



City of Downey

2020 General Plan Annual Report Community Development Department



11111 Brookshire Avenue, Downey, CA

City of Downey

11111 Brookshire Avenue
Downey, CA 90241

City Council

(at the time of adoption)

Claudia Frometa, Mayor
District 4

Blanca Pacheco, Mayor Pro-Tem
District 1

Sean Ashton
District 2

Catherine Alvarez
District 3

Mario Trujillo
District 5

Planning Commission

(at the time of adoption)

Miguel Duarte
District 1

Horacio Ortiz, Jr.
District 5

Patrick Owens
District 2

Arturo Montoya
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

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

Introduction



Executive Summary

The City of Downey's 2020 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.

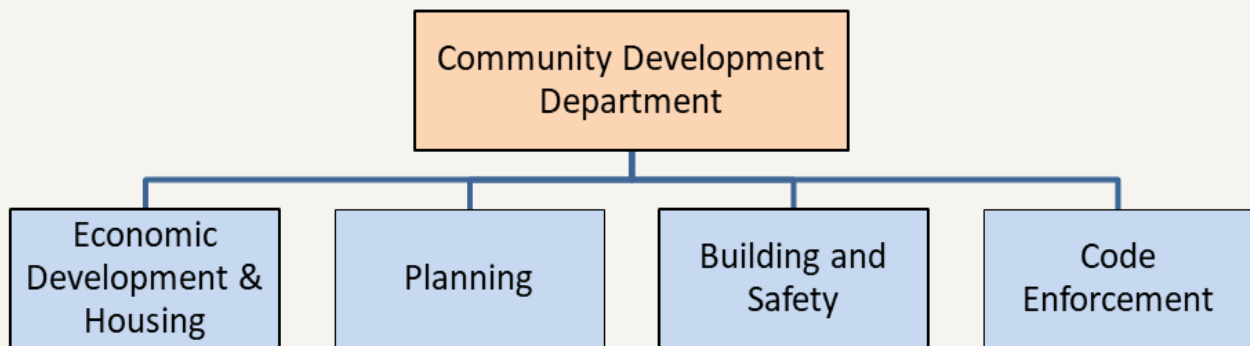
Background Information

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 112, 901 residents (Source: Finance Department, City of Downey *Comprehensive Annual Financial Report for Fiscal Year—ended June 30, 2020*).

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 February 17, 2021, and accepted by the City Council on March 23, 2021.

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 2020 through December 2020. 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)

Planning Commission

The Planning Commission conducts public hearings on all 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 2020, the Planning Commission conducted 10 meetings during which they considered 16 hearing items.

Below are some of the projects that were approved by the Planning Commission:

- Medical Building (9432 Telegraph Road) – A new 7,788 square foot, two-story medical building was approved by the Planning Commission. The new building will be located on the south side of Telegraph Road between Parsons Boulevard and Hasty Avenue. Staff worked diligently with the applicant to achieve a modern architectural style with quality materials and drought tolerant landscape throughout the site.
- Bella Lounge (11002 Downey Avenue & 8304 3rd Street) - A new bar/lounge with a façade remodel within an existing multi-tenant building on a primary corner within the Downtown District. The project was approved on the subject site at the corner of Downey Avenue and 3rd Street. This remodel will provide a revitalization to the existing character of the building. The project's plans are currently under review through the building plan check process.

Planning Applications

Planning applications in 2020, including Administrative, Planning Commission, and legislative items to the City Council, totaled 126. The COVID-19 pandemic led to restrictions of group gatherings which resulted in less special events, sidewalk sales, and similar business activity. Despite the restrictions, Planning staff continued to review business licenses and conduct plan check review to ensure proposed businesses, improvements and new construction were in compliance with the zoning code.

Single Family Residential

In 2020, the Planning Division continued to conduct community outreach and held a Planning Commission Study Session regarding residential design guidelines and changes to the City’s Single Family Development Standards. As a result, Staff has compiled final draft standards to be presented for consideration by the Planning Commission and City Council during the calendar year of 2021.

