend

Coachella General Plan (1)

- Very Low Density Residential
- Low Density Residential
- Medium Density Residential
- High Density Residential
- General Commercial
- Entertainment Commercial
- Heavy Industrial
- Light Industrial
- Open Space
- Agriculture
- Public Use
- Airport

Avenue 62 Project (2)

- Low Density Residential
- Medium Density Residential
- High Density Residential
- Very High Density Residential
- Commercial
- Office/Industrial
- Public
- Parks/Open Space

COD Project (3)

- Low Density Residential
- Medium Density Residential
- High Density Residential
- Commercial
- Parks/Open Space

Sources:
1. City of Coachella, GIS database, 2007
2. Land Use Concept for South Valley Parkway Area, T&B Planning, 2007
3. Panorama Conceptual Land Use Plan, Templeton Planning Group, 2006

Land Use Context

The Land Use Plan from Coachella's current General Plan designates a large portion of the western study area as light industrial land uses, and a significant area within the eastern study area as agricultural land use. The industrial and agricultural land uses also stretch south, with industrial uses south of the Jacqueline Cochran Airport and agricultural uses south of the City's sphere of influence. The conceptual land use plans for the Avenue 62 and COD projects are overlaid on these areas (left), illustrating the future of development.

With these development pressures, the land use concepts explained below provide alternative development scenarios for the study areas. These land use concepts take into consideration the idea of Coachella as a city of districts, as discussed on page 8, in addition to incorporating the circulation recommendations from page 11. The land use concepts also account for those approved development projects within the study area boundaries. The core ideas that are similar throughout the land use concepts are summarized in the framework plan, illustrated on page 16.

Aside from commonalities, each concept demonstrates a different land use scenario and a unique set of land use principles. The range of land use concepts provided intends to provoke creativity in solving planning issues, and provides the City with a degree of planning flexibility.

Some of these land use principles may be combined to form additional land use concepts. For example, the separation of the east and west study areas allows for the land use configuration in the western study area to be applied to different land use concepts within the eastern study area. The purpose of the land use concepts is to provide different methods for achieving the guiding principles and core ideas presented in this recommendations report.

These concepts should be further evaluated and considered as part of the General Plan update, and consequential Zoning Code amendments.

Concept A: Village Center

Concept A portrays the Village District as the center of a series of villages within the eastern study area. In addition to notes overlaid on the Village Center concept illustration, major planning principles are listed below:

- The major node for the District is centrally located within the eastern study area, easily accessible to SR-86 via Airport Boulevard, but with sufficient distance from the interchange to lessen traffic congestion at this juncture. Airport Boulevard separates into a couplet at the District center node to emphasize the area as a destination. The District node is placed adjacent to the CVUSD parcel for possible joint use opportunities with educational, recreational, and community facilities. The District node includes retail, mixed use, and public land uses in addition to recreational facilities and community centers.
- Proposed circulation for the study areas generally adheres to the traditional parcel grid, with the exception of a spine road and minor loop roads:
  - The spine road located parallel to the All American Canal serves development east of SR-86, potentially providing an alternate route from the COD campus to the I-10. This spine road is pulled back from the All American Canal in strategic locations to allow for development adjacent to the open space.
  - Minor loop roads also increase connectivity, with Airport Boulevard connecting to Buchanan Street and 58th Avenue linking to Lincoln Street.
- For the western study area, a small corridor of residential uses is located across 54th Avenue from the recently constructed Lennar residential community. This concept illustrates the idea of a greenbelt to buffer the residential uses from industrial uses to the south. The school located here would also satisfy potential demand for schools serving the surrounding neighborhoods. The land use concept for the western study area may be either applied to or replaced by the remaining land use concepts for this area.
- Industrial and office uses within both the eastern and western study areas comprise approximately 2,500 acres total, per the Jobs and Economic Development recommendations on pages 20 to 22. Residential land uses take up the majority of the remaining acreage. Additional housing recommendations are discussed on pages 18 and 19. The acreage for these areas may be increased or decreased according to market demand.

Land Use

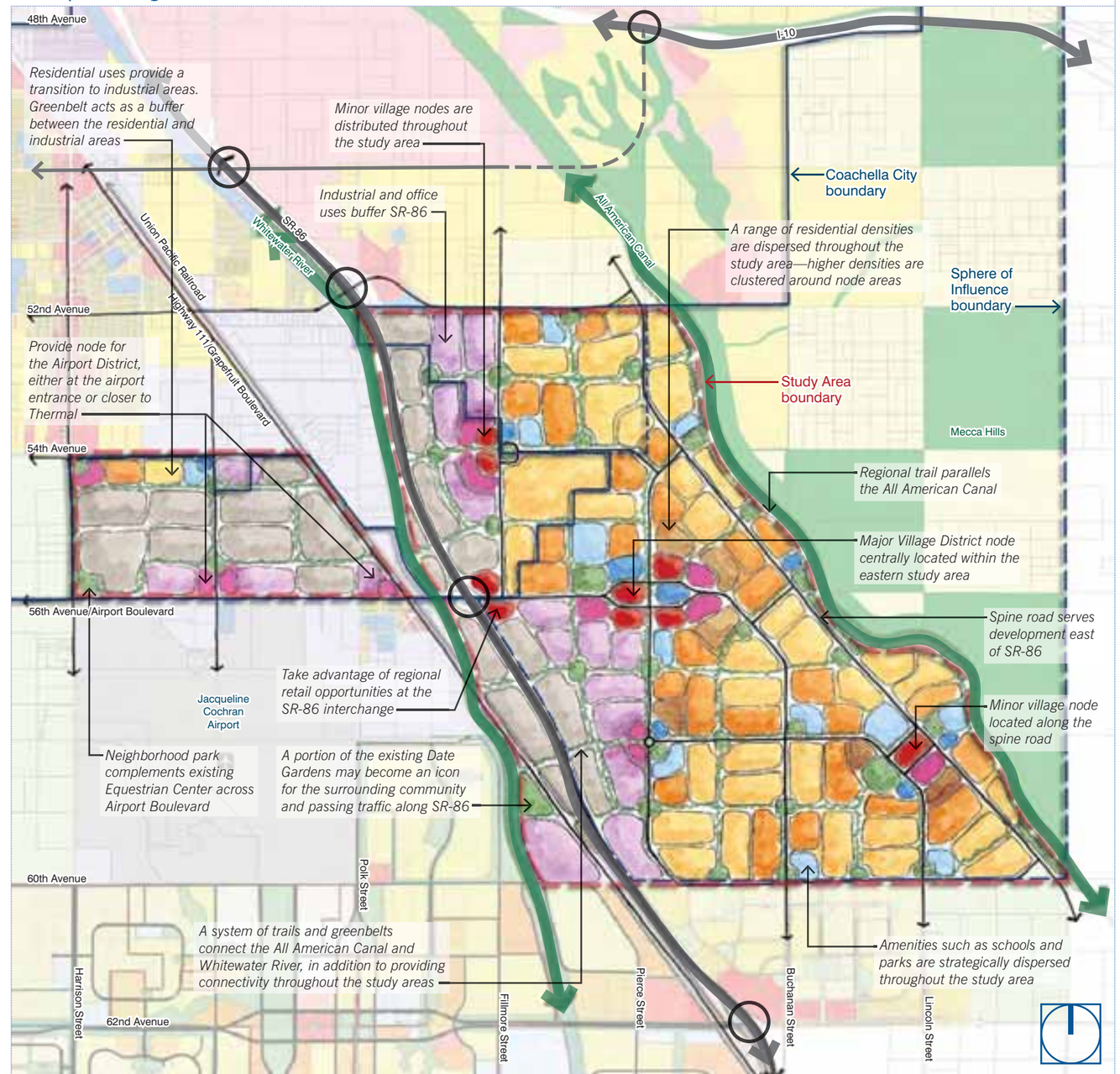
The land uses applied in these concepts generally represent the common definitions. Land uses that necessitate additional description are:

- Public/Institutional land uses include uses such as neighborhood centers, churches, police and fire substations, and minor civic offices.
- All the land use concepts provide for a minimum of two high schools, with the remaining school designations signifying elementary schools.
- Park land uses represent parks of varying sizes: larger park areas reflect regional parks, and smaller park areas signify neighborhood parks.
- The low, medium, and high density residential uses do not represent specific density ranges but signify the provision and distribution of a variety of residential densities.
- The mixed-use designation generally represents a mix of either office and retail uses, retail and residential uses, or office and residential uses.

