

City of Lancaster

GENERAL PLAN

ANNUAL PROGRESS REPORT

For Calendar Year 2007

Prepared by the Lancaster Planning Department

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Per (CCR Title 25 §6202), 2007 HCD Tables showing Housing Element implementation are attached at the end of the report:

- Table A – Annual Building Activity Report for Very-Low, Low and Moderate Income Units
- Table A2 – Annual Building Activity Report for Above-Moderate Units
- Table B – Regional Housing Needs Allocation Progress
- Table C – Program Implementation Status

City of Lancaster General Plan Annual Progress Report (January 1 through December 31, 2007)

Introduction

California planning law (Government Code Section 65400(b)(1)) mandates that all cities and counties submit to their legislative bodies an annual report on the status of the general plan and progress on its implementation. A copy of this progress report must also be sent to the Governor's Office of Planning and Research (OPR) and the Department of Housing and Community Development (HCD).

The intent of the progress report is to ensure that the general plan directs all land use decisions and remains an effective guide for future development. The main purpose and most important function of the progress report are to provide local legislative bodies with information regarding implementation of the general plan. The following analysis provides an overview of the General Plan program and the progress made by the City during the calendar year from January 1, 2007, to December 31, 2007, toward implementation of the goals, objectives, policies, and programs of the Lancaster General Plan:

Purpose of the General Plan

The Lancaster General Plan can be described as the City's long-term outlook for the future. This view of the future is a compilation of a system of basic community values, ideals, and aspirations as to how the natural and manmade environments should be organized and managed. The plan identifies the types of development that will be allowed, the spatial relationships among land uses, and the general pattern of future development. All subdivisions, public works improvements, redevelopment projects, zoning decisions, and other various implementation tools must be consistent with the General Plan. Thus, the General Plan not only functions as a guide to the type of community that is desired, but also provides the means by which the community may achieve that desired future.

Format of the Lancaster General Plan

State law requires the general plan to address seven mandated elements. However, the general plan need not be organized into these seven elements so long as the issues required by state law are discussed within the document. The City of Lancaster faces a number of broad-reaching issues that cross the well-defined boundaries of the state mandated elements. To directly respond to these issues, the City chose a non-traditional method of organizing its plan. The Lancaster General Plan is divided into nine sections, each of which is described below:

- *Introduction:* provides a brief description of what makes up a general plan, the legislative regulations with which the document must comply with, and the scope of the plan. It also includes a discussion of the general plan preparation process and a description of how it may be interpreted or amended. This chapter also identifies General Community Goals and Objectives that represent the foundation on which all other General Plan Policy is based and discusses five broad issues facing the City and presents comprehensive programs to address each of these issues.

- *Plan for the Natural Environment:* addresses the use and management of natural resources and open space lands within the General Plan study area.
- *Plan for Public Health and Safety:* consists of an evaluation of natural and man-made hazards faced by Lancaster residents and businesses and provides a program to reduce associated risks.
- *Plan for the Living Environment:* contains plans and programs for the provision of quality living environments. It addresses parks, recreation, and other community services.
- *Plan for Physical Mobility:* focuses on transportation issues -- how goods and people move within the study area.
- *Plan for Municipal Services and Facilities:* addresses the services and facilities needed to support existing and future residential, commercial, and industrial development within the study area.
- *Plan for Economic Development and Vitality:* outlines the ways in which the community is striving for economic self-sufficiency, and presents a program to facilitate those efforts.
- *Plan for Physical Development:* focuses on the organization of the City's physical environment into a local, functional, and aesthetic pattern consistent with community values. These policies and programs are illustrated on the General Plan Land Use Map.
- *The Housing Element:* is also part of the General Plan Policy Document but was adopted under separate cover to facilitate review by the State Department of Housing and Community Development.

