



# City of Whittier

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DIV. OF HOUSING  
POLICY DEVELOPMENT HCD

Housing & Community Development  
1800 Third Street  
P.O. Box 952050  
Sacramento, CA 94252-2050

**Subject: City of Whittier 2003-2004 General Plan Progress Report**

Dear HCD Official:

Attached is a copy of the "City of Whittier 2003-2004 General Plan Progress Report", approved by the Whittier City Council on April 26, 2005, for your review. Government Code Section 65400(b) requires that an annual General Plan progress report be provided to the State Department of Housing and Community Development (HCD). The purpose of this report is to discuss the City's progress in implementing the General Plan, meeting its share of regional housing needs, and removing governmental constraints to the maintenance, improvement and development of housing. This report covers the period between October 1, 2003 and September 30, 2004.

Should you have any questions, please contact me at (562) 464-3380.

Sincerely,

Don Dooley,  
Planning Services Manager

Enc: City of Whittier 2003-2004 General Plan Progress Report

**CITY OF WHITTIER**

**2003 – 2004 GENERAL PLAN ANNUAL PROGRESS REPORT**

**COMMUNITY DEVELOPMENT DEPARTMENT  
PLANNING DIVISION**

**April 4, 2005**

**Recommendation**

That the Planning Commission recommend to the City Council the 2003-2004 General Plan Annual Progress Report.

**Background**

State law requires that each City adopt a general plan that incorporates seven mandated elements. Additional topics may be adopted, which are called optional elements. State law also states that the General Plan should be kept current. This is done through comprehensive updates and through amendments. Updates for an element are usually undertaken at least five years apart, and they look at underlying conditions and preferences. Amendments are typically smaller in scope and typically involve minor changes to the text of the General Plan or modifying the General Plan land-use map. Amendments are typically triggered by a private (developer) application or by direction from the City Council. Changes to the General Plan require a public hearing before the Commission and the City Council.

On August 3, 1993, the Whittier City Council adopted the City's current General Plan. The General Plan contains seven elements: Land Use, Housing, Transportation, Environmental Resource Management, Air Quality, Public Safety, Noise and Historical Resources. Table 1 shows the status of the City's General Plan elements, including both state mandated and optional.

**Table 1. General Plan Element Status.**

<b>Element</b>	<b>Required or Optional</b>	<b>Date of Adoption or Amendments</b>	<b>Comment</b>
Land Use	<b>Required</b>	Adopted in 1993. Latest amendment in September 30, 2003.	The City Council approve the Whittwood Town Center Specific Plan (GPA03-001) on September 30, 2003, which involves the redevelopment of the 66.4-acre Whittwood Mall site, located south of Whittier Boulevard between Scott Avenue and Santa Gertrudes Avenue.
Housing	<b>Required</b>	Adopted in 1993.	City Staff is currently updating the Housing Element to comply with Regional Housing Needs Assessment (RHNA) numbers. Staff anticipates that the Housing Element will be completed by July 1, 2005.
Transportation	<b>Required</b>	Adopted in 1993.	No amendments.
Environmental	<b>Required</b>	Adopted in	No amendments.

Resource Management Element		1993.	
Air Quality	<b>Required</b>	Adopted in 1993.	No amendments.
Public Safety	<b>Required</b>	Adopted in 1993.	No amendments.
Noise Element	<b>Required</b>	Adopted in 1993.	No amendments.
Historical Resources	<b>Optional</b>	Adopted in 1993.	No amendments.

As required by Government Code Section 65400(b)(1), every city must submit an annual progress report to their local legislative body, the Governor's Office of Planning and Research (OPR), and the Department of Housing and Community Development (HCD) on the implementation status of their General Plan. The annual report must also include discussion on the City's progress in providing its required share of affordable housing, pursuant to Government Code Section 65584, and its effort to remove governmental barriers for the maintenance, improvement and development of affordable housing per Section 65583.c(3) of the California Government Code.

