

Imagine. Commit. Accomplish.



Strategic Plan | 2014-2018

CITY OF SAN GABRIEL, CALIFORNIA

From the Mayor and Council

Friends and Neighbors:

As we concluded our Centennial year last autumn, we began work to create a vision and mission statement that articulates the core purpose and values of the City of San Gabriel, then use it to inform our decisions.

Using the vision and mission statement, the City of San Gabriel sought to develop a strategic plan that sets clear priorities essential to achieving the vision and mission.

When combined, the vision, mission, and strategic plan is intended to guide the decisions of the City Council and to provide focus for the City administration and daily work of City staff. The strategic plan and work plans also will provide accountability for City Council and City administration.

We hope that you find this document a useful guide to help demonstrate the Council's commitment to build a superior community. Let us know how we are doing; write us at strategicplan@sgch.org.

Respectfully,
SAN GABRIEL CITY COUNCIL
John R. Harrington, Mayor
Jason Pu, Vice Mayor
Juli Costanzo
Chin Ho Liao
Kevin B. Sawkins

Cover image: Poppies in bloom at Vincent Lugo Park.

What is a Strategic Plan?

Your city government performs many types of planning: comprehensive planning for the physical development of the city; financial planning to assure a sound financial footing; and emergency response planning, to ensure the safety of our community in the event of a disaster. These are all examples of plans that San Gabriel provides to guide its activities.

Strategic planning serves a different purpose than other plans. It's a way to **organize and prioritize** our efforts so we can be most efficient, and accomplish the results over a **three to five year time span**.

Unlike comprehensive planning, strategic planning is not long-range; it's short to mid-term. Unlike disaster planning, which is designed to address a single unforeseen event, strategic planning is a means for the Council to prioritize what comes first among the many competing priorities and demands it faces. Unlike a city's general plan, strategic plans are constrained by the real forces that shape city government: they are designed to help the city accomplish its goals in the context of resource and budget limits by helping the Council set clear, agreed priorities for action. We hope you will find this strategic plan a useful guide to the City's efforts.

Steven A. Preston, City Manager

Contents	Page
Welcome Message from the City Council	2
What is a Strategic Plan?	2
What's in This Strategic Plan?	3
Introduction	4
▪ The Community	
▪ The Organization	
▪ Background	
▪ Existing Guidance	
▪ Organizational Performance Assessment	
How This Plan Was Developed	6
▪ Survey Process	
▪ Development of Mission and Vision	
Strategic Plan	9
▪ Vision	
▪ Mission Statement	
▪ Strategic Directions	
▪ Action Plan	
Future Steps	16
▪ Performance Indicators	
▪ Annual Review	

What's in This Strategic plan?

The strategic plan is a simple statement of how we see ourselves as a community and an organization, what we seek to accomplish, and what our key priorities are for the next three to five years.

Our strategic plan consists of the following components:

Vision

How do we see ourselves as an organization?

Mission Statement

In a simple statement, what is it that this organization seeks to accomplish?

Fundamental Values

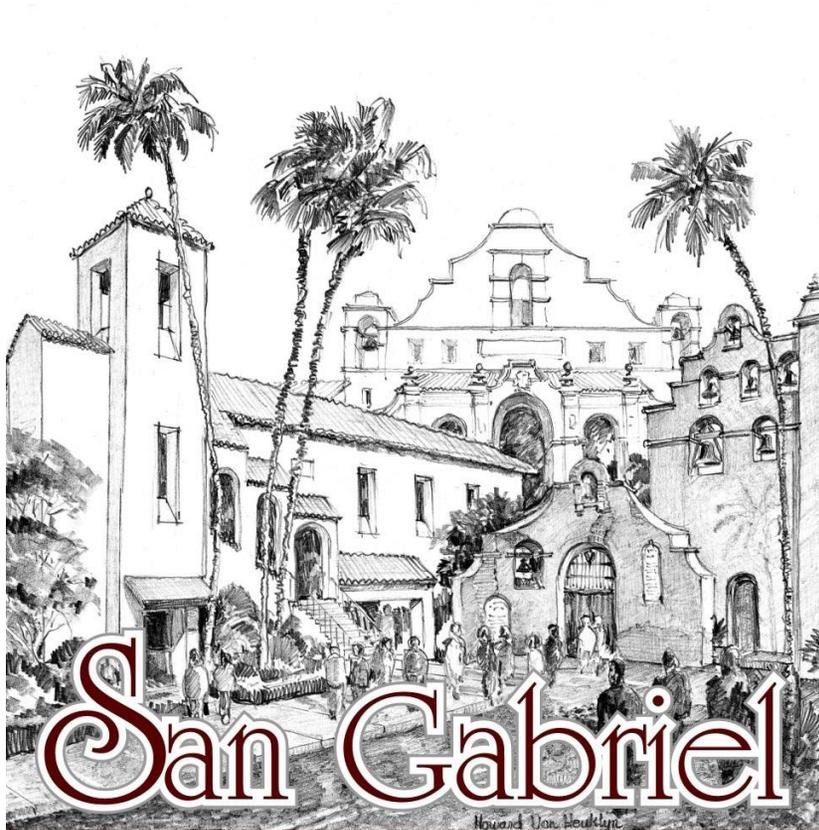
What are the fundamental values that we hold most dear as an organization?