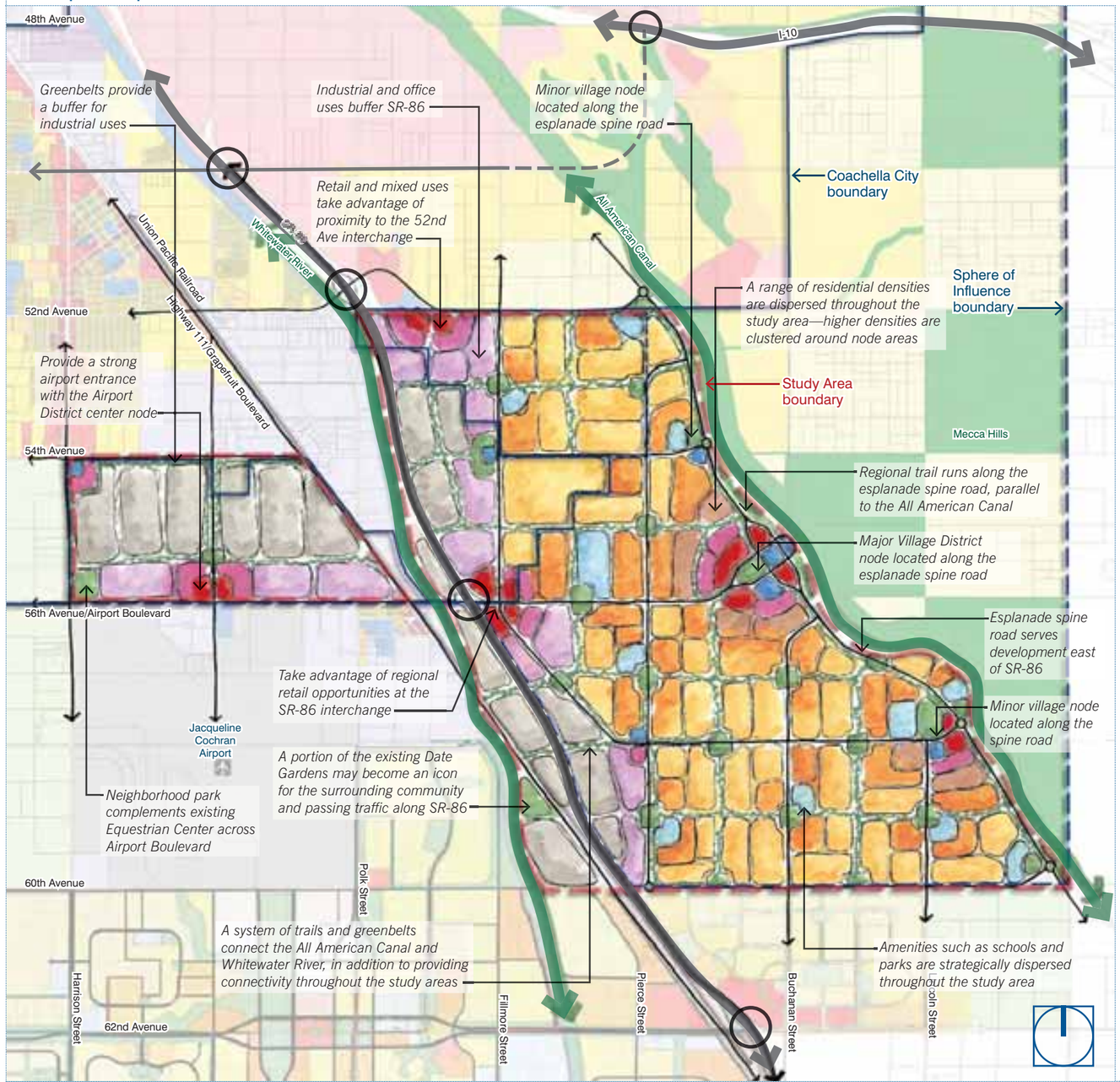
Legend

- Roadways
- Proposed Interchanges
- Industrial
- Office
- Retail
- Public/Institutional
- School
- Park
- Trail/Open Space
- Low Density Residential
- Medium Density Residential
- High Density Residential
- Mixed Use

Concept A: Village Center



Concept B: Esplanade Road



Legend

- Roadways
- Proposed Interchanges
- Industrial
- Office
- Retail
- Public/Institutional
- School
- Park
- Trail/Open Space
- Low Density Residential
- Medium Density Residential
- High Density Residential
- Mixed Use

Concept B: Esplanade Road

Concept B emphasizes the spine road parallel to the All American Canal as an esplanade road and focal point for the eastern study area. In addition to notes overlaid on the Esplanade Road Concept graphic, major planning principles are listed below:

- For Concept B, the major District node is placed along the esplanade spine road, allowing land uses here to take advantage of the adjacent open space view. Both the esplanade spine road and Airport Boulevard split into couplets at the intersection, creating an opportunity to locate recreation facilities in a village green configuration. The District node also includes retail, mixed use, and public land uses. Compared to Concept A, the regional retail uses located at the Airport Boulevard interchange with SR-86 are allowed to expand slightly due to the additional distance between the interchange and the District node.
- Circulation within the study areas primarily follows the parcel grid system, with the exception of the esplanade spine road. This road follows the All American Canal closely, with a regional trail running along one side of the street, facilitating access to the regional trail. Minor village nodes in addition to the District node are linked along the spine road.
- Office uses are placed along the southern boundary of the western study area, with retail and mixed uses located adjacent to the airport entrance to form the center of the airport District node. The industrial land uses are buffered to the north and south by a system of greenbelts and trails. Small public and mixed-use land uses located at the northwest corner of the western study area build off of existing retail uses along Harrison Street.
- Industrial and office uses within the Esplanade Road Concept are less intense than Concept A, encompassing approximately 2,000 acres. Residential land uses cover more area than Concept A, due to the decrease in industrial and office acreage. Again, the size of these areas may be increased or decreased according to market demands.