Reviewing and Amending the General Plan

The Lancaster General Plan is a dynamic document, based on conditions, policies, and community values expressed at a particular moment in time. Since these factors are continually changing, local governments must continually monitor the relevance of their plans to ensure that they remain in touch with their evolving communities.

In July 1996, the City Council authorized the initiation of an update to the City's General Plan and Program Environmental Impact Report in order to re-evaluate the General Plan text and land use map. The need for such action followed region-wide reductions in growth rates projected by the Southern California Association of Governments (SCAG) to the year 2020. The General Plan update program commenced in September 1996 and was completed on October 28, 1997.

Since the time of the last update, the City has entered a period of rapid growth fueled primarily by residential development but also consisting of new commercial and industrial development. This new development continues to absorb available land inventories that were made available

with the adoption of the 1997 land use map. Therefore, there is a need to access available land inventories to determine if adjustments to the land use map will be necessary in order to accommodate projected growth. In conjunction with the land use map, there is a need to review and revise, as necessary, the General Plan Policy document in order to reflect relevant changes to the goals, objectives, policies and action programs.

In April 2004, the Southern California Association of Governments (SCAG) adopted the new Regional Transportation Plan (RTP) which established long term growth projections to the year 2030 for each community within the SCAG region. Since SCAG represents the Council of Governments (COG) for the Southern California region, its projections have provided the basis on which previous General Plan updates were based. These growth projections will provide the foundation for the current Lancaster 2030 General Plan update program.

In February 2005, the City Council initiated a City-wide General Plan update. As of 2008, the update process is still ongoing; however, the City has reached several milestones. The City completed the community visioning process, which included community workshops, open houses, surveys and the formation of the General Plan Citizen’s Advisory Committee (GPCAC). In 2007, the GPCAC met on a monthly basis for a year, reviewing the City’s General Plan goals and objectives, in light of the Vision Priorities expressed by the community. The GPCAC also reviewed the three land use alternatives for 2030, and selected their Preferred Plan for recommendation to the Planning Commission and City Council. Currently, the City is compiling the Program Environmental Impact Report, which will analyze the potential impacts resulting from the land use alternatives. The City anticipates City Council adoption of Lancaster General Plan 2030 in early to mid-2009.

Status of General Plan Implementation during Calendar Year 2007

As part of the city-wide General Plan update, staff is in the process of a comprehensive overview and revision of all action programs adopted under the 1997 General Plan. Table 1 shows the current status of programs of the adopted General Plan. The “ongoing” status indicates that the program is in the process of implementation or that the program is carried out on a continual basis. Table 1 also gives an overview of the current status of the action programs for each element of the General Plan that have been assigned a “priority”. The priority defines a general period during which the City shall initiate the action on the program. Completion dates are then determined once the individual actions are initiated. These priorities are as follows:

- ♦ Priority one (P1) Initiate upon adoption (or update) of General Plan
- ♦ Priority two (P2) Initiate within 6 to 12 months following adoption (update)
- ♦ Priority three (P3) Initiate within 1 to 3 years following adoption (update)
- ♦ Priority four (P4) Initiate within 5+ years following adoption
- ♦ Ongoing For programs in existence
- ♦ Implemented For completed programs

Programs with assigned priorities that have not been initiated due to changing conditions, funding limitations, lack of resources, or other mitigating circumstances will be re-evaluated as part of the comprehensive review under the current City-wide General Plan update.

General Plan Amendments and Land Use Evaluations

On February 8, 2005, the Lancaster City Council initiated the update of the City’s Comprehensive General Plan and suspended the filing of General Plan amendments during the General Plan update process. However, city staff was directed to process all existing General Plan amendment requests filed with the City prior to October 29, 2004. During calendar year 2007, two General Plan amendments were brought before the City Council for decisions. The City Council approved the amendment of properties located at the southwest and southeast corner of 30th Street West and Avenue K from Urban Residential (UR) to Commercial (C) (General Plan Amendments Nos. 04-04 and GPA 06-01). There are six requests remaining, each of which requires the preparation of an environmental impact report. Staff anticipates taking these applications before the City Council sometime during 2009. The Council reserved the right to initiate General Plan amendments in the event that they perceive the need to do so during the duration of the comprehensive update.

