

City of Martinez General Plan  
Annual Progress Report



Reporting Year 2023

## INTRODUCTION

Government Code Section 65400 (b) requires that every city and county submit an annual progress report to their legislative body, the Governor's Office of Planning and Research ("OPR"), and the California Department of Housing and Community Development ("HCD") on the implementation status of their General Plan.

This General Plan Annual Progress Report covers the period from January 1, 2023, to December 31, 2023. The Annual Progress Report provides a connection between land use decisions made by the City in 2023 and the goals, policies, and implementation methods found in the current General Plan.

The purpose of the Annual Progress Report is to give an update on the implementation progress of the City of Martinez General Plan for the reporting year of 2023. On November 2, 2022, the City Council adopted the General Plan 2035 with the accompanying Environmental Impact Report, superseding the General Plan 1973.

### **General Plan Elements**

This section of the General Plan contains ten individual planning elements (land use, circulation, housing, community facilities, open space, noise, parks and recreation, growth management, scenic roadways, and safety). The State allows the combining of elements or the addition of new elements provided the required seven elements are present in some fashion.

#### **Land Use Element:**

- The Land Use Element serves as a central element to the General Plan, ensuring integration of policies relating to residential, commercial, and industrial land uses, as well as open space conservation.
- The City implements the Land Use Element in reviewing building permits and development entitlements to ensure consistency with the land use policies and programs in the Land Use Element. These focus on land use, density, circulation, utilities, open space and conservation, and environmental protection.
- The City reviewed 1,838 building permits in 2023, addressing residential, commercial, industrial, and utility land use actions. Issuance of building permits included application of current California Building Code ("CBC") and related Codes, including the California Green Building Standards Code.
- The City reviewed 70 entitlement actions in 2023, consisting of conditional use permits, variances, parcel maps, lot line adjustments, certificates of compliance, sign permits, and tree removal permits. Entitlement applications were reviewed by staff, the Zoning Administrator, Planning Commission, and/or City Council, depending upon the type of application being considered.
- The City reviewed 89 business licenses.
- The City continued work on planning for the Marina/Waterfront area, including preparation of the Waterfront Marina Trust Lands Use Plan, which was recommended for approval by the Planning Commission on October 24, 2023.
- The City approved the Riverhouse Hotel Project, located at 700 Alhambra Avenue, on November 20, 2023. This project will create nine affordable units. It is consistent with several General Plan land use policies, including the provision of high-density housing to meet housing demand and supply of affordable housing.

### Open Space and Conservation Element:

- Key programs and policies focus on protection of permanent open space lands , conservation of open space lands , and various waterways and basin protection measures.
- The City conducted significant public outreach during the preparation of the TLUP, including hosting a project website, held stakeholder interviews, hosted three public workshops, posted an “ideas wall;” held study sessions with the City Council on January 18, 2023, February 1, 2023, and September 6, 2023; held a joint study session with the City Council, Planning Commission, and Parks, Recreation, Marina, and Cultural Commission, on May 24, 2023; walked the site with stakeholders; outreached with representatives from tribal groups; and collaborated with the State Lands Commission.
- On June 7, 2022, Martinez voters approved Measure F, a 30-year parcel tax through which the City acquired the 297.5-acre Alhambra Hills property for permanent public parkland and wildlife habitat. The City completed the sale and purchase of the Property in November 2022 and secured the professional assistance of the John Muir Land Trust (“JMLT”) via a professional services agreement in March 2023 to conduct an initial assessment. This assessment is intended to help the City evaluate and prioritize next steps in the process of managing this Property (and ultimately opening it up to the public for use). The JMLT enlisted the services of Vollmar Natural Lands Consulting to assist with preparation of the report entitled, “Alhambra Hills Public Access and Habitat Management Analysis,” which was reviewed by the City Council on December 20, 2023.