Concept C: Avenue 58 Interchange

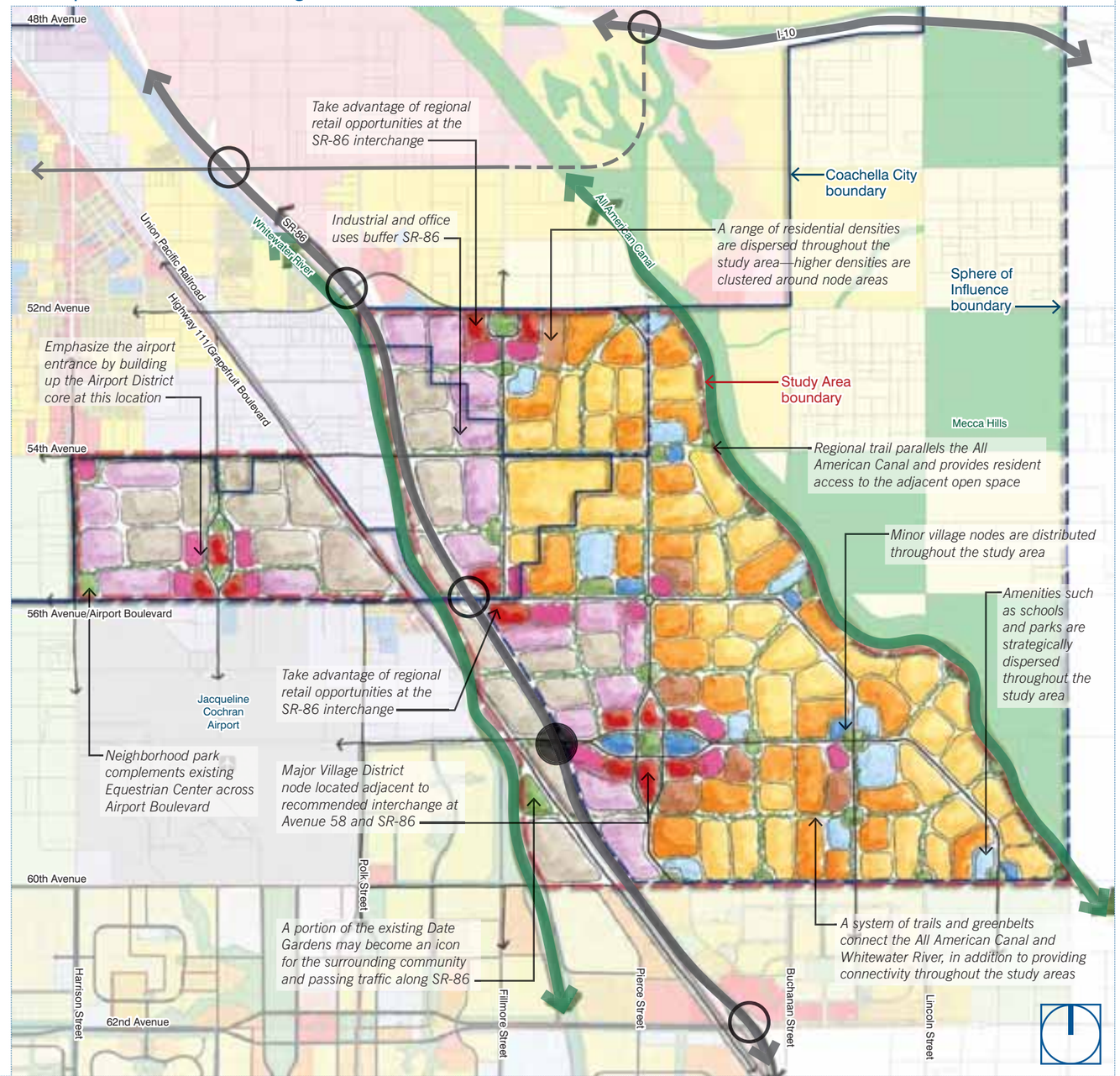
The Avenue 58 Interchange Concept examines the opportunity to add an additional SR-86 interchange, relieving traffic at adjacent interchanges and promoting connectivity between the east and west City areas. In addition to notes overlaid on the Concept C illustration, major planning principles are:

- The major District node for Concept C is located close to the Avenue 58 juncture, allowing the District center to accommodate regional retail uses in close proximity to SR-86, in addition to providing neighborhood retail, mixed use, recreational, and public uses for District residents. However, if the recommended interchange is not realized, the District node may be shifted north in proximity to the Airport Boulevard interchange.
- Placing the District node at the Avenue 58 junction also brings the area closer to the COD campus, taking advantage of activity at the Education District. The Village District node center is emphasized with intersecting couplets of Avenue 58 and Pierce Street, similar to the intersecting couplets used in Concept B. Additional opportunities for regional retail uses with exposure to SR-86 are identified at the Avenue 52 and Airport Boulevard interchanges.
- Proposed circulation for Concept C broadly adheres to the parcel grid system, with diagonal loop roads directing traffic along Airport Boulevard and Avenue 58 south toward the COD. There is no spine road paralleling the All American Canal for Concept C.
- The western study area incorporates a couplet at the entrance to the Jacqueline Cochran Airport, highlighting the heart of the Airport District at the airport entrance. The District node includes retail and mixed uses to serve the surrounding Airport District. Office uses located along Harrison Street also take advantage of exposure along this major north–south transportation corridor.
- The balance between office, industrial, and residential land uses for Concept C are similar to Concept A. However, the acreage for these uses may be increased or decreased to respond to changes in market demand.

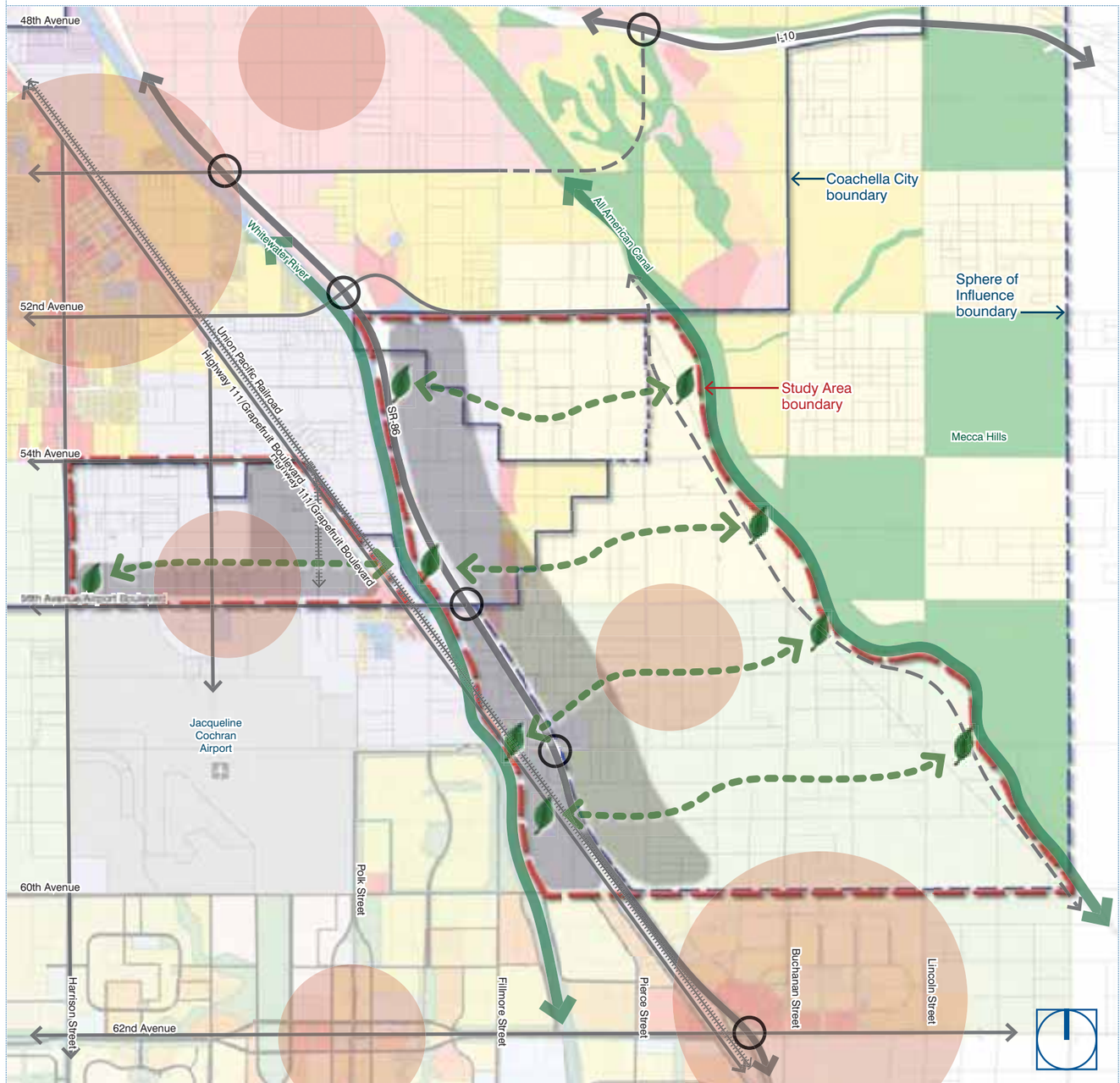
Legend

- Roadways
- Proposed Interchanges
- Recommended Interchange
- Industrial
- Office
- Retail
- Public/Institutional
- School
- Park
- Trail/Open Space
- Low Density Residential
- Medium Density Residential
- High Density Residential
- Mixed Use

Concept C: Avenue 58 Interchange



Framework Plan



Legend

- Existing roadways
- Proposed roadways
- Proposed interchanges
- District areas: 1/2-mile radius*
- Office/industrial areas
- Waterways*
- Greenbelts*
- Parks and open space*

** Note: The placement of these elements is conceptual.*

Framework Plan

The framework plan diagram and following points summarize core ideas from the previous land use concepts.

