



**City of Downey**

# 2019 General Plan Annual Report



**11111 Brookshire Avenue, Downey, CA**

# City of Downey

11111 Brookshire Avenue  
Downey, CA 90241

## City Council

(at the time of adoption)

**Blanca Pacheco, Mayor**  
District 1

**Claudia Frometa, Mayor Pro-Tem**  
District 4

**Sean Ashton**  
District 2

**Rick Rodriguez**  
District 3

**Alex Saab**  
District 5

## Planning Commission

(at the time of adoption)

**Miguel Duarte, Chairperson**  
District 1

**Nolveris Frometa, Vice-Chairperson**  
District 5

**Patrick Owens**  
District 2

**Steven Dominguez**  
District 3

**Jimmy Spathopoulos**  
District 4



**City of Downey**

---

# City Staff

## **City Administration**

Gilbert A. Livas  
City Manager

John Oskoui  
Assistant City Manager

## **Community Development Department**

Aldo E. Schindler  
Director of Community Development

Crystal Landavazo  
City Planner

Richard Hicks  
Building Official

Jessica Flores  
Economic Development & Housing  
Manager

Carrie Rios  
Senior Code Enforcement  
Officer



**City of Downey**

---

# Table of Contents

<b>Introduction</b>	<b>Page 5</b>
<b>Executive Summary</b>	
<b>Background Information</b>	
<b>Report Acceptance Date</b>	
<b>Community Development Updates</b>	<b>Page 7</b>
<b>Planning Division</b>	
<b>Building and Safety Division</b>	
<b>Code Enforcement Unit</b>	
<b>Economic Development &amp; Housing</b>	
<b>General Plan Implementation Status</b>	<b>Page 15</b>
<b>Chapter 1: Land Use</b>	
<b>Chapter 2: Circulation</b>	
<b>Chapter 3: Housing</b>	
<b>Chapter 4: Conservation</b>	
<b>Chapter 5: Safety</b>	
<b>Chapter 6: Noise</b>	
<b>Chapter 7: Open Space</b>	
<b>Chapter 8: Design</b>	
<b>Chapter 9: Economic Development</b>	

# Introduction



## **Executive Summary**

The City of Downey's 2019 General Plan Annual Progress Report is prepared by the Community Development Department with input from various City Departments including Public Works, Fire, Police, Parks and Recreation. The report is intended to provide information on the measurable outcomes and actions associated with the implementation of all of the General Plan elements. It also reviews the activities of the Community Development Department including the Planning, Building and Safety, Economic Development & Housing, and Code Enforcement.

The City of Downey General Plan is a long range comprehensive plan that will control and regulate land uses and development in the City. The individual Elements (land use, circulation, housing, conservation, open space, noise, safety, design, and economic development) of this General Plan contain policies and programs that will guide future development in the City.

California Government Code Section 65400 et seq. requires the City to annually review the General Plan. An annual report should be prepared for review and approval by the Planning Commission/City Council and forwarded to the State Office of Planning and Research and the State Housing and Community Development office.



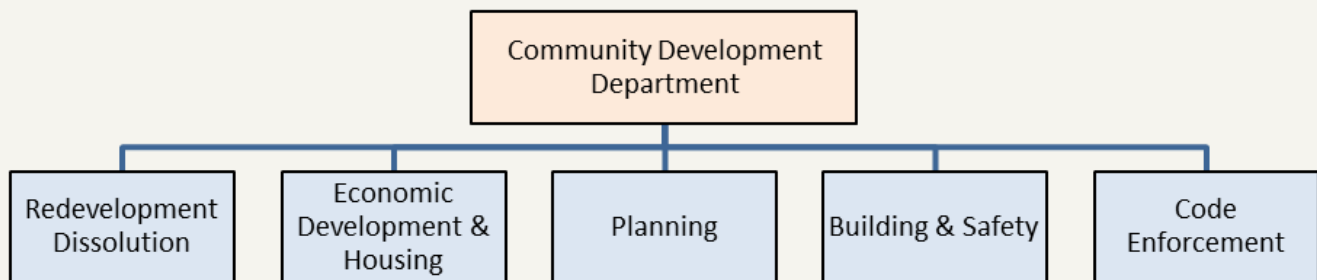
## **Background Information**

Downey is 12.8 square miles in area. Its topography is relatively level. The City is located in the southeastern part of Los Angeles County, about 12 miles southeast of downtown Los Angeles. It is bounded by: the Rio Hondo River channel to the west; Telegraph Road to the north; the San Gabriel River channel to the east; and Gardendale Street and Foster Road to the south. Cities bordering Downey include Pico Rivera, Santa Fe Springs, Norwalk, Bellflower, Paramount, South Gate, and Commerce. The City of Downey is provided regional access by four interstate highways: the I-605 Freeway, the I-5 Freeway, the I-105 Freeway, and the I-710 Freeway. These freeways provide access to major employment centers including downtown Los Angeles and employment centers in Orange County

The City of Downey has matured from its farming roots from its founding in 1873 to become the premier city in the southeast area of Los Angeles County. Downey is one of the larger suburban cities in the region with a population of 114,212 residents (Source: Finance Department, City of Downey *Comprehensive Annual Financial Report for Fiscal Year—ended June 30, 2019*).

The issues addressed by General Plan Vision 2025 will work towards achieving this vision by adhering to the values providing excellent housing, education, employment, and recreation opportunities plus the mission of providing a safe, convenient, and attractive community for those that live, work, or visit Downey.

## **Department Organizational Chart**



## **Acceptance Date**

The 2019 General Plan Annual Progress Report was reviewed by the Planning Commission on May 20, 2020, and accepted by the City Council on June 9, 2020.

# Community Development

## Department Accomplishments



# Planning Division

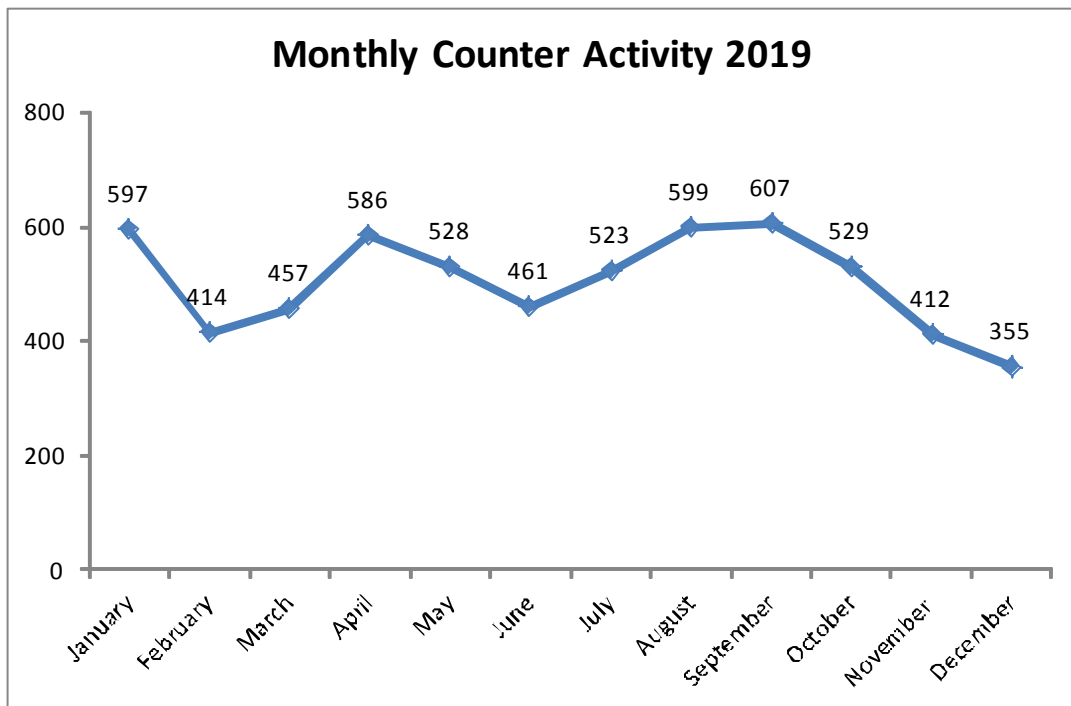
The Planning Division maintains and implements the Downey Municipal Code, Zoning Ordinance, General Plan, and prepares other specialized planning documents. The division reviews development requests for conformance with the City's planning policies and standards, and conducts environmental review under the provisions of the California Environmental Quality Act (CEQA).

