

**CITY OF
BELFLOWER**

GENERAL PLAN

1995-2010

INTRODUCTION

Government Code Section 65300 requires each California city to prepare and adopt a comprehensive, long-term general plan that facilitates the city's goals for the future. The Plan serves as a stimulus and guide for the multitude of public and private decisions which will be made by Bellflower through the year 2010.

According to state law, the general plan is required to analyze seven topics: land use, circulation, housing, conservation, open space, noise, and safety. Typically, each issue area is addressed in elements that contain goals, policies, and implementation programs.

The following list summarizes the required contents of general plan elements, as required by State law:

- **Land Use** includes the identification of existing land uses by type, analysis of development and building trends, and anticipated population and build out potentials.

- **Circulation** discusses and analyzes the city's network of streets and highways, public transit, truck routes, and utilities infrastructure (gas,

water, telephone, and electricity). Issues such as street design standards, current and future traffic levels, identification of alternative transportation modes and upgrades to the city's utility delivery systems are addressed in the circulation section of the general plan.

- **Housing** addresses existing and projected housing needs of all economic segments of the community.

- **Conservation** refers to parks and recreation areas that serve the city, as well as the preservation of biological resources and scenic highways.

- **Open Space/ Recreation** includes the preservation and management of natural resources and recreational opportunities.

- **Noise** includes the identification of noise levels and potential mitigation measures associated with transportation facilities, industrial uses and other stationary sources.

- **Safety** addresses the protection of the public from fires and geological hazards, as well as assessing potential seismic, and other community hazards.



This symbol represents the Bellefleur Apple. It is displayed throughout the General Plan. Many believe Bellflower's namesake is the Bellefleur Apple. According to local history, the City's name is linked to orchards of Bellefleur Apples which were grown by pioneer settler William Gregory at the northern part of town during the 1930s.

The captions displayed throughout the General Plan have been extracted from two documents, Bellflower: A Pictorial Essay and Bellflower: People and Places. These two documents, prepared by the Bellflower Heritage Committee during 1982 and 1987, commemorate Bellflower's hundred-year historic heritage as a commerce center, farming area, and residential community.

During the 1994 study sessions with the General Plan Ad Hoc Committee, concern was expressed about rising crime rates in Bellflower and how crime affects residents' quality of life. Crime was viewed as a public safety issue, therefore, it is addressed in the Safety Element of the General Plan.

Organization of the Bellflower General Plan:

The Bellflower General Plan comprises two documents: the background technical report (BTR) and the general plan policy document. The plan will comply with the California Environmental Quality Act (CEQA).

The background technical report contains city-specific information intended for use by residents and the city's decision makers. The report's information is the foundation for the general plan policy document and it contains detailed and technical data which address the general plan's elements.

The Bellflower General Plan's policy document contains seven elements: land use, circulation, housing, conservation, noise, safety, and open space/ recreation. Each element includes informational excerpts from the Background Technical

Report (BTR), goals, policies, and implementation programs.

Pursuant to the State General Plan Guidelines (Government Code Section 65300, et seq.), the following general plan terms are defined as follows:

Goals - A goal is a direction setter. It is an ideal future end, condition, or state related to the public health, safety, or general welfare toward which planning and implementation measures are directed. A goal is a general expression of community values and, therefore, is abstract in nature.

Policy - A policy is a specific statement that guides decision making. It indicates a clear commitment of the local legislative body. A policy is based on a general plan's goals and objectives as well as the analysis of data.

Implementation Programs An implementation program is an action, procedure, program, or technique that carries out a general plan policy.



"In 1904 Emil Firth subdivided and sold a parcel of land which he named 'Somerset Acres' (later to become the City of Bellflower). Firth laid out streets and divided the tract into one acre farm lots, selling for \$350 to \$400, which he promoted aggressively, extolling the abundance of water, the fertility of the soil, and the proximity of Los Angeles, 40 minutes away on the Pacific Electric line. Firth, remembered as a somewhat high-powered salesman, was also remembered as a benefactor to the fledgling settlement, carrying people who could not make their payments for long periods and even exchanging lots when the original one proved unsuitable." Bellflower: A Pictorial Essay.

