


TO: BOARD OF DIRECTORS
FROM: BRUCE BUEL 
DATE: APRIL 3, 2009

AGENDA ITEM
E-8
APRIL 8, 2009

COMMENTS TO SLO COUNTY RE STRATEGIC GROWTH AMENDMENTS

ITEM

Authorize submittal of comments to SLO County re Strategic Growth Amendments
[AUTHORIZE SUBMITTAL]

BACKGROUND

Attached are excerpts from the proposed Inland Strategic Growth General Plan Amendments. The County has set April 10, 2009 as the deadline for receipt of comments. The Ad Hoc Committee comprised of President Harrison and Director Winn is scheduled to provide recommended comments at the Board Meeting.

FISCAL IMPACT - NONE

RECOMMENDATION


Staff recommends that the Board receive the Committee Presentation, agree on concepts for comment, authorize submittal of such comments and authorize Director Winn to represent NCSD at the Planning Commission and the Board of Supervisors.

ATTACHMENTS

- Strategic Growth General Plan Amendment Proposal

t:\documents\board matters\board meetings\board letter 2009\Strategic Growth.doc

**COUNTY OF SAN LUIS OBISPO BOARD OF SUPERVISORS
AGENDA ITEM TRANSMITTAL**

(1) DEPARTMENT Planning and Building		(2) MEETING DATE March 24, 2009		(3) CONTACT/PHONE James Lopes, Planner III, Project Manager (805) 781-5975	
(4) SUBJECT Continued hearing on a request by the County of San Luis Obispo to amend the general plan by incorporating "smart growth" principles, goals, policies and implementing strategies into the overall land use and transportation policy document, Framework for Planning, for both the Inland area and the Coastal Zone.					
(5) SUMMARY OF REQUEST After holding hearings on March 25 and July 15, 2008, the Board of Supervisors continued the hearing on this item indefinitely on July 15, 2008, to provide more public outreach and opportunities for feedback, and to simplify the proposed goals and strategies. The Board of Supervisors can take tentative action to approve the amendments at today's hearing or on April 14. Adoption of the amendments could occur on April 28 as part of the spring 2009 cycle of general plan amendments. The County Planning Commission recommends adoption of "strategic growth" principles, goals, policies and strategies to implement the "smart growth" principles that were adopted by the Board of Supervisors in June 2005. "Strategic growth" policies will protect agricultural and natural resources, plan most growth within urban areas where transportation and services are adequate, and create traditional, compact, walkable, and complete communities.					
(6) RECOMMENDED ACTION 1) Consider the amendments recommended for approval by the Planning Commission as set forth in attached Exhibits A and B, as well as the alternative amendments with consolidated policies and strategies and simplified language in attached Exhibits C and D; and 2) Take tentative action to approve the amendments in attached Exhibits A and B, or the alternative amendments in attached Exhibits C and D, based on the attached findings; and 3) Continue the hearing to April 28, 2009 for final action, to occur through subsequent adoption of the resolution and ordinances approving all amendments in the spring 2009 General Plan Amendment Cycle.					
(7) FUNDING SOURCE(S) Department budget		(8) CURRENT YEAR COST N/A		(9) ANNUAL COST N/A	
(10) BUDGETED? <input type="checkbox"/> No <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Yes <input type="checkbox"/> N/A					
(11) OTHER AGENCY/ADVISORY GROUP INVOLVEMENT (LIST): Agriculture, Public Works, Health and General Services Departments, San Luis Obispo Council of Governments, Local Agency Formation Commission, all community advisory councils.					
(12) WILL REQUEST REQUIRE ADDITIONAL STAFF? <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> No <input type="checkbox"/> Yes, How Many? _____ <input type="checkbox"/> Permanent _____ <input type="checkbox"/> Limited Term _____ <input type="checkbox"/> Contract _____ <input type="checkbox"/> Temporary Help _____					
(13) SUPERVISOR DISTRICT(S) <input type="checkbox"/> 1st, <input type="checkbox"/> 2nd, <input type="checkbox"/> 3rd, <input type="checkbox"/> 4th, <input type="checkbox"/> 5th, <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> All			(14) LOCATION MAP <input type="checkbox"/> Attached <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> N/A		(15) Maddy Act Appointments Signed-off by Clerk of the Board
(16) AGENDA PLACEMENT <input type="checkbox"/> Consent <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Hearing (Time Est.: 180 min.) <input type="checkbox"/> Presentation <input type="checkbox"/> Board Business (Time Est. _____)			(17) EXECUTED DOCUMENTS <input type="checkbox"/> Resolutions (Orig + 4 copies) <input type="checkbox"/> Contracts (Orig + 4 copies) <input type="checkbox"/> Ordinances (Orig + 4 copies) <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> N/A		
(18) NEED EXTRA EXECUTED COPIES? <input type="checkbox"/> Number: _____ <input type="checkbox"/> Attached <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> N/A			(19) APPROPRIATION TRANSFER REQUIRED? <input type="checkbox"/> Submitted <input type="checkbox"/> 4/5th's Vote Required <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> N/A		
(20) OUTLINE AGREEMENT REQUISITION NUMBER (OAR) _____			(21) W-9 <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> No <input type="checkbox"/> Yes		(22) Agenda Item History <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> March 25, 2008, July 15, 2008
(23) ADMINISTRATIVE OFFICE REVIEW <div style="text-align: right; font-family: cursive; font-size: 1.2em; margin-top: 10px;">  </div>					



SAN LUIS OBISPO COUNTY
DEPARTMENT OF PLANNING AND BUILDING

VICTOR HOLANDA, AICP
DIRECTOR

DATE: MARCH 24, 2009

TO: BOARD OF SUPERVISORS

FROM: JAMES LOPES, AICP, PLANNER III
MIKE WULKAN, SUPERVISING PLANNER

VIA: CHUCK STEVENSON, AICP, MANAGER, LONG RANGE PLANNING
DIVISION *CHS.*

SUBJECT: CONTINUED HEARING ON A REQUEST BY THE COUNTY OF SAN LUIS OBISPO TO AMEND THE GENERAL PLAN BY INCORPORATING "SMART GROWTH" PRINCIPLES, GOALS, POLICIES AND IMPLEMENTING STRATEGIES INTO THE OVERALL LAND USE AND TRANSPORTATION POLICY DOCUMENT, FRAMEWORK FOR PLANNING, FOR BOTH THE INLAND AREA AND THE COASTAL ZONE.

RECOMMENDATION

- 1) Consider the amendments recommended for approval by the Planning Commission as set forth in attached Exhibits A and B, as well as the alternative amendments with consolidated policies and strategies and simplified language in attached Exhibits C and D; and
- 2) Take tentative action to approve the amendments in attached Exhibits A and B, or the alternative amendments in attached Exhibits C and D, based on the attached findings; and
- 3) Continue the hearing to April 28, 2009 for final action, to occur through subsequent adoption of the resolution and ordinances approving all amendments in the spring 2009 General Plan Amendment Cycle.

DISCUSSION

Summary

After holding hearings on March 25 and July 15, 2008, the Board of Supervisors continued the hearing on this item indefinitely on July 15, 2008 (staff reports for the previous hearings are in the Clerk's file). The Board directed staff to provide more public outreach and opportunities for feedback, and to simplify the proposed goals and strategies. The Board of Supervisors can take tentative action to approve the amendments at today's hearing or on April 14. Adoption of the amendments could occur on April 28 as part of the spring 2009 cycle of general plan amendments.

The County Planning Commission recommends adoption of "strategic growth" principles, goals, policies and implementing strategies in Framework for Planning for the following areas:

- Inland Area (outside the Coastal Zone) – Exhibit A
- Coastal Zone – Exhibit B

In response to Board direction, staff has prepared simplified wording and consolidated goals and strategies, that have the same effect as the Planning Commission recommendation, in the following attached exhibits:

- Exhibit C - Inland Area (outside the Coastal Zone)
- Exhibit D - Coastal Zone

The exhibits are also available at the Department of Planning and Building and online at www.sloplanning.org >Recent News, >Strategic Growth.

If your Board wants to approve Exhibits C and D with the simplified and consolidated language, staff will revise Appendix A (see Exhibit A), an implementation schedule and priorities for the proposed strategies, so that it reflects the revisions to those strategies in Exhibits C and D. In that case, staff will make the revised Appendix available prior to final adoption of the amendments.

The proposed policies implement eleven "smart growth" principles that were adopted by the Board of Supervisors in June 2005 (see the proposed principles below). "Strategic growth" responds to environmental constraints, economic and social concerns with efficient planning and development. This results in saving energy, land, water and other resources, and reducing the costs of serving growth.

Strategic Growth Proposals

The purpose of *strategic growth* is to bring together the goals of sustaining our resources, providing for a vibrant economy, and planning livable communities into coordinated strategies for action.

- Strategic growth aims to serve community needs and enhance the quality of life by balancing environmental, economic and social concerns with realistic, efficient land use solutions based on resources.
- As resources become more limited and the costs of infrastructure increase, the County will be able to better utilize energy, land, water and fiscal resources to serve growth more efficiently.
- The proposed 11 strategic growth principles (inset) and their goals and strategies are intended to coordinate land use, transportation and infrastructure planning within known resource limits.

Proposed Strategic Growth Principles:

1. *Preserve open space, scenic natural beauty and sensitive environmental areas. Conserve energy resources. Conserve agricultural resources and protect agricultural land.*
2. *Strengthen and direct development towards existing communities.*
3. *Foster distinctive, attractive communities with a strong sense of place.*
4. *Create walkable neighborhoods and towns.*
5. *Provide a variety of transportation choices.*
6. *Create a range of housing opportunities and choices.*
7. *Encourage mixed land uses.*
8. *Take advantage of compact building design.*
9. *Make development decisions predictable, fair and cost-effective.*
10. *Encourage community and stakeholder collaboration.*
11. *Strengthen regional cooperation.*

The strategic growth proposals are derived from local experiences across America, where cities and counties and regional governments have worked together to reduce inefficient large-lot development, foster new and renewed community life, and sustain environmental resources for future generations. Strategic growth development patterns are recalled from communities built before World War II, when neighborhoods and towns were more pedestrian-oriented. Strategic growth is based on collaboration with communities and a variety of stakeholders in order to achieve the principles and goals.

- **Principles** state the "big-picture" goals that organize land use and transportation planning into major, discrete efforts. The principles are inter-related, and each one needs detailed attention in order to create the safe, healthy, livable, prosperous, and well-governed communities that are intended by the County's Communitywide Results.
- **Goals** are proposed as *policies* that will create the results intended by the principles. Following the goals (*policies*) will achieve the principles. Exhibits C and D show the proposed change in terminology from "Goals" to "Policies."
- **Strategies** are the specific programs, projects or actions that will achieve the goals. Appendix A in Exhibit A contains the schedule for starting strategies. They are keyed to programs that can consolidate them into clusters for efficient completion of the time frames.

Implementing plans is complex; the extensive number and range of strategies would require budget and staffing commitments to complete them within their identified time frames. Completing the strategies within a 20-year horizon will be important. The highest priority is given to "essential" strategies that must be started and completed soon for strategic growth to have a minimal effect. Appendix A, Exhibit A lists of the strategies and their recommended priorities and start dates.

The proposed amendments address the following sections and chapters in both the Inland and Coastal Zone document, Framework for Planning:

1. **Preface** – Changes to describe the setting and issues concerning growth in general.
2. **Chapter 1 – Introduction and General Goals**
 - A new "major issues" section describes issues about the existing pattern and trends of land use from a statewide and regional perspective.
 - A new section describes strategic growth as a melding of smart growth with strategic planning.
 - Strategic growth principles, goals and implementing strategies are added within the existing General Goals section. Eleven principles are proposed that provide guidance for planning and directing growth toward compact, walkable communities, and for conserving and sustaining important agricultural, natural and scenic resources. Goals and implementing strategies are proposed to address the location, amount and design of future population and commercial growth, and to provide supportive public services and facilities.
 - A requirement for new development and subdivisions to be consistent with the principles and goals is added to section D, Organization of the Land Use Element.

3. Chapter 4 – Public Service Considerations

- Revisions encourage more efficient services and facilities as part of compact community planning.
- Goals and objectives encourage compact community development and expansion to enable the efficient delivery of services and facilities.
- Goals and objectives encourage planning for land uses consistent with the sustainable, renewable capacities of resources, services and facilities.
- Revisions to Section D add criteria to consider for expansion of urban and village reserve lines and spheres of influence.
- Revisions to Section H update the description of the Local Agency Formation Commission's (LAFCO) jurisdiction and purview.

4. Chapter 5 – Circulation Element

- Revised street design guidelines
- Goals and objectives for pedestrian circulation and bikeways
- Revised objective for transit to have the same consideration as streets and highways in funding decisions

5. Chapter 6 – Land Use Categories

- Guideline No. 13 for land use category amendments is added in order to consider the conversion of agricultural land in reference to the Agriculture & Open Space Element.

Environmental Determination

The Environmental Coordinator, after completion of the initial study, finds that there is no substantial evidence that the project may have a significant effect on the environment, and the preparation of an Environmental Impact Report is not necessary. Therefore, a Revised Mitigated Negative Declaration (MND) pursuant to Public Resources Code Section 21000 et seq., and CA Code of Regulations Section 15000 et seq. was issued on January 10, 2008 for the proposed amendments (see Attachment 2).

The Revised MND determines that the proposed amendments will not have significant impacts on the environment, and no mitigation measures are necessary, due to its programmatic nature and resource-based, general scope. The Project Description for the Revised MND states that, "The proposed goals, policies and implementing strategies emphasize that planning activities and development should sustain the capacities of natural resources and adequate services and facilities. They do not create additional growth beyond the existing General Plan. They are not specific to any one location or community. The proposed amendment applies to all of the unincorporated area of San Luis Obispo County, including the Coastal Zone."

