

General Plan Implementation

The most important measure of a general plan is how well its policies are carried out to achieve the community's vision and goals once the plan has been adopted. The 2030 General Plan will be implemented through a combination of private and public actions during the General Plan time horizon. The County will use the policies included throughout this General Plan as a decision making guide for a wide range of discretionary actions. The County will consider development proposals in new growth areas and existing developed areas, requiring project revisions or conditions in order to ensure General Plan consistency. The County will coordinate with other public agencies on investments, such as infrastructure and public facilities to support land use change consistent with the General Plan. The County will use guidance in the General Plan to update its codes and standards. County staff will use General Plan actions as "work orders" during the planning period, consulting with the Board of Supervisors to determine priorities and timing for these proactive measures.

Legal Authority

California planning law requires cities and counties to prepare and adopt a "comprehensive, long-range general plan" to guide development of the community. Statutory authority for a general plan is described in Title 7, Division 1 of the Government Code of the State of California. Article 5, Section 65302 et seq. requires cities to adopt a comprehensive general plan to guide future physical development. Cities and counties have the sole responsibility for the review, approval, and adoption of the general plan. However, State agencies have review and comment authority over some local government actions.

Use of the General Plan

The 2030 General Plan will be used by the County in:

- Entitlement approvals;
- Plan approvals;
- Updates to development codes, including zoning, subdivision, grading, public improvements, changes to impact fee structures, and other County codes, standards, and plans;
- Public investments and programming; and
- Other County decisions.

General Plan Amendments

General plans are meant to allow flexibility in implementation. Policies provide a decision making guide, but discretion is inherent in implementing the General Plan. Some variation from the policy language may be allowed, so long as such variations further General Plan goals. The 2030 General Plan provides substantial opportunity for development and conservation. The County will be supportive of development that supports General Plan goals, adhering to the framework presented in the General Plan to manage growth and development at a fiscally and environmentally supportable pace. But, as conditions and needs change, the County may consider proposed amendments to the General Plan. Some of these will be policy changes, while others may be changes to land use designations. Some General Plan Amendments will be accomplished through adoption of Specific Plans or Community Plans (also known as Rural Community Plans), although the adoption of Specific Plans and Community Plans would not necessarily require a General Plan Amendment. Whether a General Plan Amendment is



required would depend on if the subject Specific Plan or Community Plan is consistent with the 2030 General Plan.

Proposed changes to the General Plan will be analyzed and evaluated according to the merit of each proposal and consistency with the intent of the General Plan. The approval of the Board of Supervisors, with the following findings, is required to approve a General Plan Amendment:

- The proposed amendment is in the public interest;
- The proposed amendment is consistent and compatible with the goals and policies of the General Plan;
- The potential effects of the proposed amendment have been evaluated and determined not to be detrimental to the public health, safety, or welfare; and
- The proposed amendment has been processed in accordance with the applicable provisions of the California Government Code and the California Environmental Quality Act.

In addition to the above findings, expansion of the Valley Growth Boundary requires approval of at least 4 out of 5 Board members.

The County is limited in how many times it may amend any one of the mandatory general plan elements. An element may not be amended more than four times in one calendar year, except in the following circumstances:

- The element is optional;
- The amendments are requested and necessary for affordable housing;
- The amendment is necessary to comply with a court decision in a case involving the legal adequacy of the general plan;
- The amendments are made to bring a general plan into compliance with an airport land use plan; or,
- The amendments are needed in connection with the adoption of a comprehensive development plan under the Urban Development Incentive Act.

Specific Plans

In accordance with State law, the County may adopt specific plans for properties within the boundaries of the Planning Area. All property owners in a specific plan are encouraged to participate in the specific planning process. If properly designed and implemented, a specific plan, as set forth in California Government Code, is a helpful tool for providing a transition between Countywide goals and policies contained in the 2030 General Plan and subsequent entitlement requests (e.g., tentative maps, conditional use permits).

The specific plan is essentially a complete “blueprint” for the development of a defined area. Specific plans must be consistent with the 2030 General Plan, relevant County codes and standards, and must contain, at a minimum:

- Land use diagram and description;
- Open space diagram and description;
- Circulation system diagram and description;



- Policies, design guidelines, and development standards;
- Parks and recreation diagram and description;
- Affordable housing strategy;
- Public facility plan, including the location and sizing of major infrastructure (e.g., water, wastewater, storm drainage) and other public facilities (e.g., parks, schools) consistent with the General Plan, master plans, and standards;
- Phasing and financing of all public infrastructure and facilities;
- Description of the requirements, entitlements, and process for specific plan implementation; and
- Analysis of consistency with General Plan goals, policies (including diagrams), and actions, as relevant.