Table 1
Status of General Plan Specific Action Programs

General Plan Section	State-Mandated Element Addressed	Status of Specific Action Program						Total Programs by Element	Percent of Total Programs
		Implemented	Ongoing	P1	P2	P3	P4		
Plan for the Natural Environment	Conservation and Open Space	4	50	2	8	9	7	80	16%
Plan for Public Health and Safety	Noise and Safety	5	58	1	5	2	5	76	15%
Plan for the Living Environment	Housing, Open Space & Optional Issues	5	84	4	8	8	0	109	22%
Plan for Physical Mobility	Circulation	6	38	1	5	4	0	54	11%
Plan for Municipal Services & Facilities	Safety & Optional Issues	3	30	1	1	2	2	39	8%
Plan for Economic Development & Vitality	Optional Issues	5	58	1	2	2	0	68	14%
Plan for Physical Development	Land Use	8	53	4	3	3	0	71	14%
Total		36	371	14	32	30	14	497	
Percent		7%	75%	3%	6%	6%	3%	100%	100%

Source: Lancaster Planning Department

Development Activity Summary (January 1, 2007 – December 31, 2007)

Table 2 gives an overview of the major projects for new construction that received either discretionary or staff level review and approval during 2007. Table 3 presents an overview of building permit activity for new construction during 2007.

**Table 2
Development Summary Report
January through December 2007**

Approvals	Subdivisions	Conditional Use Permits	Director's Review/ Site Plan Review
I. Housing (units/lots)			
A. Detached	805 lots		
1. Single Family			
2. Mobile Home			
a. Park			
b. Subdivision			
B. Attached			
1. Single family (to include zero lot lines)			
2. Condominiums			
3. Apartments			2 units
4. Other (sq.ft.)			
II. Commercial			
A. New (sq. ft.)			
1. Office/Professional			
2. Retail		29,000 sq. ft. mixed use commercial 8,400 and 5,241 sq. ft. retail/restaurant 42,019 sq. ft. grocery store 18,249 sq. ft. commercial use 18,241 sq. ft. commercial use 35,745 sq. ft. commercial use 82,160 sq. ft. commercial use	12,833 sq. ft. car dealership 240 sq. ft. drive-thru coffee kiosk 13,000 sq. ft. drug store 8,722 sq. ft. retail
3. Other			
B. Remodel/Addition (sq.ft)			
1. Office/Professional			
2. Retail			
3. Other			
III. Industrial			
A. New (sq. ft.)			
1. Research/develop.			
2. Light mfg.			60,850 sq. ft. industrial use
3. Heavy mfg.			
4. Service			
5. Other			13,932 sq. ft. office 21,189 sq. ft. office

Source: Lancaster Planning Department

All of the approvals reflected in Tables 2 and 3 are in conformance with and help to further implement General Plan Community Goal 2 which states "...facilitate the development of the City of Lancaster into a balanced and complete community encompassing a diverse mix of land

use types and intensities, housing types and styles, and local employment and business opportunities which combine to provide a quality living and working environment”.

Table 3
Building Permits Issued, 2007

New Building Permits	January through December
I. Housing (units)	
A. Detached	
1. Single Family	805
2. Mobile Home Park	0
B. Attached	
1. Single family (to include zero lot lines)	0
2. Condominiums	0
3. Apartments	2

Source: Lancaster Planning Department

Housing Element Amendment

The Housing Element of the General Plan is one of the seven State mandated elements and the only one that is required by law to be updated at least once every five years. The foundation for preparation of the Housing Element (or Housing Element amendment) is the determination of the statewide housing need for the five-year planning cycle by the State Department of Housing and Community Development (HCD). State law requires HCD to provide the Southern California Association of Governments (SCAG) with the region’s share of the state-wide housing need. SCAG in turn works with sub-regions and cities to determine each jurisdiction’s share of the regional housing need through the Regional Housing Needs Assessment (RHNA) process.