### Historic, Cultural, and Arts Element:

- The Historic, Cultural and Arts Element is designed to establish goals, policies, and implementation measures that will help protect and enhance the City’s significant historic and cultural resources and encourage art and cultural enhancements within the City to add to the rich fabric of life enjoyed by Martinez citizens.
- The City continues to require discretionary projects comply with all requirements of CEQA, California Office of Historic Presentation (OHP), and National Register of Historic Places. In 2023, the City did not add any structures to any local, State, or federal registers.
- The City has been in an exclusive negotiating period with the Martinez Historical Society (“MHS”) since 2021 regarding future plans for the Old Train Depot (“Depot”), which is an approximately 5,200-square foot building, located at 401 Marina Vista Avenue and was originally constructed in 1877. On March 29, 2023, the City Council formed the Old Train Depot Negotiation Ad Hoc Subcommittee (“Ad Hoc Subcommittee”) to assist staff in negotiating with the MHS. The MHS prepared a business plan detailing their proposal to convert the Depot, for which the Ad Hoc Subcommittee and a third-party consultant has had several concerns. On December 20, 2023, the City Council approved a Resolution which would extend the exclusive negotiating period one final time until April 29, 2024 to allow the MHS to address comments and concerns and would also allocate \$50,000 in funds be transferred from the Cultural Impact Fee fund to the Train Depot CIP C4007 for preparation of construction drawings and specifications and a HRE.

### Parks and Recreation Element:

- Key programs and policies prioritize adequate availability of parks and recreation facilities for Martinez residents, acquisition of lands for parks, and waterfront recreation uses .
- The City continued to offer a wide range of recreation programs to Martinez residents, including more than 28 ongoing programmatic events, 11 special events, permitting of 120 special events.
- The City's Public Works Department continued to maintain City-owned park and recreation facilities.
- On June 20, 2023, the City of Martinez Parks, Recreation, Marina, and Cultural Commission ("PRMCC") received a report from City staff on the process for naming the new park at Pine Meadow Drive, and planned outreach efforts which included utilizing social media, websites, newsletters, mailers to residents, and the City's online application website. After the report and presentation, the PRMCC adopted a motion for staff to follow the park naming policy and outreach plan that was presented, and a recommendation for staff to reach out to local Native American Tribes and school districts. The final recommendation from the PRMCC was Karkin Park. On December 6, 2023, the City Council received a report from City staff on the recommendation from PRMCC for City Council to consider and the City Council directed staff to name the new park as Pine Meadow Park. On December 20, 2023, the City Council adopted an Resolution which officially named the park Pine Meadow Park and installation of a monument sign with the name of the park.

### Circulation Element:

- Circulation Element policies and programs focus on ensuring provision of circulation on City streets for vehicles, bicycles, and pedestrians, increasing the efficiency and safety of roadways, and maintaining the Circulation and Scenic Roadways.
- Projects which may result in generation of significant new traffic were required to submit traffic analyses to be considered as part of development entitlement reviews.
- The City applied for and received a grant from the Metropolitan Transportation Commission ("MTC"), worth \$875,000, to facilitate the implementation of the Downtown Parking Study, including the installation and/or upgrades to the parking meters/kiosks and the installation of new wayfinding signage in the Downtown area.
- The City continued in 2023 to work with regional agencies, including the Association of Bay Area Governments ("ABAG")/MTC and the Contra Costa Transportation Commission ("CCTA"), to ensure a comprehensive approach was taken with respect to regional transportation issues.
- The City partnered with CCTA and the Cities of Hercules, Pittsburg, and Antioch on the preparation of a feasibility study on expanded ferry service.
- The City undertook several roadway improvement projects in 2023, as well ongoing street maintenance actions.
- Policies focus on protection of the scenic qualities of the Scenic Roadways from new development.
- No significant implementation action regarding scenic roadways took place in 2023.

### Public Safety Element:

- The Safety Element contains programs and policies focused on protection from seismic hazards and other geologic hazards and constraints , as well as fire hazards and flood hazards.
- As appropriate, building permit and grading plan review also includes review of soils and geotechnical reports to ensure application of mitigation measures designed to ensure safety of residents and workers, as well as application of the CBC requirements related to seismic safety.
- New development in flood-hazard areas also required submittal of engineering analyses to ensure protection from flooding.
- Construction in high fire hazard areas required use of sprinkler systems to reduce threat from wildfires.
- The City implemented a new alerting system – Martinez Alerts – to supplement the Community Warning System and provide timely alerts to the community and interested parties. This new alert and warning system, powered by Rave, enables the City to provide interested parties with critical information quickly in a variety of situations, such as health alerts, severe weather, unexpected road closures, police activity, missing persons and evacuations of buildings or neighborhoods. Interested parties can receive time-sensitive messages via text, email, or voice.

