

**City of Baldwin Park
2020 General Plan**

Introduction

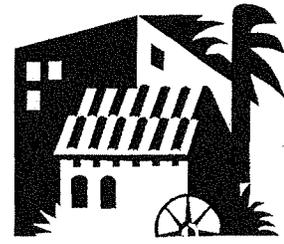
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INTRODUCTION

Baldwin Park 2020

The City of Baldwin Park has matured from its early farming roots in 1912 when the Pacific Electric Railroad laid tracks through the center of town, to a culturally diverse community of over 75,000 residents and an employment base of over 18,000 jobs. As Baldwin Park moves into the 21st century and toward the year 2020, the City is committed to developing a long-range plan which capitalizes on the community's physical, economic and human resources and responds to several key planning issues facing the City:

- How can the City create a distinct and economically viable Downtown which serves as the cultural heart of the City?
- How might the City attract businesses that would benefit from the spending habits of the increasing number of motorists traveling daily along the I-10 Freeway?
- What types of support businesses are needed to meet the changing demographics of City residents and the growing daytime population created by businesses in the community?
- As the City's residences and commercial businesses begin to age, how can the City promote reinvestment and revitalization?
- With virtually no vacant land remaining, how can the City provide additional housing to support regional population growth?
- As the local population grows, what City services and facilities need to be enhanced to meet the needs of City residents?
- Does the local circulation system require any adjustments in response to land use changes to ensure that residents and the business community can travel within and through Baldwin Park efficiently and safely?

- How can the City enhance its community identity and strengthen Baldwin Park’s “sense of place” within the San Gabriel Valley?

The General Plan provides the stepping stone between the Baldwin Park community of today and the desired community of the future. This Plan has been prepared to help the City to look forward to the year 2020 by setting forth goals and policies addressing economic development, land use, circulation, housing, and related issues that effect the quality of life in Baldwin Park.

What Is a General Plan?

A general plan is a document required by State law that serves as a guide to the long-term physical development of a community. The geographical area addressed by a general plan is not limited to a city’s corporate limits. In addition to establishing policies for properties within city boundaries, a city may plan for any lands outside the city limits which are not under another city’s jurisdiction and which may influence the decisions and planning activities related to properties within the city’s own corporate limits. A city’s general plan can be thought of as a *pattern* or *blueprint* for future growth and development.

Per State regulations, a general plan must address at least the following issues: Land use, circulation, housing, noise, public safety, conservation, and open space (California Government Code, Section 65302). However, a jurisdiction can craft its general plan to deal with any issue which decision makers, city staff, residents, business owners, and other stakeholders deem important to the community.

General Plan Planning Area

As of 2002, Baldwin Park’s corporate limits encompassed 4,337 acres of land. Abutting the City boundaries are an additional 344 acres within the sphere of influence. This area, highlighted in Figure I-1, relates to development within Baldwin Park and has a bearing on how the City makes decisions regarding circulation, land use, and public safety. Therefore, the Planning Area addressed in this General Plan includes all properties within the corporate City limits, as well as those within the sphere of influence.



Figure I-1
Planning Area

General Plan Scope and Structure

As described above, State law requires that a General Plan address land use, circulation, housing, noise, public safety, conservation, and open space. The Baldwin Park General Plan discusses these topics in a series of chapters called elements. The 2020 General Plan contains nine elements that focus on the required issues as well as the City's community design and economic development goals. These elements include:

- Land Use
- Urban Design
- Economic Development
- Circulation
- Housing
- Open Space and Conservation
- Public Safety
- Noise
- Air Quality

In addition to the nine elements, this General Plan also contains a Glossary and an Implementation Plan (see Appendix). The glossary defines key terms and phrases used in the Plan. The Implementation Plan, which is adopted separately from the General Plan elements and requires annual review, identifies the specific actions the City will undertake to implement the goals and policies contained in the elements. Annual review of the Implementation Plan allows the City to adjust programs and planned actions to respond to new or refocused priorities, to address annual budget constraints and/or opportunities, and to account for change in any physical condition or circumstance in the community (for example, occurrence of a natural disaster).

Supporting Documentation

Several supporting documents were produced during the development of the Baldwin Park 2020 General Plan, including the element technical reports and the Environmental Impact Report (EIR).

