

City of La Cañada Flintridge

Youth Master Plan

February 17, 2004

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4.0 SUMMARY

VISION STATEMENT

Our vision for the community is to provide a supportive environment, rich in diversity and committed to the principles of fairness and equity. It is our belief that such an environment will enable our youth to develop the skills and character necessary for future success.

Executive Summary

The City of La Cañada Flintridge has always looked to the youth of the City for inspiration and new ideas. This is a reasonable assumption because the youth of our community truly act as a barometer of the health of a city and as a repository of the hopes and dreams of our families. Listening to the opinions and needs of our youth is integral to the success of our city. The establishment of the Youth Council in 1999 was an important first step in this organic process.

For over four years, the Youth Council has provided a forum specifically for the discussion of youth issues and to expose youth to the nature and scope of city government. The Youth Council has proposed, developed and recommended a number of programs to the City Council intended to promote the acceptance of youth in all aspects of the community.

The need to actively engage our youth in positive, physical and mental activities is of paramount importance. The City and numerous community groups have worked diligently over the years to foster this goal. It is in this spirit that the City Council directed the Youth Council to develop a Master Plan for the youth of our city. Specifically, the Council challenged the youth to begin a dialogue with their peers and community groups in order to develop a comprehensive framework for youth participation.

The following report highlights a series of short and long-term steps identified through a process that began over 18 months ago.

PARTICIPANTS

LA CAÑADA FLINTRIDGE CITY COUNCIL MEMBERS

AYSO

**All American Gladiator Football
Assistance League of Flintridge
La Cañada Flintridge Chamber of Commerce
Child Education Center
Church of Angeles Crest
Church of Jesus Christ of Latter Day Saints
Church of the Lighted Window
Community Prevention Council
Crescenta- Cañada Lions Club
Crescenta Valley Little League
Crescenta Valley Sheriff's Station
Crescenta- Cañada YMCA
Crestview Preparatory School
Delphi Academy
First Church of Christ
Flintridge Preparatory School
Flintridge Sacred Heart Academy
Foothill Progressive Montessori
Girl Scout Association of La Cañada
Glendale Unified School District
Hillside Developmental Learning Center
Hogg's Hollow Pre-school and Kindergarten
Kiwanis Clubs of La Cañada
La Cañada Elementary
La Cañada High School
La Cañada Junior Baseball and Softball
La Cañada Presbyterian Church
La Cañada Unified School District
La Cañada Thursday Club
La Cañada United Methodist Church
Lutheran Church in the Foothills
Palm Crest Elementary
Paradise Canyon Elementary
Partner in Education
Pasadena Humane Society
Renaissance Academy
Roger Barkley Community Center
Rotary Club of La Cañada Flintridge
San Gabriel Valley Habitat for Humanity
Spartans Basketball
St. Bede's Catholic Church
St. Geroge's Episcopal Church**

1.0 HISTORICAL PERSPECTIVE

The Youth Master Plan is a broad term given to a set of long term and short term goals intended to serve as a blueprint for city organizations to establish objectives, set benchmarks, and work together to meet a set of defined goals as a community.

The overriding objective throughout the planning process was to include as many community groups as possible, to identify important areas in which the community could do a better job, and to keep the focus on youth by making their desires the central piece of the final plan.

Through research and input from a number of involved community stakeholders, a number of steps have been identified in order to better provide the youth of La Cañada Flintridge with a supportive environment that will offer every young person an equal opportunity to develop the skills and qualities necessary for future success.

In March, 2001, the City Council approved a Master Plan process and directed City Staff to proceed with its development. Given the size of our community, a staff decision was made to conduct an in-house process. By conducting the process utilizing both City staff and the Youth Council, we were able to save money (but not time) without sacrificing quality. While the entire process has taken longer than expected, this Master Plan has truly been a community project that we believe has a legitimacy that Master Plans facilitated by paid outside consultants sometimes lack. The goals identified in the plan that follows are ones that the members of our community have identified. We expect that this ownership will help make many, if not all, of these goals a reality.

2.0 PROCESS OVERVIEW

The first step in this Youth Master Plan process is to involve the stakeholders and community groups working with the youth in our community to better implement what has been learned from the data in order to improve services for the community. This can best be accomplished through improved participation, communication, and collaboration among families, youth organizations, and the City of La Cañada Flintridge. The Youth Master Plan is an outline that will aid our community in continuing to flourish while providing children with an excellent environment in which to learn and grow.

A target age for youth to be served was identified after preliminary discussions with the City Council and subset of community leaders. The target age for the plan was identified as 13 to 18-year-olds.

Over the past eighteen months, the Youth Council has worked closely with various stakeholders in the community in formulating a Youth Master Plan for La Cañada Flintridge. Throughout this time period, a number of key steps have already been taken.