The list below outlines the activities of the Planning Division from January 2019 through December 2019. The day-to-day planning activities include:

- Administrating the City's Zoning Ordinance (Development Code)
- Answering public inquiries on the telephone and over the public counter
- Processing entitlement applications for the Planning Commission and City Council
- Reviewing and approving business license applications for zoning compliance
- Reviewing development plans for compliance with City standards (Plan Checks)

## Counter Activity

Counter activity represents the number of counter visits recorded in the Planning Division. Records of counter visits are kept and tracked on a monthly basis. Historically, counter activity has been greater during summer, while lower in the winter. In 2019, the total counter visits were 6,068. September was the busiest month of counter activity with 607 visits.





## Planning Applications

Planning applications in 2019, including Administrative, Planning Commission, and legislative items to the City Council, totaled 210. Also, Planning staff reviewed business licenses and conducted plan check review to ensure the proposed business, improvement and new construction were in compliance with the zoning code.

### Single Family Residential

In 2019, the Planning Department conducted community outreach and a Planning Commission Study Session regarding residential design guidelines and changes to the City’s Single Family Development Standards. As a result of those meetings, Staff has compiled final draft standards to be presented for consideration by the Planning Commission and City Council during the calendar year of 2020.

### Large Family Daycare

In compliance with Senate Bill No. 234, the City of Downey established new regulations and development standards for residential Family Daycare facilities. The ordinance, dictated by state legislation, now removes all review and regulation authority from local jurisdictions.

## Street Faire

Community Development staff participated in the 26th annual Street Faire on May 4, 2019, which occurred on Brookshire Avenue between Firestone Boulevard and 5th Street. Staff members were present throughout the day to provide information on City programs, policies and answer general questions in regards to development in the City.

Planning Applications	
Temporary Signs	32
Sign Permits	70
Conditional Use Permits	10
Sidewalk/ Parking Sales	18
Fireworks Stands	16
Christmas tree Lots / Pumpkin Patches	3
Special Events	16
Minor Modifications	12
Zone Changes	2
Tentative Parcel/ Tract Maps	1
Planned Sign Program	2
Temporary Roof Mounted Balloon	1
Searchlight for Special Event	0
Negative Declaration	0
Code Amendments	4
Lot Line Adjustments	1
Miscellaneous Actions	1
Minor Conditional Use Permit	6
Variances	2
Site Plan Review	6
Temporary Use of Land Permit	2
Minor Site Plan Review	2
Final Tract/ Parcel Map	3

## Planning Commission

The Planning Commission conducts public hearings on most entitlements, including new commercial and multi-family residential buildings, conditionally permitted uses, variances and similar land use requests. On legislative items such as General Plan Amendments (GPA), Amendments to the Zoning Ordinance, and Zoning Changes, the Planning Commission acts as an advisory body to the City Council. In 2019, the Planning Commission conducted 19 meetings during which they considered 39 hearing items.

Below is a list of some of the major projects that were approved by the Planning Commission:

- Chick-fil-a and Retail building Restoration (8818 Imperial Highway) - A new 4,000 square foot restaurant with drive-thru and the remodel of a 10,000 square foot retail building was approved on the subject site at the South-West corner of Imperial Highway and Lakewood Boulevard. The project's plans are currently under review through the building plan check process.
- Florence Apartments (7224 Florence Avenue) – A new three-story, 12-unit apartment complex with 30 parking spaces was approved by the Planning Commission. The new residential development is located on the southern block of Florence adjacent to the Rio Hondo River overpass leading towards Bell Gardens.
- Rives Mansion (10921 Paramount Boulevard) - Entire rehabilitation of the historic Rives Mansion was approved for adaptive reuse. The site will for the majority occupy office related businesses. The project also involves the construction of a 1,200 square foot retail café.

# Economic Development & Housing

The Economic Development and Housing Division oversees and is responsible for facilitating the growth of the local economy in Downey. More importantly, the Division works with City staff, local business entrepreneurs, developers, contractors, and the Downey Chamber of Commerce, to attract and retain quality development projects in Downey. In 2019, the Economic Development Division staff facilitated several key projects in Downey.

## **Counter Activity**

In 2019, the total counter visits for Economic Development and Housing Divisions were 448. January was the busiest month of counter activity with 47 visits.

(This space left intentionally blank)

# Economic Development & Housing

The primary goal of the Economic Development & Housing Division is to facilitate and encourage economic growth and meet the housing needs of everyone in the community. These objectives are achieved through the implementation of long-term goals and short-term policies established in the City of Downey's Housing Element.

In 2019, the economic development division assisted in an amendment to the Development Agreement to the Promenade at Downey shopping center in an effort to further facilitate the development of the remaining vacant 21 acres. The division also helped further implement the City's Art in Public Places program. By assisting the City's Theater Subcommittee, the renovation of the Downey Theater Plaza will be accompanied by a new sculpture named the "Tree of Life". Funding for the artwork is generated through development fees of previous major construction. Additional Art in Public Places pieces will be installed at Furman Park and on Downey Avenue within the Downtown. Funds managed by the Economic Development Division through the Community Development Block Grant provide support for some of the City's after school programs, adult literacy program, senior meals program, grade school health and eye screening program, at risk youth programs, and job training programs.

In 2019, the Housing Division continued to offer the "Housing Rehabilitation Grant Program". The grant program was offered to households who fell within the 50 percent Annual Median Income as defined by HUD. This was made available to owner-occupied single family residential properties with the goal of processing approximately 10 projects during the fiscal year. A total of 13 home improvement projects were completed with an investment of \$455,000 in grant money received by HUD.

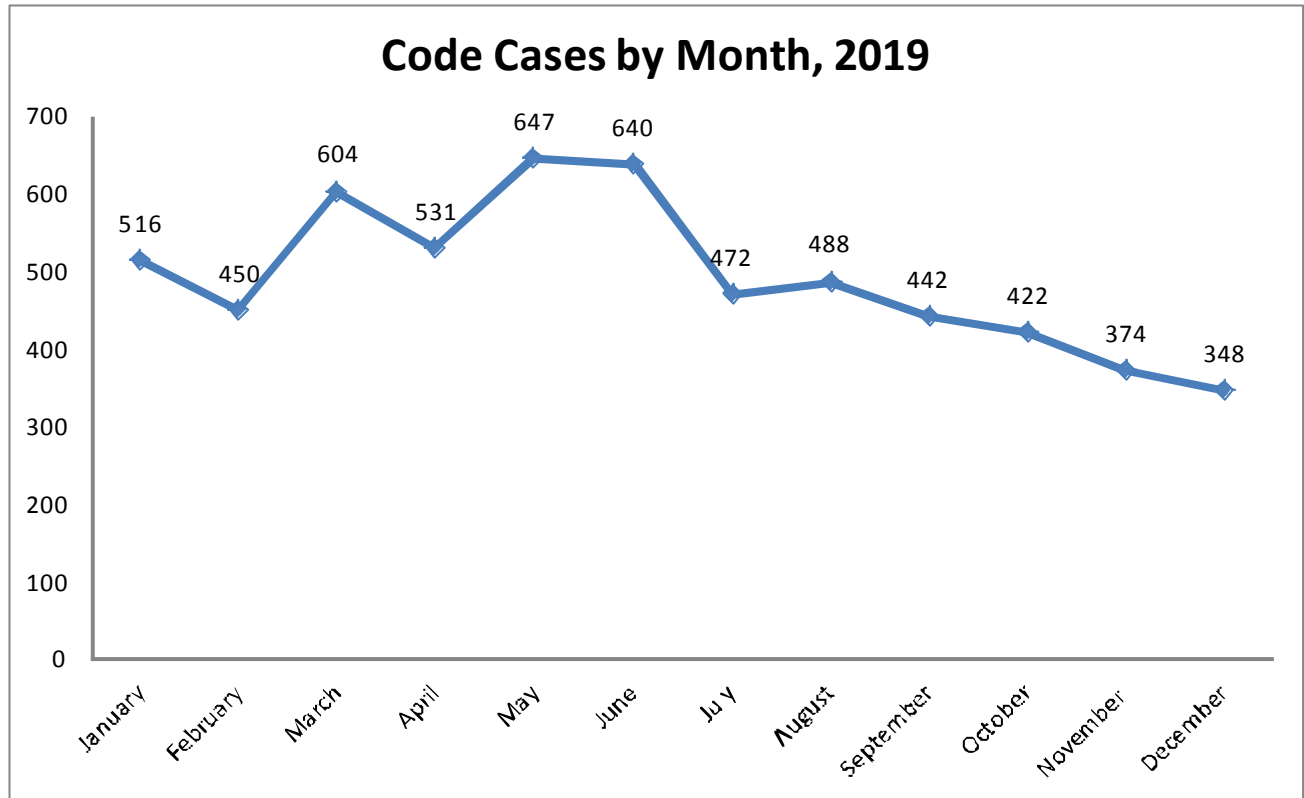
The primary funding source comes from The U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development's ("HUD") annual allocation of the Community Development Block Grant ("CDBG")