This report covers the period between October 1, 2003 and September 30, 2004.

## **STATUS OF GENERAL PLAN AND IMPLEMENTATION PROGRESS**

### **General Plan**

#### **Land Use Element**

The Land Use Element serves as a guide for public and private decision-making regarding land use issues and future development. Specific goals and policies are provided to correspond to major land use issues of concern, including, land use compatibility, residential, commercial and industrial uses, parks and open space areas.

The City of Whittier is considered a developed community comprised mostly of single-family residential neighborhoods, with its predominant commercial and industrial uses situated along several major roadways. As a developed community, any future development in the city would occur as infill or redevelopment.

In 1993, an updated Land Use Element was adopted as part of the City's comprehensive General Plan update. Since adoption of the City's current General Plan, the City has processed a variety of new land use developments. One General Plan Amendment and one Specific Plan have been submitted for City Council approval between October 1, 2003 and September 30, 2004. On

September 30, 2004, General Plan Amendment 03-001 was approved to change the General Plan Land Use to "specific plan" for a 64-acre mixed-use development located at the southwest corner of Whittier Boulevard and Santa Gertrudes Avenue. On April 12, 2005, the City Council will also consider the Whittier Boulevard Specific Plan (WBSP), which restructures the length of the Corridor into a series of distinct segments (or thematic districts) over a 7-mile corridor. The WBSP aims to revitalize the Boulevard to showcase the high quality of Whittier from the Boulevard, reduce the amount of land zoned for commercial use, and refocus Boulevard segments that are no longer available for commercial use. The City expects to receive another Specific Plan proposal for the conversion of an 75+/- acre, youth correctional facility (the Fred C. Nelles Facility located at the southwest corner of Whittier Boulevard and Sorensen Avenue) into a mixed-use development in the summer of 2005. The property currently has a General Plan Land Use designation of Elementary School.

**Housing Element** - In a continuing effort to provide housing assistance within the community, the City of Whittier and the Whittier Redevelopment Agency have sponsored a number of housing programs which are implemented by the Redevelopment and Housing Division of the Community Development Department. The Whittier Redevelopment Agency is a separate legal entity established in early 1970's to eliminate blight and improve infrastructure within Whittier's four Redevelopment Project Areas, and to assist low and moderate income families to secure decent, safe, and sanitary housing at affordable prices citywide. The focus of the Division of Redevelopment and Housing activities are to provide financial assistance in the form of low cost home improvement programs, provide essential public services, stimulate the revitalization of older declining neighborhoods and monitor the modernization of essential infrastructure in neighborhoods with a high concentration of low-moderate income residents.

Share of Regional Housing Need - The City's Housing Element identifies Whittier's housing goals and objectives. The City's share of affordable housing units is determined by a Regional Housing Needs Assessment (RHNA) conducted by the Southern California Association of Governments (SCAG). Table No. 2 (below) identifies the specific number and type of affordable housing units to be constructed within the City of Whittier from 1998 to 2005. This identification of affordability type is categorized as Very Low (less than 50 percent of Los Angeles County median income), Low (50-80 percent of L.A. County median income), Moderate (80-120 percent of L.A. County median income), and Above Moderate (greater than 120 percent of L.A. County median income). However, the actual affordability is based on many factors including, but not limited to: household income, sales price, financing terms, required down-payment, permitted debt ratio and household size (number of persons in the family).