Internal Consistency:

Government Code Section 65300.5 requires, "...the general plan and elements and parts thereof (to be) integrated, and internally consistent and compatible"

Each general plan element is required to be internally consistent and non-contradictory with any other general plan element. If a general plan is incomplete, or there are inconsistencies among the elements, efficient long-term planning is hampered.

State law also requires a city's general plan to be consistent with its adopted zoning ordinance.

At the local level, the Bellflower City Council has adopted several local plans pertaining to water conservation, upgrades to the City's water system, solid waste reduction, and other issues. Where applicable, this information is reflected in the general plan to ensure compatibility.

Background Information:

Portions of Bellflower's General Plan were completed in 1973, 1974, and 1977. This Plan has served the City for over two decades. However, due to numerous changes in State law, the City embarked on a much-needed comprehensive update to it in 1990.

On February 12, 1990, the Bellflower City Council appointed members to the "Bellflower General Plan Update Ad Hoc Committee" to complete the General Plan. The Bellflower General Plan Update Ad Hoc Committee held numerous study sessions, all of which were open to the public. In 1991, a draft General Plan was completed by a consultant. However, this document was not formally adopted by the City.

In May 1994, the City Council re-convened the Bellflower General Plan Update Ad Hoc Committee with new appointees. The Committee's purpose was to assist City Staff and an in house contract planner with the refinement and improvement of the 1991 draft General Plan. The Committee approached its tasks with vigor and diligence. Community issues were discussed, and draft general plan goals, policies, and

"In 1906, another Los Angeles Real Estate man, Frank E. Woodruff (1859-1939), formerly a successful Iowa businessman, came across the Somerset Acres and formed a syndicate to purchase outright over 1000 acres of Somerset Acres to operate as a farm. The syndicate hired a firm to manage the property, but it did not return the profit they expected. All kinds of crops were tried - sugar beets and alfalfa of course but also cauliflower and even eucalyptus trees, for furniture-making. They also ran some livestock on the place. Discouraged (one partner wryly suggested giving the ranch to the Salvation Army), the syndicate decided in 1908 to subdivide the ranch into one acre farms. Finally, Woodruff and McWilliams bought out the other partners in 1911. Woodruff and McWilliams recast their subdivision scheme on an entirely new basis. They laid out a townsite and within its boundaries sold townsize lots. Lots 25 feet wide by 131 deep, on the north side of Flower Street west of Somerset Avenue (Bellflower Boulevard), sold for \$70. For the first time, people other than farmers were invited to settle in Somerset. A town grew up around the Somerset Station as though it had been just waiting for a signal to begin. New England traditions of the town meeting and voluntary civic associations, carried west by Middle Western descendants, took over." Bellflower: A Pictorial Essay.



implementation programs were formulated. The Committee held numerous study sessions, which, at times included members of the public.

Citizen Participation:

Beginning in 1995, the Bellflower General Plan Update Ad Hoc Committee held public study sessions and workshops on the revised draft General Plan. The goal of these public study sessions and workshops was to solicit the community's views, concerns, and input. In particular, the City was interested in learning about the needs of its individual residents, neighborhoods, and businesses.

Cable television, newspaper announcements, and public notices were used to spread the word about Bellflower's General Plan public study sessions and workshops.

Environmental Review:

In California, the development permit process is coordinated with the environmental review process under the California Environmental Quality Act (CEQA). Every development "project", which is not exempt from CEQA, must be analyzed by the lead agency to identify and analyze any potential environmental impacts.

Under CEQA, the *City of Bellflower General Plan* constitutes a project. Accordingly, the *General Plan* was reviewed and analyzed in accordance with CEQA and no adverse environmental impacts were identified. Environmental documents prepared for the *General Plan* were noticed in accordance with State requirements. In addition, the State of California's, Office of Planning and Research, Clearinghouse Division was utilized to circulate the project's environmental documents to local and State responsible agencies.



"The Pacific Electric has a large brick power house here. We have one of the largest and best schools on the line, two stores, one lumber yard, one real estate office, a restaurant, a barber shop, plumber's shop, a good blacksmith shop, an excellent meat market, and a bakery nearing completion . . . The town and surrounding farms are supplied with excellent free water, piped all over the country from the artesian well, and we are about to get a large new depot, as 500 cars of beets will be shipped from Somerset this season." A profile of Bellflower in 1912, printed in the first issue of the Somerset Optimist Newspaper.

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