



Chapter 2: Vision



Chapter 2 Vision

2.1 OVERVIEW

In 2009, the City of Murrieta initiated a comprehensive update of the Murrieta General Plan — the basic policy document that shapes private development and the public infrastructure that supports it.

Murrieta has changed significantly since its first General Plan was adopted in 1994. The national recession and pause in development pressure provided a perfect opportunity to realign City policy to prepare for the next period of growth. At the same time, the General Plan Update addressed current policy issues and engaged community members in setting the course for the next 25 years.

The Vision Chapter provides background for understanding the Murrieta General Plan by describing the City of Murrieta, the opportunities that City leaders see, and the community priorities for Murrieta’s future. It has three parts, as follows:

- **Part 1: About Murrieta** gives an overview of Murrieta, describing the setting, landscape, history, people, and economy of this City that sees itself as “The Future of Southern California.”
- **Part 2: New Directions** describes the major opportunities and policy direction behind the General Plan Update.
- **Part 3: Community Priorities** provides the community’s vision for the future of Murrieta, expressed in ten community priorities.

2.2 PART 1: ABOUT MURRIETA

SETTING

The City of Murrieta is located in southeastern Riverside County, between the Santa Ana Mountains and San Jacinto Mountains, where the I-15 and I-215 Freeways meet. This scenic area with creeks, hot springs, and rolling hills has been the site of various settlements dating back to prehistoric times, and Murrieta’s downtown reflects the history of the town site that was established in 1884. Incorporated in 1991 with a population of approximately 24,000, Murrieta is now home to over 100,000 people.

Surrounding communities include Menifee, Temecula, Wildomar, and unincorporated Riverside County; refer to *Exhibit 2-1, Regional Location Map*. The San Diego County border is just south of Temecula, and Orange County lies on the other side of the Santa Ana Mountains to the west.

Murrieta’s “crossroads” location has made it possible for many people to live here and enjoy affordable housing, excellent schools, and “small town feeling” lifestyle while commuting to jobs elsewhere. Originally founded as a stop along the California Southern Railway, the City looks forward to an extension of the Metrolink commuter line from Corona into southwest Riverside County, and to a potential station for California’s High Speed Rail that has been proposed in the vicinity of the I-15/I-215 junction.

LANDSCAPE

The City’s Corporate Boundary and Sphere of Influence comprises 41.96 square miles, of which 33.61 square miles is located within the City Limits. The average elevation within the City is approximately 1,110 feet above mean sea level (AMSL).

Murrieta sits below the Santa Rosa Plateau of the Santa Ana Mountains. The Hogbacks Ridge runs through the northeastern part of the City. Other mountain ranges are visible in the distance: the San Jacinto Mountains to the east, and the Santa Margarita and Agua Tibia ranges to the south.

The two main creeks and their tributaries flowing through Murrieta are Murrieta Creek in the western portion and Warm Springs Creek to the east. Open space lines these waterways. Murrieta Hot Springs Road got its name from mineral-rich springs that once attracted travelers who sought their healing properties.

For most of the twentieth century, Murrieta was most notable for dry farming and producing grain and other agricultural products. In the 1960s, the area was known for the breeding of fine racehorses. This heritage is still reflected in the large-lot rural areas near the base of the Santa Ana Mountains and along Los Alamos Road, and in the remaining agricultural land.

By 2009, approximately one-third of the land within Murrieta’s City limits was developed with residential uses. Commercial centers and business parks are located along the freeways and major streets, while industrial uses are found in the South Murrieta Business Corridor and west side of the City. Murrieta is still growing, with just over one-third of the land considered to be vacant.

HISTORY

Paleo-Indian Period. Archaeological research in the Murrieta-Temecula area suggests that prehistoric occupation of the valley dates back thousands of years. There are a number of long-term prehistoric sites located in Murrieta, which are valuable resources. The carvings and other



signs left in local rocks and boulders provide an important record of Murrieta's early occupation by Native Americans.¹

Shoshonean Period. Luiseño and Cahuilla groups of the Southern California Shoshone Indian Tribe entered into the area sometime after 1500 and settled at various sites along streams throughout the Murrieta-Temecula area. These Payomik Kowichum, as they were called before the Mission Era, were a hunting-gathering people. Two Payomik settlements are believed to have been located in Murrieta: Avaxat, referring to the cottonwoods of Murrieta Creek, was located just west of the creek near present-day Ivy Street, while Toatwi was located near Los Alamos and Winchester Road.²

Spanish and Mexican Periods. Both the San Luis Rey and the San Juan Capistrano Missions claimed the territory for cattle raising and used local vaqueros to manage their cattle herds. They likely used Los Alamos Road to travel from the Alamos grasslands to the missions. Soon after Spain lost control of Mexico and the missions closed, the entire Murrieta area was divided among three land grants: Rancho Temecula, San Jacinto Rancho, and Rancho Santa Rosa.³

American Period. As travel along the Santa Fe Trail and Southern Emigrant trails during the early American Period brought more settlers, settlement occurred along the Santa Ana and San Jacinto waterways. The Southern Pacific Railroad line from Los Angeles through the San Gorgonio Pass was completed in 1876. In 1883, the California Southern Railway allowed for travel through the Cajon Pass and down to San Diego through what is now western Riverside County.