- Districts:
  - Establish an Airport District and Village District within Coachella's sphere of influence.
  - The Airport District node may evolve into a center for business and industrial uses within the City.
  - The Village District node could become the heart of a series of villages within the eastern study area.
  - Within each district, smaller village nodes may be distributed to support adjacent uses. Minor retail areas with public and recreational uses create village centers within the districts.
- Land uses:
  - Disperse land uses throughout the study areas rather than concentrating single land uses over large areas.
  - Locate business and industrial areas adjacent to SR-86 to maximize exposure and buffer residential uses. For additional recommendations involving business and industrial uses, see pages 20 to 22.
  - Provide for a range of residential densities and housing types, rather than focusing only on single-family detached units. For more recommendations regarding housing and building types, see pages 18 and 19. Strategically locate higher residential densities around retail and public amenities.
  - Distribute adequate amenities such as schools, churches, parks, and other public uses throughout each district to create a sense of community.
  - Buffer business and industrial areas from residential uses with greenbelts and landscaped roadways.
  - Preserve existing icon land uses. For example, the Desert Circuit Equestrian Center and Date Gardens may be preserved for use by future residents.
- Transportation:
  - A spine road along the All American Canal provides an alternate route to SR-86 for development east of SR-86.
  - A system of trails and greenbelts connect smaller village centers and districts. Existing irrigation drainage courses may transition to greenbelts as development progresses.

Implementation Recommendations

In addition to land use recommendations, this recommendations report provides a series of implementation recommendations to address issues identified during the strategic framework session.

High Performance Development

City officials and residents identified the need to pursue sustainable planning practices during the strategic framework session. Sustainability is "meeting the needs of the present without compromising the ability of future generations to meet their own needs," as generally defined by the 1987 Bruntland Report of the United Nations World Commission on Environment and Development. Environmentally conscious planning and principles of sustainability are beginning to find their way into city ordinances and guidelines. The incentives for sustainable planning and building design include:

- **Minimal or no cost impact**: Incorporating sustainable design from the earliest stages has benefits for both builders and future occupants. Many sustainable design principles have minimal or no cost impacts if incorporated early in the design phase, and initial costs can frequently be offset by reduced construction time and long-term operations and maintenance savings. In addition, several federal and state organizations provide financial incentives for sustainable construction.
- **High performance**: Sustainable development is also high performance development. Sustainable buildings operate more efficiently than standard buildings through the conservation of energy, reduction of operating and maintenance costs, and improvement of indoor lighting and air quality.
- **Increased value**: The application of sustainable planning and building design are a desirable amenity for many potential occupants, who are often willing to pay a premium to live in a resource-efficient house and community.
- **Increased productivity**: With improved indoor lighting and air quality, sustainable buildings have the potential to offer healthier and more satisfying work environments for tenants. Studies have demonstrated that improved indoor environments lead to an increase in worker health and productivity.

The City of Coachella has the opportunity to prepare new guidelines and requirements to ensure that new developments implement sustainable planning and building design measures. These guidelines and requirements need to be understood up front by the development community, prior to the design and planning process. City expectations should be consistently applied to new development.

Coachella may use already established sustainable best management programs as a guide for establishing sustainable guidelines. Programs such as Leadership in Energy and Environmental Design (LEED)® certification, ComfortWise®, and EnergyStar Home® contain policies to achieve sustainability for different types of development. The comprehensiveness of these certification programs guarantees, for their respective types of development, the achievement of a high minimum standard. A list of resources is identified on this page.

However, sustainable principles as they relate to planning and building design are continually evolving as new technologies and methods develop. The City should consistently monitor these progressions to ensure that the goal of sustainability is met over time. Sustainable topics and issues may be described in general terms to allow for the incorporation of new technologies as they are developed.

Resources

The following consolidated list of available programs and resources may inform sustainable guidelines for the City of Coachella:

- Southern California Edison (SCE), Sustainable Communities Program, *www.sce.com*
- SCE and Southern California Gas Company, Savings By Design, *www.socalgas.com/business*
- Fuscoe Engineering and City of Irvine Redevelopment Department, Sustainable Travelways Guidelines, *www.cityofirvine.org/depts/cd/redevelopment/*
- Metropolitan Water District, California Friendly Homes and California Friendly Landscape, *www.bewaterwise.com*
- U.S. Green Building Council, LEED ® certification, *www.usgbc.org*
- U.S. Department of Energy, EnergyStar ®, *www.energystar.gov*

Grass swales provide a natural method to address site drainage.

Existing trees and plants may be preserved and reused during construction.

Pervious paving reduces the negative effects of stormwater runoff and facilitates groundwater recharge.

Single-family homes fronting a walkway and park

Street view of small-lot single-family homes

Courtyard within a multifamily cluster

Alley and garage access for attached townhomes

Park surrounded by multifamily buildings

Multifamily complex adjacent to greenbelt

Housing

City officials and residents envision Coachella as a balanced community, providing a broad range of housing types at different price points that can accommodate individuals and families of all ages and income levels. Given that the area of focus is southeast Coachella, our recommendations focus on the production of new housing, rather than the rehabilitation and reinvestment needs of the built-out areas of the City.

The following recommendations were developed in response to the strategic framework session:

1. Provide Multifamily Housing: Coachella currently has a high percentage of single-family detached homes. The City has limited condominium products and, until recently, no market rate apartments. Given the high price of market rate single-family detached units today relative to the median income of residents, the growing middle class will only be able to afford apartments or condominiums. The City of Coachella should actively encourage the production of multiple-family housing that offers residents and the emerging workforce move-up options. The next section, Housing Prototypes, shows the diversity in possible residential buildings types.

2. Think At the Neighborhood Scale: Quality neighborhoods involve more than simply housing. They also provide parks and greenways, public facilities, recreational opportunities, schools, neighborhood commercial uses, and other supporting land uses. Neighborhoods should also include a focal point of activity or interest, be it a park, school, recreation center, or other amenity on which identity can be built. In reviewing projects, the City must pay particular attention to creating not only quality housing, but a sustainable neighborhood fabric.

3. Require Quality Housing: Too often jurisdictions accept proposals for housing development that are of less quality than desired. Decisionmakers may believe that some development, particularly in a slow market, is better than none. The City has recently adopted design guidelines so that City decisionmakers and staff can provide guidance as to acceptable standards for housing. As the southeast sector gradually develops, the City must only allow the development of high quality residential products that will stand the test of time.

4. Leverage Market Forces: Unlike many cities, Coachella has extensive land resources for new housing. Developers will propose larger-scale projects that may offer thousands of housing units at a time. The economies of scale available with such large residential developments offer greater potential for affordable housing. The City should consider requiring affordable units through an inclusionary program. The City can play an active role in facilitating the production of affordable housing by providing regulatory concessions where appropriate.

5. Senior Living at its best: The Coachella Valley is renowned for its climate, slower pace of life, and entertainment amenities—all attractive to seniors. Although communities in the western portion of the Valley have capitalized on senior demand for housing, this demand has not extended to Coachella. However, with its vast land resources, Coachella has the opportunity to attract senior-restricted developments, integrated with appropriate lifestyle amenities. Age-restricted types of development should be a part of the City's overall housing strategy.

6. Target Second-Home Developments: The Salton Sea State Recreation Area and the Sonny Bono National Wildlife Refuge offer unique opportunities for water and wildlife recreation that are unique in California. The restoration of this area could distinguish Coachella as a "gateway to the sea." In addition, Coachella has other tourist-oriented centers, such as the Desert Circuit Equestrian Center. As these amenities develop, the City may experience a demand for higher end second homes for those who live in Coachella during the winter months. The City should be receptive to the potential market for second/vacation homes.

