

Stakeholder Interviews Summary

Introduction

On February 5th, 6th, and 20th, members of the Raimi + Associates team conducted 18 stakeholder interviews with Rancho Cucamonga industry leaders, community-based organizations, public-serving institutions, elected officials, and other stakeholders about issues and opportunities for PlanRC, the Rancho Cucamonga General Plan Update. The purpose of the stakeholder interviews was to provide the Raimi + Associates team with a snapshot of existing conditions, trends and public sentiment in the city at the beginning of the General Plan process. The Stakeholder Interview Summary is not an exhaustive compilation of all the comments and ideas expressed during the stakeholder interviews. Rather, it is the consultant team's summary of the high level "take-aways" and common themes identified from the individual conversations.

The comments received at these interviews have been categorized by the project team into the following major categories:

- Unique and Special Attributes
- Enhancement and Change Opportunities
- Barriers to Change
- Engagement and Outreach Ideas

The Stakeholder summary includes two components: a high-level summary of findings and consolidated notes identifying key ideas and concepts heard from stakeholders. This document serves as a baseline for ongoing engagement as part of the General Plan Update process. Information from the stakeholder interviews provides background information as the team begins its work on the General Plan update. However, not all comments expressed can or will be included in the General Plan.

Interviewees

Members from the organizations and/or affiliations were interviewed during the process. Other organizations were invited but were unable to attend on the days scheduled for interviews. Together, these groups represent a diversity of interests, affiliations and opinions in the City.

- Alta Loma Riding Club
- Alta Loma School District
- CBRE
- Chaffey College
- Chaffey Joint Union High School District
- Chamber of Commerce
- City of Rancho Cucamonga:
 - City Mayor
 - Council Members
 - City Manager
 - Planning Commissioners
- Creative Housing Associates
- Haven City Market
- Healthy RC:
 - Youth Leaders
 - Steering Committee
 - Community Champions

- Historic Preservation Group
- Homebridge
- National CORE
- Nongshim
- Ontario Convention Center and Visitors Bureau
- Sumitomo Tires
- Tekton

Summary of Findings

Interviewees share a strong affinity for the “small town feel” of Rancho Cucamonga and deep commitment to maintaining unique community character across the City. Various assets were cited as making the city unique and special: weather, natural environment (e.g., mountains, access to trails), regional economy, public schools, quality of public services, and history (e.g., vineyards, Route 66).

Many stakeholders alluded to successful planning and policy initiatives of the past — where the City took a lead in engaging community members in new and innovative ways or where community members came together to understand that progress and diversity are necessary to maintain fiscal health and a good quality of life for all. There is also an appreciation for the commitment and professionalism of City Staff. The Rancho Cucamonga General Plan Update, also known as PlanRC, will be served greatly by this strong foundation and the ability of the City to communicate throughout the entire process.

Themes

Interviewees shared excitement and openness to PlanRC and many ideas for what the process can achieve. The project team noted the following recurring themes and observations for PlanRC:

- Develop a shared vision for the future of Rancho Cucamonga that builds on the City's foundation as a forward-thinking community always looking to be better than it has been
- Continue to be a city for young families to raise children. This includes daycare, quality schools, and a diversity of parks and recreational programs for youth.
- Provide a variety of housing for different household incomes and housing types.
- Enhance equestrian trails and parks for physical and mental health
- Move from approval of stand-alone scattered development projects toward a slate of projects and improvements that support place-based neighborhood development
 - New development should be context-sensitive and compatible with existing neighborhood character and plans
 - Develop standards for emerging districts, neighborhoods, corridors, and nodes
- Strengthen local government openness and transparency
 - Increase transparency of planning deliberation and decisions
 - Support small and large businesses alike

- Enhance existing partnerships with schools to ensure all residents and workers, regardless of age, have career pathway options

Consolidated Notes

Unique and Special Attributes

- Small town feel
- Clear and distinct neighborhoods or districts
- Balanced community with intentional separation of uses
- California history related to agriculture and Route 66
- Great weather for healthy, active living
- Equestrian community
- Quality infrastructure
- Excellent schools
- Top-notch staff that make the City a known leader in innovation
- Views of mountains and access to foothills
- Diverse economy with easily identifiable sectors or industries
- Progress-oriented leaders with high standards
- Commitment to planning and growth

Enhancement and Change Opportunities

- Population/demographics
 - Attract and retain residents, regardless of age
 - Welcome a diverse population (age, income, race/ethnicity, etc.)
- Growth and development
 - City as its own center of gravity in the Inland Empire
 - Move from scattered development projects to place-based, neighborhood development and comprehensive vision of the City
 - Deliberate historic preservation and enhancement (Route 66, Alta Loma)
 - Establish key City centers and districts
 - Enhance existing nodes of activity and neighborhoods (like the feel of Victoria Gardens)
 - Embrace TOD and mixed-use to appeal to younger and older, aging populations
 - Rezone properties near high quality transit from commercial to residential
 - Allow higher density in strategic areas around the City, not just near transit
 - Redevelop existing struggling commercial and retail to high-density workforce housing mixed with market rate
 - Secure more community benefits from new developments before approval
 - Implement and/or align the General Plan with existing plans, including the Trails Plan, Central Park, corridor plans, and others
- Pedestrian, bicycle and transit
 - Improve walkability and pedestrian access in residential neighborhoods
 - More bike parking, especially for kids near parks and activities
 - Bus rapid transit on major corridors