# Code Enforcement Unit

The Code Enforcement Division is responsible for enforcing the Downey Municipal codes that relate to residential and business property maintenance standards, including business licensing. Code Enforcement also enforces building, health and safety standards related to environmental protection and neighborhood preservation. The Division works in close cooperation with all City departments and the City Prosecutor to educate the public and gain the willing compliance of violators.

In 2019, the total counter visits for Code Enforcement Unit were 938. August was the busiest month with 117 visits.

Code Enforcement activity for the year of 2019 involved 5,934 cases for various property violations (i.e. commercial, residential, public street, park and recreational). May had the highest number of new cases generated with 647 cases. In addition to conducting property violation inspections, Code Enforcement Officers conducted inspections on yard sale permits and were proactive in issuing administrative citations.

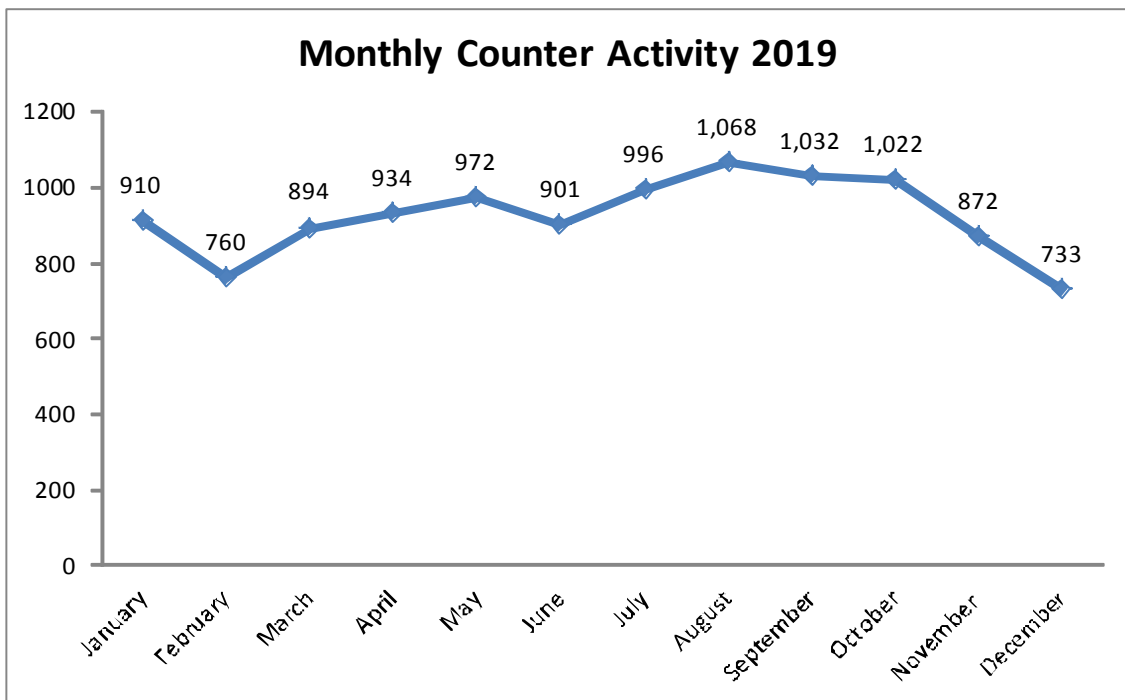




# Building and Safety Division

The Building and Safety Division is responsible for a variety of tasks that include issuing permits, processing plan check submittals, and inspections. The Building and Safety Division reviews all plans and permits for compliance with the Zoning and Building regulations. The 2016 California Building Standards Code (California Code of Regulations, Title 24) was adopted in 2017 and remained in effect through 2018. In November 2019, the 2019 California Building Standards Code was adopted to take effect in 2020.

In 2019, the Building and Safety Division accepted 2,162 permit applications and issued 2,020 building permits. The total valuation for all permits issued was \$129,269,060.91. These applications include all construction related projects and installation of mechanical and utility equipment. Also, there were a total of 34 new residential dwellings constructed in 2019. In addition, the Building & Safety Inspectors have conducted 11,059 inspections.



Building & Safety's counter activity is typically busy during summer. In 2019, the total counter visits were 11,094. August was the busiest month of counter activity with 1,068 visits.

# General Plan

## Implementation Status





## Chapter 1 Land Use Element

The Land Use chapter establishes the policies for determining where certain land uses, such as residential, commercial, industrial, are most desirable. The Land Use chapter defines the physical areas in the City serving the needs of residents, businesses, and visitors.

- ◆ **Promote housing projects and mixed use projects that include housing within areas designated for the downtown area, transit-oriented developments, and areas in the vicinity of the Downey Landing project (Program 1.1.2.3.).** In 2019, no new development projects were submitted for entitlement within the specified areas of this program. However projects were submitted and/or issued for construction in 2020 that fall within these areas. These projects account for total of eight (8) new units within the downtown.
- ◆ **Promote the Downtown area as a destination point for entertainment, dining, civic, and other activities (Program 1.2.2.1.).** Downtown Downey continues to support and encourage community events including outdoor events for businesses such as the annual Downey Street Faire, St. George Greek Festival, Veteran and Memorial Day Events at Bastards Canteen restaurant. These type of events have drawn large crowds to the downtown area and created a lively environment for the community. In addition, construction began in the year 2019 for new developments to open in the downtown such and the Avenue Theater redevelopment project. Numerous other proposals were discussed with staff for spaces in the downtown.
- ◆ **Adjust the codes, policies, and regulations in response to changes in land use trends (Program 1.3.2.2.)** Zone Text Amendments for the year of 2019 include changes to standards related to cannabis, Accessory Dwelling Units, massage establishments, and Large Family Daycares. Efforts were also made in finalizing development standards for Single Family regulations. Lastly, the Planning Division conducted studies and research in order to identify additional adequate changes to commercial zone regulations. This work will lead to request for Zone Text Amendments during the year of 2020.
- ◆ **Discourage residential construction not in harmony with the surrounding neighborhood (Program 1.4.2.1.)** Staff is currently, and for the majority of 2019, currently finalizing development standards and design guidelines for Single Family Residential properties. The new regulations aim to guide design towards harmony with its surroundings.

## Chapter 2 Circulation Element

The safe and efficient movement of people and goods through cities is provided by a circulation system ranging from sidewalks to roadways. As population and economic growth continue, cities have the challenge of improving the circulation system to deal with increased demands. Population and economic growth also impact the infrastructure needed to provide utilities and other services for those who live, work, and visit Downey.

### **Traffic Congestion**

- ◆ **Maintain intersections and street segments at acceptable service levels and not worsen those intersections and street segments currently operating at unacceptable levels (Program 2.1.1.1).** In 2019, the City began 35 new Capital Improvement Projects and two major corridor studies related to intersections and street segment improvements. These projects consist of improvements to the City's major corridors, as well as improvements to residential streets. All project details are described in the Capital Improvement Program published annually and made available to the public. The program describes projects approved, implemented, and scheduled for the fiscal year of 2019-2020. Within the program members of the public can identify project start times and end schedules. Some projects have proposals and major improvements approved for continuous attention over the next five years.

