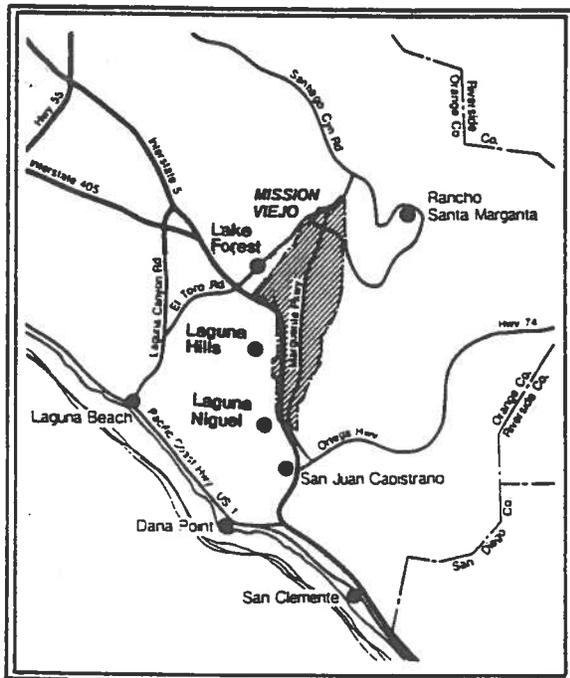

INTRODUCTION TO THE GENERAL PLAN

The City of Mission Viejo lies in the south-central portion of Orange County, and area which has experienced substantial growth. Development of the community of Mission Viejo began in 1965 when the Orange County Board of Supervisors adopted the Mission Viejo Planned Community Development Plan.

PLANNING FOR THE FUTURE

The Development Plan, described a well-planned community consisting of residential, commercial, industrial, recreational, and public land uses designated to meet the needs of expected population growth within that portion of the county. The Development Plan became the basis for planning and provision of all necessary public services and facilities, and provided a guide for Mission Viejo's growth and development as an unincorporated community.



City of Mission Viejo Regional Setting

Substantial development occurred in accord with the Development Plan and when the City of Mission Viejo incorporated on March 31, 1988, the area included in the boundaries was nearing build-out. In 1989, the City proceeded with the preparation of the General Plan, the long-range constitution and guide for future growth and development. The overall quality of development in Mission Viejo since initial development has been excellent, and the City wishes to maintain and even improve upon its established image as a highly desirable community in which to live and work. On October 8, 1990, the first General Plan for the City was adopted. It established a development policy capable of guiding the City into the next century. From time to time the City has amended or comprehensively updated elements of the General Plan to further refine the City's blueprint for growth and development.

PURPOSE OF THE GENERAL PLAN

California State law requires for each city and county to adopt a comprehensive, long-term general plan for its own physical development. In essence, a city's general plan serves as the blueprint for future growth and development. As a blueprint for the future, the plan must contain policies and programs designed to provide decision makers with a solid basis for land use related decisions.

The general plan must address many issues which are directly related to an influence land use decisions. In addition to land use, State law requires that the plan address circulation, housing, the conservation of natural resources, the preservation of open space, the noise environment and the protection of public safety (Section 65302 of the California Government Code). These issues are to be discussed to the extent that they cover topics of special or unique interest to the city or county, such as the recreational resources or economic development.

ORGANIZATION OF THE GENERAL PLAN

The Plan consists of the following nine elements, or chapters which together fulfill the state requirements for a general plan. The nine elements are: Land Use, Housing, Circulation, Conservation / Open Space, Public Safety, Noise, Economic Development, and Growth Management. Table I-1 illustrates the relationship between the General Plan's eight elements and the seven State-mandated elements. The City of Mission Viejo General Plan contains goals, policies and programs which are intended to guide land use and development decisions for the twenty-first century.

**TABLE I-1
RELATIONSHIP OF CITY GENERAL PLAN ELEMENTS
TO STATE-MANDATED ELEMENTS**

MISSION VIEJO GENERAL PLAN ELEMENT	STATE-MANDATED GENERAL PLAN ELEMENTS	OPTIONAL GENERAL PLAN ELEMENTS
Land Use	X	
Housing	X	
Circulation	X	
Conservation / Open Space	X	
Public Safety	X	
Noise	X	
Economic Development		X
Growth Management		X

General Plan Organization

The Plan for the City of Mission Viejo consists of text and maps. Several supporting documents prepared during the course of preparation of the General Plan include the Program Environmental Impact Report (Program EIR) and related appendices, and the Sustainability Action Plan. The General Plan provides direction for the City’s growth and development.

The General Plan Program EIR provides a program-level assessment of the general environmental impacts resulting from the updates to and implementation of policies established within the General Plan, in addition to any impacts related to preparation and implementation of the Sustainability Action Plan.

Element Organization

Each of the eight General Plan elements is comprised of an Introduction and Goals and Policies section. Some elements have a Plan section. The Introduction describes the purpose and focus of the element and also introduces other plans and programs outside of the General Plan which may be used to achieve specific General Plan goals.

The Goals and Polices section presents the City’s long-term objectives for the subject area of each element. The goals and polices are arranged by issue or subject, and a brief description of philosophy or basis behind those objectives precedes each group of goals and polices.

For general reference, goals and policies may be defined as follows:

GOAL: A goal is a broad statement of purpose and/or direction.

Policy: A policy describes a more definitive course of action supporting the achievement of a goal.

For some elements, the third and final section consists of the “plan” or further definition of programs to be used to implement General Plan policy. For example, the Land Use Element contains a “Land Use Plan” which indicates the types and intensities of land use permitted city-wide. Wherever possible, each element contains maps, diagrams and tables to illustrate General Plan policy.