Strategic Directions

There are hundreds of activities that a city government is required to accomplish. But which of these are the most critical for us to achieve if we are to fulfill our mission? Those are the strategic directions.

Action Plan

What are the key actions that we must undertake over the next three to five years to accomplish our mission?



Introduction

The Community

San Gabriel, 10 miles northeast of Los Angeles, is the birthplace of the Los Angeles region, founded by Father Junipero Serra in 1771.

Home to a population of more than 40,000, San Gabriel is 4.09 square miles with a diverse population of Asian, Hispanic, Caucasian, Native American and other communities.

Visitors to the historic Mission District enjoy outstanding entertainment, vibrant food culture, and the charm of early California. San Gabriel is a place of unique homes and diverse neighborhoods, quality commercial development, convenient connections to regional transportation, and outstanding public education.

The Organization

Incorporated in 1913, San Gabriel is a general law city operating under the Council/Manager form of government. The Council is elected at large to four-year overlapping terms, with the Mayor appointed by majority vote of the City Council.

The general fund budget for the City for FY 2013-14 is \$55.8 million, including approximately \$45 million in operations, and \$10 million in capital improvements. The budget funds 174 full-time employees.

Under the direction of the city manager and the city management team, city employees see to it that the City's laws and policies are carried out in a courteous and professional manner.

Background

In 2013, the City Council set a priority on the completion of a strategic plan. The Council recognized that such a planning exercise was crucial to effective administration of the city in the coming years, in part because:

- There had been no consistent history of strategic planning in the City.
- A basic set of principles, referred to as “City Philosophy,” was issued prior to 1999.
- A former attempt at strategic planning under the rubric “One City, One Future” was unsuccessful.

Existing Guidance

In the absence of a strategic plan, the Council in 2010 adopted five principles and five initiatives, based in part on scientific polling performed for the City’s utility user tax election process, combined with interviews with key stakeholders. Those principles have been the basis for decision-making during the past four years.

The five principles previously identified were:

Transparency, Community Engagement, Customer Service, Diversity, and Smart Organization.

The five initiatives previously identified were:

Infrastructure, Public Safety, Economic Development, Arts and Culture, and Quality of Life.

Organizational Performance Assessment

The City initiated an organizational performance review in 2010 to provide some insights into internal challenges. While the study was never completed, significant input from the City’s employees suggested that:

- The City didn’t have a proper succession planning strategy in place.
- Employees want better training, particularly among those seeking to improve their skills for mid-management and management positions.
- There was general dissatisfaction with the City’s budget and budget process.
- Employees were concerned about a number of staffing and classification issues.
- The City is lagging in its technological capabilities.
- The City would benefit from having a single administrative policy guide.
- City facilities are outdated and lacking sufficient space for employees.

A New Strategic Plan for San Gabriel

Over the past several years a consensus has emerged that a strategic plan that reflected the Council’s vision for the City was necessary, based on the following beliefs:

- Faced with diminishing resources and an extensive work program, the Council and staff both agreed that strategic planning would foster consensus about

organizational goals, resolve competing demands, and prioritize needs.