A youth survey regarding drug education, teen services, and volunteer and educational opportunities was distributed to over 2,200 students at the various schools in the area.

In addition, the Youth Council hosted an extremely successful Youth Master Plan forum in August of 2003. The forum provided important community feedback on a number of ideas and valuable information for both the short and long term success of the youth in La Cañada Flintridge.

Continued contact with the schools and with the greater community at events such as the annual Youth Faire and the Roger Barkley Community Needs Assessment has served to highlight the most relevant issues for the youth and has provided pragmatic and important solutions and ideas for improvement.

Students in La Cañada Flintridge are tremendously involved, participating in sports, volunteer work, artistic

endeavors, or some other form of employment. However, there is most definitely room for improvement.

General participation, communication between youth groups and families, and greater collaboration between these youth organizations were all identified as areas in which progress needed to be made.

The Youth Master Plan encompasses a comprehensive blueprint and listing of ideas for implementing the changes recommended by the community. By identifying both short and long term needs, the Youth Master Plan will hopefully encourage improvement in La Cañada Flintridge for years to come.

2.1 Process Timeline

- **April 2001**- City Council directs Youth Council and City staff to develop a Master Plan process by Fall 2001
- **December 2001**- City staff develops Master Plan process and begins preliminary research
- **May 2002**- City staff identifies a variety of Youth Master Plans at cities located within California and across the nation as potential models
- **September 2002**- City finalizes a Youth Survey to assess the needs and opinions of La Cañada Flintridge youth aged 13-18
- **November 2002**- Youth Survey is distributed to over 2,200 area youth aged 13-18

Process Timeline (continued)

- **February 2003**- Youth Survey information is compiled, analyzed and presented to City Council
- **March 2003**- City staff and Youth Council begin process of sharing data from Youth Survey with the Community

- **August 2003**- A Youth Master Plan community forum is conducted attracting over 15 community groups and more than 40 participants
- **September 2003**- Feedback from community groups is compiled and specific short and long term goals are identified
- **October 2003**- A comprehensive Youth Master Plan for the City is drafted
- **November 2003**- Youth Council approves a draft version of the Master Plan for distribution to community groups
- **January 2004**- A second Community forum is conducted to receive additional feedback and comments
- **February 2004**- A Draft Master Plan is presented to the City Council
- **February 2004**- City Council feedback is incorporated and a Final version is presented to the City Council for approval
- **March 2004**- Widespread dissemination of the Master Plan to community groups

3.0 THE PLAN

The purpose of the Youth Master Plan is to establish a set of long term and short term goals intended to serve as a blueprint for city organizations to establish objectives, set benchmarks, and work together to meet a set of defined goals as a community. The objectives established by the Youth Council include:

1. Encourage additional avenues for participation to the youth in our community.
2. Develop additional and more effective methods of communication to actively engage our youth.
3. Foster collaboration between and among the City and a variety of community groups.

Goal No. 1. - Encourage additional avenues for participation to the youth in our community.

This goal describes short and long term steps for La Cañada Flintridge to ensure that participation in youth activities is encouraged. We anticipate developing programs, conducting fairs and seminars, and actively marketing opportunities available to youth in the community.

Desired Result: La Cañada Flintridge wishes to ensure that every youth has an equal opportunity to participate in any and every youth activity available to them. We would like to provide a new and more positive outlook for the youth and community life of La Cañada Flintridge. We envision a community in which all youth are connected to and made aware of the many opportunities available to them.

Short Term Steps *(in order of priority)*

- Producing a local newspaper Youth Council Monthly Column to inform youth about the accomplishments of

the youth council and to provide opinions and knowledge on controversial or pressing issues in La Cañada Flintridge. (*implemented*)

- Offering an annual or quarterly **Community Service Fair** to educate middle and high school students about the various volunteer programs and giving them the option of signing up for community service activities. (*in development*)
- Sponsoring a **"Teen Talent Show"** and/or **Teen Film Festival** annually to showcase the extremely talented youth of La Cañada Flintridge. (*in development*)
- Planning **Youth Fitness Awareness Days** in which experts on fitness and nutrition educate the youth of La Cañada Flintridge how to treat the body during sports and activities.
- Planning **Ski Trips** during the winter to bring together members of our youth and provide an athletic opportunity for teenagers to participate as a group. (*in conjunction with RBCC*)
- Hosting a **"Battle of the Bands"** in which high school bands from the La Cañada Flintridge area perform on a monthly basis in front of a teenage audience. The goal would be for kids to express themselves musically, while informing them of youth activities available to them. (*in conjunction with RBCC*)
- Coordinate **seminars** by local community groups (even local area colleges and universities) **to prepare youth for future and immediate employment.**

Long Term Steps

- **Maintain a website**, connected to the city's official site, which is maintained by the Youth Council (or any group such as 21st Century Institutes participants) and is constantly updated to include all recent events and programs occurring within La Cañada Flintridge.

