I

Introduction

GENERAL PLAN

HUNTINGTON BEACH

ADOPTION OF THE GENERAL PLAN

This document is the General Plan for the City of Huntington Beach and has been prepared in accordance with the requirements of the California Government Code Section 65300 et seq.

The associated Draft Environmental Impact Report (EIR), was available for public review and comment for 45 days (comment period: July 23, 1995 to September 5, 1995). Public hearings regarding the adoption of the General Plan and EIR were held by the Huntington Beach Planning Commission on July 18 and 25, August 8 and 22, September 12 and 26, October 10 and 24, November 14 and 28, and December 12, 1995. The Planning Commission recommended certification of the EIR and adoption of the General Plan to the City Council on December 12, 1995. The City Council held public hearings on March 25, April 22, and May 13, 1996. The EIR was certified and the General Plan was adopted by the City Council at the meeting of May 13, 1996

Role and Purpose of a General Plan

The General Plan is the fundamental policy document of the City of Huntington Beach. It provides the framework for management and utilization of the City's physical, economic and human resources. By providing a basis for rational decision making, this document guides civic decisions regarding land use, the design and/or character of buildings and open spaces, the conservation of existing housing and the provision of new dwelling units, the provisions of supporting infrastructure and public services, the protection of environmental resources, the allocation of fiscal resources, and the protection of residents from natural and human-caused hazards. The General Plan acts to clarify and articulate the City's intentions with respect to the rights and expectations of the public, property owners, and prospective investors and business interests. Through the Plan, the City informs these groups of its goals, objectives, policies, and development standards, thereby communicating the expectations and responsibilities of all sectors in meeting its objectives.

State Requirements

California State law (Government Code Section 65300) requires that each city prepare and adopt a comprehensive, long-term General Plan for its future development. This plan must contain seven elements, including land use, circulation, housing, conservation, open space, noise and safety, and must conform to the guidelines found in the State of California General Plan Guidelines, published by the Office of Planning and Research. In addition to the seven required elements, state law permits cities to include optional elements in their General Plans, thereby providing local governments with the flexibility to address the specific needs and unique character of their jurisdictions.

California State law requires that the day-to-day decisions of a city follow logically from and be consistent with the General Plan. More specifically, Government Code Sections 65860, 66473.5 and 656474 require that zoning ordinances and subdivision and parcel map approvals be consistent with the General Plan.

The California Coastal Act requires communities within the coastal zone to prepare a local coastal program (LCP), including a coastal land use plan. The City of Huntington Beach satisfies this requirement with its Coastal Element. The Coastal Element, like all other elements, must be consistent with each other. Therefore, the previously adopted Coastal Element will require updating for consistency. Any updates to the Coastal Element and the LCP must be reviewed by the California Coastal Commission.

Measure M, approved by Orange County voters in 1990, requires all jurisdictions within the County to maintain a Growth Management Plan and a seven-year Capital Improvement Program. Measure M raises the County's sales tax, for a twenty year period, to pay for specific voter-approved transportation projects. Local jurisdictions may receive tax monies for approved local projects if their Growth Management Plan and Capital Improvement Program conform with measure requirements.

Organization and Content of Huntington Beach's General Plan

Huntington Beach's General Plan contains each of the seven elements required by state law, in addition to five optional elements, Urban Design, Historical and Cultural Resources, Economic Development, Growth Management, and Utilities. As defined by the State of California General Plan Guidelines, the mandated and optional elements often overlap in subject matter and policy direction. To avoid potential redundancy and confusion within the General Plan as well as to provide a cohesive and consistent approach to Huntington Beach's planning issues, the City's General Plan is organized by resource topic rather than by each of the mandated elements. The following illustrates how the Plan is structured and explains the way in which each of its chapters correspond to the state mandated elements.

