

Chapter 1 Introduction

1.1 Jurisdiction

Specific plans were first introduced by the California State Legislature in 1965. Since that time, the legislature has steadily increased the possible uses and the role of the specific plan. California Government Code Section 65450 provides a legislative body the authority to prepare specific plans for the systematic implementation of the general plan for all or part of the area covered by the general plan. As identified in Government Code Sections 65451 and 65452:

A Specific Plan is a tool for the "systematic implementation" of the general plan. It may be applied to all or a portion of the area covered by a general plan...At minimum, a specific plan must include a statement of its relationship to the general plan (Government Code Section 65451 (b)) and a text and diagram (s) specifying all of the following in detail...distribution, location and extent of the uses of land...proposed distribution, location, and extent and intensity of major components of public and private transportation, sewage, water, drainage, solid waste disposal, energy,...standards and criteria by which development will proceed...a program of implementation measures...

The role of specific plans can range from identification and clarification of city policies to the method by which public facilities are funded and operated. This means that planning, regulations, design, and engineering details can be included in one document. Regulations and standards can be tailored to specific sites rather than to citywide zones. An adopted specific plan has an effect similar to the local general plan; for example, the state's Subdivision Map Act requires that the legislative body deny approval of a final or tentative subdivision map if it is not in substantial conformance with the specific plan. Furthermore, the specific plan may also have an effect similar to a zoning ordinance in that the specific plan contains the development and performance standards that are applicable to the specific plan area.

The Cambria Pines Specific Plan will serve as its own zoning district. The Specific Plan is tailored to the existing site configuration, natural constraints, man-made constraints and environmental setting. This Specific Plan provides specific implementation plans which will govern development and will allow expeditious review, processing, and approval of development phases which are in compliance with this Specific Plan and its goals and policies.

1.2 Location and Setting

1.2.1 Regional Location

The Cambria Pines Specific Plan is located in the City of Carson. Carson is located approximately 20 miles south of downtown Los Angeles, and is surrounded on all sides primarily by the City of Los Angeles with small unincorporated portions of Los Angeles County located to the north, west, and northeast of the City (refer to Figure 1, Location Map). Other neighboring cities in the general area include the cities of Long Beach, Torrance, Compton and Gardena.

The City of Carson is characterized by generally flat topography with elevations of 20 to 30 feet above sea level. The most dominant landform in the City are the Dominguez Hills in the northeast portion of the City, with elevations of approximately 200 feet above sea level in this area of the City.