Water supply issues that were raised by the Nipomo Community Services District are addressed in the Water Supply section, page 24 of the Revised MND, and in previous Planning Commission staff reports. Jim Harrison, current Board President, sent the attached letter of March 2, 2009, with the statement that the proposed amendment must comply with the California Environmental Quality Act (CEQA) and with Ordinance 3090 "in regards to impacts on the Nipomo Mesa Water Conservation Area" (see Attachment 4). Ordinance 3090 was adopted as Land Use Ordinance Section 22.112-020F (attached with NCSO letter), which requires that,

"Applications for general plan amendments shall include documentation regarding the estimated existing and proposed non-agricultural water demand for the land division or development that could occur with the General Plan Amendment." The proposed amendment is not subject to the standard, since it does not propose any development entitlements that would generate "non-agricultural water demand." The amendment does not propose any changes in density or development entitlements that can be measured. This and other points are made in the Revised MND and previous staff reports, which are summarized below:

1. The amendments are guidance for conducting planning activities and reviewing discretionary projects and amendments, and they do not change any entitlements by themselves. It is speculative to assert that the proposed amendments will by themselves create or lead to the creation of additional water demand.
2. Due to the general nature of the proposed guiding principles and goals, it is not possible to quantify the location or rate of development that could occur.
3. The policies and strategies for planning more growth beyond current allowances are to be based on the sustained capacity of resources, services and facilities. A goal is proposed, by which new amendments and discretionary development projects would be measured, to "give highest priority to avoiding impacts or minimizing significant environmental impacts from development through site and project design."

At the March 25, 2008 public hearing, NCSD representatives Michael Winn and attorney Jon Seitz requested that the following strategy be given an "Essential" priority instead of "High" for implementation in Appendix A, which staff agrees to recommend. Mr. Winn also recommended that the amendment envisioned by the strategy be more definite, and where a resource Level of Severity II or III exists, seek to prohibit future amendments until the Level of Severity is less than II. Staff does not agree, but recommends changing the requirement for a future amendment so that it "shall not be approved unless" proof of adequate water and sewage disposal capacities exist for the amendment and other planned development within the urban area (where a resource Level of Severity II or II exists). The third area of concern that Mr. Winn expressed was that this and other capacity-related policies also include the rural area that may be affected by a resource shortage, such as the Nipomo Mesa. Staff agrees with this recommendation, and proposes the following revisions in underline, as also shown in Exhibits C and D (see Exhibit C, page 13, Implementing Strategy 14 for Principle 2):

"Amend the Land Use Ordinance to require that amendments to the Land Use Element or Ordinance that propose increases in density or additional development where certified Resource Management System levels II or III exist, shall not be approved unless they provide proof of adequate, available water and sewage disposal capacities to serve: 1) the proposed amendment, 2) existing development, and 3) allowed development on vacant parcels within the rural, urban or village area that are subject to the RMS Levels of Severity."

Public Outreach Efforts

March 25, 2008 Hearing

On March 25, 2008, your Board held the first hearing on this item to consider the Planning Commission-recommended strategic growth amendments. Testimony at the hearing was critical of the recommendations for strategic growth and of the process. The Board continued

the hearing to July 15, 2008 for more outreach to participants in the hearing and other stakeholders.

After the March 25, 2008 hearing, staff organized a series of workshops with representatives of business and development, agriculture, and environmental groups. Consensus among these groups was summarized in the staff report (Clerk's file) for the July 15, 2008 Board of Supervisors hearing, as follows:

"All groups with whom staff met voiced the following common comments and concerns:

- They voiced support and desires to improve the strategic growth proposals, not defeat them.
- They encouraged more education of the public about the benefits that strategic growth efforts would bring before more hearings are held.
- They were interested in more collaboration among the groups and integration of their ideas in order to make strategic growth succeed as a planning approach.
- They encouraged more clarity and sequencing in the proposals.
- They were concerned about the extent of rural residential growth, and how to shift growth to urban areas and cities."

July 15, 2008 Hearing

On July 15, 2008, the Board of Supervisors heard testimony and continued the hearing off-calendar to allow time to produce an outreach effort and refine the proposals into simpler statements with more defined time frames.

- Responses by staff to the major criticisms at the March 25, 2008 hearing are contained in the staff report for the July 15, 2008 hearing.
- Staff made the following proposals, which the Board of Supervisors endorsed on July 15, 2008 (*Staff comments are italicized to report on these efforts*):

"Taking more time for broad public outreach will help to familiarize and involve the general population with strategic growth concepts and benefits. This effort could result in more community input to advisory councils and decision makers. Using Department funds, staff would look into hiring the services of a consultant with specialized media skills to assist staff in conducting the following interactive outreach over several months:

(Staff Comment: The critical budget situation prevented the use of Department funds for consultant services.)

- a. Develop and present informative, simple programs about strategic growth and planning in several media, such as print, television and the Internet.

(Staff Comment: A section was created on the department website with both background and detailed information about the proposals.)

- b. Present opportunities for feedback, suggestions and alternative ideas online, in print and perhaps in phone surveys.

(Staff Comment: A survey was created for online use)

- c. Continue leadership meetings with interested representatives from three communities of interest: agriculture, development/business, and environment. Extend this interaction to health and social equity organizations, and develop collaborative interactions among these groups.

(Staff Comment: A consolidated meeting of all these interests was held on October 10, 2009 – see below.)

- d. Engage in leadership meetings with representatives of cities and unincorporated towns.

(Staff Comment: The Board of Supervisors met with cities, districts and agencies on October 14, 2008.)

- e. Continue to work with cities and other agencies together with the SLOCOG Community 2050 Blueprint program to develop a regional smart growth vision."

(Staff Comment: SLOCOG was instrumental in co-sponsoring the October 14, 2008 meeting. Steve Devencenzi, Planning Director of SLOCOG, introduced the audience to a new regional effort for a "sustainable community strategy," which is required by SB 375 as a leading component in developing the next Regional Transportation Plan this year.)

October 10, 2008 Workshop

A stakeholders workshop was held on October 10, 2008 that brought together people in the business, environmental and agriculture sectors (who had met before separately) with people in the health and social services fields. They organized into small groups and identified concerns with and obstacles to strategic growth, and solutions to overcome them.

October 14, 2008 Workshop

On October 14, 2008, the Board of Supervisors held a meeting with other jurisdictions to discuss the obstacles to implementing strategic growth principles. Attending were elected officials of cities, service districts and special districts and agencies, including the Superintendent of the County Office of Education, and the public. Generally, comments were favorable for implementing strategic growth--supporting it with adequate water supplies, infrastructure and transportation--and for refining inter-governmental collaboration by working better together to achieve results.

Other Public Outreach

The economic downturn impacted the County and Department budgets this fiscal year, and planned funding was no longer available for an extensive, broad public outreach campaign as envisioned. Consultant costs for workshops and publications were too great to fund a traditional "get out the word" effort. However, in a two-quarter graduate planning studio class taught by instructors Doreen Liberto-Blanck and Scott Bruce, students engaged in research and reported on the following:

1. Case studies of projects that implemented each of the 11 strategic growth principles
2. Research comparing conventional growth with more compact strategic growth
3. A regional strategic growth land use model
4. Design examples of strategic growth neighborhood planning
5. Class workshops at the ends of the fall and winter quarters with interested elected and appointed officials and interest group stakeholders, and
6. Video presentations for Channel 21 and the Internet to reach a wider audience, which began in March 2009
7. A report, Vision for Strategic Growth, which was published in March, 2009

An on-line survey was used to obtain feedback on the workshops and proposals. Staff also contacted the media about the proposals and hearings.

Growth Assessment

Staff prepared a brief Growth Assessment with student assistance that will be available at the March 24 hearing. It provides information about the relative differences between conventional growth and strategic growth, and its conclusions are as follows:

1. Only about 15 percent of the residential development in the unincorporated area has been affordable to moderate-, low- and very-low-income families and individuals.
2. In existing County community plans, the areas planned for housing reflect this ratio. Only about 10 percent of the total residential area is planned for multi-family housing. Strategic growth planning would strive to calibrate the amount of small-lot detached and attached multi-family housing to the need of income groups. The result would be more areas planned for compact development and housing that is more affordable for moderate and low-income groups.
3. By planning for greater numbers of units per acre (higher density), strategic growth would produce the same amount of growth as conventional growth policies on about half the land.
4. Communities, the County and other agencies would need to make commitments to serve these neighborhoods with supporting services and facilities, such as water, sewer, and nearby parks and schools. The costs of water, sewer lines and streets would be lower per unit in strategic growth neighborhoods, making them more affordable than conventional, large-lot development. A recent 2004 Brookings Institute study concluded that over the next 25 years, a national shift toward strategic growth could save local governments¹:
 - 11.8 percent, or \$110 billion, on road and street building costs
 - 6 percent, or \$12.6 billion on sewer costs
 - 3.7 percent, or \$4 billion, for operations and delivery of services.Other studies indicate similar cost savings with strategic growth planning, as shown in the Growth Assessment.
5. Water demand would be lower for the same number of dwelling units in strategic growth planning, where compact, denser neighborhoods use less water due to lower landscaping demand.

Other Board Direction

Pilot Strategic Growth Project.

The Board of Supervisors wanted to consider two options for a pilot strategic growth program. At the July 15, 2008 hearing, the community plan update for Shandon was on hold, but work on that plan has since resumed. Although the Shandon Community Plan update is for a small community (whereas a larger-scale strategic planning program would be in a regional context), it can be viewed as a valid pilot project to demonstrate how strategic growth principles can be achieved at the community level. The Board-approved smart growth principles are among the

What would be a Strategic Growth planning process?

- *Community involvement*
- *Infrastructure and facilities review*
- *Resources review*
- *Economic and housing review*
- *Development suitability: buildable areas*
- *Community commercial planning*
- *Neighborhood planning*
- *Costs and funding tied to development*
- *Resource protection*
- *Implementation projects*

¹ Muro, M & Puentes, R (2004) *Investing in a Better Future: A Review of the Fiscal Competitive Advantages of Smarter Growth*

guiding principles for the plan, which aims to support growth within available resources, minimize vehicle miles traveled, and develop compact neighborhoods, locally available services, and easily-accessible local jobs.

Two-Map Plan and Zoning System.

The Board of Supervisors also wanted to consider a two-map system of mapping the General Plan separately from the zoning maps. The Board asked that this option be considered for its potential advantages and benefits. It will be considered during the upcoming preparation of the Countywide Rural Plan, which will address the entire structure and organization of the Land Use Element. In addition, a hybrid of the current single-map system and a two-map system is being developed as part of the Shandon Community Plan update.

Countywide Rural Plan

The Board authorized start of a Countywide Rural Plan on July 15, 2008. This plan will be a major revision to the Land Use and Circulation Elements, and will be the larger-scale pilot project for strategic growth, if the proposed amendments are adopted. It will provide a layered approach from the regional to the community levels of planning. Projected growth and the build-out capacities of communities will be considered along with resource constraints to consider appropriate areas within and adjacent to communities to plan for projected growth. This is a multi-year program, with outreach, research and initial analysis occurring this year

Agency and Public Comments

The staff of the Local Agency Formation Commission provided revisions to the Planning Commission-recommended text for Chapter 1, Section H, Inland Area, which are shown in Attachment 3. This section addresses LAFCO's role in establishing areas for future urban growth, called Spheres of Influence. It also addresses approval of annexations to cities and districts within these Spheres of Influence. The recommended revisions include 1) a preamble that introduces LAFCO and its history 2) a more complete list of actions that LAFCO takes, and 3) an updated list of factors for Municipal Service Reviews that reflects legislative changes over the last year.

Staff Comment: *The revisions as shown improve and update the discussion, and they should replace the entire Section H in both the Inland and Coastal Zone Framework for Planning documents.*

Since last year's Board hearings on this item, correspondence has also been received from the Nipomo Community Services District (NCSD), and letters of support have been sent by the cities of Paso Robles and Arroyo Grande (see Attachment 4). The NCSD's comments are addressed in the preceding section of this report titled Environmental Determination.

In response to previous comments from Jerry Bunin of the Home Builders Association, attached Exhibits C and D (the Planning Commission recommendations with staff modifications) include a revision to Policy 11, Principle 2 regarding the cost of providing infrastructure. The staff-recommended change from the Planning Commission version below recognizes the concern that the cost of major services and facilities should be shared among those who immediately benefit, as well as among the community at large, which also benefits.

11. ~~Share Fund the cost of additional services and facilities among from those who most immediately benefit and the entire community such as new residents, businesses, public agencies, and visitors. Based on reliable studies such as cost benefit analyses, funding methods may include dedications, in lieu fees or other exactions, to assure that adequate services are available~~

OTHER AGENCY INVOLVEMENT

The proposed amendments have been discussed with staff in the Agriculture Department and the San Luis Obispo Council of Governments (SLOCOG). They were also discussed with the San Miguel, Creston, Cayucos, Los Osos, Avila Valley, Oceano and South County advisory councils.

FINANCIAL CONSIDERATIONS

County-initiated amendments are processed using funds in the Planning and Building Department budget. Significant additional public outreach efforts on strategic growth are not included in the Department's proposed Fiscal Year 2009-2010 budget, and would require additional funding.

RESULTS

The policies propose to "live within our means" with respect to resources and infrastructure, by planning more compact, mixed-use neighborhoods which will also provide more housing and transportation choices.

The intended results include fewer and smaller-scale environmental, social and economic impacts from new development; reduced greenhouse gas emissions, air pollution and energy consumption; cost savings on new public facilities and streets; greater access to daily destinations; healthier communities; and increased cooperation between jurisdictions and agencies concerning growth.