Temporary Outdoor Dining and Business Areas

In June, the Planning Division created guidelines and a permit process for Temporary Outdoor Dining and Business Activities to provide the opportunity for businesses to safely reopen, amidst limitations that arose from to the COVID-19 pandemic. Staff developed guidelines for both new programs in compliance with local, county and state health safety directives. Staff received 51 outdoor dining inquiries and processed 34 approvals. The Outdoor Business Activity program was developed for gym/fitness centers as well as personal service businesses. Staff received 19 inquiries and received 9 applications which were processed for approval.

Planning Applications	
Temporary Signs	9
Sign Permits	47
Conditional Use Permits	10
Sidewalk/ Parking Sales	7
Fireworks Stands	15
Christmas tree Lots / Pumpkin Patches	4
Special Events	7
Minor Modifications	8
Tentative Parcel/ Tract Maps	2
Planned Sign Program	2
Code Amendments	3
Lot Line Adjustments	1
Miscellaneous Actions	3
Variances	1
Site Plan Review	3
Temporary Use of Land Permit	2
Certificate of Compliance	1
Minor Conditional Use Permit	1
Temporary Outdoor Dining	34
Temporary Outdoor Business Area	9

Economic Development & Housing

In 2020, the Economic Development and Housing Division assisted in an amendment to the Ground Lease Agreement of a vacant 21-acre, city-owned parcel located adjacent to The Promenade Shopping Center, in an effort to facilitate development on the property. Additionally, in response to the COVID-19 pandemic, the City created a Business Assistance Program that will provide grants of up to \$25,000, to small businesses in the community that were financially impacted by the COVID-19 pandemic; the city expects to assist at least 35 businesses.

Furthermore, the Division continued to assist in the implementation of the City's Art in Public Places program. The renovation of the Downey Theater Plaza was accompanied by new sculptures named "The Conductor" and "In the Wings II". Five (5) additional pieces of art were added throughout the Downtown Area along Downey Avenue. The pieces are called "On a Roll", "Infinite Dance", "Homeward Monarch", "From a Different Perspective", and "My Heart is in Your Hands". Funding for all of the aforementioned artwork is generated through development fees of previous major construction. In addition to the mentioned artwork above, a kiosk was added on Downey Avenue between 2nd and 3rd Street that displays historic information of Downey.

Funds managed by the Economic Development and Housing Division, received through The U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development's ("HUD") annual allocation of the Community Development Block Grant (CDBG) and Home Investment Partnership (HOME) grants, provide support for some of the City's public service programs, including: the ASPIRE after school program, adult literacy program, senior meals program, grade school health and eye screening program, counseling at-risk youth program, rental assistance program, and job training programs. In addition to providing for public service programs, these two federal grants are available to the City for a variety of community development activities including affordable housing activities, neighborhood improvement programs, economic development strategies, and improvement of public facilities. Moreover in 2020, the City was also granted additional funding through the CDBG-CV (CDBG Cares Act), which provided funding for additional COVID-19-related public services, an emergency rental assistance program, and a business assistance program.

Additionally, the 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 12 home improvement projects were completed with an investment of \$437,500 in grant money received by HUD.

Additionally, as mentioned previously, in response to the COVID-19 pandemic, the City created emergency assistance programs that were focused on being flexible to meet the needs of the community. The emergency assistance programs consisted of the following:

- * Emergency Residential Rental Assistance Program that provided 155 households in the community with rental assistance.
- * Small Business Assistance Program which provided \$25,000 grants to small businesses.
- * Downtown Parklet Program which provided financial assistance for the restaurants located within the Downtown area to construct safe and compliant outdoor dining parklets to then be installed in the parking stalls in front of their businesses.

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.

Code Enforcement activity for the year of 2020 involved 5,768 cases for various property violations (i.e. commercial, residential, public street, park and recreational) and closed out 1,053 cases. August had the highest number of new cases generated with 511 cases. In addition to conducting property violation inspections.

Code Enforcement Officers addressed and conducted 682 inspections related to Covid-19 regulation violations. In addition, the Division continued to take calls to report violations of County Health Orders related to the COVID-19 pandemic. The Division also contacted and worked with business owners to educate and explain Health Orders and assist them to attain compliance to ensure all safety precautions are being met to benefit the community.

