



The Strawberry Ladies by Tara Stood

Economic Development Element

Economic development enhances San Clemente’s quality of life by providing local goods and services and expanding employment and business opportunities. As important components of economic development, the community expects municipal facilities and services to maintain and enhance San Clemente’s quality of life and spur further investment in the City. The community also recognizes that providing these facilities and services costs money and requires balancing tradeoffs among competing and changing priorities.

The Economic Development Element establishes goals and policies to guide decisions about public and private investment in and opportunities for improved quality of life through economic growth.

PRIMARY GOAL:

Build and maintain a thriving local economy to expand employment and business opportunities, provide needed products and services, help achieve the City of San Clemente’s Vision and Strategic Plan, and preserve and enhance San Clemente’s quality of life, consistent with our environmental goals.

GOAL AND POLICY SECTIONS:

1. [Economic Development Program](#)
2. [Competitive Employment Centers](#)

3. Tourism

4. Distinct Shopping and Entertainment Districts

ADDITIONAL LINKS

- [Community Profile](#)
- [San Clemente Vision and Strategic Plan](#)

Economic Development Program

Implementation of San Clemente’s past General Plans relied on either private development projects or public resources for funding and leadership. In an era of constrained municipal revenues and with little undeveloped land available, San Clemente will increasingly rely on a combination of public and private resources to implement the General Plan.

The General Plan seeks to manage the increasing complexity of economic development through a comprehensive economic development strategy which allocates municipal staffing and resources for economic development activities.

GOAL:

Maintain and continuously improve an adequately staffed and funded, local economic development program and help residents work close to where they live.

POLICIES:

ED-1.01. ***Economic Development Strategy.*** The City intends to adopt an Economic Development Strategy. Until such a strategy is adopted by the City Council, policies ED-1.02 and 1.03 shall be applied so as to implement the long-term goals of the General Plan and to emphasize mid- and long-term development of the local economy, rather than focusing on individual projects. The City may also consider additional goals with more near-term focuses.

ED-1.02. ***Allocation of Public Resources.*** We allocate public resources based on an adopted Economic Development Strategy.

ED-1.03. ***Staff Resources.*** We budget for adequate staff resources to implement the economic development strategy and will weigh competing funding demands to balance the allocation of municipal resources.

ED-1.04. ***Long-Term Benefits.*** We consider long-term benefits, not just short-term returns, in our decision-making processes.

ED-1.05. **Evaluation of Progress.** We annually evaluate our progress in achieving the economic development strategy. This evaluation will guide decisions to maintain or modify the allocation of resources for economic development.

Competitive Employment Centers

San Clemente has several centers for office and industrial economic activity, including Los Molinos, the Rancho San Clemente and Talega business parks, and the Camino de Estrella/Los Mares area near the hospital. These centers provide services, goods, and employment for City residents. They also provide desirable locations for starting businesses, which in turn, enhances San Clemente as an outstanding place to live and work. Also, office and industrial properties typically generate more tax revenues than they cost in public services and, therefore, can help provide municipal resources for reinvestment in the community's quality of life.

The General Plan seeks to improve the attractiveness of employment centers by addressing the reasons why businesses choose San Clemente as a business location, rather than simply attempting to compete on costs alone. The General Plan also seeks to focus resources on the needs and challenges of existing businesses because existing businesses can generate significant job growth.

GOAL:

Establish and maintain regionally competitive office and industrial employment centers.

POLICIES:

ED-2.01. **Focus on User and Quality of Life.** We shall give high priority to City initiatives, investments, Council decisions and the allocation of City resources that benefit the ultimate office or industrial user and contribute to the quality of life for all, including employees, rather than focusing solely on reducing initial commercial development costs.

ED-2.02. **Business Competitiveness.** We shall give high priority to City initiatives, investments, and the allocation of municipal resources that address the needs and challenges of conducting business in San Clemente and improve the City's competitiveness as a business location

ED-2.03. **Existing Businesses.** We give high priority to initiatives, investments, and the allocation of municipal resources that help businesses remain and prosper in San Clemente.

ED-2.04. **Economic Development Organizations.** To achieve economic development goals and objectives, the City shall pursue the appointment of San Clemente residents,

businesses, and City employees to boards governing regional and state economic development agencies and City-partnered service providers.