A. Huntington Beach General Plan

Topics/Elements	*State Mandated Elements*
Land Use	Land Use/Open Space
Urban Design	Optional
Housing	Housing
Economic Development	Optional
Growth Management	Optional
Circulation	Circulation
UtilitiesOptional	Optional
Public Facilities/Public Services	Safety
Recreation and Community Services	Open Space
Historical and Cultural Resources	Conservation/Open Space
Environmental Resources/Conservation	Safety/Open Space/Conservation
Noise	Noise
Environmental Hazards	Safety
Air Quality	Optional
Hazardous Materials	Safety
Coastal	Coastal (Mandated for coastal cities)

B. Element Structure

Each General Plan element contains the following subsections:

- Statutory Requirements
- Technical Synopsis
- Issues
- Goals, Objectives and Policies

Goals:	The ultimate purpose of an effort stated in a way that is general in nature and immeasurable.
Objectives:	A measurable goal.
Policies:	A specific statement guiding actions and implying clear commitment.
Implementation Programs:	Actions, procedures, or techniques that carry out the General Plan policy through implementing a standard. Each policy is linked to a specific action oriented implementing program.
Implementation Matrix:	The responsible agency, funding sources, and schedule for implementing the program.

Relationship Among General Plan Elements

As a comprehensive strategy for the management of a city's diverse physical, economic and social resources, there is a high level of interrelationship among the topics and elements of the General Plan. The Land Use Element provides for the types, density/intensity, design, and distribution of commercial, residential, industrial, and agricultural land uses as well as public and private open space. The Housing Element addresses the manner in which existing housing will be conserved and new housing will be provided where the Land Use Element permits development. The Economic Development Element establishes methods by which the City can attract specific kinds of businesses and land uses accommodated by the General Plan and help maintain and keep these uses at a high level of productivity over time. The Circulation and Utilities Elements identify the kinds of public infrastructure that the City will need to support the land uses accommodated by the General Plan, and specify how the City can provide that infrastructure. The Public Services/Public Facilities Element and the Recreation and Community Services Element define the range of government services the City will need to support Huntington Beach's residents, businesses, and visitors. The Historical and Cultural Resources Element sets forth the policies dealing with resource protection in the context of new land use development. Finally, the Noise, Environmental Hazards and Hazardous Waste Elements provide for the protection of humans and property from the adverse effects of natural and human-made hazards.

Monitoring and Updating the General Plan

The State recommends that the short-term sections of the General Plan be reviewed annually and revised as necessary to reflect the availability of new implementation tools, changes in funding sources, and the results of monitoring the effectiveness of existing policies and the impacts of past decisions. The City's Planning Commission is required to report annually to the Council on the status of the Plan and progress made in its implementation. The Housing Element must be reviewed and updated at least every five years and revised as necessary to reflect new conditions, shifting local attitudes, and technological advances. Plan amendments are limited to a maximum of four times per year, consistent with the requirements for a Charter City such as Huntington Beach with the exception of the Housing Element amendments.

Relationship to Other Documents and Planning Programs

A. General Plan Environmental Impact Report

In accordance with the requirements of the California Environmental Quality Act, the City has prepared a separate document that discusses the environmental impacts anticipated when the General Plan is implemented and proposes appropriate mitigation measures.

B. General Plan Technical Background Report

The Technical Background Report is a corollary document to the General Plan. Published in July, 1992, it presents an extensive discussion and analysis of the existing conditions in Huntington Beach pertaining to each topic contained in this General Plan.

C. City of Huntington Beach Zoning and Subdivision Ordinance

The principal method for the implementation of the General Plan Land Use Map is the Zoning and Subdivision Ordinance. The City has updated its comprehensive Zoning and Subdivision Ordinance and is currently updating the Zoning Map. Both the Ordinance and the Map will require revision based upon this Plan's adoption in order to ensure consistency. Together, the Zoning and Subdivision Ordinance and Zoning Map identify specific types of land use, intensity of use, and development standards applicable to specific areas and parcels of land within the City.

Community Participation in the General Plan's Preparation

The community was involved extensively in the preparation of Huntington Beach's General Plan. The central component of the community participation effort was the 25-member General Plan Advisory Committee (GPAC). The GPAC was appointed by the City Council and composed of residents, business persons, and representatives from the City Council, Planning Commission, and other government entities/agencies. The GPAC participated in 35 meetings during the Plan's formulation, beginning in January 1992. Although membership on the GPAC was limited, all meetings were open to the public; residents and other interested parties were encouraged to participate and provide their input at each GPAC meeting.