ATTACHMENTS

1. Planning Commission Resolution and Findings
2. Revised Mitigated Negative Declaration, January 10, 2008
3. LAFCO Revisions to Section H, Chapter 1 of Exhibit A
4. Correspondence

EXHIBITS

1. Exhibit A: Planning Commission-Recommended Draft, Inland Area Framework for Planning
2. Exhibit B: Planning Commission-Recommended Draft, Coastal Zone Framework for Planning
3. Exhibit C: Planning-Commission-Recommended Draft, Inland Area Framework for Planning, with Staff Modifications to Simplify and Consolidate Language
4. Exhibit D: Staff-Recommended Draft, Coastal Zone Framework for Planning, with Staff Modifications to Simplify and Consolidate Language

ATTACHMENT 1

Planning Commission Resolution and Findings

PLANNING COMMISSION
COUNTY OF SAN LUIS OBISPO, STATE OF CALIFORNIA

Thursday, February 28, 2008

PRESENT: Commissioners Eugene Mehlschau, Sarah Christie, Anne Wyatt, and Chairperson Robert Roos

ABSENT: Commissioner Penny Rappa

RECUSED: None

RESOLUTION NO. 2008 - 045

RESOLUTION RECOMMENDING AMENDMENT
OF THE LAND USE AND CIRCULATION ELEMENTS
OF THE SAN LUIS OBISPO COUNTY GENERAL PLAN

WHEREAS, State Law requires that a General Plan be adopted; and

WHEREAS, the Land Use Element of the San Luis Obispo County General Plan was adopted by the Board of Supervisors on September 22, 1980, and is a proper element of the General Plan; and

WHEREAS, public necessity, convenience and general welfare requires that the elements of a General Plan be amended from time to time; and

WHEREAS, the Planning Commission of the County of San Luis Obispo held public hearings on August 9, 2007, August 30, 2007, October 11, 2007, November 29, 2007, December 13, 2007, January 24, 2008 and February 28, 2008, to consider the proposed amendments to the Land Use and Circulation Elements of the San Luis Obispo County General Plan; and

WHEREAS, the Planning Commission, at the conclusion of the public hearings, adopted findings for the amendments recommended for approval, and

NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED that the San Luis Obispo County Planning Commission recommends to the Board of Supervisors of the County of San Luis

FINDINGS FOR APPROVAL
LRP2005-00013/County of San Luis Obispo

Environmental Determination

- A. The Environmental Coordinator, after completion of the initial study, finds that there is no substantial evidence that the project may have a significant effect on the environment, and the preparation of an Environmental Impact Report is not necessary. Therefore, a Revised Negative Declaration (pursuant to Public Resources Code Section 21000 et seq. and CA Code of Regulations Section 15000 et seq.) has been issued on January 10, 2008 for this project.

Amendments

- B. The proposed amendments to the Land Use Element add text and policies in the form of principles, additional goals, objectives and implementing strategies to Framework for Planning, Inland and Coastal Zone documents, which relate to, clarify and expand the existing Framework for Planning policies while introducing more strategic detail and direction to planning policies.
- C. The proposed amendment is consistent with the Land Use Element and other adopted elements of the General Plan because the changes are consistent with the general goals of the Land Use Element, including the Coastal Plan Policies in the Local Coastal Program, the Agriculture and Open Space Element, Economic Element and other elements of the County General Plan.
- E. The proposed amendment will protect the public health, safety and welfare of the residents of the county by identifying and encouraging specific implementing strategies that will focus on planning long-term relationships between growth and resources, services and facilities.

ATTACHMENT 2

Revised Mitigated Negative Declaration, January 10, 2008

EXHIBIT C

Proposed Amendments to Framework for Planning (Inland): General Plan Amendment LRP2005-00013

Staff-Proposed Modifications to the Planning Commission Recommended Draft

- Proposed new text is underlined. Existing text proposed to be deleted is in ~~strikeover~~.
- **Staff modifications** are proposed to replace the term “goals” with “policies,” throughout including text with underlined Planning Commission Recommended Draft text.
- **Staff modifications** are proposed to update the section on the Local Agency Formation Commission, within the underlined Planning Commission Recommended Draft text on pages 29 - 32.
- **Staff Modifications Proposed to Sections on pages 8 – 20, 22 – 24:**
 - In these marked sections, Planning Commission–recommended text is the same as in Exhibit A but is shown with editing conventions **removed**.
 - Staff-recommended additions are underlined, and proposed deletions are in ~~strikeover~~.

Amend the Preface of Framework for Planning (Inland), Part I of the Land Use Element of the General Plan, page vi, as follows:

PREFACE

Residents of San Luis Obispo County enjoy a rare blend of Mediterranean climate, superb physical setting and hospitable living. The county has been fortunate in avoiding many environmental, social and economic problems that have occurred elsewhere in California and the nation. However, continuing population growth encouraged by these amenities has presented the county with the necessity of making far-reaching land use decisions. The supply of housing has not kept pace with increasing demand. It is increasingly difficult to finance the infrastructure and services that existing and future residents expect and deserve. The pattern of land uses continues to occur in ways that necessitate commuting and shopping by vehicle, with increasing impacts to our life styles, energy supplies, health and safety, and our land and water resources.

We depend upon the land for food and fiber, space to live and work, water supply, wildlife, recreation, waste disposal and other numerous resources. Land use decisions must balance an increasing demand for new areas where development can occur, with the need to preserve the environment upon which the population depends. As a result of competing demands for the use of land, the interest of the public in the development and the use of private land must be clearly defined. The county population will continue to grow, while the amount of land and resources available to accommodate growth are limited. As new development demands more resources, the challenge to the County is to focus on “living within its means” and to sustain our resources for current and future generations. Similar attention is needed to maintaining sustainable capacities for public services and facilities.

Decisions to establish new land uses must occur within a regulatory framework that considers the needs of a particular use as well as the characteristics of the development site and its surroundings. Development should assist in maintaining, and hopefully improving the long-term quality and productivity of the land.

This Land Use Element and the accompanying Land Use Ordinance provide the framework for county decisions on land use and development, and represent the values and goals of the county regarding land use. It will be up to both public agencies and the private entrepreneur to implement these values in the future development of the county. Difficult choices will arise, but we must remember that we are planning so that our children, future residents and visitors may continue to enjoy the benefits of San Luis Obispo County we now share.

Amend Chapter 1 of Framework for Planning (Inland), Part I of the Land Use Element of the General Plan, beginning on page 1-1, as follows:

CHAPTER 1: INTRODUCTION TO THE LAND USE ELEMENT

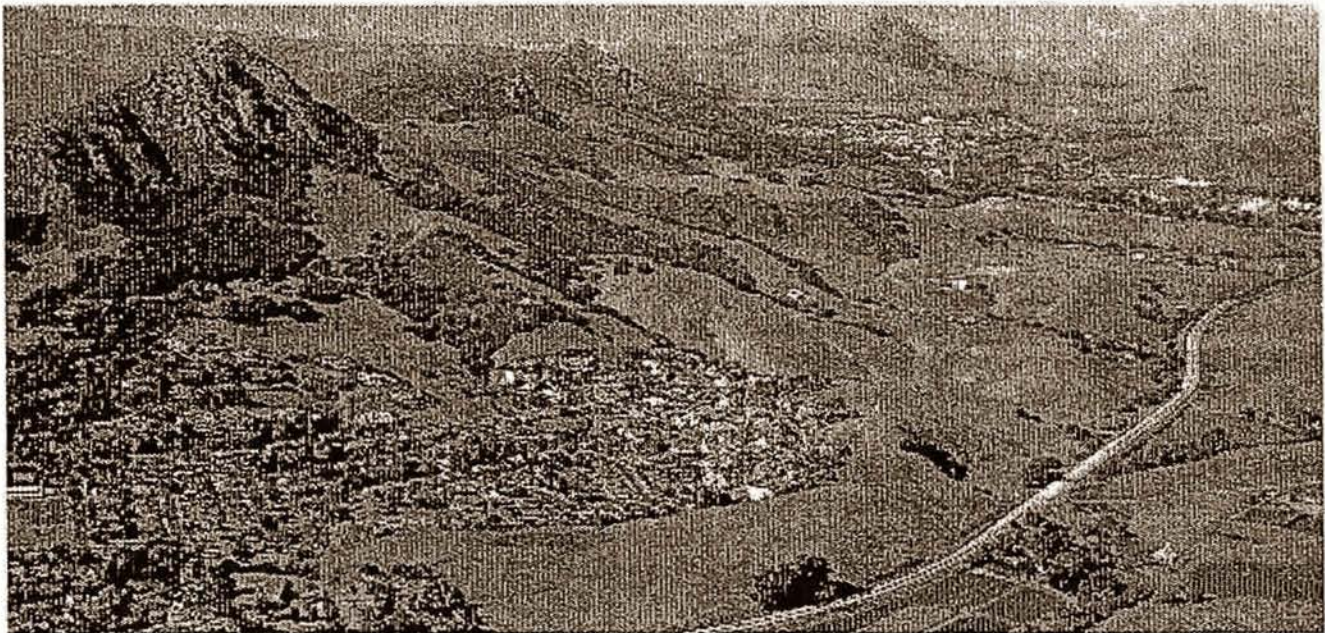


Figure 1-1: Scenic Morros in a rural setting between San Luis Obispo and Morro Bay

The Land Use Element (LUE) is a plan describing the official county policy on the location of land uses and their orderly growth and development. The Land Use Element is one of several parts (or elements) of the San Luis Obispo County General Plan as shown in Table 1. The plan has been prepared in accordance with state law, and it has been adopted by the county Board of Supervisors. The LUE coordinates policies and programs in other county general plan elements that affect land use, and provides policies and standards for the management of growth and development in each unincorporated community and the rural areas of the county. The LUE also serves as a reference point and guide for future land use planning studies throughout the county.

Table 1

<u>General Plan Elements</u>	<u>Descriptions</u>
<u>Land Use</u> <u>Framework for Planning</u> <u>13 Area Plans (4 in the Coastal Zone)</u> <u>Local Coastal Program (or Plan)</u> <u>Coastal Plan Policies</u>	<u>Designations and descriptions of types of land use and density of dwellings-per-acre that are allowed in mapped districts or land use categories, also showing areas subject to flooding.</u> <u>Land Use Element within the Coastal Zone is the Local Coastal Program, which implements the Coastal Act and is certified by the California Coastal Commission</u>
<u>Circulation</u>	<u>Maps and policies for transportation routes and modes such as vehicles and transit, correlated with the Land Use Element</u>
<u>Housing</u>	<u>A plan with analysis of existing and projected housing needs, and goals, policies and programs for the preservation, improvement and development of housing</u>
<u>Agriculture and Open Space</u>	<u>A plan for the preservation and conservation of open-space land, in recognition that open space is a limited and valuable resource which must be conserved wherever possible</u>
<u>Conservation</u>	<u>A plan for the conservation of natural resources, including water, forests, soils, harbors, wildlife and other biological resources</u>
<u>Noise</u>	<u>An analysis of existing noise problems and projected noise levels, with policies and implementation measures to minimize exposure to excessive noise</u>
<u>Safety</u>	<u>A plan for the protection of the community from unreasonable risks associated with earthquakes, geologic hazards, flooding and fires</u>
<u>Master Water & Sewer Plan</u>	<u>A plan for the collection, storage and distribution of water supplies and sewage disposal</u>
<u>Energy</u>	<u>A plan for the efficient use of energy resources, electricity generation and transmission and fossil fuel production</u>
<u>Offshore Energy</u>	<u>A plan for the location and extent of on-shore resources and facilities that would be appropriate for addressing off-shore oil development and production</u>
<u>Economic</u>	<u>Policies to establish a context and priorities for economic development</u>
<u>Parks and Recreation</u>	<u>Policy guidance regarding the provision of park and recreation services, documenting the county's existing park and recreation resources, and evaluating park and recreation needs</u>

Authority

California law requires each county to establish a planning agency to develop and maintain a comprehensive long-term general plan. The Government Code (Section 65302a) mandates a Land Use Element, "designating the proposed general distribution, general location and extent of the uses of the land for housing, business, industry, open space, including agriculture, natural resources, public buildings and grounds, solid and liquid

waste disposal facilities, and other categories of public and private uses of the lands. The Land Use Element is to include standards of population density and building intensity recommended for the territory covered by the plan, and is also to identify areas subject to flooding, which must be reviewed annually.”

Scope and Purpose

The state guidelines for the preparation of general plans encourage the Land Use Element to include:

1. Identification of land use issues.
2. Land use policies and proposals, distinguishing among any short, middle and long-term periods of fulfillment.
3. A description of land uses and land use intensities, including the relationships of such uses to social, environmental and economic goals and objectives.
4. Standards and criteria for physical development within each use area with consideration for land capacity.
5. A description of the land use pattern, including text and a diagram or other graphic such as a map.
6. An outline for implementation, describing measures necessary to achieve land use objectives and policies, and the timing or staging of plan implementation.

General plans are implemented primarily through zoning and subdivision regulations. Implementation of general plan policies also occurs through government activities such as capital improvement programs, public works, property acquisition, tax programs, and through voluntary actions of the private sector. State law requires zoning and land divisions to be consistent with the adopted general plan.

A B. PLANNING APPROACH

The Land Use Element (LUE) has been designed to support county land use decisions as part of a dynamic process instead of being a rigid, static plan. To achieve that objective, the LUE has been structured and is used differently than traditional land use plans and zoning. ~~As in previous plans, The land use maps illustrate long-term land use and growth policies, and but they are now adopted as the official zoning maps and also used to evaluate current development proposals in much the same way as former district maps of a the zoning ordinance. The LUE also accommodates a more detailed periodic review of its policies, and updating of supporting information in response to changing conditions.~~ In conjunction with the LUE, the Land Use Ordinance (LUO) is the zoning ordinance and provides comprehensive development standards and review procedures.

Together, the Land Use Element and Land Use Ordinance are an integrated land use policy and regulatory system. The policies of the LUE and the enforceable standards of the LUO work together to ensure the compatibility of uses.

- The LUE provides policy and conceptual land use guidance and establishes where land uses may be located through the designation of land use categories.

- The LUO establishes which uses are allowed in each land use category and regulates site design and development within the land use categories.
- No use required to have a permit by the LUO can be approved unless it is consistent with the Land Use Element.

~~In general, the LUE and LUO allows a wider range of land uses than previous zoning, which attempted to maintain harmonious land uses by rigidly segregating uses in separate districts.~~

The performance standards of the Land Use Ordinance ensure compatibility of adjacent uses. The LUE and LUO are together a growth management system that directs the amount, type and intensities of development into specific areas.