In July 2000, the City initiated General Plan Amendment No. 00-05 to begin the Housing Element amendment process. On January 26, 2001, the City submitted the draft document to HCD. On February 20, 2001, the Planning Commission opened the public hearing to receive public testimony on the draft. During the 60-day State review period, City staff worked with HCD to address their concerns regarding the draft document and on May 29, 2001, staff submitted a revised draft to HCD. On June 8, 2001, the City received correspondence from HCD finding the draft Housing Element amendment to be in compliance with State housing element law. On June 18, 2001, the Planning Commission adopted a resolution recommending to the City Council approval of the draft document. On June 26, 2001, the City Council approved the Draft Housing Element Amendment. On September 21, 2001, HCD submitted correspondence finding the City’s adopted Housing Element to be in full compliance with State housing law. Adoption of the Housing Element amendment represents the last phase in the 1997 General Plan update program.

In early 2007, the City began work on the current Housing Element update. On October 9, 2007, the City invited the public for a public scoping meeting, to address any concerns and accept any input residents may have. The draft Housing Element was prepared and released for public review on May 1, 2008, with a 30-day comment period ending May 30, 2008. The draft was also sent to HCD on May 1. The City of Lancaster Planning Commission conducted a public hearing

on June 16, 2008 to discuss and receive comment on the draft Housing Element. On July 1, the City received comments back from HCD. On August 12, the City revised the draft and presented the Housing Element to the Council for adoption. After Council adoption of the Housing Element, the document was resubmitted to HCD for further review. The City is awaiting further response from HCD.

Residential Building Activity

Table 4 shows that during 2007, the City of Lancaster issued 805 building permits for new single family homes and two multiple family units. During this same period, construction was completed on 432 single family homes as noted in the table. Also during 2007, the City issued permits for the demolition of two single-family units and 17 multi-family units. Subtracting the demolitions leaves a net construction figure of 413 residential dwelling for the calendar year.

Table 4
New Housing (Lancaster)
January 1, 2007 to December 31, 2007

New Residential Units			Demolitions	Net New Units
Unit Type	Permits Issued	Units Constructed	All Residential	Units Constructed Less Demolitions
Single Family	805	432	2	430
Multiple Family*	2	0	17	-17
Group Quarters	0	0	0	0
Total	807	432	19	413

*Represents dwelling units

Source: Lancaster Department of Building and Safety

New Construction Need

The SCAG Regional Housing Needs Assessment projected a need for an additional 12,799 housing units of all types within the City of Lancaster between January 1, 2006 and June 30, 2014.

The 2006-2014 RHNA projection represents an annualized need of 1,505 new residential units per year. The 413 net housing units constructed during 2006 represent 27% of the projected annualized need. Table 5 indicates that household growth has increased since the 1990s, with a 2.3% rate during the 2000s compared to 1.5% rate during the 1990s. Table 5 further shows that housing production and household formation closely paralleled each other during the decade and continue to do so through 2007.

Between 2000 and 2007 inclusive, the average annual rate for housing production and household formation was 2.3%. This is slightly above the rate of the previous decade average growth figure. The number of new housing units and new households has continued to increase each year since 2000, although 2007 saw a decrease in units after 2006. As detailed in the Housing Element amendment, adequate sites with appropriate zoning and infrastructure needed to

facilitate the full range of housing types are available to accommodate the RHNA new construction need if market conditions so dictate.