Some of the projects are taking place at the following intersections in order to maintain an acceptable level-of-service, increase mobility and enhance safety at these locations:

Old River School Road Pavement Rehabilitation - This project includes rehabilitation of existing asphalt pavement and overlay of existing concrete pavement on Old River School Road from Imperial Highway to Arnett Street. The work includes miscellaneous repairs of existing concrete sidewalks, curb and gutter, driveway approaches, ADA compliant curb access ramps and incidental replacement of striping and pavement markings. Estimated to conclude in the Summer of 2020.

Lakewood Boulevard at Imperial Highway Intersection Improvements – This project includes reconstruction of Lakewood Boulevard at Imperial Highway intersection. Improvements include widening on north and south sides of Imperial Highway to provide double left-turn lanes in the eastbound and westbound directions; widening on east side of Lakewood Boulevard for a northbound right-turn lane; construction of sidewalks, drive approaches and ADA-compliant curb access ramps; modifications of traffic signal, street and pedestrian lighting; striping and signing modifications; and right-of-way acquisitions as necessary. Estimated to conclude in the Summer of 2021.

Telegraph Road Traffic Throughput & Safety Enhancements (Phase 2) - This project includes construction of new median islands, traffic safety improvements and rehabilitation of asphalt pavement on Telegraph Road from West City Limit to Lakewood Boulevard and Passons Boulevard to East City Limit. Work includes replacement of damaged sidewalk and curb and gutter and reconstruction of curb access ramps to comply with current ADA requirements. Estimated to conclude in the Summer of 2020.





## **Chapter 2 Circulation Element continued**

- ◆ **Develop a signal system master plan to promote state-of-the-art intelligent transportation system (ITS) improvements to better service on-going traffic conditions. (Program 2.1.1.3.).**

The City has continued to incrementally expand the traffic signal control system. In 2019, this included investments of over \$386,382. Initially, the Traffic Management Center was implemented at City Hall in 2005 and the first fiber-optic traffic signal communications systems were installed along the Lakewood Blvd. and Firestone Blvd. corridors. Additional systems are now located and continuously upgraded along Florence Avenue, Paramount Boulevard, Bellflower Boulevard, Imperial Hwy and Telegraph Road. In 2019, the City further expanded the fiber-optic communications networks along Woodruff Ave., and the goal is to continue those efforts along the Stewart & Gray Rd. and Old River School Rd. corridors. In addition, the city continuously maintains the system software and other elements of the TMC to maintain pace with current technology and replace obsolete hardware and software.

The Woodruff Avenue Traffic Signal Communication System project commenced in July of 2019. It involves the expansion of the city's traffic signal communication system along Woodruff Avenue between Firestone Boulevard and Foster Road. The design phase of this project was completed in 2018. The estimated completion date for the construction phase of this project is Summer 2020.

The Stewart & Gray Road Traffic Signal Communication System project also commenced in July of 2019. It involves the expansion of the city's traffic signal communication system along Stewart & Gray Road between Old River School Road and Woodruff Avenue. The estimated completion date for the construction phase of this project is Summer 2020.

The Paramount Boulevard Traffic Signal Communication System project commenced in July of 2019. It involves the expansion of the city's traffic signal communication system along Paramount Boulevard between Gardendale Street and Telegraph Road. The estimated completion date for the construction phase of this project is Summer 2020.

- ◆ **Encourage appropriate turn lanes and other operational improvements at major arterial intersections identified as congested (Program 2.1.1.6.).** Major capacity improvements were performed for intersections at Lakewood/Firestone, Imperial/Paramount, Lakewood/Florence and Lakewood/Imperial.

The city continued projects funded through the Federal Highway Safety Improvement Program (HSIP) to upgrade and implement operational improvements to the existing traffic signals at six (6) intersections along Paramount Boulevard as well as five (5) intersections along Stewart & Gray Road. In addition, HSIP funds previously awarded and commenced in July 2019 to upgrade and implement operational improvements to the existing traffic signals along Paramount Boulevard, Stewart & Gray Road and Imperial Highway. The estimated completion date for the implementation of the traffic signal upgrades is Summer 2020.



## **Chapter 2 Circulation Element continued**

- ◆ **Establish a development recovery fee program to require new developments and expansions of existing developments to pay the cost of circulation improvements (Program 2.1.2.1.).** Developer fees continued to be collected, in 2019, on a case-by-case basis by the Public Works Department through the development plan review/entitlement process. Approximately \$1 million is collected from developers each year. In addition, the city is proposing to complete a transportation impact developer fee nexus study in conjunction with the next General Plan Circulation Element update.
  
- ◆ **Ensure the mitigation of off-site traffic impacts by development projects to the maximum extent feasible, including the installation or upgrade of traffic signals at intersections and/or contribution of its fair-share towards mitigating impacts (Program 2.1.2.2.).** Land development projects are reviewed on a case-by-case basis for potential traffic impact. If trip generation thresholds in accordance with the LA County Congestion Management Program of 50 vehicle trips during either AM or PM peak hour are exceeded, a traffic impact analysis study is required which will determine mitigation measures necessary to offset the impacts created by the development on any designated CMP facilities or the amount of development fee to be collected. For example, traffic studies are currently under preparation in conjunction with the environmental documents being prepared for the proposed redevelopment of the Rancho Los Amigos South Campus Specific Plan as well as the Eco Rapid Transit Line.
  
- ◆ **Promote site designs, street patterns, and street signalization that discourage the use of local streets as through routes (Program 2.1.2.4.).** The intersection improvement projects included under Programs 2.1.1.1 and 2.1.1.6 are intended to increase capacity and operational efficiency at these intersections in order to encourage through traffic on arterial streets and minimize intrusion through residential neighborhoods. In addition, improvements were not only made to signalization but also involved the widening of the major arterials, such as Florence Avenue, Paramount Boulevard, and Lakewood Boulevard, to provide an increase in the capacity and mobility along these corridors, and ultimately to minimize intrusion through residential neighborhoods. Furthermore, the traffic signal communication system projects mentioned in Program 2.1.1.3 will improve mobility along the Woodruff Avenue, Stewart & Gray Road and Paramount Boulevard corridors which will also minimize intrusion through residential neighborhoods. In addition, the city's Traffic Calming Program provides a framework for discouraging through traffic on local streets through a series of traffic calming measures which are applied to local residential streets as appropriate in response to complaints submitted by residents.



## Chapter 2 Circulation Element continued

### Travel Alternatives

- ◆ **Encourage the use of bicycling as a form of transportation for employment commuting and business purposes, in addition to recreational purposes (Program 2.2.2.1.).** Bike lanes exist throughout various major streets in Downey. These bike lanes provided a healthy option to help reduce greenhouse gas emissions. Also, bike lanes have a “traffic calming” effect, meaning roads that appear narrow result in slower vehicular speeds improving safety and increasing driver’s reaction times. In 2019, approximately 1.17 million dollars was invested in bike share, safety training/education, and implementation of the City’s Bicycle Master Plan. Funding sources include county and state agencies.
- ◆ **Promote home-based businesses (Program 2.2.3.4.).** In 2019, the city issued 276 business licenses for home-based business. This allows people who live in residential zoned properties an opportunity to work from home. The majority of the licenses are on-line sale and real estate businesses.

### Truck Traffic

- ◆ **Co-ordinate with local, regional, and state agencies involved in mitigating truck traffic impacts in the region (Program 2.3.1.2.).** The City of Downey Public Works Department issues overload permits to ensure that the correct haul routes are utilized through the city and that proper arrangements have been made in advance. In addition, truck circulation improvements will be incorporated in the various proposed intersection improvements as referenced in Program 2.1.1.1. New developments must also comply and compare impacts against regional and state standards/thresholds, in addition to City standards.
- ◆ **Discourage truck parking on public streets (Program 2.3.2.1.).** The Public Works Traffic Division continued to implement parking prohibitions of large commercial vehicles on public streets. DMC Section 3185 (b) prohibits the parking of commercial vehicles exceeding 6,000 lbs. manufacturer’s unladen weight or 84 inches in height or width on all public streets with the exception of those streets located within areas zoned industrial, the vehicle is involved with the servicing of the adjacent property or for a period not to exceed eight hours if the vehicle has been involved in an accident or is disabled. The Downey Police Department’s Traffic Unit continued to monitor and issue citations for those in violation.