By the late 1880s and early 1890s, there was growing discontent between Riverside and San Bernardino, its neighbor 10 miles to the north. After a series of instances in which charges were claimed about unfair use of tax monies to the benefit of the City of San Bernardino only, several people from Riverside decided to investigate the possibility of a new county. Joined by San Diego County residents in the Temecula and San Jacinto Valleys and the desert region who were tired of living so far from their county seat, they petitioned the State legislature, held an election, and on May 9, 1893 formed Riverside County.

Further developments in Riverside County included Banning and Beaumont in the San Gorgonio Pass; Hemet south of San Jacinto; Moreno Valley east of Riverside; Perris, Lake Elsinore, Murrieta and Temecula along the California Southern Railroad; Palm Springs, Palm Desert, Indio and Coachella along the Southern Pacific route to Yuma; and Blythe on the Colorado River. The trains were used to transport settlers into the area, creating a period of agricultural and land development. Transportation, agriculture, and the control of water have continued to be central themes in the settlement, development, and growth of Riverside County.⁴

¹ City of Murrieta *General Plan*, June 21, 1994.

² Ibid.

³ Ibid.

⁴ Robinson, W.W. 1979. *Land in California*. Berkeley and Los Angeles: University of California Press.



The Murrieta area was originally included in Mission San Luis Rey’s lands as part of Rancho Temecula. After secularization, other ranchos were carved from Rancho Temecula, including the Pauba, La Laguna, and Little Temecula Ranchos. By the mid-19th century, Murrieta’s land area was bisected by the Southern Emigrant Trail, which ran through western Riverside County in a similar alignment to the current I-15 Freeway. The trail, which also served as the route of the Butterfield Overland Stage, went through a major stop called “Alamos,” the Spanish word for cottonwoods, located near the present-day intersection of Cherry and Jefferson Avenues in Murrieta. Another branch of the Southern Emigrant Trail veered northward from Temecula to Box Springs near present-day Moreno Valley, roughly following the present-day route of I-215 Freeway.⁵

The City of Murrieta was named after Don Juan Murrieta, a Spaniard who originally settled in the Merced region of the San Joaquin Valley. Don Juan Murrieta eventually drove his herds of sheep southward to southern California, and after bringing 100,000 sheep to southwestern Riverside County (along with several business partners), purchased 52,000 acres of the Temecula and Pauba ranchos from Vincent de Laveaga of San Francisco in 1873. Juan and his brother Ezekiel Murrieta deeded a right-of-way to the California Southern Railway in 1882 and soon thereafter announced their plans to subdivide a town called “Murrieta” along the railroad.^{6,7}

In 1884, before they could make their plans a reality, the Murrieta brothers were bought out by the Temecula Land and Water Company, which immediately subdivided a portion of its new holdings. The subdivided lands included 14,500 lots that were generally 40 acres in size, as well as some larger tracts ranging from 200 to 4,000 acres each for large-scale agriculture.⁸ At the heart of the subdivision was the Murrieta town site, which consisted of 160 acres divided into 537 lots near the railroad depot. The original grid layout of streets included Kalmia, Juniper, and Ivy Streets which ran northeast to southwest; and Washington, Clay, and Hayes Streets, which ran northwest to southeast. The town increased rapidly during the boom years that affected many railroad-adjacent towns in southern California in the late 1880s.⁹

By 1886, the town included a post office, depot, large hotel, restaurant, two general stores, a hardware and furniture store, school, livery stable, lumber yard, butcher shop, laundry, blacksmith shop, church, newspaper called *The Era*, and two physicians. By 1890, the town had a population of 800.¹⁰ When Riverside County was formed in 1893, Murrieta was designated one of 12 original judicial townships and the 40th election precinct.¹¹

⁵ Lech, Steve. 2004. *Along Old Roads. A History of the Portion of Southern California that Became Riverside County, 1772–1893.* Published by the Author.

⁶ Garrison, Arlean V. 1963. *My Children’s Home—A History of Murrieta, California.* Published by the author.

⁷ Ibid 4.

