

**Location:** Coachella, Riverside County

**Timeframe:** 2007 - 2008

**Project Partners:**

City of Coachella

### Project Services

- Open houses and meetings
- Public involvement
- Scenario building
- Urban design strategies



This Compass Blueprint project was the first step in applying sustainable growth strategies and a regional perspective in planning for the city's growth. This study included evaluating key planning issues and proposing appropriate and creative physical, policy, economic, and social solutions as the city continues to grow.

### Goals

- Create livable neighborhoods in new developments and manage long-term population growth in the old city boundaries and the newly annexed areas
- Develop plan to upgrade transportation routes in newly annexed areas including highways, rail lines and the airport
- Resolve imbalances between new residents and new employment by creating new economic opportunities
- Create various commercial districts to provide employment and activity clusters
- Create a new and cohesive image for the City of Coachella

This Compass Blueprint project was the first step in evaluating key planning issues and proposing appropriate and creative physical, policy, economic, and social solutions. The recommendations report is a summary of the work completed for the project, and provides design concepts for circulation and land use within the study areas as well as policy recommendations. The 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; 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.

Through a strategic framework session, it became apparent that the City envisions itself becoming a balanced community with opportunities for all segments of society to live, work, play, and learn. This Demonstration Project provided planning tools for the City to achieve this vision and assist with General Plan update efforts. SCAG assisted the Coachella Sphere of Influence Sustainability Project with a full range of services including form-based codes, urban design and economic development strategies, public involvement services and visualizations.

### **Results**

- Study Area: comprised of 8,474 acres, with a build-out population of 250,000 residents and 115,000 jobs
- Land use recommendations with implementation strategies
- Provided design concepts for circulation—expand road capacity by adding more lanes on major routes through town
- Create clusters of new residential and employment areas
- Develop six distinct districts within the downtown area
- Create conservation policies to reduce the demand for water and other limited resources

### **Update**

The Sphere of Influence Study was presented to the City Council after completion as an informational item. The study had two important and influential effects in the City of Coachella, the first was to point the way towards a downtown area specific plan, which became the goal of a subsequent Compass Blueprint Demo Project, and the second was to reevaluate the pattern of residential development. The City of Coachella was able to demonstrate to the community of Thermal, located to the south, that the city could grow the industrial job base in a way that would be sensitive to the environmental concerns of regional neighbors.