~~During the studies that produced the structure and procedures of the Land Use Element, land use policies were formulated through review of two kinds of information. First, existing county land use policies were accepted as the foundation for the document. Before the Land Use Element, county land use policies were in various general plan elements, individual community plans and adopted specific plans (see "Relationship to Other Adopted Plans."). The LUE did not attempt to redefine those policies, but incorporated them into a more consistent framework. Changes occurred only where current information showed clear shifts in local conditions, invalidating previous policy decisions. Information that supported the review of existing policy was a broad data base on both natural and man-made features of the county landscape. The data provide a current perspective on county economic, social and physical conditions affecting land use. Characteristics considered included natural features (vegetation, soils, slopes and hazards); and man-made features (existing land use, parcel sizes, ownership patterns, and current zoning). The policies of the Land Use Element resulted from all these factors.~~

B G. ORGANIZATION OF THE LAND USE ELEMENT

The Land Use Element has three major sections: Framework for Planning, the area plans and the official maps. The Circulation Element of the General Plan is included in the Land Use Element with text and map references within these sections.

Framework for Planning - Inland Area

Part I of the Land Use Element, Framework for Planning, contains policies and procedures that apply to the unincorporated area outside the coastal zone, defining how the LUE is used together with the Land Use Ordinance and other adopted plans.

Framework for Planning is only used in reviewing development and land division proposals as follows:

1. The principles and policies goals in Chapter 1 are used for determining the consistency of a proposed discretionary land use, development or subdivision application with the Land Use Element to ensure it will be compatible with county land use policy.
2. The descriptions of purpose and character for each land use category in Chapter 6 and the density and building intensity criteria are used to review proposed amendments to the LUE and to review individual development projects proposed in existing land use categories.

3. The parcel size ranges, density and building intensity criteria in Chapter 6 are used with Chapter 22.22 of the Land Use Ordinance to establish parcel size standards and review proposed land divisions for general plan consistency.

[Existing text from this point on page 1-5 to the end of the chapter, including Figure 1-1, is not addressed and is omitted with the intent to be located before the next section, Major Issues.]

E. MAJOR ISSUES

The following land use issues relate to the quality of life, historical character and livability of San Luis Obispo County:

1. The unique, rural and small-scale community character of San Luis Obispo County evolved due to its relatively remote location midway between San Francisco and Los Angeles. As metropolitan growth extends outward from the Bay Area and Southern California, the distance between these areas is in effect diminishing. Similar metropolitan growth is now foreseeable here as a threat to our well-known quality of life.
2. Post-World War II development trends have emphasized large-lot, suburban and rural development which have resulted in a dependence on automobile travel. However, this type of development is too expensive for most existing county residents, making it impractical for public transit inefficient and increasing dependence on single occupancy vehicle trips. It in turn increases energy consumption, contributes to air pollution and greenhouse gas emissions, increases traffic congestion and affects public health. Increasing real estate values also create pressure to convert agricultural and resource-rich land.
3. Partly due to our setting and national reputation, a high market demand exists for this large-lot (low density) development which is commonly called low-density "sprawl" development.
4. More compact forms of housing are not being built in enough quantity to provide homes that are affordable to people of all income levels, and this does not meet the broader housing needs of the population.
5. Increased "sprawl" decreases the amount of natural and agricultural areas that have been instrumental in the maintenance of the County's small-scale character.
6. Low-density development does not encourage public transit, pedestrian or bicycle travel, although these are the healthiest and most energy-efficient forms of transportation.
7. Low-density development does not create an "eyes on the street" presence or an engaging civic life, so that isolation and low involvement in community affairs can result.
8. The "sprawl" pattern creates demands for funding infrastructure, roads, streets and highways that threaten the fiscal health of the County, by competing with financial resources needed to provide other public services and facilities.
9. The desirability of our area combined with shrinking government budgets have resulted in minimal new park, recreation and natural areas, as well as lagging street and sidewalk maintenance. Continuing to grow without providing these resources will impact the area's quality of life.

F A. PLANNING PRINCIPLES, GENERAL POLICIES GOALS AND IMPLEMENTING STRATEGIES

The following principles and policies goals describe the fundamental purposes for the Land Use Element and Circulation Element. These general goals reflect the Board of Supervisors' adoption of a set of "Smart Growth Principles." The purpose of these principles and policies is to better define and focus the county's pro-active planning approach and balance environmental, economic and social equity concerns. This approach includes strategic planning, which considers constraints and opportunities and identifies realistic, short-term strategies that will achieve longer-term goals. Accordingly, the combination of smart growth and strategic planning is considered "strategic growth," which seeks cooperation among communities to resolve concerns, respect resource limitations and enhance economic prosperity.

As resources become more limited and the costs of infrastructure increase, the Land Use Element encourages planning for compact, efficient and environmentally sensitive development to better utilize energy, land, water and fiscal resources. It emphasizes community-centered growth that provides people with additional travel, housing and employment choices that are closer to job centers and public facilities.

The following principles reflect the County's mission and vision to plan and develop safe, healthy, livable, prosperous and well-governed communities by balancing economic, environmental and social equity concerns in planning and development decisions. Each principle is further defined by policies goals and supported by implementing strategies actions to ensure progress toward the principles. The implementing strategies shall be started and funded within the priorities and time frames that are listed in Table A-1 in Appendix A, for timely achievement of the strategic growth policies goals.

Strategic Growth Definition for San Luis Obispo County

Strategic growth is a compact, efficient and environmentally sensitive pattern of development that provides people with additional travel, housing and employment choices. It focuses future growth away from rural areas and limited resources, closer to existing and planned job centers and public facilities where sustainable resources are available.

Strategic Growth Principles

- 1. Preserve open space, scenic natural beauty and sensitive environmental areas.
Conserve energy resources. Conserve agricultural resources and protect agricultural land.*
- 2. Strengthen and direct development towards existing communities.*
- 3. Foster distinctive, attractive communities with a strong sense of place.*
- 4. Create walkable neighborhoods and towns.*
- 5. Provide a variety of transportation choices.*

County Mission:

***Serve the community with pride
to enhance the economic,
environmental and social quality
of life in San Luis Obispo
County.***

County Vision:

***Create and maintain a place that
is safe, healthy, livable,
prosperous and well-governed.***

Planning and Building Department Mission:

***Promoting the Wise Use of Land
Helping to Build Great
Communities***

6. Create a range of housing opportunities and choices.
7. Encourage mixed land uses.
8. Take advantage of compact building design.
9. Make development decisions predictable, fair and cost-effective.
10. Encourage community and stakeholder collaboration.
11. Strengthen regional cooperation.

Together, the principles and policies goals define how land will be used and resources will be protected. They provide the basis for defining the 13 land use categories, and for determining the land areas to which they are applied, and for considering all discretionary development and land division applications. More detailed goals, objectives and policies that address specific planning issues are presented in the other chapters of this report and in the area plans. ~~The provisions of the Land Use and Circulation Elements are designed to carry out these goals. Proposed amendments to specific policies or the land use category maps should also carry out these goals. The policies and provisions of the Land Use Element should:~~

The goals also function as criteria to help determine the consistency of a development proposal with the LUE. New development should be located, designed and built in a manner that furthers these principles and goals, as well as complying with all other provisions of the LUE.

[START OF STAFF REVISIONS TO PLANNING COMMISSION RECOMMENDED DRAFT]

Basic text is the Planning Commission recommended draft language, with editing conventions removed, to page 21. New staff-proposed changes are underlined for new text, and in ~~strikethrough~~ to delete text.

Principle 1: Preserve open space, scenic natural beauty and sensitive environmental areas. Conserve energy resources. ~~Conserve agricultural resources and~~ Protect agricultural land and resources.

Policies Goals

1. Maintain and protect a living environment that is safe, healthful and pleasant for all residents ~~by conserving non-renewable resources and replenishing renewable resources.~~
2. ~~Balance the capacity for~~ Keep the amount, location and rate of growth allowed by the Land Use Element within the sustainable ed capacity availability of resources, public services and facilities. ~~for future generations.~~
3. ~~Identify and preserve open spaces, scenic public views, and sensitive and important plant and wildlife habitats and cultural resources.~~
4. ~~Preserve and protect the air quality of the county by seeking to~~ Exceed or at least maintain the minimum state and federal ambient air quality standards.



Figure 1-3: Hollister Peak

5. ~~Give highest priority to avoiding or minimizing significant environmental impacts from development through site and project design. Mitigate adverse impacts that cannot be avoided by using the best available methods and technology to the maximum extent feasible. (Moved to Goal 14)~~
6. (Blank in PC Recommended Draft)
7. ~~Energy Conservation~~ Support the conservation of Conserve energy resources by:
 - a. Planning for energy efficiency and conservation in land use and transportation transit plans, and in subdivision and building regulations.
 - b. Decreasing reliance on environmentally costly energy sources, increasing conservation efforts, and encouraging use of alternative energy sources.
 - c. ~~Encouraging land use and transit measures that reduce the use of petroleum products~~
8. ~~Protect agricultural, natural and other rural areas between cities and communities, and work with landowners and these communities to maintain their rural character and land uses.~~
9. Encourage the protection and use of agricultural land for the production of food, fiber and other agricultural commodities, and support the rural economy and local agricultural markets.
10. Support the rural economy and local agricultural markets, by protecting production agriculture and its associated activities.
11. ~~Provide for an environmentally sustainable rate of orderly development within the planned capacities of resources and services, within the county's and citizens' financial ability to provide them.~~
12. ~~Design and maintain a land use pattern and population capacity in the General Plan that is consistent with the renewable capacities of existing natural resources, public services and facilities, and their programmed expansion where funding has been identified.~~
13. ~~Reduce future impacts to natural resources by developing cost-effective infrastructure to meet community needs.~~
14. Give highest priority to avoiding ~~or minimizing~~ significant environmental impacts from development through site and project design. Where such impacts cannot be avoided, minimize them to the maximum extent feasible. Use the best available methods and technology to the maximum extent feasible to mitigate adverse impacts that cannot be avoided. (Moved from Policy 5)



Figure 1-4: Vegetable row crops

Implementing Strategies

1. Revise the Land Use Element, Land Use Ordinance and the Growth Management Ordinance to assure sustainable identify resource capacities for long-term direct new growth, and to identify suitable development areas that will maintain natural resources at sustainable levels in both rural and urban areas with the least constraints.
2. Develop and refine effective techniques for land conservation, such as land banks, density transfers and agricultural and conservation easements, and pursue grants and innovative financing tools to acquire and preserve facilitate open space acquisition and preservation.
3. ~~Work with the agricultural community, conservation communities and advisory committees on~~ Establish a program that links rural land conservation with agricultural economic development; supports locally-based commercial agriculture, preserves scenic rural landscapes and sustains resources. Form a committee of agricultural, conservation and advisory committee representatives to assist the program.
4. ~~Identify and prepare policies and programs in the Conservation Element to conserve rural visual character within "community separators" that benefit the land owners and adjacent communities.~~
5. Create an urban and rural forestry program that encourages engages property owners, developers and communities to in planting, maintaining and protecting trees to enhance air quality and help offset mitigate for increases in offset carbon dioxide emissions.
6. Revise the Land Use and Conservation and Open Space Land Use Elements and County ordinances to give emphasis on to, and incentives for; energy-efficient construction that minimizes its carbon footprint, especially ~~with particular emphasis on development in rural areas.~~

Principle 2: Strengthen and direct development towards existing communities.

Policies Goals

1. Maintain rural areas in a distinction between urban and rural development by planning for rural uses that are predominately agriculture, low-intensity recreation, very low-density residential uses, and open space uses, in order to that preserve and enhance a well-defined rural character.
2. Avoid establishing or expanding Residential Rural and Residential Suburban areas outside urban or village reserve areas.
3. Plan for most future development to be within cities and existing communities. ~~to enhance community development, capitalize on existing infrastructure, and to preserve rural character, open space and protect agricultural uses.~~
4. Encourage opportunities for Create complete communities with appropriate areas for housing, commerce, civic uses, schools employment and non-residential development, recreation and open spaces that will create complete communities.