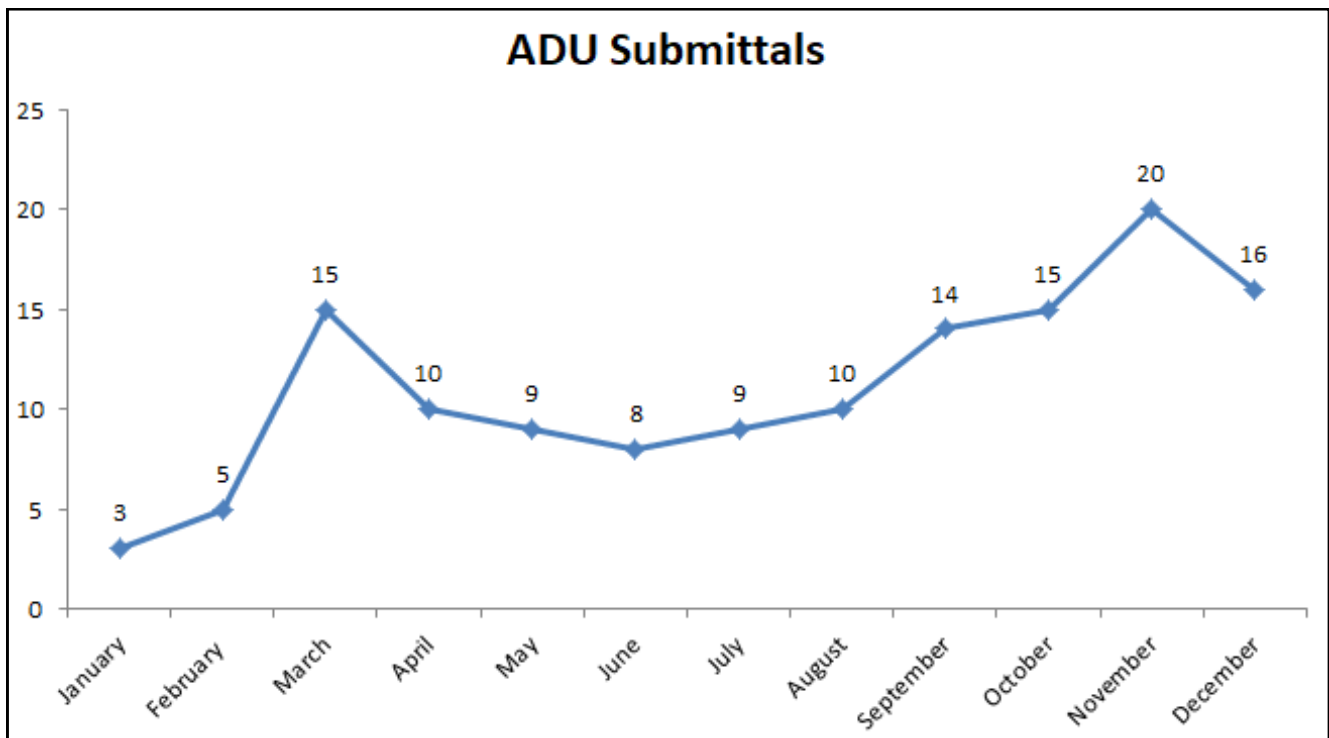
(This space left intentionally blank)

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 Building regulations. In November 2019, the 2019 California Building Standards Code was adopted and took effect on January 1, 2020.

In 2020, the Building and Safety Division accepted 2,029 permit applications and issued 1,864 building permits. The total valuation for all permits issued was \$102,064,088.7. These applications include all construction related projects and installation of mechanical and utility equipment. Also, there were a total of 5 new residential dwellings submitted for plan check in 2020. In addition, the Building & Safety Inspectors have conducted 7,590 inspections.

In 2020, there were a total of 134 new ADU plan check submittals. November had the most submittals for ADU's with 20 submittals.



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.).** There were no new housing projects within these areas, however construction for a new eight (8) unit development was completed in 2020 which is located within the Downtown District.