⁸ Ibid 6.

⁹ Ibid 5.

¹⁰ Ibid 6.

¹¹ Gunther, Jane Davies. 1984. *Riverside County, California, Place Names: Their Origins and Their Stories.* Rubidoux Printing Co., Riverside, California.





Washington Avenue, 1917. Credit: E. Hale Curran Collection.



Washington Avenue, 1917. From left to right, H.C. Thompson, A.K. Small, Dr. Sturgis, and Harry Thompson. This building still stands, although the façade has changed over the years. Credit: E. Hale Curran Collection.



The Santa Fe Railroad acquired California Southern Railway after a wet winter in 1883–1884 ruined a large stretch of their newly-created railway through the Temecula Valley. The connection was reconstructed; however, their purchase was not financially profitable. After they completed a line through the San Jacinto Valley, the California Southern alignment became somewhat redundant as well. In 1891, after a wet winter flooded and washed out the California Southern tracks in Temecula Valley, Santa Fe drastically curtailed rail service through Murrieta. Murrieta became the end of a rail spur from Corona and not a stop along any major thoroughfare.¹² This, in addition to the broader southern California real-estate bust in the 1890s, dampened Murrieta's growth as a town. After a short-lived attempt in the 1890s to attract “gentleman planters” to the area with an irrigation district aimed at supporting widespread groves of deciduous fruits, the area settled into a more bucolic existence.¹³ Daily train service continued into Murrieta until 1935, after automobile use had become a well-established alternative to train travel in southern California.¹⁴



Murrieta Depot, 1898. Standing in front are Depot Agent O.W. Miller and his daughter Evelyn.
Credit: E. Hale Curran Collection.

After the close of the rail line in 1935, the land boom ended. By 1947, the town had an estimated population of 1,200. In that same year, the Murrieta Fire Protection District was formed. Civic accomplishments in the 1950s included a new town hall (1956) and the formation of the Murrieta Valley Chamber of Commerce (1959). In the 1960s, the area became known for the breeding of fine racehorses.

¹² Ibid.

¹³ Ibid 5.

¹⁴ Ibid 6.



From the 1890s through the late 20th century, Murrieta's land use and local economy was largely based on dry-farming grains (barley, wheat, and oats), and Murrieta's identity was influenced by established farms of vast rolling fields of seasonal grasses. Murrieta was largely a town consisting of grain farmers who drove huge teams of horses pulling combine harvesters over the fields of the Antelope Valley, the Santa Rosa Plateau, and the Alamos district. Murrieta farmers also grew potatoes, alfalfa, vegetables, and grape vineyards, as well as orchards of olive, cherry, pear, apple, fig, and nectarine trees.¹⁵



Built in 1918, the grain elevator is pictured here in 1958. It was operating until 1983 and still stands, west of downtown. Credit: E. Hale Curran Collection.

¹⁵ Alter, Ruth C., Kathleen A. Crawford, and Scott A. Moomjian. 2004. Murrieta Historical Resources Inventory Update. Prepared for the City of Murrieta by Archaeos, May 2004.



One exception to the community's dominant agricultural identity was the regionally-popular Murrieta Hot Springs. Located along present Murrieta Hot Springs Road just east of I-215, the mineral-rich springs have been used by people for thousands of years. The Luiseño called the springs Cherukanukna Hakiwuna and their extensive use of the springs is reflected in the numerous habitation sites and artifacts identified nearby. Non-Indian visitors in the late 19th century determined that the springs had healing properties, and Murrieta Hot Springs became part of a rapidly growing network of Southern California destinations for health-seekers. In 1887, a Pasadena syndicate bought the hot springs, along with over a thousand acres of land. After several years of new owners, Murrieta Hot Springs was purchased by Fritz Guenther in 1902. It prospered under the family's ownership for nearly 70 years, expanding from 200 acres of ranch land and a few decrepit buildings into over 500 acres of prime resort spa, complete with bathhouses, tiled pools, hotels, great halls, stables, gardens, and hiking trails; however, by 1969, profits declined due to laws prohibiting gambling, and affordable air travel enticed families to take their vacations elsewhere. Murrieta Hot Springs was sold again, continuing its decline over the years until the spa was closed in 1990 and the resort was auctioned off.¹⁶ Since that time, the Murrieta Hot Springs have been acquired by the Calvary Chapel Bible College, who has been restoring many of the buildings to their former glory.

City Incorporation. Renewed residential growth in Murrieta began in the 1980s with the improvement of I-15 and I-215 Freeways and subsequent migration of thousands of San Diego and Orange County residents' farther inland in search of affordable suburban housing. The 1980 Census recorded approximately 2,200 residents in Murrieta; however, by 1990, the population had soared to over 24,000 residents. This rapid residential growth between 1980 and 1990 led Murrieta to incorporate as a general law City in 1991.