Figure 1-5: Edge of Santa Margarita

5. ~~Plan and~~ Create active and vital urban and village environments that are attractive, compact and orderly arrangements of buildings, structures and open space, appropriate to the size and scale of development for each community.
6. ~~Plan a pattern of strategically located commercial and/or industrial areas that is compatible with overall land use, convenient to patrons and alternative transportation modes, realistically related to market demand and the needs of the neighborhood and community, and near areas designated for residential use.~~ Plan adequate and convenient areas within communities for employment and economic development near transit and residential areas.
7. ~~Encourage the~~ Phase in of urban development in a compact manner, first using vacant or underutilized "infill" parcels and lands next to or near existing development, as illustrated in Figure 1-6.
8. Consider urban expansion when the available inventory of suitable internal or "infill" land is largely developed and only when resources, services and facilities are available to adequately accommodate the associated growth.
9. Give high priority to funding needed infrastructure improvements in a timely manner within existing urban and village areas.
10. ~~Conduct long term planning (20+ years) to provide and fund the creation of additional, sustainable public resources, services and facilities to serve existing communities in with sufficient time to avoid overburdening existing resources, services and facilities (Moved to Strategy 10.)~~
11. Share ~~Fund~~ the cost of additional services and facilities in proportion among ~~from~~ those who most immediately benefit and the entire community ~~such as new residents, businesses, public agencies, and visitors.~~ Based on reliable studies such as cost benefit analyses, funding methods may include dedications, in-lieu fees or other exactions, to assure that adequate services are available.
12. ~~Locate new and additional public service facilities on existing public lands where feasible, allowing for sufficient buffers to protect adjacent rural and agricultural areas.~~
13. Provide adequate community amenities, ~~such as parks, natural areas and trails~~ in support of ~~with~~ new development, which will support a high quality of life and a compact form of community development.
14. ~~Require site design for planned development projects that provides a range of housing sizes, footprints and design features. (Moved to Principle 6, Strategy 4)~~

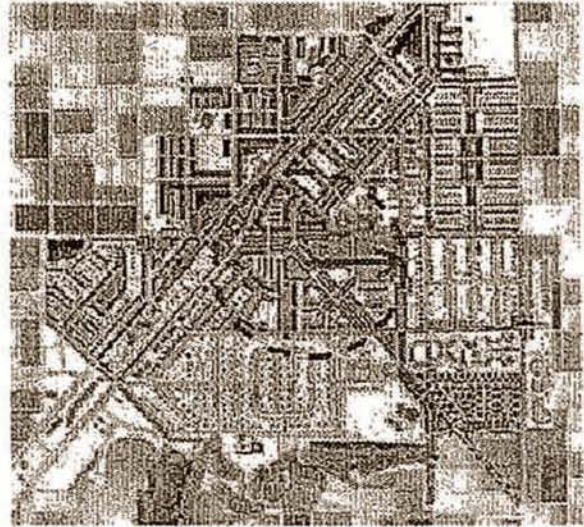


Figure 1-6: Compact community with a commercial core near residential areas (1/4 mile radius)

Implementing Strategies

1. Amend the Land Use Element and Ordinance to 1) maintain rural areas in low-intensity uses, 2) avoid expanding Residential Rural and Residential Suburban categories in rural areas, and 3) preserve and enhance a well-defined rural character.
2. Revise the Transfer of Development Credits (TDC) program to more effectively shift potential rural development to communities with adequate infrastructure and conserve nearby rural lands.
3. ~~Revise the Land Use Element, the Land Use Ordinance and the area plans to implement these planning goals.~~
4. Work with communities to create and maintain distinct urban boundaries next to rural areas, and to avoid approving projects that are not supported by a city or a Community Services District within its sphere of influence, urban area or rural referral area. (Moved from Principle 1, Strategy 5)
5. Work with cities, and unincorporated communities and agencies ~~their advisory councils~~, to identify suitable strategic growth opportunity development areas within and adjacent to existing communities ~~and adjacent expansion areas at their edges~~ for compact, affordable development, where supported by sustainable resource capacities. (Moved from Strategy 1)
6. Coordinate with the cities to consider accepting greater shares of overall countywide growth with corresponding reductions in unincorporated area growth, ~~and to~~ Consider compensating assistance from the County to offset the transportation, financial and other demands from this growth. (Moved from Strategy 8)
7. Develop a regional and ~~or~~ sub-regional economic and land use strategy to stimulate creation of head-of-household jobs, improve the ~~current~~ jobs-housing imbalance and strengthen the economy within each community.
8. Plan a ~~pattern of strategically located~~ commercial and/or industrial areas that are compatible with overall land use, convenient to patrons, neighborhoods and alternative transportation modes, and reflect ~~realistically related to~~ market demand and the neighborhood needs. ~~of the neighborhood and community, and near areas designated for residential use.~~
9. Revise the Resource Management System and the Growth Management Ordinance to give a higher priority to serving existing communities with adequate resources, streets and infrastructure, ~~related to their needs~~, over outlying rural areas.
10. Conduct long-term planning (20+ years) to fund and provide the creation of additional, sustainable public resources, services and facilities to serve existing communities in with sufficient time to avoid overburdening existing resources, services and facilities. (Moved from Goal 10)
11. ~~Determine the local public costs of services and facilities and the most equitable financing mechanisms, and give high priority to funding adequate infrastructure and services within existing village and urban areas.~~
12. ~~Work with service districts to e~~ Coordinate County land use actions with service districts responsibilities to provide sufficient public resources, services and facilities.
13. ~~Explore~~ Create ing an “infrastructure first” policy; that requires ~~where the funding (for example, through community financing districts)~~ and/or provision of infrastructure is ~~required~~ before development is allowed to proceed, ~~with assistance from mechanisms such as~~ community financing districts.
14. Amend the Land Use Ordinance to require that amendments to the Land Use Element or Ordinance that propose increases in density or additional development where certified Resource Management System levels II or III exist, shall not be approved unless they provide

proof of adequate, available water and sewage disposal capacities to serve: 1) development resulting from the proposed amendment, 2) ~~in addition to~~ existing development, and 3) ~~and the~~ allowed development on vacant parcels within the rural, urban or village area that are subject to the RMS Levels of Severity.

Principle 3: Foster distinctive, attractive communities with a strong sense of place.

Policies Goals

1. ~~Protect and restore the valued aspects of each community's~~ the valuable history, cultures, images and identity ~~and civic pride of communities and rural areas.~~
2. ~~Protect~~ Provide rural areas separation between communities to achieve maintain or restore the images of well-defined communities within an attractive rural setting.
3. ~~Maintain and enhance community separation by~~ Establishing and maintaining a distinct urban edge between urban and rural areas to enhance community separation, and creating rural conservation policies, strategies and incentives. (Moved from Strategy 1)
4. Enhance the commercial identity and viability of downtowns.
5. ~~Foster and enhance a strong local identity through~~ will be fostered by with appropriate design of public spaces and buildings. ~~guidance for streetscapes, public plazas and art, and civic buildings and facilities.~~

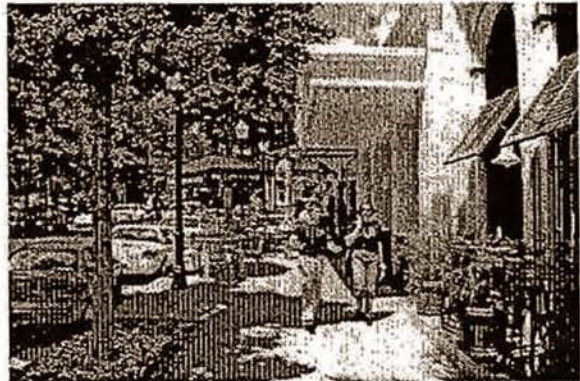


Figure 1-7: Streetscape on a downtown street

Implementing Strategies

1. ~~Identify and~~ Prepare and implement policies and programs in the Conservation and Open Space Element to conserve rural visual character within "community separators" that benefit the land owners and adjacent communities. (Moved from Principle 1, Strategy 3)
2. ~~Maintain and enhance community separation by establishing and maintaining a distinct urban edge between urban and rural areas, and creating rural conservation policies, strategies and incentives.~~
3. Revise the Land Use Element and Ordinance to 1) rRetain or create distinct urban ~~reserve~~ boundaries and 2) by revising the Land Use Element and Ordinance to require development intensities that create reflect a clear difference between urban and rural areas densities ~~and character.~~
4. Revise the Countywide Design Guidelines to encourage appropriate, place-based (locally relevant), pedestrian-oriented designs within communities.
5. Foster a strong sense of place by identifying local, valued aspects within each community ~~in~~ ("placemaking") ~~techniques and programs.~~

6. Establish an inter-departmental team to fund and develop ~~create~~ locally-based public facilities and amenities that preserve community character, such as public buildings, plazas, parks, and public art.
7. ~~Work to identify and obtain sources of funding to implement programs for improving and funding mechanisms for infrastructure and street and civic enhancements such as plazas, gathering places and public art.~~
8. Hold an annual downtown improvements workshop and work with downtown stakeholders to form business improvement districts.
9. Encourage property owners to protect and conserve historic buildings and resources ~~within and outside communities~~; using a variety of means such as the Mills Act, an incentive program for the restoration and preservation of historic structures.

Principle 4: Create walkable neighborhoods and towns.

Policies Goals

1. ~~Improve communities and public health by connecting streets, bicycle, pedestrian and transit facilities are between neighborhoods to maximize circulation opportunities.~~
2. Locate land uses so that most housing is within a walking distance of 1/4-mile from ~~Plan for~~ schools, parks, public spaces, transit stops and commercial districts ~~within convenient, walkable, 1/4-mile distances from to be located as focal points for walkable neighborhoods within urban and village areas, based on convenient walking distances between them, as illustrated in Figure 1-8.~~
3. Plan for maximum connectivity between different land uses through ~~by including~~ walkways or other means ~~paseos~~ between buildings and sites ~~and continuous facades of street-fronting buildings, to avoid barriers or separation between uses.~~
4. Create attractive street enhancements and public spaces that serve as gathering places on corridors and at connecting locations.
5. Provide ~~Expand~~ parks, natural areas and recreation facilities with new urban development to enhance a community's quality of life and improve public health.

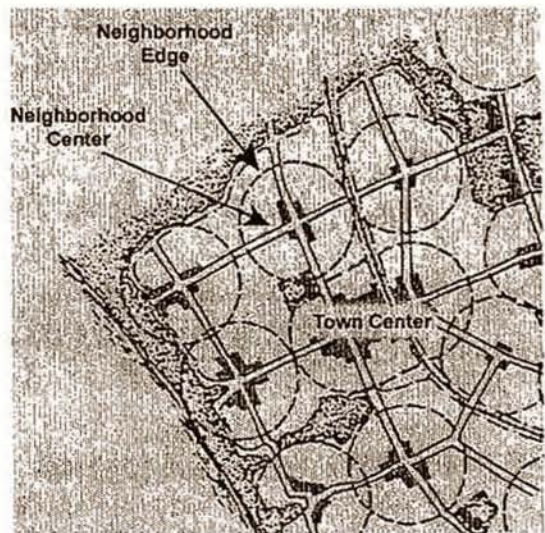


Figure 1-8: Walkable neighborhoods

Implementing Strategies

1. Update the Countywide Design Guidelines to create maximum connectivity between ~~with~~ community, neighborhoods, streets and projects ~~designs that integrate and promote for~~ pedestrian and bicycle travel ~~and activity with high levels of connectivity.~~
2. Revise the Land Use Ordinance and Land Use Element ~~area~~ plans to enhance neighborhoods with small-scale and appropriate commercial areas; parks and recreation areas; public spaces;

and recreation, family, cultural and civic facilities, all within convenient walking distances from housing. Work with the General Services Agency to plan and implement parks and recreation facilities.

3. ~~Develop funding mechanisms to finance the design and construction and maintenance of attractive street and civic environments that attract pedestrians.~~
4. Support e Enhance downtowns and commercial areas with attractive civic and pedestrian facilities, events and promotions, and facilitate ways to finance them, for example, through forming such as by ~~facilitating the formation of~~ business improvement and community facilities districts.
5. ~~Work with the General Services Department to plan and implement parks and recreation facilities within walking distance of neighborhoods.~~
6. Pursue a street tree program on urban streets and public parking lots.
7. Enhance major boulevards and downtown streets with street trees, street furniture, textured crosswalks, planted medians and ornamental ~~or signature~~ lighting. (Moved from Principle 5, Strategy 4)

Principle 5: Provide a variety of transportation choices.

Policies Goals

1. Design a safe, reliable and effective transportation system that protects natural and scenic resources and minimizes environmental impacts ~~provides safety, reliability and effectiveness within feasible economic and technical means preserves important natural resources and features, promotes the esthetic quality of the region and minimizes adverse environmental changes.~~
2. Reduce and mMinimize the generation of air pollutants and greenhouse gases from existing and future development, ~~projected growth by implementing land use and circulation policies and programs that offer transportation alternatives to the single-passenger vehicle, and with emphasis on reducing~~ vehicle miles traveled.
3. Coordinate ~~Integrate~~ land use and transportation planning ~~in coordination with cities to ensure that all transportation demands can be safely and adequately accommodated.~~
4. Provide public transit, bicycle lanes, multi-use trails and pedestrian walkways that connect to ~~population centers, schools, shopping and other~~ community destinations, to encourage alternative transportation.
5. Make communities more bicycle- and pedestrian-friendly ~~by designing streets that moderate the speed of traffic and provide~~ with safe and attractive routes ~~for bicyclists and pedestrians.~~

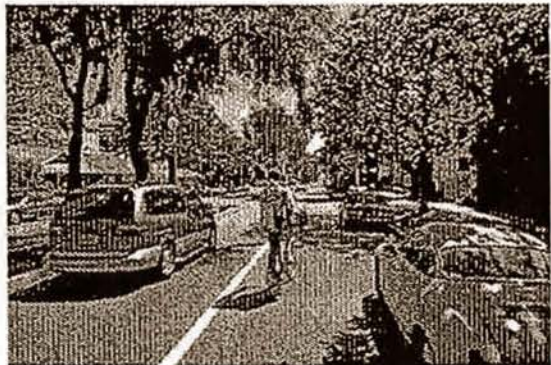


Figure 1-9: Bike lane on a residential street

6. ~~Provide multi-use trails (for walking, bicycling and equestrian travel) between and through communities, and to connect them with other means of alternative transportation, consistent with the Parks and Recreation Element. (Moved to Strategy 6)~~

Implementing Strategies

1. Integrate LUE area and community plans more closely with transit and pedestrian facilities by providing more intensive and diverse land uses near major transit corridors and transit stops and within convenient walking distance between ~~to~~ destinations.
2. Give high priority to funding biking, walking and transit facilities and operations within the transportation planning programs of the County and the San Luis Obispo Council of Governments.
3. ~~Seek grant opportunities for integrated land use transportation planning where more intensive corridors and large property development are contemplated.~~
4. ~~Enhance major boulevards and downtown streets with street trees, street furniture, textured crosswalks, planted medians and ornamental or signature lighting. (Moved to Principle 4, Strategy 6)~~
5. Give highest priority in the programming of Local Transportation Funds (LTF-TDA) to fully fund public transit operations, multimodal connections to public transportation, and to facilitate strategic growth.
6. Provide multi-use trails (for walking, bicycling and equestrian travel) between and through communities, and to connect them with other means of alternative transportation, consistent with the Parks and Recreation Element. (Moved from Goal 4)

Principle 6: Create a range of housing opportunities and choices.

Policies Goals

1. Locate most new housing ~~urban residential development~~ within urban or village areas and reserve lines; close to jobs, employment areas, while protecting residential areas from incompatible and undesirable uses.
2. Provide quality housing choices that are affordable to people with a variety of income levels.
3. Provide a range of housing types within each neighborhood, where affordable units are mixed compatibly with market-rate housing.