**Table 2. City of Whittier - Regional Housing Needs (10/1/03 to 9/30/04)**

<b>Income Category</b>	<b>Housing Units</b>	<b>Percent of Total</b>
Very Low	66	21.3%
Low	54	17.5%
Moderate	70	22.7%
Above Moderate	119	38.5%
TOTAL	309	100%

Housing Objectives and Programs - The following summarizes the progress that the City has made toward achieving Housing Element objectives and development of specific programs:

- 1) **Assistance to the Salvation Army** (CDBG funded): The City has provided a small amount of grant funding to the Salvation Army to support the Hospitality House and Shower program. This program assists homeless individuals by providing a safe environment to eat, sleep, and shower.
- 2) **Housing Rehabilitation** (CDBG and HOME funded) program offers low-interest or no-interest loans to promote the improvement, rehabilitation and/or the preservation housing units. The loans are often times paired with a grant for exterior beautification or lead-based paint removal. Improvements and repairs eligible under the program include lead-based paint testing and hazard reduction, electrical, heating, plumbing, roofing, stucco application, exterior and interior painting, windows, insulation, concrete driveway, kitchen and bathroom repairs, flooring, etc. Like the MHRG program, the program is available to Low-income households earning no more than 80% the area median income adjusted for family size. In fiscal year 2003-2004, this program funded 12 rehabilitations. Between its inception and 2003-04, the HOME (Home Investment Partnership Program) funded portion of the program assisted 51 homeowners. CDBG funds are also used for housing rehabilitation purposes. From the program's inception through 2003-04, the CDBG funded portion of the program has assisted approximately 240 homeowners.
- 3) The **Minor Home Repair Grant Program** (MHRG) (CDBG funded) is available to Low-income families. It makes available grants of up to \$3,000 for minor home repairs, such as painting, minor plumbing and electrical repairs, window and door repair, and other items of similar nature. The program was initiated in Fiscal Year 2003-04. During this first year, \$100,000 was allocated to the program which assisted a total of 37 households. At the beginning of Fiscal Year 2004-05 the City Council again allocated \$100,000 to the program and in December 2004, the City Council allocated an additional \$50,000 to another non-profit agency (SCRS) to provide minor home repairs to disabled people under the MHRG Program.

- 4) The **Rio Hondo Temporary Home** (Redevelopment funded) provides transitional housing, food and related supportive services to assist families and individuals regain self-sufficiency. The Agency has provided annual funding in the amount of \$50,000 to the Home for the past several years using LMI SetAside funds (20% of gross tax increment from redevelopment areas).
- 5) The **Whittier Area First Day Coalition** (Redevelopment funded) is a homeless shelter that opened in May 2000, and has been funded \$100,000 annually using redevelopment LMI Set-Aside funds. Additionally, in 2003-04 the redevelopment agency allowed First Day to use \$49,762 in unspent funds for the purchase of their building. These funds were previously committed to First Day but were not spent in previous years.
- 6) The **Women's and Children Crisis Shelter** (Redevelopment funded) provided temporary shelter food, clothing, crisis intervention and advocacy for victims of domestic violence. The Agency has provided \$34,000 annually using redevelopment LMI Set-Aside funds.
- 7) The **First Time Home Buyer Program** (FTHB) (Redevelopment funded). The FTHB program has assisted 73 families from its inception in 1997-98 through November 2004.
- 8) The **Community Alliance for Responsible Enforcement Program** (CARE) (Redevelopment funded) was added to the Agency housing assistance efforts in 1999. It has the primary goal of enhancing the visual appearance of neighborhood while creating a sense of safety and security in the Area. The Program allows property owners and managers to bring about improvement in building conditions and management. The minimum loan amount is \$2,000 and the maximum amount is \$22,500. Three (3) households were funded in FY03-04. The CARE program has assisted 37 properties from its inception in 1999 through November 2004.
- 9) The **Rental Improvement Loan Program** (HOME funded) assists rental property owners with non-interest bearing loans to promote the improvement, rehabilitation and/or the preservation of rental property containing up to eleven units. No property owners have yet taken advantage of the opportunity to improve their property under this program.

**Housing Element Update** - As indicated in Table 1 (in the "Background" section), the Housing Element is currently the only element that is being updated. The City continues to show a good faith effort complying with the required Housing Element goals. Staff anticipates an updated Housing Element will be ready for submission to the State Department of Housing and Community Development (HCD) by July 1, 2005.