Following incorporation, Murrieta started its own police department and took control of the 46-year-old Fire Protection District. The first Murrieta General Plan was adopted in 1994. The City of Murrieta established its own public library in 1998 and built a larger facility for it in 2007 in Town Square, a 34-acre site on the edge of downtown where Murrieta's City Hall, Police Department, Fire Department, Senior Center, and Library encircle a town green and amphitheater. The first building completed in Town Square was the Police Department, in 2002. Murrieta's first park intended to serve the entire City soon started taking shape, with the first phase of Los Alamos Hills Sports Park completed in 2006.

Murrieta's residential growth continued to increase the population, to approximately 44,280 people in 2000 and 85,000 in 2005. As of 2009, the City's population is estimated to be 100,714.¹⁷

¹⁶ Ibid.

¹⁷ California Department of Finance, 2009.



PEOPLE

As described above, the City of Murrieta's total population has approximately quadrupled in size since its incorporation, from 24,334 in 1992 to 100,714 in 2009.

The largest age group for the City of Murrieta is the mature working age population of people from 35 to 64 years of age. According to 2006-2008 American Community Survey estimates, this age group comprised about 35 percent of the total population in the City. Children made up the second largest age group, with about 31 percent of Murrieta's population under 18. Residents from 18 to 34 years old made up about 25 percent of the population, representing the entry level and less experienced working age population. Older adults over 65 years old made up the smallest age group for the City of Murrieta at approximately 9 percent in 2008.

The 2006-2008 American Community Survey estimated that over one-quarter of the people in Murrieta identified themselves as Hispanic or Latino, of any race. Of the remaining population, over one-half of the residents were White, between 5 and 10 percent were Asian, and 4 to 6 percent identified themselves as Black or African American. Census 2010 will provide more exact information on the age and ethnicity of Murrieta residents.

ECONOMY

In 2009, employment opportunities in Murrieta are primarily driven by local household demand for products and services. The largest employment sectors are retail trade, with large employers such as Wal-Mart and Home Depot; local government, which includes schools and the City of Murrieta; and health care, including Southwest Healthcare. Together, such local-serving businesses provide nearly 78 percent of the jobs in Murrieta in 2008.¹⁸

The remaining 22 percent of jobs in Murrieta are export-base, meaning that their products or services are demanded outside Murrieta at the regional level or beyond. This type of business brings outside dollars into the community. Large employers in this sector include American Industrial Manufacturing Service and Cryoquip, Inc.

Murrieta has an educated, skilled labor force that is not accommodated by local jobs. Instead, 87 percent of the local labor force commutes outside of Murrieta to work.¹⁹ This mismatch presents an opportunity to develop Murrieta's economic base by promoting economic diversification, particularly within the manufacturing, professional, scientific and technical, information and finance, and insurance sectors.

Economic Catalysts

A look at the surrounding regional economy indicates that Murrieta has the potential to attract firms that offer higher skilled jobs — especially due to its educated and skilled resident labor force, land use development opportunities, existing regional freeway accessibility, and plans for future transit.

¹⁸ Source: Stanley R. Hoffman Associates

¹⁹ Ibid.



Building on an existing strength, Murrieta is seeking to offer more opportunities for higher education closer to home. An extension facility of Azusa Pacific University is already located in Murrieta, and extension facilities of other institutions are found in neighboring cities. A satellite campus for California State University (CSU) San Marcos opened in Temecula through a cooperative effort by the City of Murrieta, City of Temecula, and Temecula Valley Unified School District, in which Murrieta provided a grant for tenant improvements. This cooperative effort brought the first four-year university to the Temecula Valley. In December 2008, the Murrieta City Council approved an 11.5-acre project called the Murrieta Education Center that is envisioned to accommodate satellite facilities for several colleges as well as a workforce development center. Located in the South Murrieta Business Corridor, the complex will house these facilities in two five-story buildings, with complementary retail planned for another building.

The opening of Loma Linda University Medical Center-Murrieta in 2011 is expected to be another economic catalyst as it expands the existing health care cluster. The North Murrieta Business Corridor, where this teaching hospital is located, will be poised for development that complements the facility.

A high-speed rail station in Murrieta, if constructed, would become a major catalyst for growth. Such a station is tentatively planned near the I-15/I-215 interchange.