- ◆ **Promote the Downtown area as a destination point for entertainment, dining, civic, and other activities (Program 1.2.2.1.).** In response to the COVID-19 pandemic, the Economic Development Division initiated an Outdoor Dining Parklet Program for restaurants within the Downtown District. This was a grant program that was implemented to assist businesses who incurred unexpected expenses when indoor activity was prohibited. The program reimbursed restaurants for materials used to construct an outdoor dining parklet. Staff worked with individual applicants to ensure that the outdoor dining areas were using quality design materials and that they were safely constructed and in compliance with all local, county, and state health orders. In addition, construction continued moving forward in the year 2020 for new developments in the downtown such as the Avenue Theater redevelopment project. Additionally, in 2020, a new development project was submitted for entitlement and approved for a new lounge/bar within the downtown district which will contribute to promoting the downtown area as a destination draw for entertainment and dining uses.

- ◆ **Discourage residential construction not in harmony with the surrounding neighborhood (Program 1.4.2.1.)** Staff has worked with the community in receiving feedback on design within the Single Family Residential neighborhoods. Staff has finalized new development standards and design guidelines to ensure mass and scale of new construction is in harmony with the surrounding neighborhood. The guidelines have been prepared and will be presented for City Council consideration in 2021.



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.).**

The city is in the process of initiating improvements at the following intersections to increase capacity in order to maintain an acceptable level-of-service, increase mobility and enhance safety at these locations:

Lakewood Blvd. at Florence Ave. – this project will add additional left-turn lanes in the northbound and southbound directions on Lakewood Blvd. as well as add an exclusive right-turn lane in the westbound direction on Florence Ave. The environmental process has been completed and the project is currently at the 60% design level. In addition, the right-of-way acquisition process is currently underway. Construction is estimated to commence in fall 2021.

Lakewood Blvd. at Firestone Blvd. - this project will add additional left-turn lanes in the northbound and southbound directions on Lakewood Blvd. The project is currently at the 90% design level. Construction is estimated to commence in summer 2021.

Lakewood Blvd. at Imperial Hwy. - this project will add additional left-turn lanes in the eastbound and westbound directions on Imperial Hwy. The project is currently at the 30% design level and the environmental document is currently being prepared. Construction is estimated to commence in summer 2022.

Paramount Blvd. at Imperial Hwy. - this project will add additional left-turn lanes in the southbound and westbound directions on Imperial Hwy. and will widen the southbound receiving lane in order to permit U-turns in the northbound direction at the intersection. The environmental process has been completed and the project is currently at the 60% design level. Construction is estimated to commence in fall 2021.

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.).** Over the past several years, the City has been incrementally expanding the traffic signal control system. 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 have since been implemented along Florence Avenue, Paramount Boulevard, Bellflower Boulevard, Imperial—Highway, Woodruff Avenue and Telegraph Road. The City is currently constructing fiber-optic communication networks along the Stewart & Gray Rd. and Old River School Rd. corridors. In addition, the city is currently in the process of upgrading the system software and other elements of the TMC to maintain pace with current technology and replace obsolete hardware and software. Completion of this task is anticipated in March 2021.

The Stewart & Gray Road Traffic Signal Communication System will involve the expansion of the city's traffic signal communication system along Stewart & Gray Road between Old River School Road and Woodruff Avenue. This project is currently under construction. The estimated completion date for the construction phase of this project is July 2021.

The Old River School Road Traffic Signal Communication System will involve the expansion of the city's traffic signal communication system along Old River School Road between Imperial Highway and Arnett Street. This project is currently under construction. The estimated completion date for the construction phase of this project is spring 2021.

- ◆ **Encourage appropriate turn lanes and other operational improvements at major arterial intersections identified as congested (Program 2.1.1.6.).** Major capacity improvements are proposed at the four intersections as described in Program 2.1.1.1. The city received funding through the Federal Highway Safety Improvement Program (HSIP) (Cycle 7) to upgrade and implement operational improvements to the existing traffic signals at nine (9) intersections along Paramount Boulevard as well as seven (7) intersections along Stewart & Gray Road. In addition, the city received HSIP funding (Cycle 8) to upgrade and implement operational improvements to the existing traffic signals at nine (9) intersections along Imperial Highway. The proposed traffic signal upgrades at the intersections along Paramount Boulevard, Stewart & Gray Road and Imperial Highway are currently under construction. The estimated completion dates for implementation of the traffic signal upgrades along Paramount Blvd. and Stewart & Gray Rd. is summer 2021. The estimated completion date for the implementation of the traffic signal upgrades along Imperial Hwy. is fall 2021.