- San Gabriel’s diversity resulted in many different views of priorities. A wide-range of stakeholders exist in any strategic planning process. These stakeholders include residents, non-resident business owners, managers and employees, visitors, City Council, City Manager, and city employees.
- Because the organization did not have historically established performance standards which include key performance indicators, measures of satisfaction, and measurable outcomes, the strategic plan must include initial steps to embed these practices in the organization.

The Council formed a strategic planning committee consisting of two members of Council, the City Manager, and select members of the executive team. Council then approved a search for a consultant to facilitate the plan.

How This Plan Was Developed

The strategic planning team, in collaboration with consultants, initiated a multi-step process to create the strategic plan.

Based on earlier experience with an extensive outreach process that raised expectations and failed to deliver results, and in an effort to manage the costs of the strategic planning effort, the planning team agreed to engage in a more focused approach for the initial plan.

The following planning steps were identified and initiated:

- Review all relevant documents including prior strategic plans and Council minutes.
- Review strategic plans of comparable cities to benchmark best practices.

At its inaugural meeting in December 2013, the Strategic Planning Committee began work on the plan. The sub-committee suggested a five-year horizon for vision, as well as a two- to three-year period for a strategic plan, with regular review of the plan and key indicators to provide internal measurement of progress.

A confidential, electronic survey was developed by the Strategic Planning Committee. Other processes the sub-committee selected to achieve the goals of developing a vision, mission statement, and strategic plan included the following:

- Facilitated meetings with the sub-committee, full City Council, and full City executive team.
- Use of information and consensus at the facilitated meetings with the sub-committee, full City Council, and full City executive team to establish a vision statement, mission statement, key strategic directions, and action steps in support of those directions.
- Completion, approval, and public release of the first-phase strategic plan in 2014.

For a more comprehensive review of the process used to prepare this strategic plan, and detailed comments generated during the review process, please see the Council staff report.

Development of Mission and Vision

On March 22, 2014, the first of two facilitated strategic planning sessions including the full City Council and executive team was held. A series of exercises built consensus around a new vision and mission statement for the City, as well as identifying key strategic directions.



The dramatic chandeliers of the Mission Playhouse, one of the valued institutions that sets San Gabriel apart.

The first exercise asked members of the City of San Gabriel City Council and executive team to list their top values for the city – those beliefs that are fundamental to who we are as an organization.

Building on that dialogue, the following vision, mission, strategic priorities and action plan were developed. A full description of the process may be found in the staff report presented with this strategic plan document.



Strategic Plan | 2014-2018

VISION, MISSION, STRATEGIC DIRECTIONS, ACTION PLAN
CITY OF SAN GABRIEL, CALIFORNIA

Strategic Plan

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Vision Statement

The City Council has agreed on the following vision to guide the City's government during the next five year period.

San Gabriel's Vision

San Gabriel will be a premier city in the region.

Building on its rich history, San Gabriel will stand out as a vibrant, inclusive, and inviting place to live, work, shop, and play.

San Gabriel will set the standard for excellence and innovation.

Mission Statement

Through uncommon commitment, collaboration, and optimism that inspire community pride, we:

- Promote economic vitality
- Provide exceptional services and experiences
- Implement innovative, sustainable solutions
- Celebrate our rich history and promising future

These statements include the elements of a compelling vision and mission including aspiration (a premier city, standard of excellence), recognition of past (rich history), identification of key stakeholders (live, work, shop, play), and identification of key areas of action.

Fundamental Values

These are the fundamental values that our organization strives to achieve every day:

- Integrity
- Service
- Transparency, Openness and Accessibility
- Professional excellence
- Accountability
- Inclusiveness/diversity
- Innovation

The Importance of Our Employees

San Gabriel’s employees are a fundamental to the successful implementation of this plan. They are part of an extended family, along with the Council, appointed officials, and the executive team, that works to accomplish the Council’s priorities, and supports the values of this community.

In bringing this plan forward the City will continue to build, feed and nurture strong working relationships, improve educational experiences, and develop staffing and management practices that will best accomplish the Council’s objectives by developing and maintaining a high quality workforce.

Strategic Directions

Building upon the vision and mission statement, the Council and executive team identified the following strategic directions:

Key Directions	
1	Build and improve the city’s infrastructure
2	Generate economic development by fostering a business-friendly environment
3	Engage the community to foster civic pride and ownership
4	Make service excellence a cornerstone of the San Gabriel experience
5	Develop resources by identifying new sources of funding, organizational innovations and efficiencies

These strategic directions form the core of the action plan to achieve the vision and mission of the strategic plan.