2.3 PART 2: NEW DIRECTION

AN EMPHASIS ON ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT

Murrieta's growth has largely been driven by residential development, but the General Plan Update marks a deliberate effort to direct investment toward building a strong economic base. Before starting the General Plan Update, the Murrieta City Council identified economic development as the City's top priority. To support that priority, the City Council established a Comprehensive Development Strategy presenting the 20-year vision that Murrieta will be a diversified business hub for Southwest Riverside County and North San Diego County.

To achieve this vision, the City seeks to encourage private sector investment in the creation of higher paying jobs, income, and wealth through economic diversification. The City is focusing its efforts to attract a variety of businesses, higher educational institutions, and health care facilities. A full range of quality new development will be part of this effort, including retail centers, corporate/technology parks, hotels, and upscale restaurants.

The General Plan Update aligns City policy with this emphasis on economic development, by directing public investments in infrastructure and promoting the development of shovel-ready sites. It targets key locations for changes in land use and zoning that support the development of medical, educational, commercial, and business clusters. These key locations include the areas around Loma Linda University Medical Center-Murrieta and the Murrieta Education Center, the economic catalysts described above.



Economic development is strongly linked to two other major themes of the General Plan Update: sustainability and becoming a healthy community. Commuting is one example of a connection between these themes. When there are more jobs available closer to home, Murrieta residents can reduce the amount of time that they spend commuting. This should reduce emissions from their cars, which benefits both the environment and human health. It would also provide residents with more time to spend in healthy activities with their families.

SUSTAINABILITY

Environmental sustainability is a particular concern for cities in California due to State legislation aimed at curbing California's contributions to climate change. Federal grants for cities are also emphasizing sustainable planning.

Sustainability is commonly defined as the ability to meet current needs without compromising the ability of future generations to meet their own needs. In other words, it involves balancing current demands with future ones and allowing natural and human resources to maintain their productivity and abundance.

Since the natural environment is an important part of Murrieta's identity and a resource that residents value, pursuing environmental sustainability is a way to enhance one of the City's major assets. In this pursuit, Murrieta can also promote community health and provide a quality of life that drives a strong economy.

The General Plan Update sets policy for many of the most important components of sustainability, including land use, transportation, resource conservation, and open space. It also provides the opportunity to address non-mandated topics, such as air quality, energy, green building, public infrastructure, urban design, and walkability. Therefore, updating the General Plan provides a chance for the City to both assess its level of sustainability and enact policies to enhance it.

As part of the focus on sustainability, care was taken in choosing the materials used to help spread the word about the General Plan Update. Promotional materials included cotton shopping bags, business cards on plantable paper embedded with wildflower seeds, and flyers on recycled paper.

HEALTHY COMMUNITY

Increasingly, people are becoming aware that where they live affects their health. They notice whether there is a park or recreational trail in their neighborhood, and whether their community has more fast food outlets than grocery stores with fresh fruits and vegetables. A community can offer opportunities for a healthy lifestyle or expose people to health risks.

Planning decisions underlie people's daily and habitual decisions that affect their health, such as where to live, work, and travel; what to eat; and where and when to play, socialize, and be physically active. The built environment and land use decisions play an important role in



shaping the pattern of community development — a pattern that either promotes or discourages physical activity and healthy food choices.

Cities are making new efforts to consider health implications of land use and other policy. The City of Murrieta is in the forefront of this movement by including a Healthy Community Element in the General Plan Update.

COMMUNITY INVOLVEMENT

Besides these major policy issues, the General Plan Update presented an opportunity to get the community involved in setting direction for Murrieta. Workshops, surveys, and other participation opportunities during the planning process prompted community members to articulate their hopes for the future, provide direction on land use, suggest goals, and review draft documents. This community input was translated into ten community priorities that are described in this Vision Chapter, and influenced the General Plan Update in many other ways. Community participation in the General Plan Update process is described in [Chapter 1, Introduction](#).

2.4 PART 3: COMMUNITY PRIORITIES

During the General Plan Update, community members were afforded a number of ways to share their thoughts about Murrieta today and Murrieta in the future. The ten community priorities below describe the vision that members of the public provided for the future of their community, which guided the goals and policies in this General Plan.

- **Natural Environment.** Protect the natural beauty of the mountains, hills, and waterways.
- **Rural Areas.** Preserve elements of Murrieta’s rural heritage.
- **Community Character.** Protect and foster a strong sense of community and safety, as well as the “home town” feeling.
- **Recreation and Culture.** Provide abundant parks and facilities for recreational activities, and cultural amenities.
- **Historic Downtown Murrieta.** Create a vibrant, prosperous Historic Downtown that serves as a community center and provides a variety of quality shopping and dining experiences.
- **Governance.** Promote community involvement and provide for a fiscally sound future.
- **Sustainable Economy.** Pursue economic vitality and longevity by attracting higher education and growing a base of clean industry, while maintaining the current housing affordability.