## **Chapter 2 Circulation Element continued**

- ◆ **Ensure that land uses generating high amounts of truck traffic provide compensation to the city for projected pavement wear of public streets (Program 2.3.2.4).** Approximately \$5 million annually is programmed in the city's Capital Improvement Program for the rehabilitation and/or reconstruction of the city's arterial, collector and local streets. In addition, developers are assessed fees on a case-by-case, pro-rata share basis towards pavement rehabilitation of arterial streets designated as truck routes. The City collects \$1.5 million annually from its trash collection company which is applied towards the rehabilitation of the City's residential streets.

### **Regional Traffic**

- ◆ **Coordinate with CalTrans, METRO, SCAG, Gateway Cities COG and other agencies to promote multi-modal improvement strategies to improve the regional transportation network (Program 2.4.1.1).** As in 2018, City staff continued to participate in the development of the West Santa Ana Branch (WSAB) Transit Corridor Project. It is a new 20-mile light rail transit line that would connect downtown Los Angeles to southeast LA County, serving the cities and communities including Downey. Metro has formally initiated the Draft Environmental Impact Statement/Environmental Impact Report (EIS/EIR) phase. In response to comments received during the scoping period and ongoing technical analysis, Metro has been studying new potential alignments in addition to the original four Northern Alignment Options (alignment between downtown Los Angeles and City of Huntington Park). Studies and best practices provided by the respective agencies are also evaluated by staff and implemented when and where necessary.

### **Infrastructure and Maintenance**

- ◆ **Promote the expansion of communication networks to meet the needs of city residents, businesses, and other land uses (Program 2.7.1.2.)** The City continues to use the customer service check-in kiosk system to better expedite service at the public counters. This new system allows staffs to provide an effective and efficient service to our customers and to enhance communications between various City Departments in terms of speed, capacity and reliability. This system also allows Staff to reflect on ratings of services to ensure customer service is exceptional. The City website also allows residents to report incidents out in field that is then relayed directly to the appropriate staff members.
- ◆ **Promote alternative funding sources for infrastructure maintenance and upgrades (Program 2.7.2.1.).** Funding sources for projects mentioned in this Circulation Element progress report include Los Angeles County Metro, Federal Transportation Improvement Programs, and the California Department of Transportation.



## **Chapter 3 Housing Element**

The California State Legislature has identified the “Attainment of a decent home and suitable living environment for every citizen”, as the State’s major housing goal. Accordingly, the State of California mandates that each county and city maintain a Housing Element in their General Plan. Section 65583 of the Government Code sets forth the specific components to be contained in a community’s housing element, including the City’s share of the Regional Housing Needs Assessment (RHNA).

In addition to providing assistance and guidance for the City’s Housing Element, the Housing Division administers a variety of community development activities including affordable housing activities, neighborhood improvement programs, economic development strategies, improvement of public facilities, and support for needed public services. The following is in regards to Chapter 2 (Housing Plan) of the 2014-2021 Housing Element goals administered by the Housing Division:

### **Program 2 – The Housing Rebate and Grant Program**

**Objective:** Address property, structural, and energy/water conservation improvements for low-income homeowners in the City. The City anticipates that 10 projects will be assisted annually based on funding availability.

**Status:** A total of \$455,000 in funds were granted to 13 separate property owners of low to moderate income households for various eligible residential improvements.

### **Program 3 – Monitor and Preserve Affordable Housing**

**Objective:** City staff continued to maintain a list of affordable housing units throughout the City including affordability information to ensure landlords are compliant with deed restrictions and to preserve affordable units. The Housing Division will continue to pursue partnership opportunities with nonprofits to preserve and expand affordable housing in the City.

**Status:** An inventory of the City's affordable housing units is kept and maintained by the City's Community Development Department. Currently, 197 affordable units exist in the city. This figure remains the same as 2018. Continued education is provided to property owners in an effort to maintain compliance with deed restrictions. Standards, benefits, and incentives related to affordable housing are also shared with any persons interested in the construction of a residential development.

## **Chapter 3 Housing Element continued**

### **Program 5 – Housing Opportunity Sites**

**Objective:** Staff will continue to facilitate the redevelopment of underutilized sites through various outreach methods to the development community through an updated inventory available throughout the 2014-2021 City of Downey 2014 - 2021 Housing Element 25 planning cycle. Provide information to interested developers and on the City's website about potential residential opportunity sites.

**Status:** The City continues to encourage and advocate for the construction/redevelopment of underutilized parcels as an ongoing effort. The highest number of new residential development came in the form of accessory dwelling units (ADU). Sixteen (16) ADUs were issued in 2019. A total of twenty (20) applications were submitted, many of which will be approved in 2020.

### **Program 9 – Section 8 Rental Assistance**

**Objective:** Continue to provide assistance to households through continued participation in the Los Angeles County Section 8 program and encourage rental property owners to register their units with the Housing Authority of the County of Los Angeles ("HACOLA"). The Housing Division will continue to monitor the number of residents accessing the program and units available for rent.

**Status:** Current records indicate there are 548 total units within the City participating in the Section 8 program. This figure is equal to that of 2018, updated data was not possible due county agency closures amid pandemic. The County Housing Authority operates the program and is responsible for issuing vouchers.

### **Program 16 – Planning and Development Fees**

**Objective:** Continue to conduct annual reviews of planning and development fees.

**Status:** In 2019, fees were adjusted and raised 2.5% for the majority of development applications. Changes were made in an effort to recover cost for services, yet total cost for service still remains higher than the applicable fee. Change in fees remains appropriate and consistent with surrounding communities.





## Chapter 3 Housing Element continued

### Program 21 – Fair Housing

Objective: Staff continued to assist households through the Fair Housing Foundation (“FHF”) and continue to refer fair housing complaints to the FHF.

Status: On average a total of 250 Downey residents are assisted by the FHF. (Data source: Fair Housing Foundation) The City continues to educate residents on the resources available to them provided by the FHF. In addition, informational handouts are found at the Housing Division public counter.

### Regional Housing Need Allocation (RHNA)

Each local government in California is required to adopt a Housing Element as part of its General Plan that shows how the community plans to meet the existing and projected housing needs of people at all income levels. The Regional Housing Need Allocation (RHNA) is the state-mandated process to identify the total number of housing units (by affordability level) that each jurisdiction must accommodate in its Housing Element. In 2019, City of Downey issued 41 building permits for the construction of new dwelling units.

Income Level		RHNA Allocation by Income Level	2013	2014	2015	2016	2017	2018	2019	Total Units to Date (all years)	Total Remaining RHNA by Income Level
Very Low	Deed Restricted	210	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	210
	Non-Deed Restricted		0	0	0	0	0	0	0		
Low	Deed Restricted	123	0	0	0	6	0	0	0	6	117
	Non-Deed Restricted		0	0	0	0	0	0	0		
Moderate	Deed Restricted	135	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	70	65
	Non-Deed Restricted		0	20	50	0	0	0	0		
Above Moderate		346	0	12	13	44	135	87	41	332	14
Total RHNA		814									
Total Units			0	32	63	50	135	87	41	408	406

The State Housing Report is attached to this report as an appendix to provide additional details pertaining to the Housing Element’s plans and accommodations to housing needs within the City of Downey.

## **Chapter 4 Conservation Element**

The City of Downey, like the rest of southern California, enjoy a temperate climate, access to both beaches and mountains and many other amenities not found in many other parts of the world. The quality of life that the region offers its residents is one of the main reasons the region continues to attract visitors and newcomers. However, southern California is a semi-arid desert environment with limited natural resources. These limited resources, need to be preserved for continued use by existing residents and by future generations.