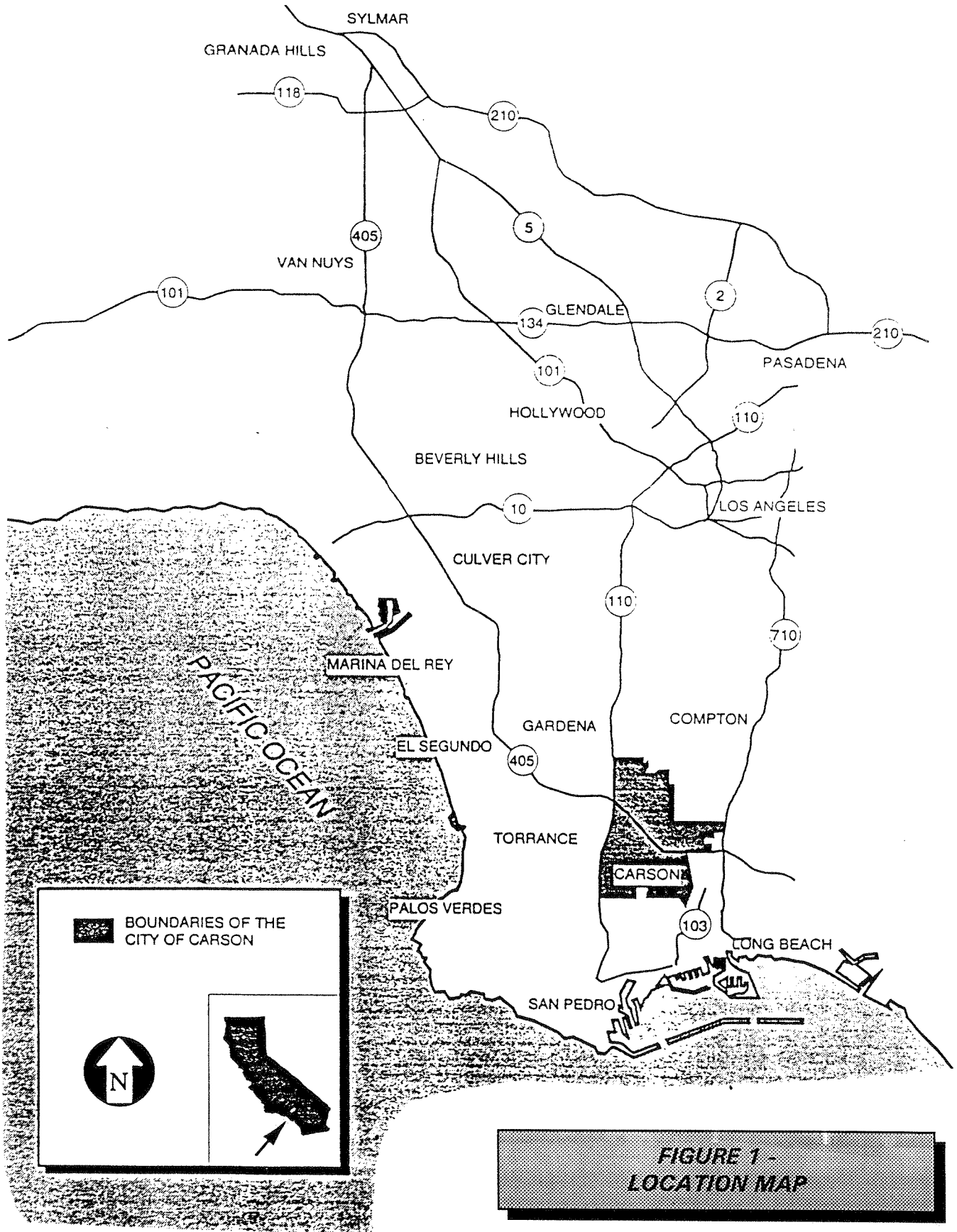
The City of Carson is currently developed with urban uses such as residential, commercial, and industrial facilities. Similar to its neighboring cities, Carson is rapidly approaching its potential development capacity. The imminent realization of its full buildout is illustrated by the comparison of the increase in growth rates of both population and housing units between the decades of 1970 to 1980 and 1980 to 1990. The 1990 U.S. Census reported the population of the City to be 83,995. This represented an increase of 3.3 percent over the 1980 population of 81,221. This signifies a growth rate of two percent less than that of the decade between 1970 and 1980. The increase in housing units between 1980 and 1990 represented a growth rate of only 4.8 percent from 23,259 in 1980 to 24,441 in 1990. This is a sharp decline compared to the 1970 to 1980 increase of 14.1 percent.