Public Works staff replaces damaged sidewalk sections.

Action Plan

After identification of strategic directions, the executive team established action steps in support of each strategic direction. They appear below with brief descriptions.

1

Build and improve the city's infrastructure

- **Accelerate San Gabriel's Great Streets Project (2-3 years)**

This annual program of projects will reconstruct streets that are identified through field investigations and the City's Pavement Management Program as having fallen below the condition where lower cost preventive maintenance methods would be effective. Great Streets Program includes all city streets and alleys. Individual projects previously listed separately are now included, including sections of key arterials such as Del Mar Ave.

- **Implement Sewer Master Plan (30 years)**

The Sewer Master Plan represents a long range approach to fixing estimated \$30 million backlog of sewer repair projects. These projects will comply with a pending consent judgment with State Attorney General and the Regional Water Quality Control Board. Completion of all capital improvements will take several decades.

- **Build a new Police Headquarters (4 years)**

Construct new, long overdue 32,500 sq. ft. modern police station, including dispatch center, jail, community meeting room, and firing range.

- **Build Public Works facility (2 years)**

Construct new corporation yard at the transfer station site on E Grand Avenue. This new facility will include improved space for equipment & material storage, vehicle maintenance and offices. Relocation of the City yard will

allow for construction of new Police Facility on the current Public Works site.

▪ **Develop Marshall Park (1 year)**

Develop park on the former John Marshall Elementary school campus. This project features multi-purpose areas, walking trail, restrooms, lighting and other improvements.

▪ **Rehabilitate Las Tunas Drive Between San Gabriel Blvd. and Muscatel Ave. (1-2 years)**

Reconstruct pavement, retrofit ADA ramps, upgrade traffic signals, construct median curb at eastern entrance to City. The design provides for future medians, landscaping and lighting not included in this project.

▪ **Replace the Mission Playhouse Marquee Sign (1 year)**

Replace the existing, failing sign with an energy-efficient electronic sign designed to be consistent with the existing Playhouse architecture.

▪ **Complete Vincent Lugo Park improvements (2 years)**

Design and construct picnic shelters, playground equipment and possible water play area. (Future phases include parking improvements, lighting, additional plantings and interpretive signs; depends on funding.)

▪ **Construct Fire Station 52 improvements (2 years)**

Expand and upgrade facility to accommodate up to five personnel. Increase office space and provide OSHA compliant equipment lockers, remove asbestos in attic and floor tiles, replace roof, generator, and upgrade substandard electrical system.



Design of the approved Crowne Plaza Hotel at Valley Blvd. and Palm Ave.

2

Generate economic development by fostering a business friendly environment

▪ **Construct Crowne Plaza Hotel (2 years)**

The City has approved all planning entitlements for construction of the Crowne Plaza Hotel, shown in the

image above, which will include a Smitty's Grill steakhouse.

- **Redevelop the former O'Donnell Chevrolet site (3 years)**

Identify appropriate uses and developer for this site, which is located at the highly visible, economically critical "100% intersection" of Las Tunas Drive and San Gabriel Boulevard.

- **Develop the 'Landwin' Hotel site (3 years)**

Secure and assist the development of a key parcel located at the northwest corner of Valley Boulevard and Del Mar Avenue.

- **Complete key projects expected to move forward in the coming two years.**

These include:

- 416 E. Las Tunas Dr. live/work project (1 year)
- 704-712 W. Las Tunas Dr. mixed use project (2 years)
- 400-420 W. Valley Blvd. mixed use project (1 year)
- 101 E. Valley Blvd. mixed-use project (1 year)
- 201-217 S. San Gabriel Blvd. mixed-use project (timeline indeterminate)

- **Implement second phase of the Business Friendly Action Plan (Ongoing)**

This task includes incentives, process improvements, regular dialogue with the business community, and specific proposals approved by Council.



New Farmers' Market at Vincent Lugo Park

3

**Engage the community
to foster civic pride and ownership**

- **Continue and enhance the Council's outreach efforts (Ongoing)**

Develop new resources to improve communication with residents.