The element technical reports include background data necessary for issues identification and plan preparation. Due to the length of these reports, they have been compiled into a separate volume and are available for review at City Hall. The background information contained in the technical report is temporal and will become outdated as conditions change. This information has been separated out from the General Plan to facilitate periodic updating. Because the technical report is not incorporated into the General Plan policy document, updating the technical report will not require a General Plan amendment, although it may lead to subsequent General Plan amendments.

The General Plan EIR analyzes the potential environmental impacts associated with development of the Baldwin Park planning area according to the General Plan land use policy, and implementation of the General Plan.

Organization of the Plan

Each of the nine elements, with the exception of the Housing Element, is organized in the following manner:

- **Introduction to the Element** - The Introduction contains a discussion of each element's purpose, defines the scope and content of the element, and describes related plans and programs.
- **Issues, Goals and Policies** - This section of each element contains a description of identified planning issues, goals and policies related to the element topic. The issues, goals and policies are based on input received from the General Plan Vision Committee; from community workshops; from members of the City Council and Planning Commission; and from City staff.

The issues represent the opportunities, constraints or concerns that are addressed by the General Plan. The goals are overall statements of community desires and are comprised of broad statements of purpose or direction. The policies serve as guides to the City Council, Planning Commission and City staff in reviewing development proposals and making other decisions that affect the future growth and development of Baldwin Park.

- **The Plan** - Each element also contains a Plan section. The Plan provides an overview of the City's course of action to implement the identified goals and policies. For example, the Land Use Element contains a "Land Use Plan" indicating the types and intensities of land use permitted in the City. The Circulation Element contains a "Circulation Plan" describing the overall circulation system required to meet the future needs of Baldwin Park.

The structure of the Housing Element varies slightly because State law is very specific about the items that must be addressed in a housing element. In addition to broad goals and policies, the Housing Element contains numeric goals for housing rehabilitation and new housing construction, as well as descriptions of programs the City will pursue toward those goals.

The structure of the elements allows readers to easily locate issues of interest and to read a summary of the City's goals and policies relative to a particular topic. However, General Plan readers should realize that the General Plan is an integrated document. The policies contained in the various elements are interrelated and should be examined comprehensively. For example, many of the Economic Development Element policies tie closely to policies contained in the Land Use Element. All policy components must be considered together.

Community Participation

Because the General Plan reflects the goals and ideals of the community, citizen input represents an integral part of the General Plan preparation process. Both Baldwin Park residents and representatives from the business community and school district contributed insight and vision into the planning efforts and helped develop the goals and policies contained in the Plan. Public participation took the following forms:

- A *General Plan Vision Committee* was formed representing diverse community interests to provide policy direction in formulation of the 2020 General Plan. The Committee met five times prior to General Plan preparation to identify and discuss issues, to develop goals and policies, to review land use and circulation alternatives, and to recommend a preferred Plan to City decision-makers. A list of Vision Committee members and their affiliation is included at the beginning of the Plan, and a summary of each of the Committee meetings is included in the Appendix.
- A written *Community Needs Assessment Survey* was conducted to document the major concerns facing the community, and to help focus key issues to be addressed in the General Plan. A total of 27,000 surveys were distributed community-wide, with approximately 1,600 completed surveys returned, one-quarter in Spanish and three-quarters in English. A summary of the survey results are included in the Appendix of the Plan.
- *Focus Group Meetings* were conducted with key segments of the community to solicit targeted input on the particular issues and needs of these groups in Baldwin Park. Meetings were held with the following groups: Business Workers and Owners, Single-Female Head of Households, Youth, and Social Service Providers. Summaries of the Focus Group meetings are also included in the Appendix.

- Three *Community Workshops* were conducted at key stages during development of the Plan. The first workshop launched the public participation program and was structured as an informational session to answer questions about the program and to solicit input about issues of importance to the community. The second workshop focused on a discussion of land use alternatives for six special study areas in Baldwin Park, and the third workshop focused on presentation of the Draft Plan and solicitation of input in several key topic areas. A summary of each of the community meetings is included in the Appendix.
- The public had opportunities to address decision-makers directly regarding issues, concerns and desires at a series of *City Council/Planning Commission Study Sessions* both prior to preparation and during review of the Draft General Plan.
- The Draft General Plan and supporting documents were circulated for public review and comment before and during formal *public hearings* held before the Planning Commission and City Council.