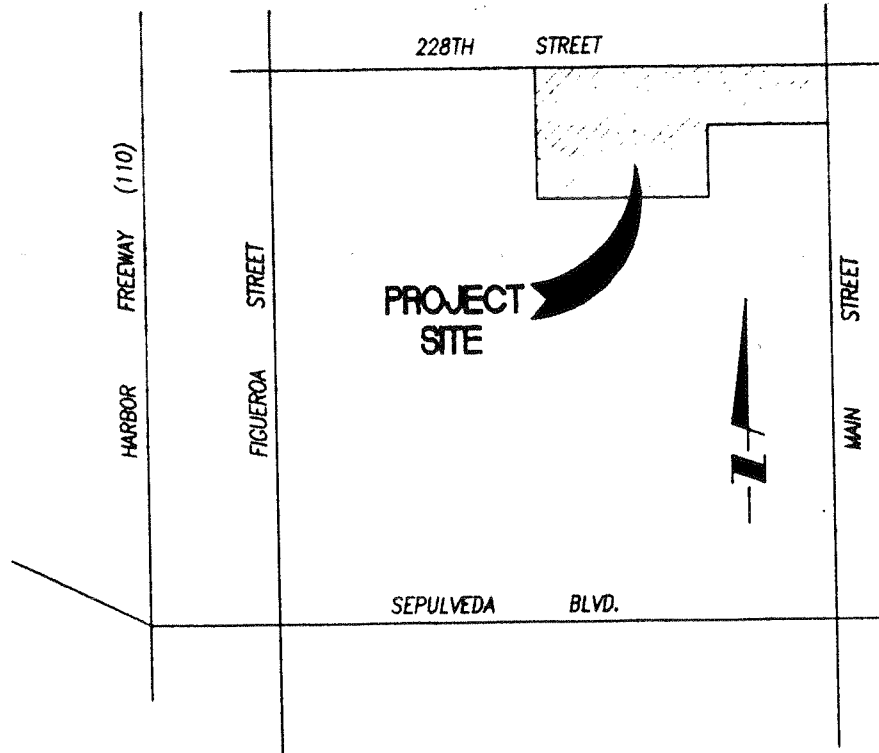
1.2.2 Local Setting

The project site is located at the western portion of the City of Carson along Main Street. The surrounding properties include a mix of residential, educational (senior high school), religious and retail commercial land uses. The 20.7 acre site is bordered to the north, south and west by single-family residential uses and to the east by a mix of retail commercial uses on Main Street and Carson High School; see Figure 2, Site Location.

The project site is currently developed with eleven (11) functioning oil storage tanks. The project site has been developed for more than 50 years with oil tanks and related uses. In addition, the adjacent residential areas are developed on areas once developed with oil storage tanks.

The adjacent residential neighborhood to the north, west and south of the site consists of one- and two-story single family homes which were primarily built in the 1960s. Retail commercial uses are located on Main Street to the east of the project site. In addition, a church is located immediately adjacent to the site at the corner of 228th and Main Streets.





VICINITY MAP:
NTS

**FIGURE 2 -
SITE LOCATION**

1.2.3 Project Site

The project site is currently zoned MH-D (Heavy Industrial-Design Review Overlay). The existing land uses on the site include functioning oil storage tanks.

The topography of the project site is generally flat. There are no significant ridges or slopes on the site, other than berms that have been graded to surround the 11 oil tanks on the project site. The majority of the site has been developed at one time or another for oil tanks and related uses.

The vegetation and plant life on the site is limited. The site is primarily vacant and the only animal life would include small mammals, such as rodents.

1.3 Project Description

The Cambria Pines Specific Plan proposes the development of 162 single-family detached homes on a 20.7 acre site (resulting in a density of 7.9 units per acre) located on 228th Street to the west of Main Street. The average lot size will be approximately 3,800 square feet. The dwelling units will be one- and two-stories and contain between 1,000 to 2,100 square feet. Each house will have a two-car garage and driveways (to meet the City's requirement for off-street parking spaces). The Cambria Pines Specific Plan seeks to promote home ownership by median income households, increasing the City's affordable housing stock. The architectural theme of The Cambria Pines Specific Plan will be New England/Cape Cod/Traditional. Landscaping will include landscaped buffers on the site's northern and eastern boundaries with grass, trees, and shrubs.

1.4 Purpose of The Cambria Pines Specific Plan

Within California there have been tremendous pressures to provide adequate and affordable housing for the growing population. Many of communities, particularly within southern California, are near their full buildout potential as determined by their general plan land use plans and policies. Therefore, in order to meet the demand for housing these communities must recycle existing housing stock, increase densities, or convert other areas for residential uses. Many cities have identified areas currently underutilized which would be appropriate to meet the housing demand. Converting sites can be accomplished by either simple zone changes and general plan amendments or by the adoption of specific plans which also incorporate the former.