### **Water Supply**

- ◆ **Continue providing information to the public promoting the benefits of water conservation (Program 4.1.1.1).** The Public Works Department continued to provide public education on water use habits and drought tolerant landscaping via the Street Faire, National Night Out, Ride & Stride event, and landscaping workshops. In addition, staff continued to provide samples of synthetic turf at the Community Development Department Planning counter. Residents were encouraged to work with Planning staff for additional information regarding installation and materials. All new developments and landscape remodels require the use of drought tolerant species, and are designed by licensed landscape architects.
- ◆ **Promote the continued use of water conservation methods at city-owned facilities, such as parks and golf courses (Program 4.1.1.3).** The City continued to look for additional opportunities to expand its use of recycled water at City-owned and other sites as recycled water becomes available. Some of the larger City locations where recycled water is currently used include: Downey Cemetery, Independence Park, Rio San Gabriel Park, Wilderness Park, Rio Hondo Golf Course, Crawford Park, Columbia Memorial Space Center, and Sports Park. The City currently maintains 35 recycled water services/meters for use at City Park and golf course ponds, and for irrigation of landscaping at parks, golf course, and medians/parkways.
- ◆ **Encourage the use of reclaimed water, or re-use of water on-site, for new and redevelopment projects (Program 4.1.1.4).** The Public Works Department continued to require contractors and developers to install recycled water services/piping and meters where recycled water is located in proximity to the development projects.
- ◆ **Expand the availability of reclaimed water by extending the dual-pipe water system (Program 4.1.1.5).** The recycled water facility at the Downey Promenade Shopping Center allows the use of recycled water for landscape irrigation at medians/parkways along Lakewood Boulevard, Bellflower Boulevard and future construction projects along these corridor.



## Chapter 4 Conservation Element continued

### Stormwater Quality

- ◆ **Provide treatment of runoff generated by properties on-site before release into the storm drain system (Program 4.3.1.1.).** 32 development and redevelopment projects were approved for construction with infiltration systems to capture and store runoff to reduce pollutant transport and augment local water levels beneath the ground. As public, commercial and residential projects are redeveloped, runoff control measures are implemented in the form of infiltration resulting in a steady improvement in water quality and local water levels.
- ◆ **Promote effective street cleaning (Program 4.3.1.3.).** The Nationwide Environmental Services continued to vacuum-sweep city streets weekly. These streets are posted with “No Parking” signs during the appointed period and Parking Enforcement Officers accompany the sweeper vehicles. Residents utilizing a Street Sweeping Parking Permit are responsible for maintaining the street area adjacent to their properties as a condition of being exempted from the posted parking restrictions.
- ◆ **Encourage proper storage and handling of construction materials to avoid the contact of pollutants with storm water runoff during construction (Program 4.3.1.4.).** Public Works, Code Enforcement, and Building and Safety staff continued to share responsibility for implementing Program 4.3.1.4 of the City Vision 2025 General Plan. Public Works focused on construction projects in the public right-of-way, preparation and review of erosion control plans by developers, compliance by large state permitted construction sites and responding to complaints of materials in the municipal separate storm sewer system (MS4), which includes streets, alleys and drains. Building and Safety is primarily responsible for on-site or private property conditions, while Code Enforcement responds to resident complaints and provides more aggressive enforcement capabilities to supplement other staff efforts. Projects are required to comply with Best Management Projects which aim to prevent pollutants from construction from contaminating storm water runoff.

### Tree Preservation

- ◆ **Promote the installation of new trees when damaged or dying trees are removed (Program 4.4.1.3.).** The Public Works Department continued to work with property owners to ensure that the removal of damaged trees and the placement of new trees comply with City’s Tree Ordinance. Public Works Department is responsible for reviewing and approving all proposed landscaping plans within the public right-of-ways and street medians. Section 7605 of the Downey Municipal Code specifies that, “Any public street tree removed shall be replaced if a replacement is deemed appropriate and if it is mutually agreed to by both the City and the property owner.”

## **Chapter 4 Conservation Element continued**

### **Air Quality**

- ◆ **Encourage alternative modes of travel, such as walking and cycling, to vehicle use and alternative modes of employment, such as telecommuting and home-based businesses, to reduce emissions associated with vehicle use (Program 4.5.1.4).** In 2019, approximately 1.17 million dollars was invested in bike share, safety training/education, and implementation of the City's Bicycle Master Plan. Funding sources include county and state agencies. In 2019, the Economic Development Department also contracted with a private company, with the approval of City Council, to provide electrical scooters.
- ◆ **Promote the use of alternative fuel vehicles, including clean diesel, compressed natural gas, hydrogen, that result in reduced emissions, including in instances involving City operations (Program 4.5.1.5).** With the growing number of electric and hybrid vehicles, additional charging stations have been installed in public and private facilities (City Library, Promenade at Downey, Stonewood Mall, and The Commons Commercial Center) to promote the use of natural gas and pure electric vehicles. The City also complies with state regulations for permit streamlining of these types of projects.

### **Energy Resources**

- ◆ **Ensure the installation of energy efficient street lights and traffic signals (Program 4.6.2.1).**  
The City utilizes light-emitting diode (LED) vehicle and pedestrian indications at all signalized intersections owned and maintained by the City. In addition, the City utilizes LED technology at all City-owned and maintained street and pedestrian lights.



## **Chapter 5 Safety Element**

Natural and non-natural hazards present a variety of risks to persons who live, work, and visit the City. The aim of the City is to reduce the potential risk of death, injuries, property damage, and the economic and social dislocation resulting from hazards.

### **Disaster Response**

- ◆ **Coordinate emergency preparedness with the federal, state, school district and other local agencies (Program 5.1.2.3).** The Office of Emergency Management throughout the year, has continued to coordinate with the federal, state, and neighboring local agencies' in preparing for response and recovery efforts in the event of disasters. This was done through planning, training and exercising; the goal is to minimize the loss of lives and property.
- ◆ **Monitor the location, type of facility, and amount of hazardous materials kept at properties (Program 5.2.1.2).** The Fire Department continues to monitor and inspect all facilities that handle hazardous materials at or above the reportable quantities as set forth in the California Health & Safety Code (§25503.5). Inspections are conducted every other year to ensure compliance with both the Fire and Health & Safety Codes. The frequency of these inspections exceed the State's minimum requirement that hazardous materials inspections occur once every three years.
- ◆ **Promote public information regarding the types of hazardous materials, which may include common household items, and the proper method of disposal (Program 5.2.1.3).** The Downey Fire Department continued to update its website to provide up-to-date information on the safe handling and disposal of hazardous materials. The website's Emergency Preparedness section contains information on hazardous material awareness and safety, in addition to educational information on fire safety.

### **Hazardous Materials**

- ◆ **Ensure proper disclosure of amounts of hazardous materials by existing uses and proposed uses, during the business review process (Program 5.2.1.4).** The Downey Fire Prevention Bureau continued to conduct inspections during the business license application process. Once identified as a handler of hazardous materials, these businesses receive an inspection from Downey Fire Department's Hazardous Material Section to ensure accurate disclosure of the hazardous substances, and the safe handling and storage of the materials. The facilities are then entered into the Fire Department's database, issued an operational permit, and placed on a routine inspection frequency.

- ◆ **Ensure that properties involving hazardous materials dispose of waste properly (Program 5.2.2.1).** The Public Works Integrated Waste Coordinator continued to monitor and manage hazardous waste disposal from residential properties. Businesses handling hazardous waste are permitted and inspected by the County of Los Angeles Fire Department Health-Hazardous Materials Division.

## **Chapter 5 Safety Element continued**

### **Hazardous Materials**

- ◆ **Promote the convenient “drop-off” collection for the disposal of hazardous waste generated by residential households and other land uses (Program 5.2.2.2).** The City continued to offer programs that encourages residents to dispose hazardous waste materials (i.e. electronic devices) to both the Sanitation Districts of Los Angeles County Household Hazardous Waste Collection Program and the Los Angeles County Sheriff’s Safe Drug Drop-off Program, which accepts expired prescription medications and sharps (i.e., needles).

The Downey Police Department and Downey C.E.R.T members participated in the annual National Prescription Drug-Take Back Initiative. In 2019, Downey residents again had an opportunity to drop off expired, unused and unwanted prescription drugs. All of the collected items were turned over to the D.E.A for disposal.