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 are collected on a case-by-case basis by the Public Works Department through the development plan review/entitlement process. Approximately \$250,000 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 CEQA guidelines are exceeded, a traffic impact analysis study is required which will determine mitigation measures necessary to offset the impacts created by the development at any signalized intersections or the amount of development fee to be collected. For example, traffic studies were recently prepared in conjunction with the environmental documents being prepared for the proposed redevelopment of the Rancho Los Amigos South Campus Specific Plan and the Eco Rapid Transit Line and were also completed recently for a Marriott hotel development and a proposed Starbucks.
- ◆ **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, the traffic signal communication system projects mentioned in Program 2.1.1.3 will improve mobility along the Stewart & Gray Rd. and Old River School Rd. 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.

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

Chapter 2 Circulation Element continued

that appear narrow result in slower vehicular speeds improving safety and increasing driver's reaction times.

- ◆ **Promote home-based businesses (Program 2.2.3.4.).** In 2020, the city issued 219 business licenses for home-based business. This allows people who live in residential zoned properties an opportunity to work from home.

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.
- ◆ **Discourage truck parking on public streets (Program 2.3.2.1).** Section 3173 of the Downey Municipal Code states No person shall park or leave standing upon any public street or private property, any commercial vehicle having a manufacturer's unladen weight in excess six thousand (6,000) pounds or having a width in excess of eighty-four inches (84") as measured at the widest portion of the body, not including mirrors or other extensions, or having a height in excess of eighty-four inches (84"), or any trailer, or commercial equipment, irrespective of weight, upon any public street or on public or private property in the City, except:
 - 1) When such vehicle is parked in an industrial zone, excluding parking buffer zones;
 - 2) When such vehicle, trailer and/or commercial equipment is parked while being loaded or unloaded or in connection with, and in the aid of the performance of, a service to or on a property in the block in which such performance of, a service to or on a property in the block in which such vehicle, trailer and/or commercial equipment is parked until such service is completed; or
 - 3) When the vehicle, trailer or commercial equipment is immobile due to accident or mechanical breakdown, in which event said vehicle, trailer and/or commercial equipment may be parked for a period of time not to exceed eight (8) hours;
 - 4) When such trailer is attached to a motor vehicle capable of providing the motive power for moving the trailer upon the street, alley, public way or place.



Chapter 2 Circulation Element continued

The following are excluded from the provisions of this section:

- 1) Pick-up trucks as defined by California Vehicle Code Section 471 which are not used for commercial purposes or defined as a commercial vehicle pursuant to California Vehicle Code Section 260, and commercial vehicles, trailers and/or commercial equipment parked or stored on private, commercially zoned property, and owned or operated by the same commercial use.

- 2) Commercial vehicles, trailers and/or commercial equipment operated and parked by a registered transient guest of a motel or hotel if such commercial vehicle, trailer and/or commercial equipment is parked within approved designated vehicle parking areas upon the business premises of the motel or hotel.

In addition, the City requires new land development uses to provide parking for commercial vehicles (i.e., trucks and truck-trailer combinations) making deliveries or pick-ups from said use on the property itself and highly discourages the parking of commercial vehicles upon the adjacent public street while making deliveries or pick-ups.

- ◆ **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). The City coordinates extensively with various regional agencies to enhance multi-modal travel within the City. The City secured a \$1.3 million grant from Metro to implement a bus transit priority system which will improve travel times for public transit buses (Metro and Downey LINK) by giving the transit vehicles priority at signalized intersections. In addition, the City received a Community-Based Transportation Planning grant from Caltrans in 2013 for the development of a Bicycle Master Plan which was

Chapter 2 Circulation Element continued

adopted by the City Council in 2015. Furthermore, the City received state-funded Active Transportation Program (ATP) grants in 2015 in the amount of \$300,000 for the development of a Citywide Pedestrian Plan and in the amount of \$240,000 for a Safe Routes to School Project involving the installation of approximately 1,600 linear feet of sidewalk on residential streets and the conducting of safety education events for four elementary and one middle school in the southerly portion of the City. The City coordinated the development of its Bicycle Master Plan with adjoining cities (i.e., South Gate, Paramount, Bellflower and Norwalk) to ensure connectivity of proposed bike routes within the City with those in the neighboring jurisdictions as well as the Gateway Cities COG to make sure the plan fit into the Transportation Strategic Plan (STP), a comprehensive multi-modal transportation framework developed for the Gateway Cities subregion to address the subregion's long-term mobility needs.