- **Transportation.** Improve roadway networks to reduce traffic, and provide a citywide system of bicycle lanes and recreational trails that improve accessibility without a car.
- **Infrastructure and Services.** Improve health care within the City, and continue to provide excellent school, police, fire, library, and recreation services.
- **Youth Amenities.** Provide ample activities for all ages of youth, and jobs for teens.

NATURAL ENVIRONMENT

Protect the natural beauty of the mountains, hills, and waterways.

Community members value the natural beauty and clean air of Murrieta. They listed mountains, hills, and waterways as treasures, with several calling out the Santa Rosa Plateau in particular. Participants cited open space as a treasure, and participants including youth expressed that natural areas should be retained in the future.

Participants cautioned that preservation would need to be balanced with development and the need to prevent flooding around waterways. Participants also expressed concerns about interference with property rights.

A workshop group that focused on open space and trails cited several benefits of quality of life, property values, sense of community, recreation, and wildlife preservation. This group suggested that connections between open space should be designed to work for people as well as for wildlife, and proposed a park with trails along the river from Wildomar to Temecula; they also suggested removing cement from the riverbed to allow groundwater recharge.

RURAL AREAS

Preserve elements of Murrieta's rural heritage.

Community members value the rural feel around Murrieta, although they want the preservation of rural areas to be balanced with urban growth. Workshop participants also expressed a need for additional infrastructure in rural areas, such as roads, water, and sewer.

There were several different components of this “rural” character that participants valued. Some wanted a feeling of openness, space, and country landscapes. Others cited the freedom to keep animals, ride horses, and grow food—or to have more privacy.

Residents in the Los Alamos area offered visions for their neighborhood that sought these types of rural elements, as well as large lot sizes and limited regulation, while providing more urban infrastructure.



Other participants suggested maintaining a rural feel by using elements such as split-rail fences, swales instead of curbs, greenways, and trails. One workshop group suggested ensuring compatible land uses near rural and agricultural areas. A survey participant proposed a living farm museum.

COMMUNITY CHARACTER

Protect and foster a strong sense of community and safety, as well as the “home town” feeling.

Community members described Murrieta as safe, and placed importance on keeping it that way. Participants felt that Murrieta was good for families and wanted the community to be a safe, healthy environment for children in the future. Teens strongly valued the safety and sense of community they felt in Murrieta.

Residents expressed that Murrieta had a small town feel and sense of community. They valued community events and considered other people in Murrieta to be an asset.

Participants, including teens, referred to Murrieta as “clean,” adding suggestions for more trees or landscaping, and image improvement. Participants expressed a desire for Murrieta to have a distinct identity.

RECREATION AND CULTURE

Provide abundant parks and facilities for recreational activities, and cultural amenities.

Many comments related to recreation and culture. Community members value parks and outdoor activities. Suggestions for additional recreational facilities included a dog park, aquatic facility, and a skating rink. One workshop group suggested building a campground and also suggested that volunteers could contribute to recreation, for instance through an “adopt a trail” program.

Participants expressed a need for more dining and night life in Murrieta. Others hoped for more arts and culture events and facilities, such as a concert hall. One workshop group wanted to see cultural amenities that would attract residents aged 18-30.



HISTORIC DOWNTOWN MURRIETA

Create a vibrant, prosperous Historic Downtown that serves as a community center and provides a variety of quality shopping and dining experiences.

Participants placed importance on Murrieta’s historic downtown and Town Center, describing their envisioned downtown as “magical,” “bustling,” “prosperous,” and “vibrant.” They valued the historic character of downtown and suggested street lights and windmills as enhancements.

SUSTAINABLE ECONOMY

Pursue economic vitality and longevity by attracting higher education and growing a base of clean industry, while maintaining the current housing affordability.

Community members expressed a desire for economic development that would lead to more jobs—including high-paying jobs and jobs for teens—and fully occupied retail centers. Participants hoped to see development in Central Murrieta. They noticed local signs of the economic downturn, expressing concerns about commercial vacancies, foreclosures, and lower housing values. However, participants also considered the affordability of housing in Murrieta to be an asset.

To stimulate economic development, workshop groups suggested providing higher education, infrastructure, and incentives, as well as promoting downtown. One group felt that high-speed rail could provide an opportunity. Another group suggested constructing office buildings for large employers. Some areas of growth the groups identified were medical and bio-tech industries, “green” businesses, mixed use, and hotels. Hotel locations were suggested near the Loma Linda University Medical Center and in Central Murrieta, north of Murrieta Hot Springs Road between the 1-15 and 1-215 Freeways. Participants saw opportunities for Murrieta due to assets such as freeway access and an educated workforce.