7. Think Green: The Coachella Valley is known for its unique environmental resources—its towering mountains, critical habitat areas, sensitive species, the Salton Sea, alternative energy sources, and other environmentally friendly technologies. As part of the development of southeast Coachella, the City may also wish to implement green building technologies into residential projects, neighborhoods, and green infrastructure as a means to capitalize on a key economic activity and branding of communities in the Coachella Valley.

Housing Prototypes

There is a growing diversity of housing types that provide a range of residential densities. By offering a mix of housing types, the City of Coachella can provide a range of rental and homeownership opportunities for current and future residents.

Residential building types may be classified under three categories: detached single-family homes, attached townhouses, and multifamily buildings. These categories cover most of the common typologies employed in market rate and affordable housing. Isometric examples of these different building types are illustrated on this page.

1. *Single-family homes:* The net densities of detached single-family units can range from 4 to 10 units/acre, based on the size of each parcel and the configuration of buildings and parking areas. Detached units may have rear-loaded garages, or screened garage access through a parking court within a cluster, or the traditional front-loaded garage. Detached single-family units can range from one to three stories in height.

2. *Attached townhouses:* Townhouses share one or more common walls, and are typically two to three stories high. They are a highly flexible building type and can be arranged in a variety of configurations with net densities ranging from 7 to 20 units/acre.

3. *Multifamily buildings:* Multifamily buildings can combine townhouses and apartment or condominium flats, or consist solely of apartment flats. Multifamily buildings can incorporate parking in a variety of ways, including parking separate from the residential building, or parking placed underneath the residential building, such as podium-type products. Multifamily buildings are typically double-loaded on either side of a central corridor and densities may go 20 to units/acre and higher. Densities for multifamily buildings vary based on the number of stories, average unit size, number of units, and parking ratio for each structure.

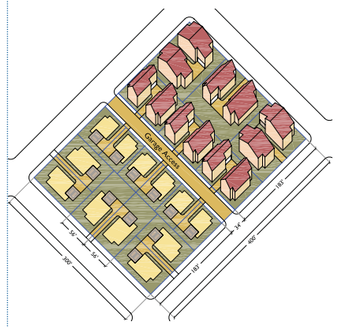
Residential Density

When describing a specific residential building or neighborhood development, density numbers can be either useful or misleading. As important it is to know the density generated by a specific building type, it is equally critical to be aware of how these numbers have been calculated. The method for calculating densities varies with the jurisdiction. Within a single planned development, one can end up with radically different density numbers, depending on the area included for density calculation.

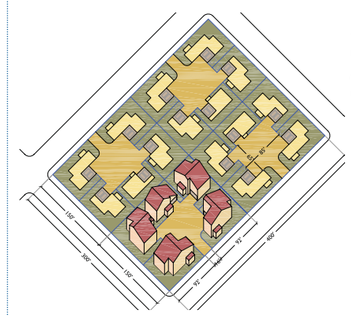
Multifamily building types are more prone to this variation in densities. Two multifamily units within the same building volume can have radically different density numbers depending on the parking ratio. For example, a five-story multifamily apartment building catering to seniors or students might have a big proportion of one-bedroom units and studios, a parking ratio of less than 1 car/unit, with stacked parking lifts. This building can have twice the density of a similar looking five-story apartment building with a high proportion of two- and three-bedroom units, and a parking ratio of more than two cars/unit.

Housing Cost and Link to Affordability

Certain prototypes lend themselves to affordability more than others. Affordable building types typically have smaller building footprints, and possibly reduced surface parking and lower parking ratios. As a rule of thumb, multifamily apartments with a parking podium cost more to build than townhouses. However, podium buildings yield much higher densities compared to townhouses and detached units.

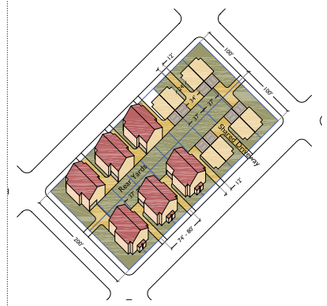


Homes with a shared driveway and attached garage at rear of the unit.

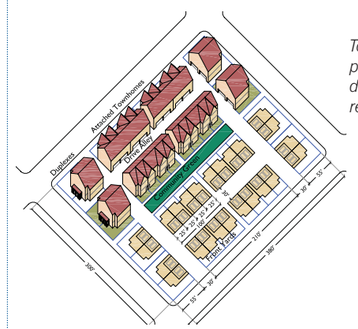


Small-lot, 5-unit family cluster with attached garages and shared driveways.

Single-family home prototypes

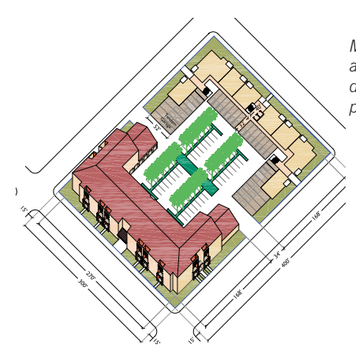


Duplex townhouses with attached garages and shared driveways.

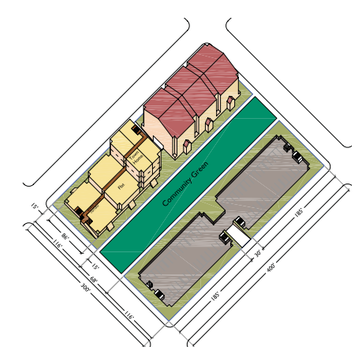


Townhouses with pedestrian greenbelts, drive alleys, and rear-loaded garages.

Attached townhouse prototypes

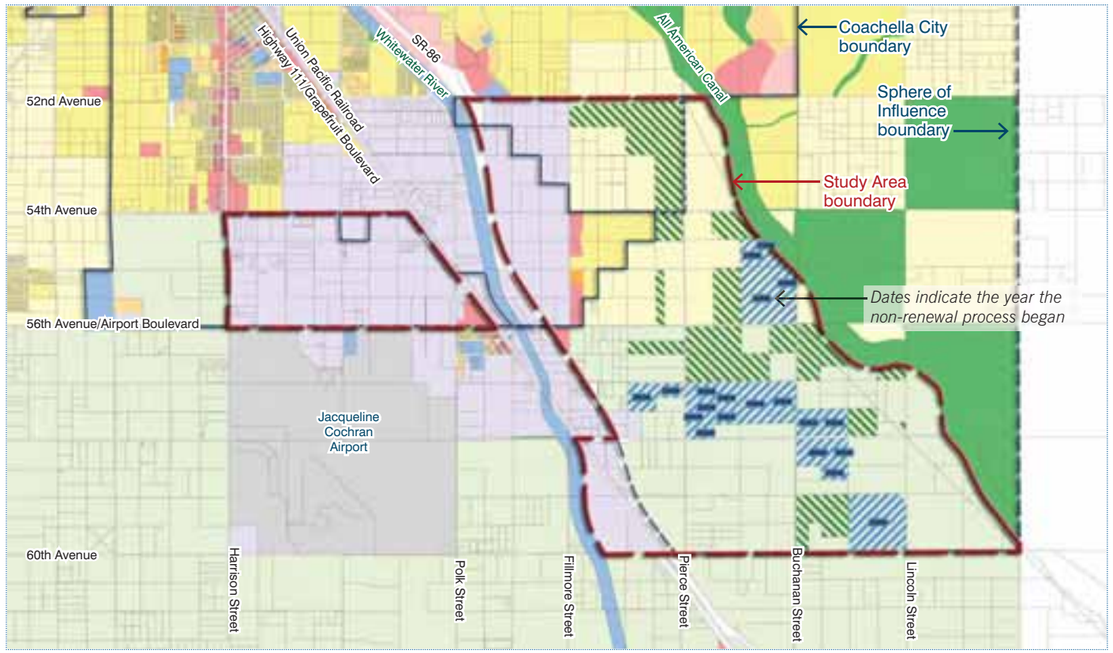


Multifamily flat apartments with a detached garage and parking court.