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.)** For some of the months in 2020, the City continued to use the customer service check-in kiosk system to better expedite service at the public counters. However, for sanitary purposes in response to the COVID-19 pandemic, the kiosks were not used for most of the year. Therefore, a customer service survey was made available on the city's website to input comments or incidents regarding customer satisfaction.
- ◆ **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 \$437,500 in funds were granted to 12 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, 206 affordable units exist in the city. 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). 53 ADU permits were issued in 2020. A total of 134 applications were submitted, many of which will be approved in 2021.

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 455 total units within the City currently participating in the Section 8 program. 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 2020, fees were adjusted based on a 1.9% consumer price index increase 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: In FY 19-20, 196 Downey residents were assisted by the Fair Housing Foundation. (Data source: Fair Housing Foundation) The City continues to educate residents on the resources available to them provided by the Fair Housing Foundation. 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 2020, City of Downey issued 5 building permits for the construction of new dwelling units.

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. Additionally, in FY 19-20, 2 families were assisted in purchasing their first home in the City through Los Angeles County’s Mortgage Credit Certificate program.

Chapter 3 Housing Element continued

Income Level		RHNA Allocation by Income Level	2013	2014	2015	2016	2017	2018	2019	2020	2021	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	0	0	210
	Non-Deed Restricted		0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0		
Low	Deed Restricted	123	0	0	0	6	0	0	0	0	0	6	117
	Non-Deed Restricted		0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0		
Moderate	Deed Restricted	135	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	70	65
	Non-Deed Restricted		0	20	50	0	0	0	0	0	0		
Above Moderate		346	0	12	13	44	135	87	41	58	0	390	0
Total RHNA		814											
Total Units			0	32	63	50	135	87	41	58	0	466	392

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).** 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).**

Section 5705 of the Downey Municipal Code specifies requirements for urban runoff reduction and requires the owner, occupant or other person in charge of the day-to-day operation or maintenance of each parcel within the City to adhere to Best Management Practices (BMPs) requirements in order to prevent or reduce the discharge of pollutants to achieve water quality standards.

Section 5706 of the Downey Municipal Code specifies source control requirements for all new development or redevelopment applications within the City. The applicant shall submit an appropriate project specific Urban Runoff Mitigation Plan to the Director of Public Works. The Urban Runoff Mitigation Plan shall include structural and design elements that typically increase infiltration, reduce pollutant conveyance and decrease runoff, including:

- * Landscaping/vegetated areas, sand filters, swales, infiltration basins, biofilters and planters to maximize infiltration;
- * Replacing impermeable surfaces with porous materials;
- * Directing impervious surface runoff to permeable areas;
- * Grading the site to encourage runoff to permeable areas;
- * Directing runoff to dry wells, perforated pipes, infiltration trenches or other source reduction BMPs;
- * Designing curbs and landscaping to facilitate infiltration;
- * Using cisterns or retention basins to store precipitation; and
- * Installing treatment control BMPs to remove pollutants.

All Urban Runoff Mitigation Plans shall include a structural and treatment control BMP maintenance schedule, the applicant's signed statement of responsibility for continued BMP maintenance and plan for continued maintenance responsibilities. In addition, the plan must indicate that subsequent property transfers include, as a written condition and are subject to, the transferee assuming full responsibility for maintenance of any structural, treatment and/or source control BMPs.

The applicant shall retain responsibility for such maintenance until responsibility is legally transferred in accordance with this chapter. The applicant, facility operators and/or owners shall also provide, as requested by the Director of Public Works, any other legally enforceable agreement which assigns responsibility for the maintenance of post-construction structural or treatment control BMPs.



Chapter 4 Conservation Element continued

As a condition for issuing a certificate of occupancy for a new development or redevelopment project, the Director of Public Works shall require the applicant, facility operators and/or owners, as appropriate, to construct all storm water pollution control BMPs and structural or treatment control BMPs shown on the approved project plans, to submit, for review and approval, a BMP maintenance schedule and inspection plan and to file a signed statement that the project site and all structural or treatment control BMPs shall be maintained in compliance with the Urban Runoff Mitigation Plan.