**Transportation Element** – The Circulation Element defines the transportation needs of the City and presents a comprehensive transportation plan to accommodate those needs. The Element also focuses on identifying and evaluating local circulation needs, while balancing those needs with regional demands and mandates. The City of Whittier currently participates in local and

regional transportation planning and decision-making by implementing the guidelines of the Los Angeles County Congestion Management Plan and conforming to the Los Angeles County Master Plan of Arterial Highways.

Through the Capital Improvements Programs (CIP), the City has undertaken various projects as described in the Table 3 below:

**Table 3. Capital Improvements Programs**

Project	Description
Whittier Boulevard at Mar Vista Street Traffic Signal	Installation of new permanent traffic signal at the intersection of Whittier Boulevard (State Route 72) and Mar Vista Street. Joint jurisdictional project between the State of California and the City of Whittier. City share of project cost is estimated at \$103,000.
Scott Avenue Reconstruction	Reconstruction of Scott Avenue from Mulberry Drive to Leffingwell Road. Joint jurisdictional project between the County of Los Angeles and the City of Whittier. City share of project cost is estimated at \$143,000.
Leffingwell Road at Santa Gertrudes Avenue Traffic Signal	Traffic signal upgrade to provide protected left turn phase for north and southbound Santa Gertrudes Avenue at Leffingwell Road. Joint Jurisdictional project between the County of Los Angeles and the City of Whittier. City share of project cost is estimated at \$19,000.
Lambert Road at First Avenue Traffic Signal	Traffic signal upgrade to provide protected left turn phase for east and westbound Lambert Road at First Avenue. Joint Jurisdictional project between the County of Los Angeles and the City of Whittier. City share of project cost is estimated at \$12,000.
Dorland Street Water Main Replacement	Replacement of water main on Dorland Street from Redman Avenue to Norwalk Boulevard. Estimated cost of \$190,000.
Milton Avenue Water Main Replacement	Replacement of water main on Milton Avenue from Bailey Street to 300 feet south of Walnut Street. Estimated cost of \$420,000.
Milton Avenue Reconstruction	Reconstruction of Milton Avenue following water main replacement project. \$201,950 project funded with Gas Tax B and Water Funds.
South Circle and North Circle Drive Water Main Replacement	Replacement of water main on South Circle Drive and North Circle Drive and 600 feet on Grande Vista Drive for a cost of \$675,000.
Pedestrian Safety Program (PSP) Grant for Sidewalk Construction.	Pedestrian Safety Program (PSP) Grant for Sidewalk Construction in the area around Laurel Elementary School. Total cost \$371,480.

Environmental Protection Agency Sewer Line Replacement Grant	Replacement of sewer lines in east and west alleys of Greenleaf Avenue from Wardman Street to Hadley Street.
Hazard Elimination Safety Grant for Driver Radar Feedback Signs.	\$176,000 Hazard Elimination Safety Grant for installation of Driver Radar Feedback Signs at various locations in the City for schools that are adjacent to major arterials.
Colima Road Resurfacing Project	Resurfacing of Colima Road from the South City Limits to the North City Limits. \$614,190 project funded with County Highway Through Cities Funds and Proposition C funds.
Resurfacing of Rose Drive	Resurfacing of Rose Drive from Greenleaf Avenue to Milton Avenue. Project funded with \$45,000 of Water Bond funds due to damage cause to the street in conjunction with the Greenleaf Reservoir project.
Transportation Development Act SB-821 Sidewalk Construction Project	Transportation Development Act SB-821 sidewalk and wheelchair access ramp construction project at various locations in the City. Total project cost of \$55,709.
Hazard Elimination Safety Grant for In-Roadway Lighted Crosswalk at Beverly Boulevard at Citrus Avenue	\$38,850 Hazard Elimination Safety Grant for the installation of an In-Roadway Lighted Crosswalk system for Beverly Boulevard at Citrus Avenue.
City Yard Fuel Dispenser System Repair and Upgrade	Repair and upgrade of the City Yard Fuel Dispenser System to meet 2008 State and South Coast Air Quality Management District standards. Project cost at \$88,572.
Painter Avenue at Philadelphia Street Traffic Signal Modification	Modification of the traffic signal at the intersection of Painter Avenue at Philadelphia Street to provide protected left turn phases for north and southbound Painter Avenue. Total \$159,046 cost of this project reimbursed to the City from Federal SAFETEA funds.
Surface Treatment Program	Fiscal Year 2004-05 Surface Treatment Program for the cyclic seal of asphalt streets. Total estimated project cost of \$592,278.
Traffic Calming Project	Beverly Drive and Youngwood Drive neighborhood area traffic calming projects. Estimate cost of \$200,000.
Beverly Boulevard west of Palm Avenue Bus Waiting Area	Installation of bus patron waiting area for the transfer layover area for Foothill Transit, Montebello Bus Lines and the MTA located on the north side of Beverly Boulevard west of Palm Avenue. \$ 5,500 project funded with Proposition C funds.
Santa Fe Springs Road Rehabilitation	Rehabilitation of Santa Fe Springs Road from Whittier Boulevard to the South City Limits. \$398,877 project funded with HUD funds.