Townhouses over flats and a single-level parking podium.

Multifamily building prototypes



Many agricultural parcels are beginning the Williamson Act nonrenewal cycle, initiating the transition from agricultural land to development.

Legend

Coachella General Plan Land Use (1)
- General Commercial
- Light Industrial
- Open Space
- Agriculture
- Airport

Williamson Act Lands (2)
- Prime
- Prime non-renewal

Sources:
1. City of Coachella, GIS database, 2007
2. California Deptartment of Conservation, GIS database, 2007

Jobs and Economic Development

City officials and residents alike envision Coachella as a balanced community that provides an adequate job supply for its residents. The following list of recommendations were developed in response to the strategic framework session.

1. Plan for City's Buildout Population to Assure Fiscal Stability: To achieve its vision of a balanced community, the City should plan for a buildout population of 250,000 and begin to study similarly sized cities, including Glendale, Riverside, Chula Vista, and Stockton. Coachella needs to understand the levels of services, facilities, and infrastructure that this size of city provides. Based on this understanding, the City should begin to plan its finances to reach these levels, with targets along the way.

2. Balance Jobs and Housing Development: The City needs to plan for a balance between jobs and housing, and will have to stick to the plan. The City's 64 square miles will have to house 114,688 jobs (excluding the agricultural and public sectors) to support the buildout population. To accommodate the nonretail jobs, the City needs to reserve about 3,000 acres of land (7.4 percent of the total land area) for employment.

3. Establish Economic Development Goals: To provide focus and to generate continued public support, the City should identify its economic development goals. Municipalities generally have three broad economic development goals: increase the number and quality of jobs, expand the tax base, and improve the community's quality of life.

4. Improve Labor Force Skills, Education, and Training: Although the labor-shed for Coachella houses nearly 120,000 workers, the labor force lacks education and skills; only 68.8 percent of workers have a high school diploma and 18.7 percent have a bachelor's degree or higher education (76.5 percent and 26.6 percent for the state respectively). Farming, forestry, and fishing employ 7.5 percent of the labor force (1.4 percent for the state) and manufacturing and logistics employ only 7.9 percent of the labor force (12.8 for the state). Only 48.4 percent of the labor force have white collar jobs, compared to 62.3 percent for the state.

When businesses are selecting locations for new or expanded operations, the size and quality of the labor force drives decisionmaking. As the baby-boom generation enters retirement, the US as a whole faces a structural labor shortage that will increase the importance of labor supply in location decisions. The labor shed's skills and education will be the predominant factors in determining the types and quantity of jobs that Coachella attracts. To increase the number of jobs and to attract better paying jobs, the City and region should focus efforts on improving the labor force's skills, education, and training, The economic displacement of the region's agricultural laborers as land is converted from agricultural production to development only increases the importance of expanding opportunities for and access to education and training programs.

5. Plan for Economic Transition: As the City grows, it will likely attract residents with more skills and education. With these new residents, the City will be able to attract a wider range of businesses, specifically those that are more office based. The City's long-range planning and economic development efforts should focus on industrial land uses for generating employment in the short and mid-term and should transition to office-based land uses for generating jobs over the long term.

If the economic structure of Coachella at buildout resembles Riverside County's current economic structure, then there is generally a sufficient amount of planned industrial land in the existing industrial park area and the western study area. If, however, warehousing and distribution constitute part of the industrial mix of uses, then more land could be needed. The City should enter into discussions with the County about this area to assure that it remains zoned for and gets developed with industrial and supporting uses, most likely through annexation. Clearly, the types of uses the city plans in this area will depend on the revenue-sharing arrangements that the City can negotiate with Riverside County and the fiscal impacts of development.

Because Coachella's economy will transition over time, the City should create flexible, performance-based zoning and development standards for employment areas, especially for the eastern study area. Rather than relying on a list of allowed and prohibited uses, the City should develop

performance standards that minimize or prohibit unwanted externalities while allowing for a variety of employment-generating uses that can change from industrial to office with the city's economic transition. Similarly, planning and development standards should provide the flexibility for small, speculative flex-space, large manufacturing and assembly plants, even larger distribution warehouses, research and development facilities, and general offices. The type and scale of development that the city attracts will change as its economy transitions.

The City needs to reserve an additional 1,700 acres for future office-based businesses. The General Plan update needs to identify the areas that the City will reserve. The plan could disperse some of the office-based employment in village centers, but most of it should be planned adjacent to the major transit facilities. Much of the land area the City has planned for industrial, especially along Grapefruit Boulevard and east of CA-86, is well suited for future office-based businesses.

6. Employment Concentration versus Dispersion: The City faces the question of whether to concentrate employment or disperse it throughout the 64-square-mile area. Currently, Coachella has planned its industrial areas along CA-86 and adjacent to the airport. If the city plans for a buildout population of 250,000 residents and 115,000 jobs, then concentrating employment in these areas will generate certain traffic patterns. The General Plan update should identify these future traffic patterns and the transportation infrastructure that the City will need to accommodate these patterns.

Regional Employment Concentration: Concentrating employment in regional centers provides several benefits. First, city residents will not fill all of the city's future jobs, and a substantial number of Coachella Valley residents might commute into Coachella for work. Similarly, a substantial number may commute out to other Coachella Valley cities for work. Developing employment centers adjacent to freeways can reduce the traffic impact to city residents. Second, planning large employment centers gives businesses room to grow. Finally, concentrating businesses concentrates the externalities—noise, truck traffic, etc.—reducing the impact to the community and reducing the potential for litigation from adjacent residents.

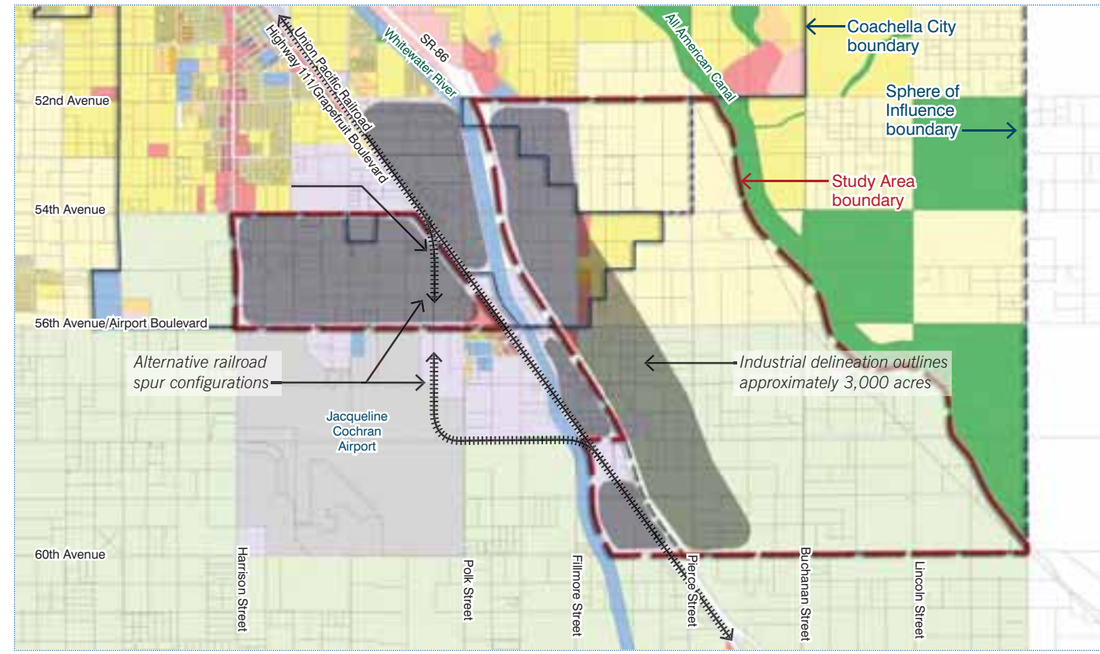
Neighborhood Employment Dispersion: Dispersing some planned employment throughout the community also provides certain benefits. First, dispersion reduces the rush-hour crunch of many people trying to get to work at the same place at the same time. Second, planning neighborhood employment centers along major arterials can improve the financial sustainability and the feasibility of public transit by creating two-way traffic along transit routes. Third, dispersing employment into neighborhood employment centers opens the door to zero-emission community walking and biking. Finally, planning a daytime population (i.e., employment) in neighborhood centers increases the profitability and financial sustainability of neighborhood-centered businesses, especially restaurants.