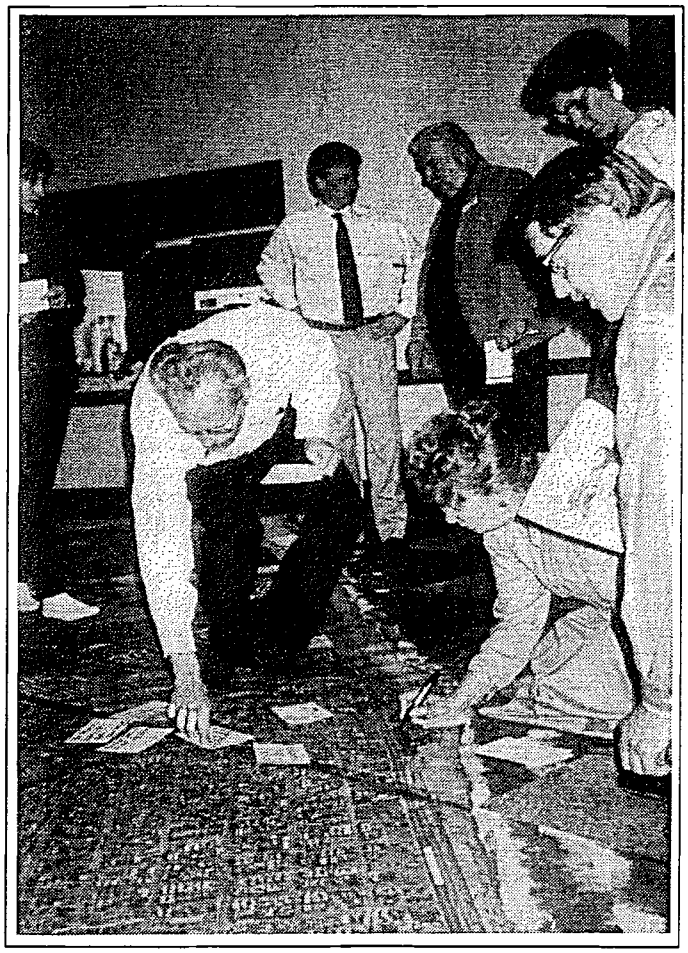
In February 1992, the City sponsored a citywide public workshop to provide the community with an opportunity to participate from the beginning of the General Plan development process (see **Plate I-1**). This meeting involved the public in a hands-on exercise whereby participants graphically explored future development options for the City. As a direct result of ideas gathered at this event, the GPAC, City Staff, and consultant devised a Huntington Beach Vision statement that served to guide all subsequent planning efforts and function as the guiding philosophy of this General Plan. A second Citywide public workshop, intended to elicit public comment on the land use concepts of the draft General Plan, was held in February 1993.

As previously noted, the formal public hearing and adoption process for the General Plan consisted of 11 public hearings before the Planning Commission, and another 3 before the City Council. The City Council adopted the Planning Commission recommended General Plan on May 13, 1996 (City Council Resolution No. 96-36). Following adoption, public verification copies of the Final General Plan and EIR were circulated for public review.

Project setting

The City of Huntington Beach is located at the northwestern tip of Orange County along the Pacific Ocean. **Figure I-1** depicts the relationship of Huntington Beach to the urban areas of Orange and Los Angeles counties. The City is bounded by the Pacific Ocean to the southwest, Seal Beach to the northwest, Westminster to the north, Fountain Valley to the northeast, and Newport Beach and Costa Mesa to the east. The City boundaries are irregularly shaped, with a base that extends along the coast for approximately nine miles as depicted in **Figure I-2**. The City corporate limits contain an area of 27.7 square miles.