Participants recognized the role of the City and the General Plan in directing land use and growth. They expressed the need to manage growth in order to provide adequate infrastructure and services, or to preserve certain qualities of the community that they value.

TRANSPORTATION

Improve roadway networks to reduce traffic, and provide a City-wide system of bicycle lanes and recreational trails that improve accessibility without a car.

Transportation systems are important to Murrieta residents to help them reach other regional destinations and to travel within the city. Participants said that Murrieta was conveniently



located, but many would rather be able to work, shop, dine, and recreate in Murrieta instead of driving out of town.

Time spent in the car is clearly an issue for Murrieta residents, with many participants citing traffic as a concern — on local streets and freeway interchanges. Even teens brought up traffic as a challenge for the community. As individuals and in groups, participants suggested more connections for Clinton Keith, Diaz, Winchester, Washington, and Ynez, as well as more freeway overpasses and north/south connectivity to Temecula. Participants asked for more roads to be paved.

Community members also hoped to see a City-wide system of bicycle lanes. They sought recreational trails (including equestrian trails) that connect parks and open space, hoping that they could access these amenities without needing to drive. As discussed in the Natural Environment section above, a workshop group proposed a park with trails along the Murrieta Creek from Wildomar to Temecula. Another group echoed this group’s suggestion of linking trails to Historic Downtown.

Groups discussing transportation also suggested developing other modes of transportation: Safe Routes to School, wheelchair-accessible connectivity, a trolley, golf carts in Historic Downtown, improved bus service, and rail connections to San Diego and Orange County.

INFRASTRUCTURE AND SERVICES

Improve health care within the City, and continue to provide excellent school, police, fire, library and recreation services.

Many participants considered Murrieta’s school system to be a community treasure, and hoped it would continue to be strong in the future. They also valued the police and fire departments, recreation services, library, and senior center.

Health care was a concern — in particular, hospital services — and participants looked forward to the new Loma Linda University Medical Center. Participants desired more opportunities for higher education. They made suggestions for infrastructure, including facilities for water, sewer, and stormwater. Services suggested by participants included services for the homeless or near-homeless, and animal shelters.

GOVERNANCE

Promote community involvement and provide for a fiscally sound future.

Participants valued the opportunity to be involved in their community, including the General Plan Update workshops. They expressed concern about interference in Murrieta from special interests or excessive regulation from higher levels of government. Participants hoped for a



fiscally sound future for Murrieta. They wanted leaders with vision, a responsive local government, communication with residents, and coordination with neighboring communities.

YOUTH AMENITIES

Provide ample activities for all ages of youth, and jobs for teens.

The General Plan Update Team heard directly from youth at Vista Murrieta High School, in a workshop attended by 48 students. These teens valued the schools, parks, programs and activities available in Murrieta, but felt a great need for more options in recreation, night life, and shopping. Teens wanted activities that they could do with their families, as well as with their friends. They also wanted more jobs, and opportunities to be involved in the community.

Teen participants suggested a teen night club, while a group of younger workshop participants asked for a pre-teen dance club. Another popular youth suggestion was a recreation/teen center. Teens also wished for more variety in shopping, and healthier restaurant options.

Suggestions from adults regarding youth included a teen center, activities, sports, mentoring and job skills training.

Teens wrote their own vision statements for Murrieta, presented below.

Youth Vision Statements

**Written by Vista Murrieta High School Students –
January 22, 2010**

“Murrieta is a diverse community in which the inhabitants can enjoy fine dining, activities, entertainment as well as the safety and security to raise families. It is also a place with a healthy environment and thriving economy. It is well designed, efficient and aesthetically pleasing.”

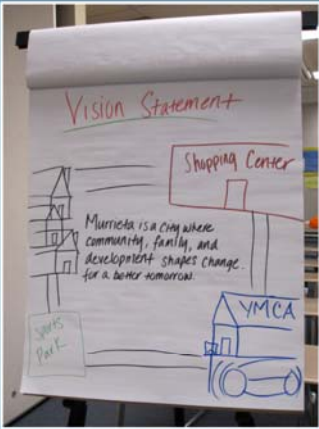
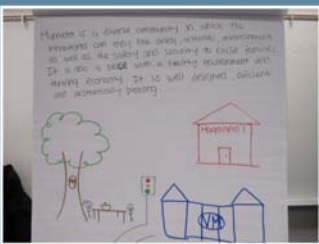
“Murrieta is still a safe place with a variety of entertainment and safe activities for families and kids to enjoy together.”

“The City of Murrieta is a safe and secure place to raise families and offers outstanding education in our great school districts. It is a diverse community that offers job opportunities and entertainment for kids as well as young adults.”