Now, during its General Plan update, Coachella should:

- Make the choice between allocating buildout employment between regional centers and neighborhood centers;
- Determine how much employment to try to disperse;
- Determine how much land to reserve for long-term regional employment; and
- Determine how much employment to plan for individual neighborhood centers.

7. Capitalize on Transportation Infrastructure: The city has three underutilized transportation routes: I-10, SR-86, and the Union Pacific Sunset Corridor mainline.

Highways: Visibility to traffic flow along freeways provides substantial economic benefits to both office-based businesses and retailers, and provides little to no economic benefit to residential uses. Indeed, residential uses typically require barriers to separate housing from freeway externalities, such as noise and auto emissions. Likewise, locating industrial uses close to freeway access reduces the need for truck traffic to compete with residential traffic. City plans should favor commercial and industrial uses over residential uses along I-10 and SR-86.



Planning for a build-out population of 250,000, the City should reserve approximately 3,000 acres of land for non-retail employment. To take advantage of the Union Pacific Railroad, the City should also examine different spur configurations to access industrial areas.

Legend

Office/Industrial Uses*
Union Pacific Railroad

** Note: The placement of these elements are conceptual in nature.*

Take advantage of the Union Pacific rail line.

Coordinate with the COD for workforce training programs.

Identify a branding image for the City.

Railroads: The Union Pacific Railroad's mainline currently handles about 60 trains per day. The right-of-way runs about 100 feet off-center from the current track, providing room for up to four tracks total. Union Pacific is in the process of expanding the Sunset Corridor line to two tracks, and expects to increase traffic up to 100 trains per day over the next five to six years.

Currently, Union Pacific does not directly service any businesses in Coachella. To provide service, a new double-ended, mile-long spur with power switches would be required, costing up to $3 million. To be economically viable, such a spur would probably have to service a 1,000- to 3,000-acre industrial park. Union Pacific's current switching yard in Indio is located just north of the boundary with Coachella.

The City could work with Indio to extend rail access south into Coachella, or go it alone and extend a spur into the current industrial park. The most effective solution, however, would be for the city to work with Riverside County and with interested Native American tribes to bring a spur in from the south, through the airport property, and into the western study area. However, the City must take the lead to initiate and coordinate the planning for this option.

8. Put the Pieces Together: There is no panacea; achieving the City's long-term employment potential requires that Coachella put all the pieces together—education and training, housing, infrastructure, product, marketing, and planning.

Education and Training: The new COD campus near the southern border of the City's sphere of influence will impart many economic benefits, especially workforce training. The city should remain an active voice for all elements of the labor force and should work with COD and Riverside County Workforce Investment Board to get as many resources as possible dedicated to education and training in the community.

Housing and Infrastructure: The city should promote and facilitate the development of affordable housing through planning, use of its redevelopment agency, and in cooperation with housing providers. Adequate housing is a prerequisite to an adequate labor force. Likewise, the City needs to plan and invest in infrastructure based on its planned buildout. Transportation planning should connect workers to jobs, residents to shopping, and citizens to public services and amenities. Public transit should be planned to assure that carless residents are easily able to access jobs, training and education, and shopping and services.

Economic Development Product and Marketing: A previous industrial study identified restrictions imposed by the largest industrial landowner as a major hindrance to business attraction. The City needs to prepare an economic development strategy that clearly identifies the economic development products that it can offer. For example, does the City of Coachella have small, medium, and large lots available with existing infrastructure? Does the City have existing buildings available? Can the industrial areas accommodate noisy businesses or high truck traffic? Is the City competing on price—low-cost labor, land, and utilities? Does Coachella offer other competitive advantages? The City should plan the development of a range of economic development products to meet expected market demand.

The City also needs to continue to sponsor local and regional economic development marketing efforts (i.e., City's economic development staff and the Coachella Valley Economic Development Partnership). Based on the City's economic development goals, the strategy should establish performance benchmarks for the recipients of City funds, linking public financing to achievement of public goals.

9. Create Community Identity Through Branding: By implementing a branding program, the City can influence the image others have of Coachella. A City-sponsored signature event, over time, will build the City's name recognition throughout the region. A tag line quickly summarizes the City's image. A consistent public relations program constantly reinforces the branding message the community wants to convey of itself. A coordinated brand image will bring more consumers, tourists, and business leaders to Coachella.

Managing Growth Comprehensively

The framework session discussed Coachella's future. Participants provided significant comments on the need to manage growth effectively in order to prevent the leapfrogging of development. With land resources available, the City Council has tremendous opportunity for addressing growth pressures and improving the future of Coachella.

Several key goals were cited:

1. Preserve and enhance quality of life through public facilities and services
2. Ensure the city's fiscal stability through prudent financial management
3. Promote a balance between the need for employment and housing
4. Require that sufficient infrastructure is in place to accommodate growth
5. Connect the different sectors of the community together into a whole
6. Create distinct and identifiable districts and neighborhoods
7. Promote a healthy lifestyle through parks, recreation, and trail networks

Role of Public Facilities and Services

The backbone of a growing community is the availability and quality of public services and facilities and supporting infrastructure. Good quality of life is often dependent on parks, libraries, police and fire services, and physical infrastructure. Coachella must proactively plan to meet the needs of its growing and changing population through a series of capital improvement plans and integrated fee structures to fund improvements.

The following discusses the status of the City's current capital improvement plans and financing as they relate to the development of the community. Although discussion focuses on the older portions of Coachella, some of the deficiencies or cited best management practices affect the development of future projects in the demonstration project area. Given the interrelatedness of the original and new portions of the community and the need to consider the entire City as a whole, the following addresses the entire community.

Police and Fire Services: County sheriff and fire departments currently provide police and fire services to the city. Response times appear to be adequate for public health and safety at this time. However, the county recommends the construction of three new fire stations in the eastern portion of the community as development occurs. With respect to police services, City residents have expressed a concern over the need for a greater level of services; however, the start-up costs of a City police department are prohibitive at this time. The City may wish to reconsider the need for City police and fire departments to improve service delivery and responsiveness and the development of a funding mechanism to charge new projects.

Parks and Recreation: The City of Coachella shares responsibility for parks and recreation services with the Coachella Valley Park and Recreation District. The City has approximately 1.9 acres of parkland per 1,000 residents, far below the standard of 3 park acres per 1,000 residents. Moreover, park impact fees collected are insufficient to pay for the full cost of acquiring parkland and constructing the facilities needed to reach city standards. We would recommend that the City prepare a comprehensive master park and recreation plan that includes parks, recreation services and facilities, trails, and green infrastructure desired by the city and then update the fee as required to fully fund the necessary improvements.

City Hall and Library: The City Hall is currently undersized and greatly needs to be replaced and/or expanded. The City contracts with the Riverside County Library System for services. The county indicates a need for three more libraries in the community. The City has entertained discussion on building a new City Hall with a City Library inside the facility. As the City grows over the next ten years it may be desirable for the City to not only house the library, but also to assume operations by City staff to provide greater levels of service. If so, library service provision could also be coordinated with local schools to provide economies of scale and efficiencies otherwise not possible.