Hadley Street Resurfacing	Resurfacing of Hadley Street from Whittier Boulevard to Painter Avenue. \$348,210 project was funded with a combination of Gas Tax B and Proposition C funds.
Improvement of Trailhead on Catalina Avenue	Improvement of the Puente Hills Native Habitat trailhead entrance on Catalina Avenue north of Mar Vista Street. Project funded through a \$29,000 grant from the Native Habitat Preservation Authority.
Improvement of Police Department Parking Lots	Expansion of existing parking lot and construction of a new parking lot for the Whittier Police Department. Project funded with 490,000 of Asset Seizure-Forfeiture Funds.
Resurfacing of Dorland Street	Resurfacing of Dorland Street from Redman Avenue to Norwalk Boulevard and Morrill Avenue from Dorland Street to Orange Drive. \$94,250 project funded with Gas Tax B and Water Funds.
Office of Traffic Safety Grant	\$143,000 Office of Traffic Safety Grant for the installation of Driver Radar Feedback Signs at various locations and installation of In-Roadway Lighted Crosswalk Systems for Hadley Street at Court Avenue, Norwalk Boulevard at Orange Drive and Beverly Boulevard at Carley Drive.
Surface Treatment Program	Fiscal Year 2003-04 Surface Treatment Program for the cyclic seal of asphalt streets. Total estimated project cost of \$785,000.

In addition to providing street and traffic circulation improvements, the City of Whittier is a local transit operator in the community, providing fixed-route and paratransit service since 1974. Whittier Transit (WT) utilizes four, heavy-duty vehicles. As of April 1, 2005, the City of Whittier will contract with the City of Norwalk to provide fixed-route and paratransit service. The City of Whittier also contracts with Western Transit Systems to operate the Dail-A-Ride system, which is comprised of six vans and 1 sedan.

In 2000, the City purchased a 4.5-mile, railroad right-of-way to use as a bicycle, walking, jogging, disabled access pathway and commuter trail. The "Greenway Trail" offers commuters an alternative mode of transportation to reduce congestion, traffic, noise, and air quality impacts. The Greenway Trail construction is expected to begin in the Spring of 2005 and will be completed in 2007.

**Environmental Resources Management Element** – The Environmental Resources Management Element (ERME) combines the mandated Conservation and Open Space Elements. This Element identifies environmental resources within the City and establishes a plan for their conservation, management, or preservation.

In terms of the Resource Management, the City has worked collaboratively with the Environmental Protection Agency to establish a water treatment plant on

Durfee Road in the Whittier Narrows Dam area. The water treatment plant, completed in 2003, will treat the water and either recharge the water back into the ground or into the San Gabriel River. Before the plant is fully operational, additional modifications are required to make the water suitable for domestic use. The City and EPA project the plant will be operational July of 2005.