Currently, the project site is designated for industrial uses and is primarily developed with functioning oil storage tanks. The purpose of this Specific Plan is to permit the development of a residential community. The Cambria Pines Specific Plan will establish specific design guidelines for development of the site and standards for the operation and maintenance of the community and the infrastructure necessary to support it. The Specific Plan seeks to ensure affordable housing opportunities are provided consistent with the City's adopted Housing Element.

1.5 Relationship to the General Plan

As identified in Section 1.1 above, a specific plan is an implementation tool for the general plan and, therefore, it must include a statement of its relationship to the general plan (Government Code Section 65451 (b)). The Cambria Pines Specific Plan has been developed to address the goals and polices of the 1982 Carson General Plan and ensure consistency with it.

The Cambria Pines Specific Plan is consistent with several goals and objectives contained within the City of Carson General Plan Land Use Element, as discussed below.

- Goal/Objective 1 of the Land Use Element states that the City shall:

Allow each land use type sufficient area to develop to the fullest extent indicated by the economy and general welfare.

Currently, use of the site for industrial purposes only is not the highest and best use, as indicated by the economy. The development of the 20.7 acre site with 164 single-family homes is responsive to both the economy and general welfare of the community.

- Goal/Objective 2 of the Land Use Element seeks to:

...replace substandard buildings and prevent deterioration of residential, commercial and industrial neighborhoods.

Implementation of the Specific Plan will remove the existing unattractive industrial uses (oil tanks) on the site and permit development of an aesthetically pleasing and stable and cohesive neighborhood. This would be beneficial to the surrounding residential neighborhoods.

Additionally, the project will have a beneficial impact on the property of other persons located in the vicinity of the site because it will revitalize the property. The site will be maintained by a private homeowner's association.

- Goal/Objective 5 of the Land Use Element requires the City to:

Improve development standards in order to control urban blight and protect property values.

The Specific Plan will establish design and development standards for the site. Development will be consistent with these standards and any alterations to structures or any portion of the site will be subject to specific administrative procedures which will ensure the adherence to these guidelines.

- Goal/Objective 8 of the Land Use Element identifies the need to:

Plan for the orderly future growth by updating and revising the General Plan whenever necessary.

This Specific Plan is an implementation tool of the General Plan. The Specific Plan will permit the City to meet the demand for increased affordable housing (as represented by the request to permit residential uses on a site currently zoned for heavy industrial uses) in a planned and organized manner.

- Goal/Objective 2 of the Land Use Element, under Residential Land Uses states:

Housing should be provided for a variety of income groups.

The proposed Specific Plan will achieve the City's long-term housing and land use objectives. The residential component of the Specific Plan will add to the City's affordable housing stock and will implement the City's above stated goal. Additionally, the proposed project is a private-sector development that will achieve the City's land use and housing objectives without requiring the City's commitment of scarce public funds and resources.

1.6 Relationship to Other Agencies

The Cambria Pines Specific Plan is located within the incorporated area of the City of Carson in Los Angeles County. The area is served by Los Angeles Unified School District, the Dominguez Water Corporation, and the County Sanitation Districts of Los Angeles County. Fire and police protection services are provided by the Los Angeles County Fire Department and Los Angeles County Sheriff's Department.

Clean-up of the project site, as required by the County of Los Angeles and the state, shall be completed in phases. Specifically, all eleven oil tanks on the project site will be removed at the initiation of site development. The site's oil remediation will be in two phases. The eastern portion of the site (designated as Parcel 1 in the tentative tract map) will be remediated with the soil moved to the western portion (Parcel 2) of the site. Following remediation of Parcel 1, remediation of Parcel 2 will be completed (which will also be prior to the development of phases 3, 4 and 5 of the residential development, as illustrated in Figure 13 of this specific plan). The state's Regional Water Quality Control Board (RWQCB) will be the lead agency for the approval of the site's remediation plan and compliance.