- **Grow and expand San Gabriel’s Farmers’ Market (1 year and ongoing)**

Implement a regular annual Farmers’ Market schedule

- **Continue and expand San Gabriel’s Summer Concert Series (1 year and ongoing)**
- **Continue implementation of the City’s expanded public information strategy (1 year and ongoing)**

The following two initiatives are related:

- **Expand community programming at the Mission Playhouse.**
- **Implement arts, culture, and community engagement strategy**

These strategies would incorporate the following events now under development, including but not limited to the following (timeline ongoing):

- Circle the Square, a street dance and festival in the Mission District
- City’s efforts to celebrate San Gabriel’s diversity such as Lunar New Year and other cultural celebrations
- Dine San Gabriel events



Preview of new mobile app for iPhones and tablets, allowing service requests to be sent and tracked by the customer.

4

Make service excellence a cornerstone of the San Gabriel experience

- **Enhance bilingual service capabilities and diversity initiatives in all City departments**

This project is part of a larger effort to diversify the City’s workforce, improve communication with our constituents, and improve service (timeline ongoing).

- **Launch land management/permit automation to enhance our business-friendly permitting programs (2 years)**

This service would allow clients to perform certain tasks online, and reduce processing times by automating parts of the development review process.

- **Launch Citywide technology improvements (Ongoing)**

These improvements will allow citizens to access their government 24 hours, seven days a week. They include launching a branded smart phone app, expanded website content, “request tracker” systems to allow citizens to refer and track questions and requests.

- **Improve online access to city documents (ongoing)**

Continue to increase and improve online access to City reports and records.

- **Implement Emergency Advance Notification System aka Reverse 911 (2 years)**

Create a system that allows all San Gabriel residents and visitors to receive direct notification from public safety officials in the event of a catastrophic event.

- **Establish a full service box office capability for the Mission Playhouse to improve service (1 year)**

Currently Mission Playhouse clients can only purchase tickets through event sponsors. Establishing an electronic box office operation at the Playhouse improves service and creates revenue to support Playhouse operations.

- **Establish concessionaire services at the Mission Playhouse (2 years)**

Development of a concession program offering food and refreshments will both improve the visitor experience and enhance revenues.

- **Expand and communicate the City’s successful passport services program (1 year)**

This program has proved one of San Gabriel’s most popular, and generates revenue to support City programs.

5

Develop resources by identifying new sources of funding, organizational innovation and efficiency

- **Privatize crossing guard services (1 year)**

Convert crossing guard services from City-operated to a professional services arrangement allowing greater flexibility and cost savings.

- **Implement shared fire command (ongoing)**

Implements a groundbreaking program in which three local cities – San Gabriel, San Marino, and South Pasadena–share fire command staff in order to improve services and decrease costs by an average of \$280,000 per year.

- **Reorganize Public Works and Parks and Recreation Departments (ongoing)**

Complete the reorganization of the Public Works and Parks and Recreation Departments to move the Engineering Division from Community Development, and move the Parks Maintenance Division from the former Parks and Recreation Department. Parks and Recreation will be re-envisioned as a Community Services Department focusing on lifestyle, leisure, recreation services, and park planning.

- **Develop a Mission Playhouse Strategic Plan – 501 (c) 3 entity (Timeline indeterminate)**

Increase resources for the Playhouse through one or more tools including the creation of an advisory board, a financial sponsor program, a planned giving program, and/or creation of a separate nonprofit entity.

- **Evaluate revenue enhancement recommendations (1-4 years)**

Prepare the first cost allocation study in several years to assess whether fees and service charges are correctly planned; make recommendations to improve the City's revenue structure, protect residents and businesses, and meet the City's obligations.

Future Steps

Performance Indicators

As a separate step in this process, the City Manager and executive team have begun developing key performance indicators and outcomes measures for each of the action plans/steps in the strategic plan. Those measures will begin appearing in the FY 2014-15 budget, but will be adapted and improved to provide the Council, citizens and staff the best information concerning performance of these actions.

Once established, key performance indicators and outcomes measures will be reviewed on a quarterly basis to ensure progress and make adjustments based upon changing circumstances.

Annual Review

The strategic plan will be reviewed on an annual basis (every 12 to 18 months) by the City Council to ensure progress and to make adjustments based upon changing circumstances.

Acknowledgements

SAN GABRIEL CITY COUNCIL

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San Gabriel

CITY WITH A MISSION

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