“Murrieta is a city where community, family, and development shapes change for a better tomorrow.”

“Murrieta is a city with an emphasis on safety, education, and opportunity in order to progress into an ideal society. Youth are able to feel close to those around them in the community while having a good time. Murrieta is a place that meets the wants and needs of the people.”

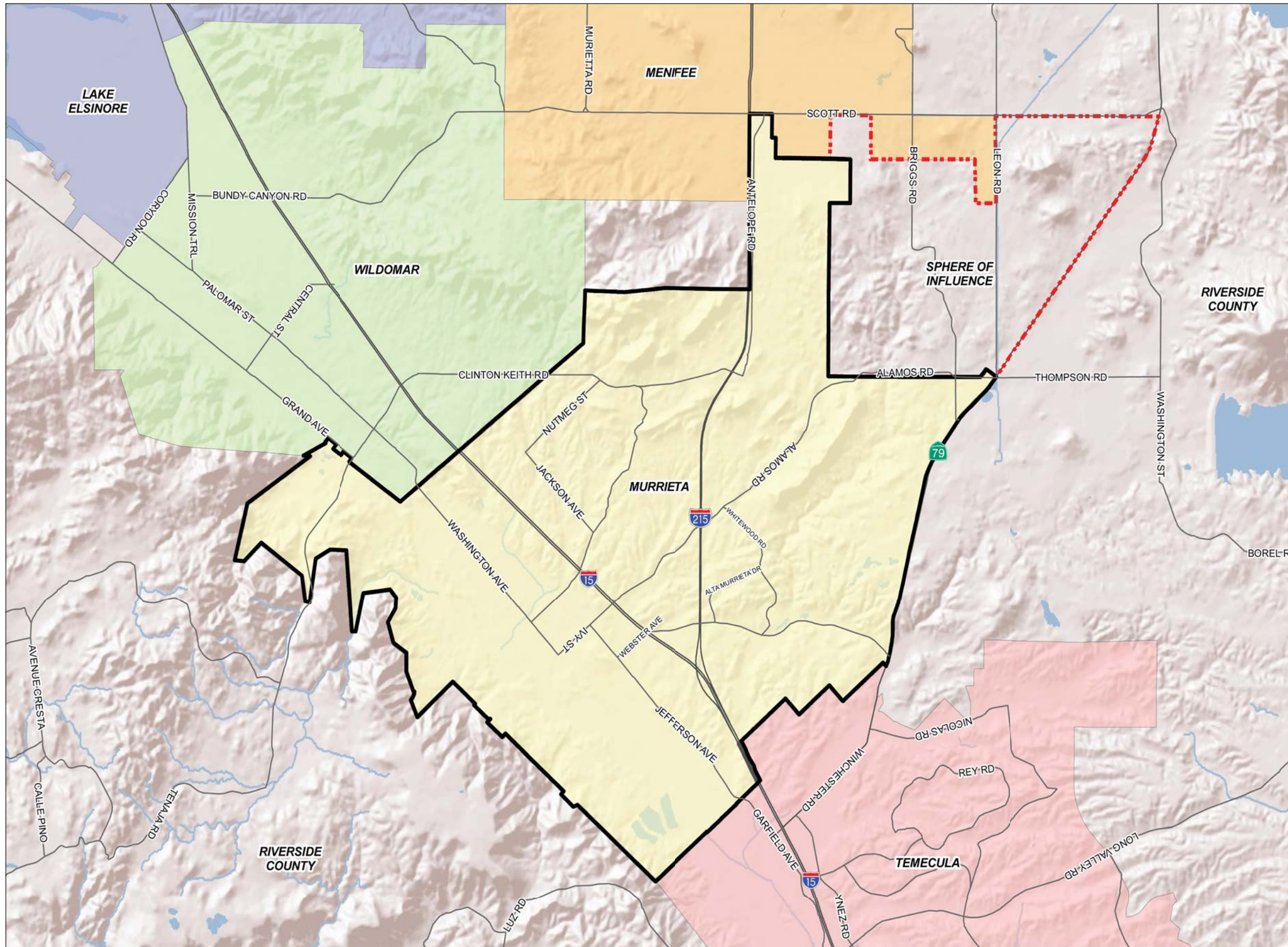
“Murrieta is now a community with positive family and youth recreations, where education and safety is valued and first priority. Where there is less traffic, more economical opportunities for growth, and a clean environment.”




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LEGEND

-  Murrieta
-  Temecula
-  Lake Elsinore
-  Menifee
-  Wildomar
-  Sphere of Influence



Source: County of Riverside, City of Murrieta, and ESRI - World Shaded Relief.