- Starting a **Youth Mentoring Program** in which high school students can volunteer to mentor younger children in all curricular subjects.
- Establish a **Youth Outreach** program to encourage local teenagers to participate in local youth activities. The goal is to reach out to youth who do not feel connected in the community.

Goal No. 2. – Develop additional and more effective methods of communication to actively engage our youth.

The purpose of this goal is to better inform and connect the youth of La Cañada Flintridge to the programs available. By increasing communication between the youth and community groups, increased participation and collaboration will be evident as a result.

Desired Result: The desired result of this goal is to increase awareness about programs, activities, and resources for youth involvement. Thus, every youth will have an equal opportunity to participate in each and every youth activity they so desire.

Short-term steps

- Coordinate with schools to **expand the use of School Public Address Announcements** to inform youth of community activities and opportunities.
- **Produce a Youth Public Service Announcement/Short Film** competition on public health and safety issues impacting youth with the winning entries featured on the City's cable-access channel. (*in conjunction with RBCC-scheduled for May 7, 2004*)
- Having **Youth Leaders Attend Youth Council Meetings** so as to receive feedback about situations in our city, to incorporate all groups into La Cañada Flintridge, and to gather new ideas and thoughts about improving our youth activities.
- **Produce a Cable-access talk show for youth**, which would inform the public of upcoming events and of

current issues plaguing the youth of La Cañada Flintridge (drugs, college applications, etc) (in development with Public Safety Commission)

- **Create a monthly youth newsletter**, which would include upcoming events and programs within the area and allow the youth to subscribe via e-mail.
- Create and maintain a directory of all the local programs/community groups (**Youth "Yellow Pages"**) and make it readily accessible by the public.

Long-term steps

- Forming a **Strategic Marketing Plan** to help the youth council advertise programs through various tactics such as fliers, newspaper advertisements, t-shirts, enticing activities, etc. Collect and make available information about youth (such as directory of youth programs, flyers from organizations and clubs) in popular "youth hang-out" locations, such as public libraries, schools, counseling/career centers, etc.
- **Promote active participation at traditionally "adult-only" groups** (such as Kiwanis, etc). This will increase communication between the youth of La Cañada Flintridge and adults to facilitate communication and mentoring between the generations.

Goal No. 3 – Foster collaboration between and among the City and a variety of community groups.

The purpose of this goal is to bring together the residents and the organizations that provide services to youth to form a closer community and to create a safe environment. In this way the efforts and resources of these groups can be maximized to best serve our youth and to enhance the community.

Desired Result: Eliminate overlap of services and utilize the expertise and resources of all groups within the community.

Short Term Steps

- Research and finalize a database of community groups, service providers and regional resources available to youth.
- Monitor and engage other Youth Organizations in the Community to update each other on programs and discuss possible ways of collaboration.
- Actively encourage community groups to attend monthly Youth Council meetings in order to gain additional insights and ideas.
- Collaborate with at least four community groups on additional projects involving youth.
- Collaborate with the Community Prevention Council on establishing their own Youth initiative in the Community.
- Collaborate with a Senior group in the community in order to address inter-generational issues and to identify potential joint projects.

Long Term Steps

- Establish a "Council of Youth Councils" within the community to include at least one representative from each of the City's many youth groups to discuss common interests and opportunities for collaboration.
- Coordinate annual "Youth Summit" with local community groups in to evaluate the progress of specific goals within the Master Plan and to incorporate new ideas and solutions.
- Collaborate with the Institutes for the 21st Century on the development of a cable television broadcasting production program to train youth on the technical aspects of cable television broadcasting.

- Utilize City and Community Resources more effectively in order to meet goals of the Master Plan.
- Conduct research in coordination with our community partners to ascertain the need to create some sort of a "Teen Center" or "Hang Out" for youth to be open after-school and on weekends.

SUMMARY

The Youth Master Plan is the culmination of almost two years of outreach to both the youth of our community and the groups that work diligently to offer their services and expertise. The process of developing a Youth Master Plan required the *participation* of a variety of community groups, effective *communication* amongst the groups, Youth Council and City Staff, and a focused effort at fostering *collaboration*. In essence, the process of developing a Youth Master Plan has provided us with a roadmap for its implementation.

As we strive together to ensure that La Cañada Flintridge is a community that "provide(s) a supportive environment, rich in diversity and committed to the principles of fairness and equity (for our youth)", we will continue to return to this document to show us the way. As our children grow and new families move into the community so shall this document continue to be one that is organic; seeded by the wisdom of the past and fertilized by the energy of the present, so that it may blossom and regenerate for the youth of the future.