Water Infrastructure: The Coachella Water Authority serves water to the City with 4,000 service connections. The City has created an Urban Water Management Plan to ensure the availability and adequacy of water supply to meet to current and future needs. The present Master Plan noted the need for new wells, reservoirs (with a total storage capacity for average day demand plus fire flow requirements), and water distribution lines in the City. The City has taken out bonds to pay for significant water improvements in recent years to address these needs. For example, the City is finalizing a new five million gallon per day (mgd) reservoir at 48th and Tyler. However, significant deficiencies still exist east of SR-86. The Coachella Valley Water District provides water to that area and is proposing an impact fee of $3,000/acre to cover the additional water supply needs. The City may wish to assume service for that area. If so, a water treatment plant, associated infrastructure, and a fee structure is needed to treat imported water from the All American Canal.

Sewer Infrastructure: The Coachella Sanitary District, a dependent district of the City Council, provides wastewater service to most of the community. The City recently completed a sewer system master plan to address existing capacity deficiencies. With state funding, the City is expanding its secondary-level wastewater treatment facility to accommodate 5.2 mgd. However, improvements are needed to accommodate development in the study area. Development located north of 52nd Avenue can flow via gravity to a new pump station near the freeway for conveyance to the treatment plant, but development south of 52nd Avenue requires a pump station to move effluent west of SR-86 to the treatment plant. The City may also wish to build capacity for the tertiary treatment of wastewater so that recycled water can be used for irrigation purposes. This would require enhanced treatment facilities, dual pipes, associated infrastructure, and a funding mechanism.

Storm Drain System: Unlike many cities (though it is common for desert cities), the City lacks a storm drain system. During intense rainstorms, portions of the City are therefore subject to periodic flooding, causing unnecessary damage to roadways and structures. The City has completed a master Storm Drainage Plan, which calls for the construction of a new storm drain system. The City has not pursued this option, because the construction costs would well exceed $20 million and no fees are in place to fund the improvements. In lieu of this option, the City has four dry wells and is building one more to alleviate flooding. At least five other dry wells are needed in the old part of town, but no fees are in place to raise the revenue needed for these improvements. Similarly, drainage facilities need to be constructed east of SR-86. Currently, no plans are in place nor has a funding mechanism been appropriately developed for such improvements.

Roadway Plan: The City has long suffered from deferred maintenance and improvement on its roadways. It does not have a pavement management system that can be used to estimate costs and plan for roadway improvements. Instead, staff compile a list of improvements. The City is spending $800,000 to $1 million annually to rebuild or replace street segments. Projects are funded by CVAG, gas taxes, TUMF fees, and the federal government. Major rebuild projects could be completed by 2015. In the meantime, the City is pursuing a preventive maintenance program of slurry-sealing streets. This is currently done every ten years, but, because of the desert climate, the interval should be shortened to five years. Lastly, the City needs to construct or replace 33 percent of its 50-mile sidewalk network. Although no plans are in place yet to address projects on the east side of SR-86, the City needs to make every effort to put in best practices with respect to technology, maintenance, improvement, and funding to ensure a sufficient road system.

County of Riverside Growth Management Policies

The County of Riverside, in addressing its goals for growth management, faced a similar challenge in planning the South Valley Implementation Plan—a complex process involving multiple constituencies, constraints, and development and enhancement opportunities. The county faced the challenge of multiple development projects being proposed either concurrently or in close sequential order, each with environmental documentation that did not consider the cumulative impacts of adjacent developments, the necessary interrelated issues, or the connectivity of one development with another.

The county therefore embarked on a multijurisdictional and multiple stakeholder process to comprehensively plan the entire South Valley region with respect to five areas: 1) land use; 2) circulation and mobility; 3) design guidelines; 4) infrastructure planning; and 5) the EIR. Once this plan has been completed and approved, project proponents will be unable to receive their discretionary project approvals until they show consistency with the South Valley Implementation Plan and pay the necessary fees for area-wide improvements. This process has been deemed successful and will be replicated in Mecca, Oasis, and the North Shore Area.

The application of this planning technique is clear for Coachella. The City has just approved the preparation of a Specific Plan for the Commercial Entertainment District that will coordinate the City's varied planning objectives, and the same technique should be provided in the southeast sector area. However, given the volatility of the housing and nonresidential market, it is imperative to provide additional guidance to the gradual urbanization and phasing of development in this area to prevent leapfrog development and to coordinate the timing and construction of necessary supporting infrastructure. Finally, to the extent that this area impacts City infrastructure systems, final plans should also be incorporated with the City's respective plans for public services and facilities.

Open space and park amenities should be a part of each development.

Live/work buildings combine two uses within one unit.

Mixed-use buildings incorporate both retail and residential spaces.

Development Incentives

The jurisdiction must weigh the benefits of immediate development with long-term goals. Residential development may develop more quickly but should be balanced with the need for employment and retail uses. For a jurisdiction seeking to generate a critical mass of residents, it may be better to delay development until the time is right for both the market and for the project goals.

The most commonly applied incentive—and the factor with the greatest influence on development—involves zoning. Most zoning calls for single uses and it usually doesn't support the density and intensity levels associated with transit-oriented development. To permit the necessary mixed-use requirements and high density levels, local governments must develop and establish proper zoning standards.

According to developers, the most effective ways to encourage development are through upgrades in transit services, streetscape improvements, reduced turnaround time during the entitlement process, and most importantly, supportive zoning. Local governments that want to enhance development potential need to implement a development process that removes uncertainty in the design and approval process. Some jurisdictions have instituted "by right" uses for specific zones, supplemented with well-defined development regulations (such as form-based zoning). At a minimum, these specific zones should be comprehensive enough to minimize (or eliminate) the need for special use reviews such as conditional use permits (CUP).

Some cities may be reluctant to forgo the review process because of their responsibility to ensure proper development that promotes public health and safety. An effective method of overcoming this difficulty is through a specific plan. If properly prepared, a robust specific plan can assemble the necessary planning guidance to minimize the subsequent entitlement process.

Industrial Adjacencies Analysis

The mixing of residential and nonresidential uses within the study areas does not necessarily present conflicting land uses or potential hazards for residents. Nevertheless, there is a growing concern for potential hazards arising from industrial land uses near the residential components within Transit Villages. To address this issue, the City may want to consider adopting a process called an Industrial Adjacency Analysis (IAA), which evaluates the potential hazards of placing residential units in proximity to industrial uses.

The IAA was designed to identify and analyze potential hazards and recommend mitigation measures to reduce or eliminate potential threats to human health and safety. Unlike California Environmental Quality Act (CEQA) reviews, which take a single-project approach to analyzing emissions and hazards, the IAA reviews several kinds of potential hazards, single and cumulative, within a given area. The IAA focuses on all industrial businesses within 1,000 feet of the proposed residential site that involve operations which may include significant trucking; the storage, use, or disposal of toxic and/or hazardous materials of a kind and/or quantity that require registration with any governmental agency; or other operations that involve significant lighting, noise, and/or odor. In addition, the IAA evaluates potential adverse impacts to residents due to the presence of contaminated soil or groundwater in the vicinity of the project. Once completed, a city can make an informed decision and approve appropriate mitigation measures based on a comprehensive data and analysis of potential health hazards. An example IAA outline format is included:

1. Executive Summary
2. Introduction
   A. Project Location
   B. Project Description
   C. Planning Background
   D. Purpose of IAA
   E. Project Plans and Site Context Materials
3. Inventory of Adjacent Operations
   A. Information regarding industrial operations within 1,000 feet of site (based on definition)
   B. Noise Levels and Sources
   C. Hazardous Materials Sources and Use
   D. Odors
4. Environmental Considerations
   A. Phase I Environmental Site Assessment
   B. Contamination Assessment
   C. Hazardous Materials Assessment
   D. Air Emissions
   E. Risk Management Program Information
   F. Health Risk Assessments
   G. Hazardous Waste Generators
5. Potential Threats to Human Health (including sensitive-receptor information)
6. Additional Characteristics
7. Summary and Conclusions, including recommendations for any distance buffering necessary to ensure land use compatibility.
8. Glossary of terms used in the IAA
9. References

Industrial uses should be appropriately buffered with walls and landscaping.

Industrial uses should be screened with landscaping.