### Noise and Air Quality Element:

- The Noise and Air Quality Element contains programs and policies focused on identify and appraise noise problems in the community and establishes local air quality standards.
- The City applied for and received a grant from MTC worth \$875,000 to facilitate the implementation of the Downtown Parking Study, including the installation and/or upgrades to the parking meters/kiosks and the installation of new wayfinding signage in the Downtown area. This program is intended to reduce the amount of time vehicles will be traveling to locate a parking spot, thereby reducing the amount of vehicle emissions and improving air quality.

### Environmental Justice and Disadvantaged Communities Element:

- The Environmental Justice and Disadvantaged Communities Element documents and addresses the needs of these two disadvantaged communities through the provision of information, policies, and programs.
- The City continues to analyze projects for sensitivity to surrounding land uses and advocates for discretionary projects to pursue environmental analysis through the CEQA process.
- The City continues to require projects with known contamination to undergo analysis and subsequent remediation when required.

### Specific Area Plans:

- This section of the General Plan governs land-use and resource conservation, site design, building, development phasing, circulation, community service, and public facility at the subarea level.
- Specific Area Plan details are included for the following areas:
  - Downtown
  - Alhambra Hills

- Implementation actions for the Specific Area Plans involved review of building permit and development entitlement applications to determine consistency with the Area Plans policies and programs, which focus on land use, residential densities, circulation, utilities, open space and conservation, and environmental protection.
- Please see the City's 2023 Housing Element Annual Progress Report for information on the implementation of the Downtown Specific Plan.

## GENERAL PLAN 2035

On November 2, 2022, the City Council adopted the General Plan 2035 with the accompanying Environmental Impact Report, superseding the General Plan 1973. This marked a significant moment in the City's land use administration and included many important changes.

General Plan 2035 puts forth five primary goals for the City:

1. Enhancing the Downtown as the central focus of the community;
2. Protecting residential neighborhoods and environmental resources;
3. Balancing future development with the provision of adequate services, facilities, and infrastructure;
4. Collaborating on regional planning efforts; meetings housing needs; and
5. Providing for economic development to maintain a high level of City services.

Following the City Council's adoption on November 2, 2022, the City prepared a version with ~~strike-out~~ for deletions and underlined additions, which are intended to provide the reader with additional clarification and therefore serve to assist the reader with understanding of the General Plan. On December 20, 2023, the City Council adopted Resolution No. 146-23, approving those changes and amending the General Plan land use designation for four parcels on Fig Tree Lane from Residential Low to Residential Medium.

Notable goals from the 2035 General Plan include:

### Land Use

- **Goal LU-G-1:** *Promote a balanced land use pattern, a mix of which enhances community character and serves the needs of existing and future residents. Encourage land use development to occur in an orderly fashion and in pace with the expansion of public facilities. Provide appropriate transitions between single family neighborhoods and higher intensity uses. Preserve open space and historic structures.*
- **Goal LU-G-2:** *Preserve and strengthen the City's overall image and create development that enhances the existing character and preserves the natural resources, residential neighborhoods, commercial areas, and smalltown historic character of Downtown Martinez to the maximum extent feasible.*
- **Goal LU-G-4:** *Preserve Historic Character throughout the City of Martinez by preserving the distinctive character of residential and commercial districts.*
- **Goal LU-G-5:** *Maintain and encourage existing waterfront recreation opportunities and water-oriented visitor commercial and social activities that are compatible with the Marina's primary recreational focus, and support Marina operations, such as grocery and bait shops, water-related activities, membership clubs, restaurants, and lodging.*
- **Goal LU-G-6:** *Create an environmentally just city with an equitable distribution of public facilities and services and a safe and healthy environment for all community members.*

- **Goal LU-G-12:** Promote activities and development for a vibrant Downtown area.

#### Open Space and Conservation

- **Goal OSC-G-1:** Maintain and Enhance the Integrity of Martinez’s visual and natural environment and preservation of habitat.
- **Goal OSC-G-2:** Maintain safe hillside communities.
- **Goal OSC-G-7:** Reduce energy use to limit air pollution and likelihood of power outages.
- **Goal OSC-G-8:** Protect water resource systems to maintain natural habitat within the watershed and enhance the biological value of the City.
- **Goal OSC-G-10:** Reduce flood hazards while enhancing the creekside environment.
- **Goal OSC-G-14:** Ensure the preservation of natural resources by determining appropriate land use and compatibility with natural resources, the built environment, and open space.