Section 5707 requires the following design elements for all new development or redevelopment projects:

- (1) Preparation and Director of Public Works approval of the Urban Runoff Mitigation Plan, as a condition of Community Development Department approval.
- (2) Runoff shall be restricted from running through certain areas.
- (3) Developments which include outdoor material storage areas that may discharge MS4 pollutants must include design elements to place materials within enclosures to prevent the pollutants from flowing into storm drains and impervious surfaces in all liquid handling areas.
- (4) Waste material bins with a capacity greater than fifty gallons shall be stored in a covered area to prevent rainfall or roof drainage through the waste.

Any project including down spouts, roof gutters or subsurface drainage shall utilize perforated pipe or similar systems in approved infiltration areas, unless approved by the Director of Public Works.

Each Urban Runoff Management Plan shall be individually evaluated to determine whether the proposed project and site characteristics meet governmental standards and must demonstrate to the Director of Public Works' satisfaction that proposed BMPs numeric design criteria or design elements meet the requirements of the Downey Municipal Code.

The Director of Public Works shall approve or disapprove of any project plans. No city grading or building permit shall be issued until the director has approved the Urban Runoff Mitigation Plan.

Chapter 4 Conservation Element continued

Development projects subject to permitting and approval for the design and implementation of post-construction controls to mitigate storm water pollution prior to completion of the project include:

- * All development projects equal to (1) acre or greater of disturbed area that adds more than 10,000 square feet of impervious surface area,
- * Industrial parks 10,000 square feet or more of surface area,
- * Commercial malls 10,000 square feet or more of surface area,
- * Retail gasoline outlets with 5,000 square feet or more of surface area,
- * Restaurants with 5,000 square feet or more of surface area,
- * Parking lots with 5,000 square feet or more of impervious surface area or with 25 or more parking spaces.
- * Streets and roads construction of 10,000 square feet or more of impervious surface area.
- * Automotive service facilities with 5,000 square feet or more of surface area.
- * Projects located in or directly adjacent to or discharging directly to an environmentally sensitive area, where the development will either discharge storm water runoff that is likely to impact a sensitive biological species or habitat and create 2,500 square feet or more of impervious surface area.
- * Single family hillside homes.
- * Redevelopment projects with land disturbing activity resulting in the creation or addition or replacement of 5,000 square feet or more of impervious surface area on an already developed site.

The site for every planning priority project shall be designed to control pollutants, pollutant loads, and runoff volume to the maximum extent feasible by minimizing impervious surface area and controlling runoff from impervious surfaces through infiltration, evapotranspiration, bioretention and/or rainfall harvest and use. Projects not classified with general applicability listed in this section but resulting in the creation or addition or replacement of 800 square feet or more of impervious surface area shall be designed to control pollutants, pollutant loads and runoff volume as approved by the City.

- ◆ **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 to their properties as a condition of being exempted from the posted parking restrictions.

Chapter 4 Conservation Element continued

- ◆ **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."

Air Quality

- ◆ **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 private facilities (Stonewood Mall, and The Apollo 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.



Chapter 5 Safety Element continued

- ◆ **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.
- ◆ **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 2020, 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 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 distribute projects to the departments that participate in Development Review Committee (DRC) meetings and received comments and conditions virtually from various City Departments since meetings were not being conducted for most of 2020.
- ◆ **Promote the use of fire sprinklers for new, expanded, and remodeled developments (Program 5.3.2.4.).** The Fire Prevention Bureau continued to require automatic sprinkler systems for new commercial developments in accordance with California Fire Code and NFPA standards and tenant improvements of commercial properties, whose permit valuations exceed 50 percent of the value of the building.

Chapter 5 Safety Element continued

- ◆ **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 8 Police Officers, 7 Police Aides, 1 IT Technicians, and 2 Office Assistants.
- ◆ **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).
- ◆ **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. 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 did not have much interaction with the School District this past year due to the school closures. We did maintain communication with district administrators and we continue to have a great working relationship.