In addition to providing well-coordinated land use and infrastructure planning, specific plans may be required to provide the information necessary to support applications to the Local Agency Formation Commission and coordination with relevant special districts.

Rural Community Plans

Yuba County has several unincorporated rural communities. The 2030 General Plan recognizes that each of these rural communities has unique characteristics, and that some rural residents have a desire to create plans specific to their community. The 2030 General Plan provides these communities the direction necessary to preserve the rural lifestyle that has shaped where they are today. The General Plan also includes overarching guidance to allow these rural communities, in conjunction with the County, to prepare community-based plans that would guide future land use change, if they so choose. As noted previously, the adoption of Community Plans would not necessarily require a General Plan Amendment. Whether a General Plan Amendment is required would depend on if the subject Specific Plan or Community Plan is consistent with the 2030 General Plan.

The General Plan and Other County Regulations

State law places the General Plan atop the hierarchy of land use planning regulations. Several local ordinances and other County plans must conform to General Plan policy direction and work to implement the General Plan. The General Plan provides a governing basis for all other plans and planning documents of the County and all codes, ordinances, and policies of the County related to land use change, transportation, environmental resources, infrastructure, and other related topics.

Cities and counties must make a “consistency” finding with the general plan for any subdivision map, zoning action, public facility plans, and other functions of local government. Court decisions have concluded that these “consistency” determinations cannot be made if the local jurisdiction does not have a legally adequate general plan. In effect, local governments cannot issue development permits or perform many vital public functions without a legally adequate general plan.

In California, general plans are cities’ and counties’ guiding policy documents. Local agencies implement general plans in part through the adoption and enforcement of zoning codes, subdivision ordinances, and other regulations. General plan land use designations and planning policy provide a framework for zoning designations and development standards. Cities and counties’ design regulations and guidelines are also governed by general plans. General plans often contain policy that guides any municipal code sections and ordinances that regulate grading, building permits, open space dedications, landscaping



requirements, parkland dedication, off-street parking requirements, transportation infrastructure, signage, and other planning-related codes and ordinances.

Other Agencies' Use of the General Plan

Regional governmental agencies, such as the Sacramento Area Council of Governments (SACOG), the Feather River Air Quality Management District (FRAQMD), and the Regional Water Quality Control Board (RWQCB), have been established in recognition of the fact that planning issues extend beyond the boundaries of individual cities. Efforts to address regional planning issues, such as air and water quality, transportation, affordable housing, and habitat conservation have resulted in the adoption of regional plans. The policies adopted by Yuba County will be affected by these plans, and will in turn have effects on these other plans. The 2030 General Plan and the accompanying General Plan EIR both make reference to laws, plans, and regulations administered by other public agencies. In many instances, the County's policies are specifically designed to achieve consistency with regulations of another public agency. In other cases, the County commits to seeking input from other agencies on issues that may arise over the course of implementing the 2030 General Plan. Unless otherwise specified, any reference to "consulting with" or "coordinating with" other agencies in no way delegates the County's responsibility for land use entitlement or lead agency responsibilities for managing land use change. Some of the key areas of interaction with other agencies are described below.

California Environmental Quality Act

The General Plan is closely linked to the State's environmental laws. CEQA recognizes the authority of the local general planning process in several areas. In law and in practice, the environmental review process is an integral part of the local planning, development review, and decision making process. Defined as a "project" under CEQA, the general plan adoption process is subject to environmental analysis and disclosure. As a policy document, the general plan provides guidance and sets standards for several areas of mandatory environmental review for other "projects" undertaken by local governments and the private sector. In recognition of this close relationship between general plan policy and the environmental review process, the 2030 General Plan has been prepared to respond to changes in the State's CEQA regulations, CEQA Guidelines, and relevant and applicable CEQA case law. It is possible that CEQA review administered by the County would have one or more responsible agencies or even co-lead agencies, as appropriate.

Yuba Local Agency Formation Commission

The provisions of California's Cortese-Knox-Hertzberg Local Government Reorganization Act of 2000 set forth procedures for LAFCOs throughout the state to review annexation applications. The Act was adopted to:

- encourage orderly development;
- ensure that populations receive efficient and high quality governmental services; and
- guide development away from open space and prime agricultural lands, unless such action promotes planned, orderly, and efficient development.