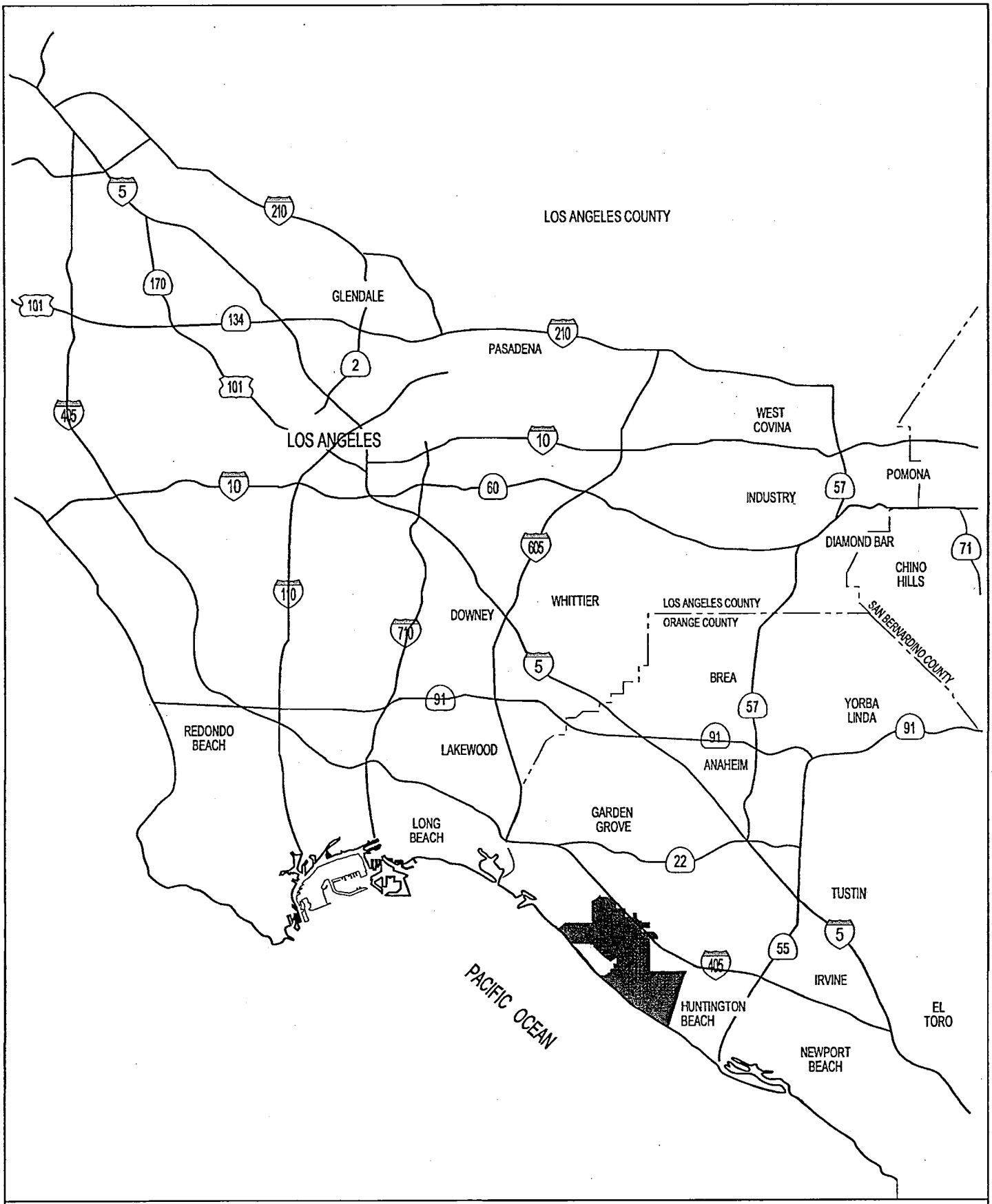
The City of Huntington Beach, through its location at the northwestern edge of Orange County, is accessible to the surrounding communities and beyond through an expansive arterial system and the freeway system. The San Diego Freeway (I-405) is the City's primary north-south regional linkage. The I-405 forms the City's northern boundary from Bolsa Chica Street to Warner Avenue. It provides access to Los Angeles County and to southern Orange County. The Pacific Coast Highway parallels the coast and links Huntington Beach with Costa Mesa to the southeast and Seal Beach to the northwest. The primary north-south arterials are Bolsa Chica Street, Springdale Street, Golden West Street, Beach Boulevard, and Brookhurst Street. The primary east-west arterials are Edinger Avenue, Warner Avenue, Garfield Avenue, Pacific Coast Highway and Adams Avenue.