### **Fire Protection**

- ◆ **Promote adequate widths on travel lanes along street and alleys to accommodate emergency vehicles (Program 5.3.1.2).** The Fire Prevention Bureau personnel, under the direction of the Fire Chief, continued to review plans diligently to ensure emergency vehicle access through private driveways, public streets, and alleys will be accommodated. This review is completed early in the Planning application process to ensure proper site layout is achieved.
- ◆ **Ensure that development projects install fire hydrants, water mains, or otherwise contribute its fair share towards mitigating impacts on the fire flow system (Program 5.3.2.3).** The Fire and Public Works Departments continued to enforce the requirements for additional fire hydrants for development projects through the plan check process. The Community Development Department continued to conduct Development Review Committee (DRC) meetings to allow various City Departments to offer comments and conditions for a proposed project.
- ◆ **Promote the use of fire sprinklers for new, expanded, and remodeled developments (Program 5.3.2.4).** The Fire Prevention Bureau continued to require sprinkler systems for new commercial development over 3,600 sq. ft. and tenant improvements of commercial properties, whose permit valuations exceed 50 percent of the value of the building.





## **Chapter 5 Safety Element**

- ◆ **Ensure access for emergency vehicles through security pedestrian and vehicular gates (Program 5.3.2.6.).** The Fire Prevention Bureau continued to require emergency lighting, exit signs, Knox box, and 2A-10BC fire extinguishers for all commercial and industrial projects.

### **Police Protection**

- ◆ **Keep crime rates and property loss rates at the lowest levels feasible (Program 5.4.1.1.).** In an effort to keep crime and property loss rates low, the Police Department continued to work closely with the community by providing crime prevention tips and education through the 221 Neighborhood Watch Groups, along with various social media platforms. To continue the high level of service to the community, the Department hired 4 Police Officers, 2 Police Officer 960 Annuitants, 3 Dispatchers, 4 Police Aides, 3 Records Specialists, 1 Park Ranger, 2 IT Technicians, 1 Training Coordinator and 1 Parking Enforcement Officer.
- ◆ **Maintain an acceptable response time for police emergency service calls (Program 5.4.1.2.).** The Police Department continued to maintain a swift response time to high priority emergency calls that require immediate assistance to ensure the public's safety.
- ◆ **Promote the use of technology as tools to improve staff productivity (Program 5.4.1.5.).** The Police Department continued to expand its use of technology through the growth of its social media presence and the creation of the Online Citizen Reporting System to report incidents such as bicycle theft, custody order violations, lost property and supplemental reports for property crimes. The Department went through upgrades in their Computer Automated Dispatch (CAD) and Records Management System (RMS). In addition, the radio system was upgraded by joining the Interagency Communications Interoperability (ICI) System and purchasing associated equipment.
- ◆ **Coordinate with Federal, State, and County agencies to address illegal activities (Program 5.4.1.7.).** The Department continued to receive both state and federal funding (grants) to provide directed enforcement and education to residents pertaining to traffic safety, neighborhood preservation, and alcohol and tobacco related criminal behavior. The Special Enforcement Team conducted several operations funded by the State's Alcohol Beverage Control and Tobacco grants. Funding from the State of California Office of Traffic Safety, allowed the Department to conduct several checkpoints and specialized patrols, targeting those found operating motor vehicles under the influence of alcohol and/or drugs. The Neighborhood Preservation Team was able to target specific crime trends in neighborhoods through the Edward Byrne Memorial Justice Assistance Grant (JAG).

## **Chapter 5 Safety Element continued**

- ◆ **Support community organizations and neighborhood awareness programs that promote crime prevention, including preventing gang activity (Program 5.4.2.2.).** The Department continued to participate in awareness programs such as Gangs Out of Downey (GOOD) and promoted crime prevention through its Neighborhood Watch Program, which grew to 221 groups. The Department continued to work closely with Clinicians from the Los Angeles County Mental Health through the Mental Evaluation Team, which includes two dedicated Police Officers. The team members receive specialized training to better assist those with challenges caused by various types of mental illness.
- ◆ **Promote coordination between schools and the City to address juvenile crime in a proactive and preventive manner (Program 5.4.2.5.).** The Department hosted monthly Safe School meetings with Downey Unified School District administrators and participated in the School Resource Officer Program in collaboration with Gangs Out of Downey. In addition, Canine Handlers did monthly school visits to help provide a safer environment for the City's students and educators.

### **Earthquake Safety**

- ◆ **Monitor groundwater table levels as they relate to liquefaction hazards (Program 5.5.1.3.).** Public Works continued to regularly observe ground water levels at well sites around the City. The ground water table is typically greater than 50' below the soil surface, which limits the risk of liquefaction to residential and typical commercial structures. Larger structures and those with significant subterranean components may be requested to provide additional seismic evaluations during the development process or as a condition of approval.
- ◆ **Ensure the placement of utility lines underground (Program 5.5.1.6.).** The Public Works Department continued to implement Underground Utility Districts for all development projects. In addition, Southern California Edison Company continued to prohibit the use of vaults installed above ground to protect the equipment and electrical lines from the intrusion of moisture.



## **Chapter 5 Safety Element continued**

### **Floods**

- ◆ **Educate the public that the City is located in an “X” flood zone where flood insurance is no longer mandatory (Program 5.6.1.2.).** The Public Works Department continued to provide handouts at the public counter regarding the current FIRM (Flood Insurance Rate Map) and flood zoning . FIRM information can be found at [www.fema.gov](http://www.fema.gov) website.
- ◆ **Minimize increases in the amount of stormwater generated by existing and proposed land uses (Program 5.6.2.1.).** The Public Works Department continued to enforce National Pollutant Discharge Elimination System (NPDES) requirements, during plan check review for new and redevelopment projects with 5,000 square feet or more of new or replacement impervious surfaces, which are generally required to provide infiltration volume commensurate with an 85th percentile within 24-hour runoff event (whichever is greater) on the new or replacement impervious surface. Larger developments are required to prepare a Standard Urban Stormwater Mitigation Plan and demonstrate that no increase in peak runoff rate will be observed as a result of the development and that at least 85th percentile or 0.75 inch in a 24-hour event (whichever is greater) of projected runoff can be infiltrated.

### **Vehicular Traffic**

- ◆ **Require street lights for new developments (Program 5.7.1.2.).** In 2019, the City continued to require developers to install new street lights adjacent to the new developments within the public-right-of-way as a condition of approval, where streetlights currently do not exist. In addition, as a condition of approval through the Site Plan Review process, properties are annexed into the City of Downey Lighting Maintenance District in accordance with Division 15 of the Streets and Highways Code.
- ◆ **Encourage the installation of sidewalks in new developments and major remodeling consistent with the sidewalk Master Plan (Program 5.7.2.2.).** The City requires land developers and property owners to construct new sidewalk where it doesn't exist through the entitlement process in conjunction with new on-site construction involving the adjacent property. The City began an undertaking the Citywide Pedestrian Plan which will serve as a blueprint for the gradual development of the City's circulation system over time. A consultant was selected and community meeting were held on the subject. In addition, the City continued progress in the construction of approximately 6,750 linear feet of new sidewalk in the proximity of five elementary schools in the southern portion of the City. Construction is estimated to be complete by winter 2020.

## **Chapter 5 Safety Element continued**

- ◆ **Promote street intersection design and signalization that are safe and convenient to pedestrians and bicyclists (Program 5.7.2.3).** The safety and convenience of pedestrians and bicyclists are taken into consideration in the designs of intersections as well as signalization. Intersections are designed to be accessible to pedestrians in compliance with the Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA). In addition, the Citywide Pedestrian Plan will recommend a series of projects featuring innovative pedestrian treatments and amenities to be deployed at intersections such as curb extensions. Traffic signal installations and upgrades also take pedestrian and bicycle safety and convenience into consideration through the use of pedestrian countdown indications and pedestrian accessible pushbuttons (a few of which are audible for the blind). The City's traffic signals are also timed to provide sufficient time for pedestrians to cross the street in accordance with state guidelines. Detection systems at signalized intersections are also required to detect the presence of bicycles. In 2019, funding was approved to commence the implementation of the Downey Bike Master Plan. Investment includes funds of approximately \$2,844,127. All other upgrades to intersections and corridors was designed with pedestrians and cyclist in mind.