Figure 1-10: Creekside Gardens affordable housing

Implementing Strategies

1. Implement the Housing Element to implement these policies. ~~create opportunities for quality housing for people of all income levels, in proximity to employment and within walking distance to daily needs.~~
2. Update the Land Use Ordinance and LUE area plans to encourage a diversity of housing (sizes, types, and costs) within subdivisions and neighborhoods provide a complete range of housing choices for all incomes.

3. ~~Revise Refine~~ the Countywide Design Guidelines, community design plans and specific plans to illustrate how to integrate higher density development design within existing neighborhoods.
4. Amend the Land Use Ordinance to require site designs for condominium and planned development projects that provide a range of housing sizes, footprints and design features.
5. Modify the Land Use Element and Land Use Ordinance to allow and encourage a diversity of housing (sizes, types, costs) within subdivisions and neighborhoods.
6. ~~Modify Land Use Ordinance regulations to encourage housing designs that result in affordability and enhance public health, safety, convenience and a high quality of life.~~
7. Modify the Land Use Element and Ordinance to create a new land use designation, such as "Mobilehome Park (MHP)" to be applied to existing mobile home parks and sites where future mobilehome parks are appropriate.
8. ~~Modify the Land Use Ordinance to restrict the number of unrelated adults that may reside within a residential unit, to protect the safety and quality of residential living and neighborhoods.~~
9. Modify the Land Use Ordinance to allow the "true cost" price of parking to be applied to willing users, and to allow more affordable units without parking, for residents who do not wish to pay for it.

Principle 7: Encourage mixed land uses.

Policies Goals

1. Integrate residential units designed for affordability with non-residential uses in order to ~~Encourage residential units in compact, affordable designs as part of commercial or other non-residential projects as appropriate, to bring workplaces, commercial development and homes closer together for workers, senior citizens and others..~~
2. ~~Create opportunities to~~ Integrate complementary uses within single use commercial sites, in order to build effective mixed-use neighborhoods.
3. ~~Provide guidance and incentives for mixed-use, multi-family residential units that are affordable by design for seniors, nearby employees and young families~~

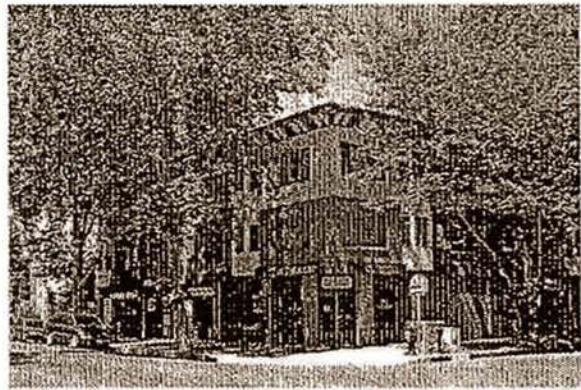


Figure 1-11: Mixed retail and residential uses in Sacramento

Implementing Strategies

1. Revise the Countywide Design Guidelines, the Land Use Element and Land Use Ordinance (LUE/LUO) to guide the design of, and offer incentives for affordable mixed-use buildings.
2. ~~Create a program to facilitate the financing of public improvements associated with affordable mixed-use projects.~~
3. Encourage ~~Include~~ mixed-use development through ~~within~~ affordable housing programs and regulations ~~for affordable housing~~

4. ~~Revise LUE community plans and Land Use Ordinance standards policies~~ to encourage the conversion of shopping centers and strip commercial streets into mixed-use developments, ~~thereby enhancing their integration with the community.~~
5. Reduce parking standards in the Land Use Ordinance for mixed-use developments, based on in relation to their size of project and its location, such as in relation to a central business district or transit stop. Consider creating in-lieu parking fee programs.

Principle 8: Take advantage of compact building design.

Policies Goals

1. Develop small-scale neighborhoods and buildings ~~residential and non-residential uses that are affordable-by-design and efficient in land and energy consumption.~~
2. Include Provide public and private and public amenities with new development to enhance the livability of compact neighborhoods, such as community rooms, day care and senior centers, libraries, pocket parks or plazas.

Implementing Strategies

1. Revise the Countywide Design Guidelines to illustrate compact neighborhood and building design that fits within existing development visually and functionally.
2. Revise the Land Use and Subdivision Ordinances to ~~identify and encourage livable,~~ 1) compact buildings and subdivisions ~~designs,~~ and 2) projects that to include amenities such as small-scale plazas, formal gardens, playgrounds and natural areas in projects.
3. ~~Revise the Land Use and Subdivision Ordinances to provide for convenient access to private and/or public open space in compact projects, and to include such spaces as plazas, formal gardens, playgrounds and natural areas in these projects.~~
4. Reduce the Land Use Ordinance requirements for off-street parking, where uses are ~~related in a pedestrian-scale planned close to each other, in order to facilitate in~~ compact neighborhoods design, to increase the viability of projects and encourage other kinds modes of transportation.
5. ~~Ease parking requirements for compact projects where community parking facilities are available, and~~ Work with developers and communities to finance and build such community parking facilities near that will also serve compact development.
6. Educate the public, developers and designers about compact residential design and building options, ~~the opportunities for more amenities and convenience, and how environmental impacts such as traffic can be avoided or minimized.~~

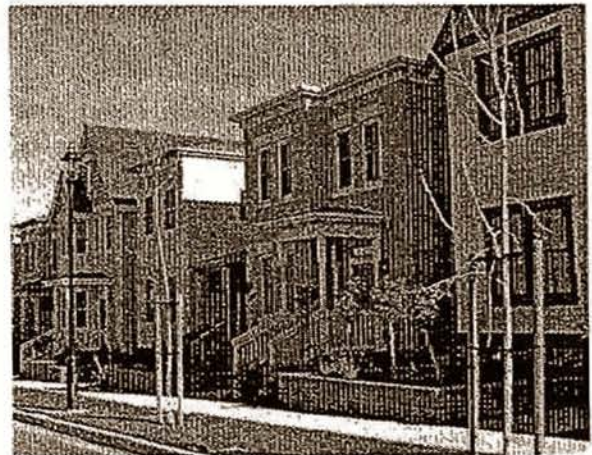


Figure 1-12: Compact neighborhood design

Principle 9: Make development decisions predictable, fair and cost-effective.

Policies Goals

1. ~~Work toward~~ Minimize ing administrative delays and costs to fee payers in the administration of the Land Use Element.
2. Expedite development review procedures and provide incentives, ~~such as priority processing for qualifying projects, for development that most effectively implements these principles and locates where plan policies encourage it to occur.~~
3. ~~Conduct planning and development review that~~ Encourages public participation in planning and development review, and considers the needs of all affected persons. stakeholders, occupants and end-users as well as stakeholders in the outcomes.
4. Use easy-to-understand language and media to convey proposals and ideas clearly.
5. ~~Create incentives that reduce the time and/or expense of the review process for projects that are deemed consistent with these strategic growth principles.~~

Implementing Strategies

1. Simplify and Prepare illustrated zoning and design standards within the Land Use Ordinance or similar document in order to make them clear and understandable, for example, through use of ~~that reduce uncertainty and enhance understanding and certainty of requirements, such as a "form-based" code.~~
2. Identify suitable locations for where strategic growth projects ~~(which that are consistent with these principles) can to~~ be eligible for expedited review.
3. Convene a streamlining task force of ~~among~~ staff and stakeholders to ~~review opportunities for streamline~~ ing the permit process to implement strategic growth policies.
4. ~~Implement a priority review of qualifying strategic growth projects (which are consistent with these principles), and create a "Green Tape" approach that facilitates their progress during permit processing.~~

Principle 10: Encourage community and stakeholder collaboration.

Policies Goals

1. Provide opportunities to incorporate public opinion early and often, ~~and routinely~~ within the planning process.
2. Cultivate relationships with those having a stake in the outcome ~~in order to obtain opinions and feedback on planning and project issues early in the process.~~
3. Encourage cooperation between ~~Work with the County, cities and unincorporated communities to build a spirit of cooperation in to~~ avoiding and solve ing growth and development issues early.
4. ~~Work with~~ Create a unified interest among County departments to in achieve ing



pFigure 1-13: Planning workshop

compact, mixed-use, walkable communities by coordinating, ~~such as through integrated regulations, project review, transportation funding and capital improvement programming.~~

Implementing Strategies

1. Inform the public and stakeholders about strategic growth ~~and the decision-making process~~ by various means, such as forums and the media.
2. Consolidate the outcomes of previous community visioning exercises that have demonstrated the public's preferences on where and how new growth should be located and designed, ~~to b~~ Build on previous efforts to create consensus with the public about attaining compact, walkable communities and rural preservation.
3. Involve the public, advisory and other groups, cities and other jurisdictions often and routinely in the planning and development review processes by early outreach, referrals and responses.
4. Provide more ~~and expanded~~ access to County media to enhance the public's develop ~~more~~ understanding of planning and project review.
5. Convene an inter-departmental team to ~~coordinate and~~ integrate strategic growth goals into each County department's work program, and into ~~within~~ the County budget, capital improvements program (CIP) and grant funding processes.
6. Expand public notification for discretionary projects in rural areas.

Principle 11: Strengthen regional cooperation.

Policies Goals

1. Work closely with cities and regional agencies to ~~provide continuity between city and county land use planning and to~~ achieve common land use goals through reciprocal agreements.
2. Collaborate with communities, stakeholders and the public to plan for land uses according to strategic growth principles ~~the goals in this chapter~~; engage public participation and encourage "ownership" of the process and the outcomes.

Implementing Strategies

1. Promote cooperation between the county and all jurisdictions ~~to in form ing and carry ing out~~ strategic growth policies based on shared values, develop ~~ing or using existing mutual agreements and implementation programs. as primary tools.~~
2. ~~Work with cities, counties, regional boards, agencies and institutions to identify specific areas in which to develop more compact urban forms, implement strategic growth principles, and provide needed housing and jobs.~~
3. Develop community and resource indicators ~~(which are identifiable measures)~~ to assess what each community needs to be livable and affordable, and to make sure that development meets community and strategic growth goals, ~~and to preserve natural resources.~~
4. ~~Identify, shared values with other jurisdictions, important regional values, and provide solutions and strategies that enhance the important assets, and protect and preserve those assets vulnerable to loss or degradation.~~
5. Refrain from approving development in ~~unincorporated areas along the~~ unincorporated urban fringes that will burden city services or conflict with city-County agreements, a LAFCO Memorandum of Agreement or other form of cooperation, unless specific mitigation measures are ~~can~~ be included.

[END OF STAFF REVISIONS TO PLANNING COMMISSION RECOMMENDED DRAFT]

~~Population Growth~~
~~Distribution of Land Uses~~
~~Phasing of Urban Development~~
~~Residential Land Uses~~
~~Commercial and Industrial Land Uses~~
~~Public Services and Facilities~~
~~Circulation~~
~~Administration~~

Amend Chapter 4 of Framework for Planning (Inland), Part I of the Land Use Element of the General Plan, beginning on page 4-1, as follows:

CHAPTER 4: PUBLIC SERVICE CONSIDERATIONS

A. INTRODUCTION

A major function of local government is to provide public services, such as provisions for water and sewer, police and fire protection, parks, roads, public health services and education, within its jurisdiction. However, the provision of public services and facilities has not kept pace with growth since the mid-1970s, and it has become increasingly difficult to time improvements in pace with development and to deliver adequate services at an affordable price. The designation and expansion of communities occurs through establishment of Urban Reserve areas, and within them, Urban Service areas. When these areas need to change, the Local Agency Formation Commission must decide whether they meet state requirements for community growth. It is now well-documented and widely accepted that services can be provided more cost-effectively to communities that are strategically located and compact by design. Therefore, new development or re-development within existing communities is preferable to expansion.

This chapter describes how the Land Use Element identifies Urban Reserve and Service areas for different levels of public services, and how expansion of services is coordinated between public agencies, in particular the Local Agency Formation Commission (LAFCO).

B. MAJOR ISSUES

1. While new development ~~provides results in~~ some financial support for the increased service demands it creates, the cost to government of providing needed services frequently exceeds the return.
2. New residential and commercial development often occurs before the up-front costs to improve necessary improvements to facilities and services are available can be funded and completed to serve the new occupants and other users, thus overburdening existing facilities.
3. The economics of land use often result in development occurring first in urban fringe areas where land cost is less, instead of adjacent to existing development. Such development results in higher costs for extension of services and can also lead to inappropriately timed land use conversions.
4. Public and private service agencies and purveyors may not actively coordinate their provision of services with planned growth areas.

5. While county facilities fees will offset some of the associated costs of new development, other funding methods must be found to fund costs of providing, maintaining and upgrading public services for existing development.

[SECTION START OF STAFF REVISIONS TO PLANNING COMMISSION RECOMMENDED DRAFT]

Basic text is the Planning Commission recommended draft language, to page 21. Staff-proposed changes are underlined for new text, and in ~~strikethrough~~ to delete text.

C. POLICIES GOALS AND IMPLEMENTING STRATEGIES FOR PUBLIC SERVICES

Policies Goals identify public desires to address planning issues and provide a reference point to determine how they should be resolved. The following policies goals are also listed in Chapter 1 along with other land-use and service-related policies goals s.

Objectives identify types of actions that relate to the major issues as well as implementing the general go policies goals . More area-specific objectives and policies are provided in the area plans.

Policy Goal:

1. Keep the amount, location and rate of growth allowed by the Land Use Element within the sustainable capacity of resources, public services and facilities. Design and maintain a land use pattern and population capacity that is consistent with the renewable capacities of existing natural resources, public services and facilities, and their programmed expansion where funding has been identified.

Implementing Strategies:

- a. Avoid the use of public resources, services and facilities beyond their renewable capacities, and monitor new development to ensure that its resource demands will not exceed existing and planned capacities or service levels.
- b. Share the cost of additional services and facilities in among those who most immediately benefit and the entire community. Finance the cost of additional services and facilities from those who benefit by providing for dedications, in-lieu fees or exactions, and special financing districts.
- c. Locate new public service facilities as close as possible to users, allowing for sufficient buffers to protect adjacent rural and agricultural areas.

