

## Introduction

### ■ Background

The current General Plan for the City of Beverly Hills contains nine elements, eight of which were adopted in the late 1970s and have not since been updated. Although the General Plan has not been comprehensively revised until now, there have been periodic amendments to the Land Use and Housing Elements. The Housing Element was last updated in 2001, and the City recently received an extension to June 30, 2008, for the next update to the Housing Element. Much of the data, analyses, and policies in these elements do not reflect the existing conditions in the City. Thus, a comprehensive update of the General Plan is necessary to reflect current conditions as well as the community's vision for development within Beverly Hills over the next 20 years.

The General Plan update process began in the spring of 2002 with the formation of General Plan Topic Committees, a process in which residents and property owners were charged with assessing issues and opportunities and formulating recommendations for future growth and development on topics of special interest specific to the General Plan update. The process ended in the spring of 2004 with each Committee presenting a Final Topic Committee Report to the City Council. These Reports, in conjunction with the findings and recommendations of this Technical Background Report, along with feedback from City staff, elected and appointed officials, and the public, will form a framework for updating the General Plan and directing the City's future planning efforts.

### ■ The General Plan

A General Plan is a state-required legal document that provides guidance to decision-makers regarding the allocation of resources and determining the future physical form and character of development for local jurisdictions. It is the official statement of the jurisdiction regarding the extent and types of development needed to achieve the community's physical, economic, social, and environmental visions and goals. Although the General Plan is composed of individual sections or "elements" that address a specific area of concern, it also embodies a comprehensive and integrated planning approach for the jurisdiction.

The General Plan clarifies and articulates the City's intentions with respect to the rights and expectations of the residents, property owners, special interest groups, prospective investors, business interests, and the general public. Through the General Plan, the community develops its goals, policies, and development standards, thereby communicating the City's expectations of the private sector in meeting the intentions of the General Plan.

Currently under state law, each city and county general plan must contain seven mandated elements:

- Land Use
- Circulation
- Housing
- Conservation
- Open Space
- Noise
- Safety

Government Code Section 65303 permits local jurisdictions to formulate other elements, which, in the “judgment of the planning agency,” relate to the physical development of a city. These “permissive” elements are as legally binding as a mandatory element, once adopted. A list of current elements of the General Plan and when they were last updated are shown in the table below. It is anticipated that there will be a minor reorganization of the existing elements with the update of the General Plan. The specific elements proposed will be determined at a later date.

<i>Currently Required Elements</i>	<i>Current Elements</i>
Land Use	Land Use (1977)
Housing	1998-2005 Housing (2001)
Open Space	Open Space (1977)
Transportation	Circulation (1977)
Conservation	Conservation (1979)
Noise	Noise (1975)
Public Safety	Safety (1976)
—	Scenic Highway (1976)
—	Seismic Safety Element (1975)

## ■ Technical Background Report

### **Purpose**

The purpose of this document, the City of Beverly Hills General Plan Technical Background Report (TBR), is to serve as a comprehensive database that describes the City’s existing conditions for physical, social, and economic resources. This information includes a discussion of the existing characteristics, trends and forecasts, and issues associated within each of these resource areas. The TBR is the foundation from which subsequent planning policies and programs will be formulated. In addition, it will serve as the “Environmental Setting” section for each technical environmental issue analyzed in the Environmental Impact Report, which will be completed as a component of the General Plan update process.

## Content

This document consists of seven chapters, as described below:

- **Chapter 1—Introduction:** This Chapter outlines the purpose and contents of the TBR, including the General Plan Study Area, the City’s regional context and the General Plan preparation process.
- **Chapter 2—Land Use and Urban Form:** This Chapter presents information regarding existing land uses and demographic conditions in the City. Existing zoning and General Plan designations will be exhibited and the potential yield of development is tabulated and compared to existing development. Entitled and potential development projects also will be documented, as well as areas susceptible to change. Baseline data and trends related to the City’s population, households and household income will be provided as well.
- **Chapter 3—Infrastructure:** This Chapter identifies system facilities, service deficiencies (if any), planned improvements, and capacities to accommodate future growth. The infrastructure documented includes domestic water, sanitary sewer, solid waste, stormwater and drainage, electricity, natural gas, telecommunications, and the City’s circulation system.
- **Chapter 4—Community Services:** This Chapter profiles the City’s public services and programs, facilities, service deficiencies (if any), planned improvements and capacities to accommodate future growth. The public services documented include schools, parks and recreation, libraries and cultural resources.
- **Chapter 5—Environmental Resources:** This Chapter describes the condition of the City’s environmental resources with respect to plant and wildlife species and habitats, hydrology and water quality, topography and hillsides, visual and historic resources and air quality.
- **Chapter 6—Community Health and Safety:** This Chapter describes the City’s setting and disaster potential pertaining to geology and soils, seismic, flood and fire hazards, and hazardous materials. This Chapter also describes the City’s police and fire services, emergency preparedness methodologies and current noise emission levels associated with select highway and roadway noise sources. The noise section also utilizes the noise data to identify existing locations of incompatible land uses.
- **Chapter 7—Planning Issues Report:** This Chapter presents a matrix of the issues identified in the preceding chapters of this TBR. The issues presented in this Chapter, in concert with those identified by the General Plan Topic Committees, represent opportunities, constraints, challenges, or problems facing the City of Beverly Hills as related to each of the topical areas to be covered in the General Plan update.