#### Historic, Cultural, and Arts

- **Goal HCA-G-1:** Foster protection, preservation, and rehabilitation of Martinez’s historic and cultural heritage.
- **Goal HCA-G-2:** Strengthen community appreciation and cohesiveness by enhancing cultural and art resources.

#### Parks and Community Facilities

- **Goal PCU-G-1:** Continue to provide high-quality parks that allow the entire community to access high-quality recreational opportunities.
- **Goal PCU-G-2:** Acquire and develop park land using a standard of five acres per one thousand residents.
- **Goal PCU-G-3:** An interconnected trail system providing access to recreational opportunities should continue to be developed and enhanced as funding permits.

#### Circulation Element

- **Goal C-G-1:** Encourage safe and convenient access to activities in the community and provide a well-designed local roadway system as well as pedestrian pathways and bicycle lanes.
- **Goal C-G-2:** Maintain and/or improve mobility in the City by considering alternative circulation system improvements beyond those identified within Table 6-3 Planned Major Improvements that increase system capacity and are found acceptable to the City, its residents, and where applicable, Caltrans or other agency.
- **Goal C-G-5:** Consider alternative improvements to traditional streets that may vary from City standards to balance the desire to make neighborhoods walkable and enhance a sense of place within Downtown Martinez.
- **Goal C-G-8:** Promote safe and convenient pedestrian and bicycle circulation.
- **Goal C-G-9:** Provide complete streets integrating a comprehensive transportation network with infrastructure and design that allows safe and convenient travel along and across streets for all users, including pedestrians, bicyclists, persons with disabilities, motorists, movers of commercial goods, users and operators of public transportation, seniors, children, youth, and families.

#### Public Safety

- **Goal PS-G-1:** Minimize the risks associated with seismic and subsidence activity.
- **Goal PS-G-4:** Protect citizens of Martinez from potential fire hazards.
- **Goal PS-G-6:** Avoid and minimize fire risk in high fire hazard areas.
- **Goal PS-G-7:** Minimize feasible risks to life and property resulting from flooding and flood induced hazards.
- **Goal PS-G-10:** Minimize risks to life, property, the economy, and the environment resulting from climate change impacts, including sea level rise and extreme heat events.

#### Noise and Air

- **Goal NA-G-1:** Continue to implement City noise standards to provide protection from unsafe and undesirable noise levels.
- **Goal NA-G-3:** Mitigate noise sources in Martinez in keeping with the Noise Control Ordinance.
- **Goal NA-G-7:** Approval of new construction to include review of sensitive receptors.
- **Goal NA-G-9:** Reduce greenhouse gas emissions to exceed to meet requirements of AB 32 and SB 375.

#### Environmental Justice and Disadvantaged Communities Element

- **Policy EJ-P-21:** Code Enforcement and Housing Rehabilitation: Assure compliance with the City's building codes to maintain the quality of the housing stock, and pursue available rehabilitation programs for both owner-occupied and rental housing and funding for the conservation, retrofitting and rehabilitation of viable older housing to preserve neighborhood character.
- **Policy EJ-P-22:** Continue to Participate in the Contra Costa County Neighborhood Preservation Program and the County Rental Rehabilitation Program. The City will promote the availability of Contra Costa County programs for housing construction, homebuyer assistance, rental assistance, and housing rehabilitation.
- **Policy EJ-P-23:** Implement Code Enforcement: As budget and staffing permits, continue to vigorously pursue code enforcement efforts in residential areas through the City's Public Works Department (Building Division).
- **Policy EJ-P-24:** Encourage Use of Rental Assistance Programs: Continue to publicize and participate in rental assistance programs such as Section 8 and other available rental programs.
- **Policy EJ-P-28:** Review all development proposals, planning projects, and infrastructure projects with the objective of avoiding adverse health impacts to disadvantaged communities, such as exposure to pollutants, including toxic air contaminants, and unacceptable levels of noise and vibration. Require to the extent feasible, measures in each public and private development, to improve physical activity such as connections to bicycle and pedestrian paths and recreation facilities. The measures should address both the construction and operation phases of the project.