Yuba County LAFCO must adhere to adopted guidelines pursuant to State law in its review of proposed changes to service boundaries and spheres of influence. Responsibilities of LAFCO include annexations and detachments of land to cities or special districts, the formation and dissolution of governmental agencies including cities and districts and the establishment of spheres of influence which identify the probable future boundaries of governmental agencies.



Regional Water Quality Control Board

The Central Valley Regional Water Quality Control Board (CVRWQCB) is a nine-member state board with the primary duty of protecting the quality of the waters within the Central Valley Region for all beneficial uses. This duty is performed by formulating and adopting water quality control plans for specific ground and surface water basins and by prescribing and enforcing requirements on waste discharges. The CVRWQCB will be responsible for approving storm drain and wastewater discharge permits required by the County to implement stormwater management plans.

California Department of Transportation

California Department of Transportation (Caltrans) plans and oversees the state highway system and works with other governmental agencies and local jurisdictions to plan, develop, manage, and maintain California's transportation system. The state is divided into 12 Caltrans planning districts. Yuba County is located in District 3 which also includes the Sacramento Valley counties of Sutter, Yolo, Yuba, Colusa, Glenn, Butte, Sacramento, and four mountain counties (Placer, El Dorado, Nevada, and Sierra). Caltrans has permitting authority for all access to and from state highways and therefore works closely with the County to ensure the safe and efficient function of state routes.

Feather River Air Quality Management District

The Feather River Air Quality Management District (FRAQMD) attains and maintains air quality conditions in Yuba and Sutter counties through a comprehensive program of planning, regulation, enforcement, technical innovation, and promotion of the understanding of air quality issues. The clean-air strategy of FRAQMD includes the preparation of plans and programs for the attainment of ambient air quality standards, adoption and enforcement of rules and regulations, and issuance of permits for stationary sources. FRAQMD also inspects stationary sources, responds to citizen complaints, monitors ambient air quality and meteorological conditions, and implements other programs and regulations.

FRAQMD and the other air districts in the air basin have jointly prepared and adopted air quality attainment plans (AQAP) and reports. The most recent AQAP, completed in 2003, addresses all of the following:

- air quality modeling to identify the reductions needed and design strategies to effectively reduce emissions;
- programs to comprehensively reduce emissions and to take advantage of zero- and near-zero-emission technologies; and,
- the impacts of pollutant transport air quality planning efforts.

Sacramento Area Council of Governments

Sacramento Area Council of Governments (SACOG) is an association of all the local governments within the six-county SACOG region (Sacramento, Yolo, El Dorado, Placer, Sutter, and Yuba counties). The County's General Plan will be used as the basis for several different regional planning efforts led by SACOG.

SACOG is responsible for development of federal and state transportation plans and programs that secure transportation funding for the region's highways, transit, streets and roads, pedestrian, and other transportation system improvements. SACOG is required also to coordinate transportation planning with state and federal air quality laws and regulations.



SACOG is also charged with distributing the local share of the regional housing needs among the cities and unincorporated areas of the County. The regional housing needs allocation (RHNA) is used as a critical measure of compliance with state housing law. The purpose of the RHNA is to allocate to the cities and county their “fair share” of the region’s projected housing need by household income group. The RHNA will also be required to be consistent with assumptions used in development of the regional transportation plan.

Cities of Wheatland and Marysville

The incorporated cities of Marysville (the County seat), and Wheatland are located in Yuba County. As noted elsewhere, the 2030 General Plan applies only to unincorporated areas of the County. However, coordination with the cities will be required to implement several General Plan policies and actions.

Beale Air Force Base

Beale Air Force Base (AFB) is located in southern Yuba County 13 miles east of Marysville. Beale AFB is situated on 22,944 acres of federally-owned land consisting of base buildings, base housing, and one active concrete runway. The General Plan includes several important areas of communication and coordination between the County and the AFB related to ensuring compatibility of surrounding land uses, as well as pursuing mutual goals for infrastructure and economic development.

Monitoring and Revising the General Plan

The County will regularly review the General Plan to help set priorities and evaluate progress toward the County’s goals. The County will annually review progress toward General Plan goals and document its findings in a report to the Governor’s Office of Planning and Research. In this review, the County will consider the availability of new planning and environmental analytical tools or policy approaches, new funding sources, and any feedback from plan monitoring activities.

