

INTRODUCTION AND BACKGROUND

General Plan Legislation

The Circulation Element has been a required element of the General Plan since 1955. Section 65302 (b) of the California Government Code requires:

A Circulation Element consisting of the general location and extent of existing and proposed major thoroughfares, transportation routes, terminals, and other public utilities and facilities, all correlated with the land use element of the plan.

Purpose and Function

The purpose of the Circulation Element is to provide a safe and efficient transportation system for existing and proposed land uses within the community. The Element provides a basis for the orderly pattern of development while minimizing the impact of transportation services on residential neighborhoods and the environmental quality of the community.

Relationship to Other General Plan Elements

The manner in which people and goods move within and throughout the City is an important factor in maintaining a quality living environment. The Circulation Element must be closely coordinated with the Land Use and Housing Elements to fully utilize the resources of the community. In addition, the Circulation Element is also closely related to the Noise Element. For instance, the Circulation Element prescribes traffic volumes for the various roadways comprising the transportation network, while the Noise Element describes the baseline noise levels that provide noise compatible land uses. In an urban environment, aesthetic elements of a circulation system such as medians, street trees and pedestrian walkways can provide passive open space and positive visual resources. These are considered in the Open Space and Conservation Element.