ED-2.05. ***Jobs-Housing Balance.*** We shall give priority to City initiatives, investments, Council decisions and the allocation of City resources, and development approvals that improve the jobs/housing ratio by creating job opportunities for residents and housing opportunities for employees.

Tourism

Unlike many other beach communities, San Clemente's character and identity are not based on tourism. Rather, San Clemente strives to excel as a well-balanced community that welcomes visitors. We recognize that San Clemente's beaches, cultural and historic resources, and businesses enhance both residents' quality of life and tourists' enjoyment and experiences.

We also recognize that tourism is often associated with costs and benefits. Tourism brings costs in the form of parking demand and traffic, and the need for increased public services and maintenance of public facilities. Tourism can also provide benefits in the form of revenues for local businesses, sales, and transient occupancy tax revenues. Our tourism goals, policies, and implementation measures seek to establish and maintain a favorable balance between tourism's costs and benefits and to manage tourism to create a net positive impact on the community's quality of life.

GOAL:

Create a branded and marketed tourism identity that attracts overnight visitors.

POLICIES

ED-3.01. ***Allocation of Resources for Tourism.*** We allocate public resources among various tourism efforts based on the Economic Development Strategy.

ED-3.02. ***Year-round Tourism.*** In City Council decisions, initiatives, investments, and development approvals, we give equal priority to programs and projects that promote consistent year-round overnight tourism, as well as to programs and projects that promote seasonal or day-trip tourism.

ED-3.03. ***Fiscal Benefits.*** We continuously seek ways to increase the net fiscal benefits from tourism and to efficiently allocate revenues to implement the economic development strategy.

ED-3.04. ***Surfing Heritage.*** We recognize the value of our beaches, surfing and the surfing industry to the City's heritage and economy. We encourage the preservation and growth of this aspect of the City's cultural and economic fabric.

ED-3.05. **Heritage Tourism.** We recognize heritage tourism as an integral part of our [Economic Development Strategy](#) [[link to Heritage Promotion section of the Historic Preservation Element](#)].

ED-3.06. **Bicycle Tourism.** We leverage our position as a regional coastal route to capture bicycle tourism.

ED-3.07. **Sports Tourism and Competition.** We leverage our position as a regional center for sports tourism and competition, with emphasis on surfing, aquatic sports, golf, and soccer.

Distinct Shopping and Entertainment Districts

Retail sales tax is a key component of the City’s municipal revenues and helps improve the community’s quality of life. Retail sales tax is generated by spending within San Clemente’s city limits. Historically, San Clemente has “leaked” retail sales as residents travel outside of the City to shop, most notably for auto and clothing purchases. At the same time, visitors often spend money at restaurants, food stores, and fueling stations. While San Clemente’s capture of total retail sales, excluding automobile sales, tends to be similar to most Southern California beach cities on a per household basis, it remains substantially below the level expected based on per household sales in Orange County and California as a whole. Increased retail sales within the City would increase sales tax revenues and help fund enhancements to community facilities and services.

The General Plan seeks to diversify the types of retail uses and enhance the appearance, safety and convenience of retail districts and centers that cater to residents and visitors. The goals, policies, and implementation measures for Distinct Shopping and Entertainment Districts are intended to strengthen the identity and function of the small shopping and entertainment areas in San Clemente, enabling each center of economic activity to serve a particular niche while maintaining the community’s character and small, beach town spirit.

GOAL:

Create and enhance distinct shopping and entertainment districts that attract visitors and residents and generate retail sales.

POLICIES:

ED-4.01. **Avenida Del Mar/T-Zone.** We require initiatives, investments, and development approvals for the Avenida Del Mar and T-Zone area to contribute to our vision of the area as an amenity-rich, multi-modal, mixed-use district that emphasizes the [pedestrian experience](#) [[link to glossary](#)]. This district is characterized by its historic resources and is one of San Clemente’s specialty retail and entertainment destinations, serving residents and visitors.