Table 5
New Residential Construction and Household Formation
Lancaster (1990 – 2000 & 2000 – 2007)

	Housing Production	Household Formation	Difference
1990 - 2000			
1990	36,525	32,901	3,624
2000	41,745	38,224	3,521
Average Growth 1990-2000	522	532	22
Percent Growth	1.4%	1.6%	0.2%
2000 - 2007			
2000	41,745	38,224	3,521
2007	48,550	44,456	4,094
Average Growth 2000-2007	972	890	82
Percent Growth	2.3%	2.3%	0%

Source: Census Bureau 1990, 2000, State Dept. of Finance 2007

Housing Affordability

As part of the 2000-2005 Housing Element amendment, staff performed an analysis on new construction permits that were issued during January 1, 1998 to December 31, 2000. All of the 569 residential units examined were of single family detached construction. Of the total number, 116 had addresses that would place them in East Lancaster while 453 had addresses that placed them in West Lancaster. According to information from the Greater Antelope Valley Economic Alliance, the average price of homes sold in East Lancaster during the first half of 2000 was \$90,755, while the average price of homes sold in West Lancaster during this time was \$106,948. As indicated in Table 6, a family of four making between \$26,050 and \$41,700 in 2000 would be considered as a low-income household within Los Angeles County.

Table 6
Household Income Ranges for Lancaster
March, 2000

Income Category	Percent of Median Income	Income Limit
Very low	<50 percent	0 - \$26,050
Low	51 – 80 percent	\$26,050 - \$41,700
Moderate	81 – 120 percent	\$41,700 – \$62,500
Above Moderate	>120 percent	>\$62,500

Source: HUD Income Limits, March 2000, based on a family of four.

Applying the HUD criterion that housing costs should not exceed 30 percent of gross income would equal a monthly housing expense range for low-income households of \$630 to \$1008. At an interest rate of 7% on a 30-year fixed rate loan, the monthly payment on a \$90,755 home would be \$604. Since this mortgage payment would fall at the bottom of the lower-income range for Los Angeles County (see Table 7), it can be concluded that all of the homes constructed within East Lancaster during this time were affordable to low-income families.

Table 7
Income Limits for 1 and 2 Bedroom Units
March, 2000*

Income Level	1 Bedroom	2 Bedrooms
Very Low	\$521	\$651
Low	\$834	\$1,043
Median	\$1,043	\$1,303
Moderate	\$1,250	\$1,563

Source: State Dept. of Housing and Community Development, 2000
Based upon 2-person and 4-person households.

A family of four making between \$41,700 and \$62,500 would qualify as a moderate-income household within Los Angeles County during 2000. Applying the above methodology, the monthly housing expense range for the four-member moderate-income household would be \$1008 to \$1510. At the same interest rate and loan terms as above, the monthly mortgage payment on a \$106,948 home would equal \$712. Therefore, it can be concluded that all of the homes constructed within West Lancaster during this period would be affordable to low to moderate income families.

Since the time of this analysis, there has been a substantial increase in the median price of homes throughout the Southern California region. Therefore, the status of housing affordability will be re-evaluated as part of the next Housing Element update.

Mitigation of Governmental Constraints to the Production of Housing

The mandate that local governments provide for housing for all economic segments of the community is but one of many, often conflicting, responsibilities they face. In addition to dealing with issues of affordable housing and housing rehabilitation, cities must provide municipal services and facilities, protect the natural environment, ensure a high quality of development and urban design, reflect the concerns of City residents, and facilitate increases in local employment and sales tax-generating uses. These responsibilities must be met in an era of increasingly tight budgets. As a result of state laws relating to municipal finance, reductions in federal and state funds for infrastructure and other programs, and changing public attitudes

toward growth, local agencies have had to require that development internalize many costs which were once subsidized by various public funds. As a result, the cost of development inevitably increases, and the American dream of owning a home becomes more difficult for those who are not fortunate to already own a home.