In addition, the Central Basin Water Municipal District completed a water treatment plant in October 2004, in the City of Pico Rivera on San Gabriel River Parkway (north of Beverly Boulevard and west of the San Gabriel River). The plant will treat water and send the water to the City of Whittier Pumping Plant No. 2 for distribution to water users throughout the City.

The City is working toward upgrading all 80 city-operated irrigation systems. Twelve systems have been upgraded to include centralized irrigation systems, flow meters, as well as, ensuring that all new plant materials are drought tolerant. For example, Parnell Park's irrigation system was centralized with flow meters, which resulted in a 60 percent reduction of water usage (based on a base rate of 40 gallons per minute per valve).

Plans for the 4.5-mile, Greenway Trail were approved by the City in December of 2001. The project is expected to commence in the Spring of 2005. The Trail will provide the following amenities once completed: a bike trail, walking trail and connecting trails to several schools, parks, and neighborhoods.

New concrete walks, play equipment and rubberized surfacing at Laurel Park and Broadway Park. Upgraded signs were installed at Kennedy, Murphy Ranch and Palm parks. The Parnell Park irrigation system was also renovated.

The trails in the Arroyo Pescadero Reserve have been maintained for exercise and enjoyment and use by hikers, bikers and equestrians. In the summer of 1994, an outdoor educational facility began along the Arroyo Pescadero Trail, which seats up to 40-50 children for interpretive programs.

**Air Quality Element** – The Air Quality Element is not a state-mandated element but is recommended under the 1991 Air Quality Management Plan for the South Coast Air Basin. The Air Quality Element contains programs that will allow the City of Whittier to contribute to the attainment of state and federal clean air standards. Listed below are projects the City of Whittier is implementing/developing in fulfilling the goals of the Air Quality Element.

The City is actively pursuing alternative means of commuting to work. For example, in 2001, the City purchased an abandoned railroad right-of-way (known as the Greenway Trail). Once completed in 2007, it will help with air quality by providing an alternative means (i.e. walking, biking) of commuting to work.

The City has purchased four, compressed natural gas vehicles: three pickup trucks and one refuse truck. All vehicles are expected to be deployed in April 2005.

The City continues to encourage flexible work schedules (i.e. 9/80, 4/40) for various departments (i.e. Police Department, Water Division, Parks Department and Community Services Department) and ridesharing by offering preferred parking spaces and other awards. To get "credit" for those employees who are already carpooling, walking, biking or taking public transportation to work, a transportation survey was conducted during the week of March 8-12, 2004. The survey included employees who report to work at the Civic Center complex during the peak commuting "window" from 6 a.m. - 10 a.m. They were to record how they came to work during that particular week to get a snapshot of their primary commuting mode of transportation. 217 employees have been identified by the departments to report to work at the Civic Center complex during the "window". 210 surveys were completed. The percentage of return was 96.8%.

The survey results showed that there are 905 employee trips generated at the Civic Center complex within the window weekly. A total of 777 vehicles arrive weekly within the window. Therefore our current AVR is 1.16. To reach our target AVR of 1.5, we have to eliminate 174 vehicles per week or 35 vehicles per day from coming into the Civic Center worksite. The City met the 2003-2004 Air Quality Improvement Plan (AQIP) requirements by purchasing emission credits, so that Whittier immediately met its average vehicle ridership (AVR) goal of 1.5 persons per vehicle.

The City has also begun installing solar systems for irrigation (i.e. Youngwood and Lindante), speed radar signs (i.e. Painter and La Cuarta) and crosswalk signs (Norwalk and Orange). Several solar instruments will also be incorporated into the Greenway Trail, including lighting and irrigation.

Street and parking area cleaning is completed on a weekly or bi-monthly basis throughout the City. More regular cleaning takes place within specific areas of Uptown Whittier area.