- ED-4.02. **North Beach.** We require initiatives, investments, and development approvals for the North Beach area to contribute to our vision of the area as a multi-modal, mixed-use entertainment and recreation district that emphasizes the pedestrian experience and preserves and enhances its key assets. These assets are views of the ocean, access to the beach, a rich inventory of historic resources, access to recreational opportunities and numerous shops and services for residents and visitors alike.
- ED-4.03. **Pier Bowl.** We require initiatives, investments, and development approvals for the Pier Bowl area to contribute to our vision of the area as a historic, multi-modal, mixed-use entertainment and recreation district that emphasizes the pedestrian experience, provides beach and ocean access, and is the focus for ocean-related activities for residents and visitors.
- ED-4.04. **El Camino Real.** We require initiatives, investments, and development approvals for El Camino Real to contribute to our vision of the area as a mixed-use, multi-modal corridor with historic resources and different commercial nodes that primarily serve the needs of San Clemente residents and businesses.
- ED-4.05. **Marblehead Coastal.** We require initiatives, investments, and development approvals for the Marblehead Coastal commercial area to contribute to the vision of the area as the primary shopping destination for regional and national chain retailers with lodging and restaurants that attract local and regional shoppers. If the Marblehead Coastal Development Plan is not realized by the expiration date specified in the Development Agreement, the City will initiate a new planning process for the area.
- ED-4.06. **Support District Visions.** We shall not approve initiatives, investments, and development projects that detract from the distinct district visions described in policies ED 4.01 through 4.05.
- ED-4.07. **Private Sector Resources.** To implement the visions for the Del Mar/T-zone, North Beach, Pier Bowl, and El Camino Real districts, we may require the commitment of private sector resources from businesses and/or property owners in those districts as a prerequisite for committing public resources.
- ED-4.08. **Other Commercial Districts.** We require initiatives, investments, and development approvals for commercial districts other than those described in policies ED 4.01 through 4.05 to contribute to the vision of these areas as primarily serving the day-to-day retail shopping, services, and dining needs of residents of adjacent and nearby neighborhoods.

Technology and Communications

To enhance residents' quality of life, the City of San Clemente recognizes the importance of continuously improving and maintaining its technology and communications infrastructure and eliminating barriers to public access. To meet the growing demands of residents, businesses and visitors, the City proactively plans for and implements new infrastructure, continuously seeks to improve communications with its stakeholders, and values technology and communications as part of its overall economic development strategy.

GOAL 1:

Establish and maintain communications and information technology infrastructure that meets the needs of all San Clemente residents and employees.

POLICIES:

ED-5.01. **Economic Development.** We foster economic development through our goal of providing communications and information technology infrastructure that meets the needs of all segments of the population, including current and future employees and residents of San Clemente.

ED-5.02. **Private Sector Partners.** We partner with private sector providers of communication and information technology infrastructure to facilitate and encourage system improvements.

ED-5.03. **Improvements to Infrastructure.** We approve proposed improvements in technology infrastructure by assessing the balance between the need for quality and access versus costs and environmental impacts.

ED-5.04. **Competition.** We support competition among technology and communications providers to provide the best and most affordable service and infrastructure.

GOAL 2:

Establish and maintain communication and information technologies that effectively inform the public on an ongoing basis and provide opportunities for all to participate in local government.

POLICIES:

ED-5.05. **Outside Sources for Data.** We partner with sources outside the City to obtain and publicly share data that provides San Clemente residents, businesses and visitors with up-to-date and accurate information that minimizes the use of staff resources and costs to obtain the same or similar data.

ED-5.06. **Staying Current.** We maintain awareness of and follow best practices in the use of communication and information technology to actively inform and engage the

community (Instead of, for example, passively providing information via City Hall visits, newspaper ads or the City's website.)

ED-5.07. ***E-Governance.*** We maintain awareness of and follow best practices in the use of communication and information technology in conducting City business.

Implementation Measures

General Plan Implementation Measures are contained in the Strategic Implementation Program (SIP). The SIP contains Implementation Measures for one-time projects that end with a specific goal, and ongoing projects that requires routine activity with no specified end date. The SIP is updated by the City Council with the City budget and Long-Term Financial Plan (LTFP) to ensure the effective implementation of the Centennial General Plan. This coordination ensures that the General Plan remains a dynamic, up to date, responsive guide to public decision making and expenditures.

Click [here](#) to access Implementation Measures for this element in the latest Strategic Implementation Program.