- Increase frequency of Metrolink headways
- Traffic and parking
 - Decrease number of lanes on some streets
 - Reduce speeds on major corridors
 - Better coordinate flow of traffic, parking, loading/unloading, and transit
 - Design for rideshare drop off points at popular venues or activity centers
 - Design for increase in traffic related to deliveries (e.g., Amazon)
 - Build shared parking lots
 - Synchronize lights on Haven, Milliken, and other major corridors, for efficient traffic routing during rush hour
 - Decrease parking requirements for distribution businesses
 - Increase parking requirements for warehouses
- Housing diversity
 - Build more housing for different income levels and lifestyle needs
 - Provide incentives for affordable housing projects
 - Add executive luxury housing with amenities
 - Create opportunities for affordable home ownership projects
 - Try different housing ideas (e.g., efficiency housing, single-room occupancy, prefabricated housing, tiny homes, public housing, garden apartments for horizontal density, ADUs and multigenerational / flexible housing arrangements)
 - Require inclusionary zoning
 - Improve understanding of what affordable housing is and what it means
 - Expand types of affordable housing and who qualifies
 - Young people that grew up in RC can't afford to live in City
 - Young families and workers that make up the community
 - Seniors that live in RC with a fixed income
- Parks and recreation
 - Enhance parks and recreation facilities and access
 - Improve existing trails and expand the trail network in the City
 - Transition baseball fields to emerging soccer leagues
 - Build more public parks
 - Provide more grant funding to Teen Center
 - Finish Central Park
- Arts and culture
 - Improve the nightlife in RC
 - Music venues, local lively music scene is missing
 - Need large venue that can accommodate big events and conferences
 - Unique dining experiences, not just cookie-cutter amenities
 - Add breweries, wineries, and other experiential retail
 - Build more arts and cultural amenities throughout
- Economy and Jobs
 - Continue to diversify the economy
 - Bring more corporate headquarters to Rancho Cucamonga

- Build a more diverse industrial base – tech, health care, distribution, etc.
 - Leverage “sweet spot” – potential for high-end office and technology spaces that also promote knowledge-based jobs in RC
 - Leverage increase in flight traffic at Ontario airport for tourism
 - Consider growth of green jobs – high growth potential in the region
 - Add an auto mall on Foothill, off both sides of the 15
- Schools and education
 - Develop clear educational pathways to emerging or high-demand jobs pathways in advanced manufacturing, logistics, biotech, coding, healthcare, and others
 - Build new schools in areas of the city that are growing
- Health and equity
 - Become a greener city
 - Better prepare for wildfires
 - Protect open space and trail system
 - Build more health facilities of all sizes that offer affordable rates and access by transit or walking
 - Improve quality of life for southern part of city, particularly southwest
 - Increase representation of low-income communities in decision-making
 - Improve access to healthy food and groceries

Barriers to Change/Issues

- Changing identity of Rancho Cucamonga
 - Demographics of younger people are more diverse
 - Character of buildings and streets
 - City has been more conservative, compared to neighbors
- A lot of people don't vote or stay engaged in the process
 - Vocal minority: Many that are opposed to needed changes
 - Silent majority: Busy with work, enjoy living in RC, raising families
- People have concerns about growth and resulting deterioration in quality of life
- Many young people are dealing with mental health problems
- Traffic congestion is increasing as the region grows
- Declining affordability is bad for diversity and economy
 - International capital buying up land and inflating costs of housing
 - Construction costs, particularly for labor, are very high
 - People who work here can't afford to live here
- Keeping up with mandates coming down from state legislation
- Financing the upkeep of infrastructure in the long-term

Engagement and Outreach Ideas

- Other Key Groups to Engage
 - Teens in local high schools
 - Parents and families in southwest
 - Pastors' network that meets quarterly

- Potential Events or Venues
 - Parades: NASCAR Trucks, Founder's Day
 - Grape Harvest Festival (bring it back)
 - Teen Center, especially during pick-up time
 - Churches: St. Peter and St. Paul Catholic Church (5000+ families attend), Hillside Church, Water of Life, Abundant (others also exist)
 - Victoria Gardens
 - Community Parks
- Communications Channels
 - School district communications and on the ground presentations at school
 - Grapevine Magazine, Alta Loma Riding Club Newsletter and other communications from local organizations
 - Social Media (Instagram, facebook)
 - Healthy RC leaders and other community leaders
 - Use existing outreach channels to foster new leadership
 - Reach out on weekends, daytime, evenings at times that are convenient for working citizens
 - Provide materials in multiple languages
 - Include robust and interactive content on the website