**Public Safety Element** - The Public Safety Element addresses both natural and man-made hazards that may result in economic and social disruption, the loss of life, and/or damage of property. In an effort to minimize such loss/damage due to earthquakes, flood, fire, landslides, crime, hazardous materials/waste contamination and man-made hazards, the City has adopted a Standard Emergency Management System (SEMS) multi-hazard functional plan. This disaster plan integrates community resources into municipal emergency management, including a list of local resources such as personnel, equipment, material, specialized medical and other training and auxiliary communications/L.A. County Disaster Communications Systems. In conformance with the SEMS multi-hazard functional plan, the City of Whittier has

continued to perform annual mock disaster drills in conjunction with other agencies (i.e. L.A. County Fire Department) and other institutions (i.e. Whittier College) that will help establish and maintain an on-going state of readiness within the City organization.

The City approved a Natural Hazards Mitigation Plan on September 14, 2004, which is currently under review by FEMA. The Plan includes resources and information to assist City residents, public and private sector organizations, and others interested in participating in planning for natural hazards. The mitigation plan provides a list of activities that may assist the City of Whittier in reducing risk and preventing loss from future natural hazard events. The action items address multi-hazard issues, as well as activities for earthquakes, flooding and wildfires.

The Police Department has also continued to enhance community safety through crime prevention. Some of the existing law enforcement programs that have promoted public safety in City of Whittier include the Neighborhood Watch Program, Public Service Area policing structure, a DUI and seat belt enforcement grant program, the School Resource Officers program and a peer-mentoring program for at-risk youth. The Department also trained all personnel in weapons of mass destruction and issued protective gear, which was funded by grants. In addition, the City continues to participate in a multi-agency crime task force that maintains collaborative partnerships between various law enforcement agencies, courts, parole officers, the District Attorney's office and local school districts.

**Noise Element** – The Noise Element of the General Plan is dedicated to protecting the community from excessive noise. The City recognizes that there are two major categories of noise sources, mobile and stationary. With respect to stationary noise sources, they are generally associated with industrial and commercial activities, construction work, and human activity. Mitigation of these noise sources typically involve limiting business hours, restricting commercial and industrial business operations to enclosed buildings, and/or considering land use compatibility when determining an acceptable limit for noise exposure for various land uses. A variety of these options continue to be implemented for all new developments in the City as a means of mitigating adverse noise impacts. It is important to note that the City routinely requires noise studies (particularly for new residential development) to ensure compliance with the City's Noise Ordinance. Noise mitigation is therefore applied to all new projects, as necessary.

**Historical Resources Element** – The Historical Resources Element is an optional Element that specifically meets the historic preservation needs of the City. The comprehensive update of the City's historic resources ordinance, in 2001, continues to serve as a guide for the 140 plus Historic Resources located throughout the City. The most recent and prominent addition to the list of National Landmarks is the Whittier Train Depot, which was placed on the National Register in 2004.

The City of Whittier approved the use of Mills Act agreements, in the early 1990s, with owners of locally designated historic properties. Based on this action, the City promotes awareness and use of the Mills Act as an incentive for the preservation of local historic buildings. This agreement provides a method of reducing property taxes in exchange for the continued preservation of the property. Property taxes are recalculated using a specific Mills Act assessment method. During the 2003-2004 fiscal year, the City approved two Mills Act Agreements bringing the grand total to 21.

The City also approved 25 period appropriate additions to Historic Resources throughout the City for years 2003 and 2004. The City also processed one in-fill development (HR04-038) within the College Hills Historic District.

The Historic Resources Commission has completed a comprehensive review of the historic survey of 2,592 properties and staff anticipates that a public hearing will be held in late 2005.

The City of Whittier historic preservation program received one of three "A" grades, for the entire County of Los Angeles, given out by the Los Angeles Conservancy in November of 2003.

Staff is routinely trained in historic preservation awareness and techniques through seminars such as the 2004 California Preservation Conference in San Francisco.