Policy Goal:

2. ~~Maintain a distinction between urban and rural development by providing Plan for rural uses outside of urban and village areas which that are predominately agriculture, low-intensity recreation, very low intensity residential uses, parks and open space preserves uses, in order to which will preserve and enhance the pattern of identifiable communities a well-defined rural character.~~

~~**Implementing Strategies:**~~

- ~~d. Direct the extension of urban services to areas within urban and village reserve lines, and restrict urban services from being provided outside urban or village areas.~~

- b. ~~Fund improvements that would primarily benefit the residents or users of new development, and that are necessary to maintain an adequate level of public services, through impact fees and special financing districts.~~

Policy Goal:

- ~~2.3. Encourage the Phase ing of urban development in a compact manner, first using vacant or underutilized "infill" parcels and lands next to or near existing development, so that urban land, transportation and services are developed and used in an efficient pattern.~~

Implementing Strategies:

- a. Give high priority and support for urban expansion that will result in compact neighborhoods with diverse yet related land uses for housing, school, recreation, work and shopping rather than low density suburban residential development.
- b. Give high priority and support for urban expansion that proposes attractive transitions from existing development, connections to existing streets and prominent pedestrian and public transit connections to destinations.
- c. Discourage low-density suburban or rural residential proposals for urban expansion or services.

Policy Goal:

4. Conduct long-term planning (20+ years) to fund and provide additional, sustainable public resources, services and facilities to serve existing communities in with sufficient time to avoid overburdening existing resources, services and facilities. ~~Provide additional public resources, services and facilities in sufficient time to avoid overburdening existing resources, services and facilities while sustaining their availability for future generations.~~

Implementing Strategy:

- a. Schedule development to occur when needed services are available or can be supplied concurrently.

D. URBAN RESERVE LINES

A basic requirement for providing public services is defining appropriate boundaries between urban and non-urban areas, and proper levels of service for each. The Land Use Element establishes such boundaries through the urban reserve line, urban service lines, and village reserve lines.

The Urban Reserve Line (URL) is a boundary separating urban/suburban land uses and rural land uses. It is based upon both the needs of individual communities for areas of additional growth during the term of the LUE, which is a 20 year period. It relates to the capacities of community resources to support such growth. The urban reserve line defines growth areas around urban centers in which the county, or the county and affected city, will actively coordinate plans, policies and standards relating to building construction, subdivision development, land use and zoning regulations, street and highway construction, public utility systems, and other matters related to the orderly development of urban areas. The amount of land included in each community URL by the Land Use Element is based on the following factors:

1. Community population projections.

2. The land absorption rate (how much land is actually being converted to urban uses each year).
3. Existing and planned capability of local services such as water and sewer systems committed in actual capital improvement programs to support continuing local development.
4. Community preferences about the character of growth.

The principles and ~~policies~~ goals in Chapter 1 and the land use policies in the LUE area plans give particular attention to identifying suitable areas within the urban reserve line for the full range of urban and suburban land uses, where such uses can be readily supported by services. Urban reserve lines are reviewed in plan updates to determine the continuing validity and need for change of those boundaries.

[SECTION END OF STAFF REVISIONS TO PLANNING COMMISSION RECOMMENDED DRAFT]

Consideration of Urban and Village Expansion

Any changes to an urban reserve line require an amendment to the Land Use Element. When the amendment is located within the coastal zone, the amendment must be approved by the Coastal Commission.

Urban Reserve Lines are established by the Land Use Element for the following cities and unincorporated communities inland of the Coastal Zone:

Arroyo Grande	South Bay	San Luis Obispo
Atascadero	Morro Bay	San Miguel
Avila Beach	Nipomo	Santa Margarita
Gambria	Oceano	Shandon
Gayucos	Paso Robles	Templeton
Grover <u>Beach</u> City	Pismo Beach	

The following criteria shall be met for all proposals to expand urban or village reserve lines. Exceptions to individual criteria may be made for proposals that generally advance the Planning Principles and goals in Chapter 1 when the proposed expansion is part of a county-initiated specific or comprehensive community plan:

1. The proposed expansion is within the Sphere of Influence of the community and any separate service district(s).
2. The proposal is consistent with the Planning Principles and ~~policies~~ Goals in Chapter 1, and the ~~policies~~ Goals and Objectives of this chapter.
3. The expansion is consistent with applicable Amendment Guidelines in Chapter 6.
4. The proposed expansion will preserve important and critical environmental areas and provide significant open space land for creating natural area preserves and open space adjacent to or near a community.
5. The proposal will not convert productive or prime agricultural land consistent with Agriculture Policies in the Agriculture and Open Space Element.

6. Required public services and transportation facilities will be funded or available at the time of development.
7. The timing is appropriate for expansion due to an existing or projected inadequate inventory of land within comparable land use categories in the community for the intended type of development.
8. Development within the proposed expansion will be adjacent to, and compatible with, existing development within the urban or village reserve.
9. Expansion will help create a more complete, walkable community, increase the affordability of housing and/or decrease economic and social segregation.
10. The proposal will improve the regional or sub-regional jobs-housing imbalance.

E. URBAN SERVICE LINES

Within the urban reserve line of each community is the urban services line (USL). The USL encompasses areas where urban services are now provided or where such services are expected to be extended during the next five to 10 years, as the community expands toward the full development potential represented by the urban reserve line. Placement of the USL is based upon existing and planned (committed in capital improvement programs) service system capacities and upon community plans.

The urban services line allows for orderly phasing of community expansion within an urban reserve line, as illustrated in Figure 4-1. The USL ~~should be~~ is reviewed ~~periodically every 5 years~~ in the LUE update process, along with the growth projections and service capabilities on which it is based. That review updates conditions within the community, correlating community growth with available resources. Review of the USL thereby allows for orderly expansion of the community with timely extensions of necessary urban services as they are available.

The USL defines areas where capital improvement programs and community plans should be coordinated to schedule extensions ~~of to~~ public services and utilities needed for urban development. As improvements are ~~scheduled and~~ constructed, the USL may be expanded accordingly. Areas of communities located between the urban service and urban reserve lines are sometimes designated on the LUE maps for urban uses, at Residential Single-Family densities or greater. ~~Such areas In such areas the land use categories~~ applied are referred to as "holding zones," where development of designated uses would be appropriate when urban services and facilities can be provided and the USL is amended to include those areas. Article 9 of the Land Use Ordinance contain standards identifying appropriate interim uses and densities for holding areas where particular uses ~~cannot could not~~ be compatibly established in advance of full urban services.

Due to a variety of reasons, the boundaries of service providers and special districts may not be co-terminus with USLs and even URLs. Some districts have entered into contracts or agreements with property owners to provide services in exchange for obtaining resources, facilities or easements. In general, these kinds of service boundary extensions should be discouraged so that service planning is closely aligned with planned land uses. The USL should be considered as the appropriate boundary for all applicable service providers, to clarify where services are appropriate, avoid conflicts between agencies, to coordinate the extension of services in accordance with planned resources, and to implement the Planning Principles and Policies Goals in Chapter 1 regarding compact development forms and directing growth to urban areas. . For these reasons, the county should coordinate with the California Public Utilities Commission in order for its decisions on the boundary locations of private service purveyors to be consistent with the USL.


Expansion of a USL is accomplished through an amendment of the Land Use Element, and should occur after LAFCO has amended the corresponding sphere of service line (see also Section H below). Factors that should be met before approving an expanded Urban Service Line or the boundary of a service district or private service provider include the following:


1. The proposed area is appropriate for urban or village services within the applicable reserve line.
2. Services are programmed and funded to provide the capacities necessary to serve the designated land uses, and resources are or are programmed to be available within their sustainable capacities.
3. The proposed urban service area is consistent with and will implement the Planning Principles and Policies Goals in Chapter 1.
4. The location of the proposed area will accommodate an efficient extension of infrastructure and transportation modes, and it will maximize the use of existing infrastructure.


F. VILLAGE RESERVE LINES


ORDERLY PHASING OF COMMUNITY EXPANSION WITHIN AN URBAN RESERVE LINE


LEGEND

- 
URBAN RESERVE LINE
 Boundary between urban land uses and rural countryside. Defines primary area for urban growth during twenty year horizon of Land Use Element.

- 
URBAN SERVICE LINE
 Area where urban services exist or are to be extended within the five to ten years after each annual LUE review. USL reviewed yearly to evaluate whether location is realistic in terms of community growth patterns and capacity of community resources.

- 
DEVELOPED AREA
 Areas within the community that are already substantially developed.

- 
PROPOSED URBAN EXPANSION AREA
 Areas for future urban uses and densities which will need full urban services, especially community water and sewer systems.

- 
PROPOSED SUBURBAN EXPANSION AREA
 Planned for future suburban uses and densities, requiring community water but able to accommodate individual septic tanks on an interim basis.



A community is defined by an urban reserve line at its border and by an urban services line within which services can be provided within 5 to 10 years of an LUE review.

As the developed area increases within the urban service line, the capacity for additional growth is evaluated in terms of community resources and facilities.

Expansion of an urban services line may occur if additional development within the urban reserve area can be served with full urban services.

Figure 4-1: Urban Reserve and Urban Service Lines

There are many areas in the county where homes are grouped in settlements of greater density than surrounding rural areas, but which are not self-sufficient communities. In past planning studies, such communities have often been overlooked, remaining undistinguished from the surrounding countryside. The LUE recognizes these villages as having both individual character and unique problems, as well as needing specialized solutions to their problems. People living in these villages identify with a local character and often feel protective of their village life-style.

The village reserve lines (VRL) distinguish developed areas from the surrounding rural countryside. A land use plan has been developed for each village, with particular attention given to their unique problems,

opportunities and development potentials. Village plans are found in the LUE area plans and village reserve lines are established for:

Black Lake
California Valley
Callender/Garrett
Creston
Garden Farms

Heritage Village
Los Berros
Los Ranchos/Edna
Oak Shores
Palo Mesa

Pozo
~~San Simeon Acres~~
Whitley Gardens
Woodland

Expansion of a village reserve line should be reviewed using the previous guidelines for Consideration of Urban or Village Expansion.

G. APPROPRIATE LEVELS OF SERVICE

The urban and village reserve lines establish the boundary between urban and rural (city and country) land uses and the different types of public services needed for area residents. Table H indicates the types of services that generally would be appropriate within in areas with urban, suburban and rural densities as shown in the Land Use Element area plans.

TABLE H LEVELS OF SERVICE		
Urban Densities* (One or more dwellings per acre)	Suburban Densities* (One dwelling per one to five acres)	Rural Densities* (One dwelling per five acres or larger)
Community Water System	Community Water System	Individual Wells
Public Sewers	Septic Tank Maintenance	Septic Tanks
Police Service	Police Service	Police Service
Fire Protection	Fire Protection	Fire Protection
Parks	Parks	Regional Parks
Street Improvements	Street Improvements	Road Improvements
Street Trees		
Lighting		
Street Sweeping		
Drainage	Drainage	Drainage
Solid Waste Pickup	Solid Waste Pickup	Solid Waste Pickup
Ambulance	Ambulance	Ambulance
Libraries	Libraries	Libraries (Mobile)
Improvement Districts	Improvement Districts	Improvement Districts
Open Space Maintenance	Open Space Maintenance	Open Space Maintenance
Cultural Facilities		
Schools	Schools	Schools

Note:

* “Density” in land use planning is a term that refers to the number of dwelling units per acre of land. Urban densities are generally one or more dwelling units per acre; suburban densities usually range from one dwelling unit per one acre to five acres, and rural densities are lower than one unit per five acres. Village areas usually have suburban densities, although exceptions may occur within the Land Use Element area plans. Urban areas normally have urban densities overall, although neighborhoods within village and urban areas may have urban or suburban densities.

In rural areas outside the urban reserve line that are experiencing long term physical hardship due to local groundwater shortages, it may become appropriate to establish an urban level community service system for water service only. Consideration should be given to the policies goals provided above in Section C. Policies Goals and Implementing Strategies. Prior to establishment of community water service within a rural area, the affected area plan and Article 9 must be amended to identify a specific water hardship area, to provide policies that explain the justification and objectives for allowing the establishment of community water service, and to provide the standards by which to implement these policies. [Added 1993, Ord. 2614]

H. LOCAL AGENCY FORMATION COMMISSION AND SPECIAL DISTRICTS

[SECTION START OF STAFF REVISIONS TO PLANNING COMMISSION RECOMMENDED DRAFT]

The following section has been edited to update and clarify the Planning Commission recommended draft, to page 32. Staff-proposed changes are within the underlined Planning Commission recommended text. The original Planning Commission recommended text follows this section for comparison.

Local Agency Formation Commissions (LAFCOs) were created to help organize, manage, and regulate the provision of public services to development. LAFCOs were created in 1963 in response to the post World War II development boom and the proliferation of development and local agencies providing public services to California’s fast growing communities. The results of this development boom became evident as more of California’s agricultural land was converted to urban uses. This premature and unplanned development pattern created inefficient and expensive systems of delivering public services using multiple small units of local government. A number of pieces of legislation were passed to help manage this situation, the most recent being the Cortese-Knox-Hertzberg Act of 2000 (CKH Act).

The Legislature has given LAFCOs the authority to carry out changes in governmental organizations that, promote the intent of the Cortese-Knox-Hertzberg Local Government Reorganization Act of 2000 (CKH Act). The CKH Act commences with Government Code Section 56000, . The CKH Act recognizes that the logical formation and determination of local agency boundaries is an important factor in promoting orderly development. In establishing these boundaries LAFCO balances future development with sometimes competing state interests of discouraging urban sprawl, preserving open-space and prime agricultural lands, and efficiently extending government services. The San Luis Obispo LAFCO addresses the following factors when considering proposals:

1. Orderly Growth. LAFCO discourages urban sprawl while encouraging orderly growth and development and the efficient provision of services.

2. Logical Boundaries. LAFCO encourages the logical formation and determination of boundaries;
3. Efficient Services. LAFCO encourages the provision of adequate, efficient and effective governmental services; and,
4. Preserve Agricultural and Open Spaces. LAFCO polices guide development away from open space and prime agricultural land uses unless such actions would not promote planned, orderly, and efficient development.