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 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.).** New development projects are subject to section 9520.06 of the zoning code to comply with outdoor lighting requirements. 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 is currently undertaking the development of a Citywide Pedestrian Plan which will serve as a blueprint for the gradual development of the City's circulation system over time. In addition, the City is completing a project which will involve 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. The City is currently in the process of retaining as consultant to complete the design phase of the project. 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. Furthermore, the City completed a citywide safety lighting retrofit in 2018 which involved the conversion of all city-owned safety lights at intersections to LED luminaires. 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. Lastly, the City will be initiating a project involving the installation of Class II bike lanes on eight of the City's minor arterial streets as recommended by the City's Bicycle Master Plan. This project is currently in the design phase. Construction is estimated to commence in Summer 2021.

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 its 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.

- ◆ **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 2020.



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.).** In 2020 The Parks & Recreation Department evaluated the staffing need based on the response to the COVID-19 pandemic. Staffing for essential programs and park site facilities was modified to meet CDC recommended COVID-19 safety guidelines. Part Time & Full Time employees were appropriately assigned to adequately meet recreational staffing needs.

- ◆ **Secure alternative means of funding, such as grants, donations, user fees and public/private partnerships, for park upgrades (Program 7.2.2.5.).** Projects that were funded by The California Department of Parks & Recreation and Measure S in 2019 continued be monitored by The Parks & Recreation Department in 2020. Upgrades to Apollo Park, Dennis the Menace Park, Discovery Sports Complex, Independence Park, Golden Park and Furman Park were completed in 2020. Lastly, a grant in the amount of \$1.14 million dollars was provided by the River's & Mountains Conservancy in November of 2020 for upgrades to Wilderness Park's natural features (North & South Lakes). Project was completed in January 2021.

- ◆ **Promote the creation of new parks, especially in areas of the city in the greatest need of additional parks (Program 7.3.1.1.).** The Parks & Recreation Department is working with the County of Los Angeles in the pre-construction stage on the south side of the Rancho Los Amigos sports complex project. The project has begun with demolition of existing buildings at the site and will continue through 2021. We are continuing to monitor California Prop 68 funds. Furthermore, Measure A funds were used to supplement Measure S projects.

- ◆ **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. During the 2020 school year in order to safely offer afterschool programming while adhering to the CDC recommended COVID-19 safety guidelines, ASPIRE programming was held via ZOOM to 360 participants. The goal of the program is to provide a fun, positive, and safe learning environment especially during the COVID-19 pandemic students are at increased need of the additional

Chapter 7 Open Space Element continued

educational and recreational support. The program operates on school days from school dismissal until 6:00 p.m. In addition, the department continues to offer recreational classes and programs offered by contract instructors which have also been modified in order to meet CDC recommended COVID-19 safety guidelines. In April 2020, Parks & Recreation staff developed a food meal service for seniors 65+ which includes a Grab n' Go program and a home delivered meals component to over 100 seniors. A total of \$18,500 was donated by Kaiser, Los Angeles County Supervisor Janice Hahn, and the Downey Elks Lodge in an effort to support the community through community service based programming as response to the COVID-19 pandemic. In addition, the Parks & Recreation Department continues to collaborate with TLC (True Lasting Connections) organization, a branch of DUSD that supports children and their families including access to child care, and essential services to families in need.



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 awarded 12 properties 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 "Keep Downey Beautiful" clean-ups that help improve community environments. The program focus is not only to keep Downey beautiful but also to have a safe and clean environment. A new social media campaign was launched in 2020 to reinforce pride in the community and encourage everyone to "do their part".

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 revitalize commercial areas with the addition of art in the form of murals and sculptures throughout the Downtown Areas as well as at the Downey Theater. In 2020, a few commercial projects were also approved by the Planning Commission for new construction which will revitalize the areas in which they are being constructed with improved design, material, and architectural styles.
- ◆ **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. In efforts to lighten the negative impacts that the COVID-19 pandemic has had on small businesses, the Economic Development Division initiated a small business assistance grant program.
- ◆ **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. Although City Hall was closed for a period of time during 2020, staff assisted the community by phone, email, and meetings were held virtually to continue work in a safe manner.



Chapter 9 Economic Development Element continued

- ◆ **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 regularly and provide more information to the public via the Internet. The Planning Department uses social media platforms and the city website to inform the community of Planning Commission meetings, community meetings, and to provide a space to obtain community input through surveys and postings.