Along with the mandate for local governments to provide housing for all economic segments of the community is the democratic principle that government respects the desires of the governed. Over the past several years, there has been an increasing concern on the part of single family residents in Lancaster and throughout Southern California regarding a proliferation of apartments and multi-family development. In many communities, “low and moderate income housing” is perceived as a problem to be avoided, rather than a public responsibility, and individuals are electing local government on a platform of “no more apartments.” The result is that community acceptance of multi-family development is severely limited.

However, the City has taken a number steps in reducing governmental constraints to the production of housing for all income levels. Existing development regulations allow residential projects an increased density of at least 25 percent over the maximum authorized density of the zone, plus other incentives, when the developer agrees to set aside a prescribed percentage of units within the project for lower-income households. Multi-family projects over 10 units not adjacent to single-family residential as well as second dwelling units on lots over 10,000 square feet can be process administratively, as opposed to a conditional use procedure, which would require a public hearing. Final subdivision maps, which once required approval by the City Council, are now approved by the Director of Public Works, decreasing processing time and housing construction costs. Other efforts to reduce constraints are underway, including the use of form-based zoning within the Downtown Lancaster area, and the consideration of such zoning in other areas in the City.

ANNUAL ELEMENT PROGRESS REPORT

Housing Element Implementation

(CCR Title 25 §6202)

Jurisdiction City of Lancaster

Reporting Period 01-Jan-07 - 31-Dec-07

Table A

Annual Building Activity Report
Very Low-, Low-, and Moderate-Income Units and Mixed-Income Multifamily Projects

Housing Development Information							Housing with Financial Assistance and/or Deed Restrictions		Housing without Financial Assistance or Deed Restrictions	
1	2	3	4				5	6	7	8
Project Identifier (may be APN No., project name or address)	Unit Category	Tenure R=Renter O=Owner	Affordability by Household Incomes				Total Units per Project	Assistance Programs for Each Development	Deed Restricted Units	Note below the number of units determined to be affordable without financial or deed restrictions and attach an explanation how the jurisdiction determined the units were affordable. Refer to instructions.
			Very Low- Income	Low- Income	Moderate- Income	Above Moderate- Income		See Instructions	See Instructions	
(9) Total of Above Moderate from Table A2 ▶ ▶ ▶ ▶ ▶ ▶						807	807			
(10) Total by income units (Field 5) Table A ▶ ▶ ▶							807			

ANNUAL ELEMENT PROGRESS REPORT
Housing Element Implementation
(CCR Title 25 §6202)

Jurisdiction City of Lancaster
Reporting Period 01-Jan-07 - 31-Dec-07

Table A2

Annual building Activity Report Summary for Above Moderate-Income Units
(not including those units reported on Table A)

	Single Family	2 - 4 Units	5+ Units	Second Unit	Mobile Homes	Total
No. of Units Permitted for Above Moderate	805	2				807

ANNUAL ELEMENT PROGRESS REPORT

Housing Element Implementation

(CCR Title 25 §6202)

Jurisdiction City of Lancaster

Reporting Period 01-Jan-07 - 31-Dec-07

Table B

Regional Housing Needs Allocation Progress

Permitted Units Issued by Affordability

Enter Calendar Year starting with the first year of the RHNA allocation period. See Example.		2006	2007									Total Units to Date (all years)	Total Remaining RHNA by Income Level	
Income Level		Year 1	Year 2	Year 3	Year 4	Year 5	Year 6	Year 7	Year 8	Year 9				
Very Low	Deed Restricted	N/A	100	0								100		
	Non-deed restricted		0	0										
Low	Deed Restricted	N/A	0	0										
	Non-deed restricted		0	0										
Moderate	Deed Restricted	N/A	0	0										
	Non-deed restricted		0	0										
Above Moderate		N/A	1,153	807								1,960		
Total RHNA by COG. Enter allocation number:		N/A										2,060		
Total Units ▶ ▶ ▶			1,253	807										
Remaining Need for RHNA Period ▶ ▶ ▶ ▶ ▶														