COMMUNITY PARTICIPATION WORKSHOP

City of Huntington Beach General Plan

PLATE I-1



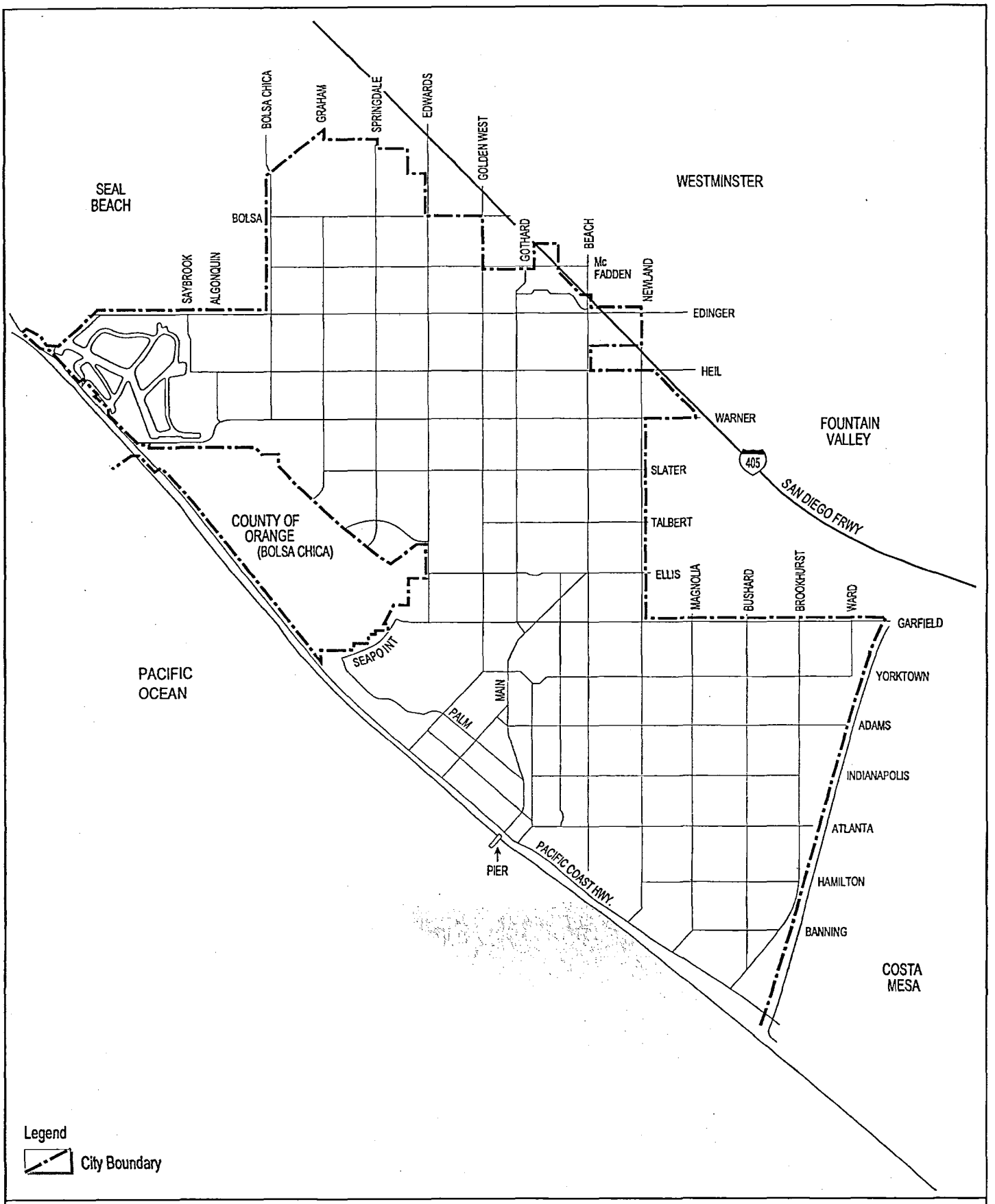
REGIONAL LOCATION

City of Huntington Beach General Plan

MILES 0 5 10

NORTH

FIGURE I-1



CITY LIMITS

CITY OF HUNTINGTON BEACH GENERAL PLAN

MILES 0 0.5 1.0 NORTH

FIGURE I-2