## **Chapter 6 Noise Element**

Noise can be defined as unwanted sound and is known to have several adverse effects on people. The most critical impact of noise exposure is hearing loss. Other effects are speech interference, sleep interference and annoyance.

- ◆ **Ensure that existing land uses that are generating noise beyond the acceptable levels reduce noise levels to acceptable levels (Program 6.3.1.2.).** The City continued to enforce it's noise ordinance (Section 4600 of the Downey Municipal Code). This involves the permitted hours for construction. For projects that involved amplified music, the City continued to strictly enforce businesses to mitigate noise impacts by imposing conditions of approval through a conditional use permit application process. Also, the Downey Police Department Special Enforcement Team conducted IMPACT inspections to ensure businesses are operating at an acceptable noise level.

In addition, the City continued to require projects that involve live entertainment activities and projects that have the potential to generate noise from machinery equipment or amplified music to comply with City's noise ordinance. This can be regulated by imposing conditions of approval through the entitlement process.



## **Chapter 5 Safety Element continued**

- ◆ **Discourage the placement of air conditioning equipment, electric generators, or other noise-generating equipment in close proximity to adjacent properties (Program 6.3.1.6.).** The City's Planning Division continued to enforce code section 9504 of the Downey Municipal Code requiring all mechanical equipment to be screened and appropriately setback from neighboring properties. This applied to all new developments and applicable remodels undertaken in 2019.

## **Chapter 7 Open Space Element**

Typical of most communities located within mature urbanized settings, Downey has a limited amount of open space areas. Open space areas are important not only to provide recreational activities for residents but also as a visual break from the built environment.

### **Updates:**

- ◆ **Maintain an adequate level of recreational staffing at park facilities (Program 7.2.2.1.).** The Parks & Recreation Department continued to monitor recreation staffing to ensure adequate levels of recreation staffing at park facilities. Full-time and part-time staffs were hired as needed to fill vacancies throughout the year.
- ◆ **Secure alternative means of funding, such as grants, donations, user fees and public/private partnerships, for park upgrades (Program 7.2.2.5.).** Projects approved in 2019 included funding from the California Department of Parks and Recreation and Measure S. These funds helped improve six separate City parks (Apollo Park, Dennis the Menace Park, Independence Park, Golden Park, Wilderness Park, Discovery Park, and Furman Park. Completion of these projects is anticipated for Summer 2020.
- ◆ **Promote the creation of new parks, especially in areas of the city in the greatest need of additional parks (Program 7.3.1.1.).** City staff continues to work with the County of Los Angeles on a sports complex project (soccer fields) on the south side of the Rancho Los Amigos campus, which includes ten acres that the county approved for recreational use. We are also monitoring California Prop 68 and LA County Measure A funds that are in the initial allocation stages. Construction has started and is anticipated to conclude by Summer 2020.

## **Chapter 5 Safety Element continued**

- ◆ **Actively work with private, non-profit and public community services organizations to provide educational and community services including child care, English translation, after school programs and recreational activities (Program 7.4.1.5.)** Parks and Recreation staff and the Downey Unified School District (DUSD) continued to administer a State grant to provide the “After School Program Information Recreation Education” (ASPIRE) at Alameda, Carpenter, Gauldin, Griffiths, Lewis, Old River, Stauffer, Sussman, Price, Unsworth, Ward and Williams Schools. The goal of the program is to provide a fun, positive, and safe learning environment. The program operates on school days from school dismissal until 6:00 p.m. Also, the Department continued to use contracted instructors to bring recreational classes and programs to the community. Lastly, Parks and Recreation staff continued to support TLC (True Lasting Connections) organization, a branch of DUSD that supports children and their families including access to child care, English translation, programs, and other necessities. With the ongoing support from local donors (i.e. First Baptist Church, Kaiser Permanente of Downey, Foundation for Life, The Downey Promenade, and Planet Fitness), TLC were able to continue to help families in need. The Parks and Recreation Department also continued to provide free admission into the Columbia Space Center for all school aged children. The library performed story time activity for younger children; the program continued even after the library closed for remodels. The city conducted bike safety education, and fun activities such as CPR tutorials were provided during National Night Out.

## **Chapter 8 Design Element**

Most residents, visitors, and businesses in Downey recognize the City as the premiere city in the southeast area of Los Angeles County. However, others less familiar with the City’s history may not share this perception and judge Downey solely on the physical appearance of the area. For this reason, it is important that the visual appearance of the community portray a positive image and that the community image display the distinct and numerous resources it has to offer.

- ◆ **Promote quality design for new, expanded, and remodeled construction (Goal 8.1).** The City continued to contract Architectural Peer Review Services to provide technical review and a comprehensive range of integrated design services for a variety of buildings. In addition, the City continued to implement the Site Plan Review process that requires Planning Commission review and approval of site plans, landscaping, lighting (except single family homes and apartments) for new construction and additions to townhome, commercial, and industrial projects in the City.
- ◆ **Lack of property maintenance may exhibit a negative image of the City (Issue 8.2).** The Code Enforcement Division continued monitoring and working with a significant number of property owners, including residential properties, commercial and industrial businesses, in an effort to keep these properties maintained. In addition, the Housing Division award 13 spate property with grant money to conduct remodels which includes landscaping, roofing, painting, and new windows.





- ◆ **Support the Keep Downey Beautiful programs (Program 8.2.2.3.).** City staff, business owners, and volunteers participated in the monthly event “Keep Downey Beautiful” that help improve community environments. The program focus is not only to keep Downey beautiful but also to have a safe and clean environment.

## **Chapter 9 Economic Development Element**

A strong community owes much to the spirit and involvement of its residents. However, community pride and civic-mindedness are not enough for a city to provide all necessary and desired services to maintain the local quality of life. A city needs a variety of employment and shopping opportunities to create balance, make it a desirable place to live, and enhance its image.

- ◆ **Develop economic strategies for business attraction and retention (Program 9.1.1.1.).** Efforts were made in establishing place identification within the downtown and other areas within the City by the installation of multiple art installments throughout the city. The installments serve to contribute to the city’s already attractive downtown area. The goal is that the investment in improving and beautifying public spaces will indirectly attract patrons to nearby commercial.
- ◆ **Continue the revitalization of commercial and industrial corridors (Program 9.1.1.5.).** The City continued to work on the Imperial Highway Strategic Plan, a corridor assessment that includes five (5) components: A Strengths, Weaknesses, Opportunities and Threats (SWOT) analysis, an implementation plan, performance metrics, development opportunity sites analyses, and a summary of research findings. The analysis assisted in identifying six major goals to revitalize the Imperial Highway corridor, which are supported by strategies, action steps, and performance metrics within the plan, providing a roadmap for enhancing economic development and the growth of the corridor. Separate from this effort, the City accepted two separate entitlements for redevelopment along Imperial Hwy and approved other via the building permit process. Another major development application was made for Woodruff Avenue at the Kirkhill site.
- ◆ **Promote through public information the benefits of businesses locating in Downey (Program 9.1.1.7.).** Staff continues to maintain and update the Economic Development web pages to assist in the attraction and retention of quality businesses. The pages contain information and materials for businesses coming to the City and include information on the various business start-up steps and even links to a site locator and opportunity sites. Additionally, the city has included a business tool-kit, to further help businesses locate regional, state and federal resources.
- ◆ **Maintain the high level of standards for quality of staff and work produced (Program 9.4.1.3.).** **Feedback is gathered from the public via the** City designed and implemented customer service check-in kiosk system. The system helps better expedite service at the public counters. The system also allows the public to provide comments and review of their experience inside City Hall. This allows staffs to provide, add, and build upon an effective and efficient service to our customers.

- ◆ **Expand the use of the city Internet web site for public information (Program 9.4.2.5).** City Departments continue to work toward improved customer service by maintaining the on-line business license application process, which enables customers to submit business license renewals or applications for a new license and to allow Downey residents to pay their water bills on-line. In addition, the City continues to update its website periodically and provide more information to the public via the Internet. The Planning Department also uses social media to inform the community of Planning Commissions or any community meetings.