## ■ Regional Context

Beverly Hills is located approximately ten miles west of downtown Los Angeles and six miles east of the Pacific Ocean, at the southern foothills of the Santa Monica Mountains. Surrounding Los Angeles communities include Bel-Air and Westwood to the west, Hollywood and the Fairfax district to the east, West Los Angeles and Century City to the south, and the City of West Hollywood to the northeast. Although not directly served by

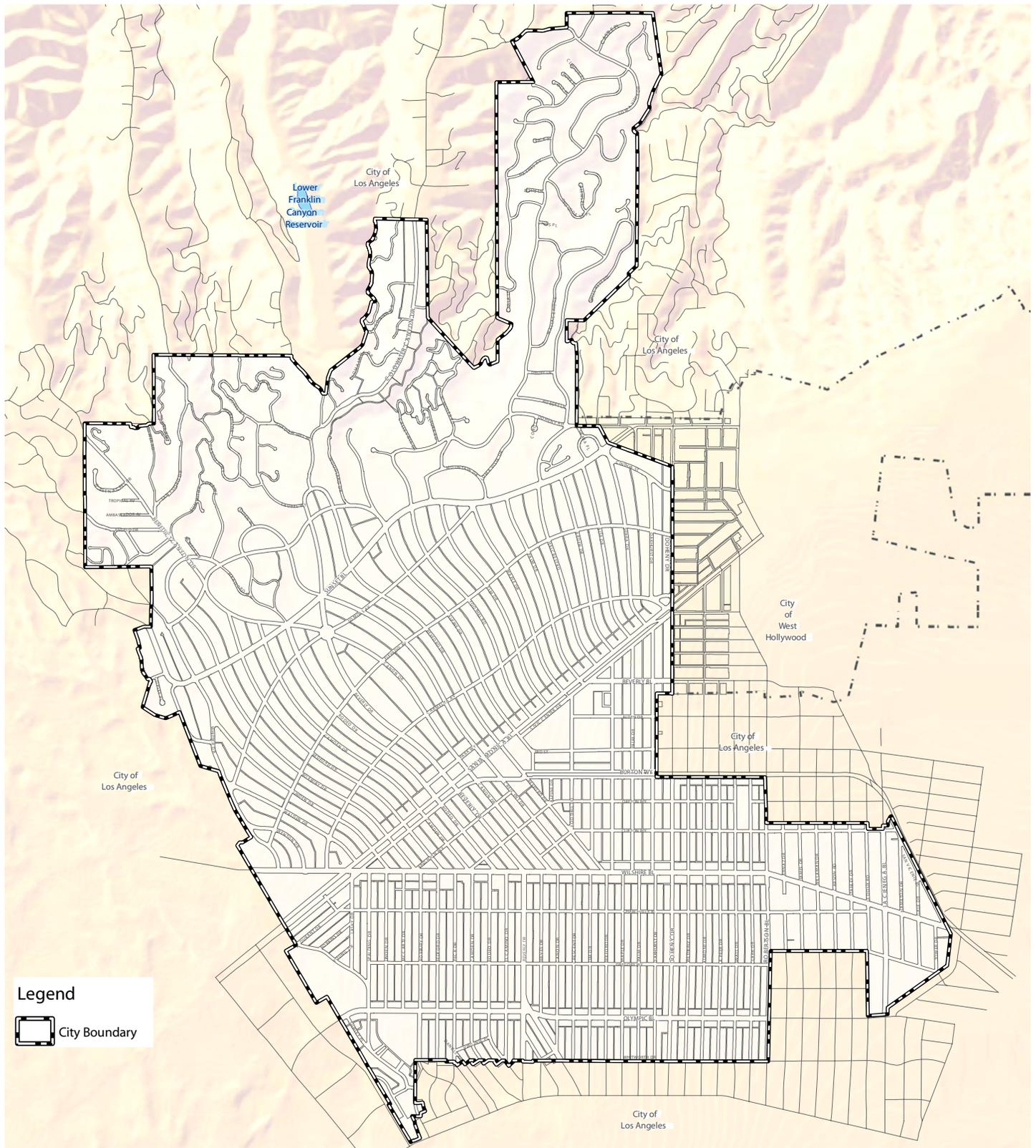
the Los Angeles regional freeway system, the City is located in proximity to three major freeways in Los Angeles County. The San Diego Freeway (Interstate 405) to the west and the Hollywood Freeway (Interstate 101) to the east of the City both run north and south and intersect the Santa Monica Freeway (Interstate 10) to the south of Beverly Hills. Figure 1-1 depicts Beverly Hills's regional location.

### ■ **General Plan Planning/Study Area**

For the update of the General Plan and preparation of the TBR, the Planning Area will comprise the City limits of Beverly Hills, as depicted in Figure 1-2. The total study area is approximately 5.7 square miles for a total of approximately 3,648 gross acres.







Source: SCAG & EIP Associates GIS Program, August 2005

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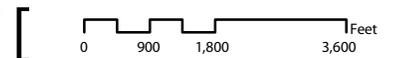


Figure 1-2