LAFCO Jurisdiction

Specific Authority. LAFCO is responsible for considering the following proposals:

- Annexations to, or detachments from, cities or special districts;
- Formation or dissolution of special districts;
- Incorporation or disincorporation of cities;
- Consolidation or reorganization of cities or special districts;
- Update and amendment of spheres of influence;
- Authorization of extension of services beyond an agency's jurisdictional boundaries;
- Provision of new or different services by special districts using outside user agreements; and,
- Preparation of Municipal Service Reviews and Sphere of Influence Updates at least every five years, if necessary.

Limitation of Authority Relating to Land Use Conditions. In order to carry out the legislative policies identified above, LAFCO has the power to approve or disapprove applications, or to impose reasonable conditions on approval. However, while LAFCO is charged with consideration of the impacts of land use in its determination, it is prohibited from making decisions specific to the determination of land use or zoning.

Sphere of Influence. The CKH Act provides the legislative authority and intent for establishing a Sphere of Influence and is included by reference in these policies. A Sphere of Influence is defined by the CKH Act as a plan for the probable physical boundaries and services area of a local agency, as determined by the Local Agency Formation Commission. In general the Sphere is a 20-year growth boundary for a jurisdiction's future development. The Sphere of Influence and Urban Reserve Line are often coordinated and are at times coterminous (identical to one another). The Sphere of Influence policies are intended to be consistent with CKH and take into consideration local conditions and circumstances. The following factors must be addressed when establishing a Sphere of Influence:

1. Present and planned land uses in the area, including agriculture, and open space lands;
2. Present and probable need for public facilities and services in the area;
3. Present capacity of public facilities and adequacy of public services that the agency provides or is authorized to provide; and
4. Existence of social or economic communities of interest in the area if the Commission determines that they are relevant to the agency

The Act further requires that a Municipal Service Review be conducted prior to, or in conjunction with, the update of a Sphere of Influence. The Service Review evaluates the public services provided by the jurisdiction and possible changes to a jurisdiction's Sphere of Influence that are currently under consideration. The legislative authority for conducting Service Reviews is provided in Section 56430 of the CKH Act. A Service Review must have written determinations that address the following factors in order to update a Sphere of Influence.

1. Growth and Population projections for the affected area
2. Present and planned capacity of public facilities and adequacy of public services, including infrastructure needs or deficiencies
3. Financial ability of agencies to provide services
4. Status of, and opportunity for, shared facilities
5. Accountability for community service needs including governmental structure and operational efficiencies
6. Any other matter related to effective or efficient service delivery, as required by commission policy

In completing an update of a jurisdiction's Sphere of Influence, LAFCO considers the General Plans of the county and cities. LAFCO also facilitates the development of a Memorandum of Agreement (MOA) between individual cities, and the county as described in the CKH Act. The MOA is a voluntary agreement that increases the levels of cooperation between the city and county with regard to growth and development within the city's Sphere of Influence. The city and county should agree on a Sphere of Influence boundary and provisions for the future development of the area. A special district and the county may enter into a MOA, but the agreement is not discussed in the CKH Act.

The California Government Code (Section 56301) states that one purpose of the Local Agency Formation Commission (LAFCO) is "...the discouragement of urban sprawl and the encouragement of the orderly formation and development of local governmental agencies based upon local conditions and circumstances." In order to see that such orderly formation and development is carried out, the code further directs that "...the Local Agency Formation Commission shall develop and determine the Sphere of Influence of each local governmental agency within the county."

The San Luis Obispo County LAFCO has adopted general policies and criteria for spheres of influence. These criteria contain the following definitions:

~~**Spheres of Influence:** Lines adopted by LAFCO that will delineate the probable ultimate physical boundaries and limits of local governmental agency service areas for a 10-20 year period. Many factors are considered, including the general plans of the various cities, boundary lines of existing special districts and the county urban reserve lines.~~

~~**Sphere of Service:** The area around a community, city or special district where short-term growth (10-year period) will be considered, and within which urban services are planned to be provided. An agency's capital improvement program assists in determining the sphere of service.~~

The definitions of the sphere of influence and sphere of service lines correspond directly to the definitions of the urban reserve and urban services lines (respectively) in the Land Use Element. The Land Use Element provides data useful to LAFCO in establishing Spheres of Influence and fulfilling its mandate to ensure that local governmental agencies undergo orderly formation and development.

~~Once spheres of influence are adopted by LAFCO they become "...a factor in making regular decisions on proposals over which it has jurisdiction. The commission may recommend governmental reorganizations to particular agencies in the county, using the spheres of influence as the basis for such recommendation..." The factors evaluated by LAFCO in determining the sphere of influence of each local governmental entity include:~~

- ~~1. The maximum possible service area of the agency based upon present and possible service capabilities of the agency.~~
- ~~2. The range of services the agency is providing or could provide.~~
- ~~3. The projected future population growth of the area.~~
- ~~4. The type of development occurring or planned for the area, including, but not limited to, residential, commercial, and industrial development.~~
- ~~5. The present and probable future service needs of the area.~~
- ~~6. Local governmental agencies presently providing services to such area and the present level, range and adequacy of services provided by such existing local governmental agencies.~~
- ~~7. The existence of social and economic interdependence and interaction between the area within the boundaries of a local governmental agency and the areas that surround it and could be considered within the agency's sphere of influence.~~
- ~~8. The existence of agricultural preserves within the area being considered for inclusion within an agency's sphere of influence and the effects of their inclusion on maintaining their physical and economic integrity.~~

[SECTION END OF STAFF REVISIONS TO PLANNING COMMISSION RECOMMENDED DRAFT]

The Planning Commission Recommended Draft text follows without LAFCO editing, for reference and to be deleted with adoption:

The Local Agency Formation Commission (LAFCO) is charged with promoting orderly development and balancing that development with the sometimes competing interests of discouraging urban sprawl, preserving open space and prime agricultural lands, and efficiently extending government services. The Legislature has given LAFCOs the authority to carry out changes in governmental organization to promote specified policies now codified in the Cortese-Knox-Hertzberg Local Government Reorganization Act of 2000 (CKH Act). The CKH Act commences with Section 56000 of the Government Code, and the reader is referred especially to Sections 56001, 56300, 56301, 56375, 56377, and 56668. The Sections contain the following major policy elements:

1. **Orderly Growth.** LAFCO is charged with discouraging urban sprawl and encouraging orderly growth and development. Providing housing for persons and families of all incomes is an important factor in promoting orderly development;

2. Logical Boundaries. LAFCO is responsible for encouraging the logical formation and determination of boundaries;
3. Efficient Services. LAFCO exercises its authority to encourage adequate, efficient and effective governmental services; and,
4. Preserve Agricultural and Open Spaces. LAFCO is required to exercise its authority to guide development away from open space and prime agricultural land uses unless such actions would not promote planned, orderly, and efficient development.

LAFCO Jurisdiction

Specific Authority. LAFCO has the specific authority to review and approve or disapprove the following:

- Annexations to, or detachments from, cities or districts; formation or dissolution of districts;
- Incorporation or disincorporation of cities; consolidation or reorganization of cities or districts;
- The establishment of a subsidiary district(s);
- The development of, and amendments to, spheres of influence;
- Authorization of extension of services beyond an agency's jurisdictional boundaries;
- Provision of new or different services by districts; and,
- Preparation of Municipal Service Reviews and Sphere of Influence studies at least every five years.

Limitation of Authority Relating to Land Use Conditions. In order to carry out the legislative policies identified above, LAFCO has the power to approve or disapprove applications, or to impose reasonable conditions on approval. However, while LAFCO is charged with consideration of the impacts of land use in its determination, it is specifically prohibited from directing specific land use or zoning actions. LAFCO can deny an application where the land use that would result violates the statutory policies of the CKH Act.

Sphere of Influence. The CKH Act provides the legislative authority and intent for establishing a Sphere of Influence and is included by reference in these policies. A Sphere of Influence is defined by the CKH Act as a plan for the probable physical boundaries and services area of a local agency, as determined by the Local Agency Formation Commission. In general the Sphere is a 20-year growth boundary for a jurisdiction's physical development. The Sphere of Influence and Urban Reserve Line are often coordinated and are at times coterminous (identical to one another). The Sphere of Influence policies are intended to be consistent with CKH and take into consideration local conditions and circumstances. The following factors must be addressed when establishing a Sphere of Influence:

5. Present and planned land uses in the area, including agriculture, and open space lands;
6. Present and probable need for public facilities and services in the area;
7. Present capacity of public facilities and adequacy of public services that the agency provides or is authorized to provide; and
8. Existence of social or economic communities of interest in the area if the Commission determines that they are relevant to the agency

The Act further requires that a Municipal Service Review be conducted prior to, or in conjunction with, the update of a Sphere of Influence. The Service Review evaluates the public services provided by the jurisdiction and possible changes to a jurisdiction's Sphere of Influence that are currently under consideration. The legislative authority for conducting Service Reviews is provided in Section 56430 of the CKH Act. A Service Review must have written determinations that address the following factors in order to update a Sphere of Influence.

1. Infrastructure Needs & Deficiencies
2. Growth & Population
3. Financing Constraints & Opportunities
4. Cost Avoidance Opportunities
5. Opportunities for Rate Restructuring
6. Opportunities for Shared Facilities
7. Government Structure Options
8. Evaluation of Management Efficiencies
2. Local Accountability & Governance

In completing an update of a jurisdiction's Sphere of Influence, LAFCO considers the General Plans of the county and when applicable, cities and special districts. LAFCO also facilitates the development of a Memorandum of Agreement (MOA) between the cities, districts and the county. The MOA is a voluntary agreement that increases the levels of cooperation between the city or district and county with regard to growth and development within the city's or district's Sphere of Influence. The city or district and county should agree on a Sphere of Influence boundary and provisions for the future development of the area.

~~The California Government Code (Section 56301) states that one purpose of the Local Agency Formation Commission (LAFCO) is "...the discouragement of urban sprawl and the encouragement of the orderly formation and development of local governmental agencies based upon local conditions and circumstances." In order to see that such orderly formation and development is carried out, the code further directs that "...the Local Agency Formation Commission shall develop and determine the Sphere of Influence of each local governmental agency within the county."~~

~~The San Luis Obispo County LAFCO has adopted general policies and criteria for spheres of influence. Those criteria contain the following definitions:~~

~~**Spheres of Influence:** Lines adopted by LAFCO that will delineate the probable ultimate physical boundaries and limits of local governmental agency service areas for a 10-20 year period. Many factors are considered, including the general plans of the various cities, boundary lines of existing special districts and the county urban reserve lines.~~

~~**Sphere of Service:** The area around a community, city or special district where short-term growth (10-year period) will be considered, and within which urban services are planned to be provided. An agency's capital improvement program assists in determining the sphere of service.~~

~~The definitions of the sphere of influence and sphere of service lines correspond directly to the definitions of the urban reserve and urban services lines (respectively) in the Land Use Element. The Land Use Element provides data useful to LAFCO in establishing Spheres of Influence and fulfilling its mandate to ensure that local governmental agencies undergo orderly formation and development.~~

Once spheres of influence are adopted by LAFCO they become "...a factor in making regular decisions on proposals over which it has jurisdiction. The commission may recommend governmental reorganizations to particular agencies in the county, using the spheres of influence as the basis for such recommendation..." The factors evaluated by LAFCO in determining the sphere of influence of each local governmental entity include:

9. ~~The maximum possible service area of the agency based upon present and possible service capabilities of the agency.~~
10. ~~The range of services the agency is providing or could provide.~~
11. ~~The projected future population growth of the area.~~
12. ~~The type of development occurring or planned for the area, including, but not limited to, residential, commercial, and industrial development.~~
13. ~~The present and probable future service needs of the area.~~
14. ~~Local governmental agencies presently providing services to such area and the present level, range and adequacy of services provided by such existing local governmental agencies.~~
15. ~~The existence of social and economic interdependence and interaction between the area within the boundaries of a local governmental agency and the areas that surround it and could be considered within the agency's sphere of influence.~~
16. ~~The existence of agricultural preserves within the area being considered for inclusion within an agency's sphere of influence and the effects of their inclusion on maintaining their physical and economic integrity.~~

Many of the same factors affecting establishment of the LAFCo spheres of influence are also considered in locating the urban reserve, urban service and village reserve lines in the LUE. Expansion of spheres of influence should also be based on a review of the factors for expanding urban and village reserve lines in section D. URBAN RESERVE LINES - CONSIDERATION OF URBAN AND VILLAGE EXPANSION. Continued coordination in the future between the LUE and the spheres of influence will support the orderly growth of county communities and will also support service agencies in keeping pace with that growth.

Amend Chapter 5 of Framework for Planning (Inland), Part I of the Land Use Element of the General Plan, beginning on page 5-1, as follows:

Chapter 5: CIRCULATION ELEMENT

[Text from pages 5-1 to 5-6 is not addressed and is omitted.]

F. STREET DESIGN CONSIDERATIONS

The location and design of streets can have a major effect on adjacent land uses. The design of residential streets is particularly important since improper design ~~of such routes~~ can have a long-term adverse effect on residents using them. Streets shall be designed in accordance with appropriate standards, and shall incorporate traffic calming features where needed, to result in vehicles traveling at safe and pedestrian-friendly speeds. The

following guidelines offer general design parameters for providing safe, convenient routes for movement of automobiles, bicycles and pedestrians within residential neighborhoods and local commercial areas.

General Design Guidelines

1. Street and pedestrian circulation patterns in newly developed areas should be compatible with the land use and circulation recommendations of the community plans for the planning areas.
2. Arterial roads and streets should be developed to provide appropriate service for local trips, to minimize traffic on principal arterials.
3. Pedestrian circulation should be expressly addressed in project and street designs so that walking is facilitated between projects and other neighborhood destinations by sidewalks, pathways or trails that have adequate width, connections and unobstructed access ~~accommodated by various methods of implementation.~~
4. New street network designs should ~~minimize the overall length of streets. be in connected patterns~~ with a variety of linear and curvilinear forms for aesthetic interest, environmental sensitivity and efficient use of land. A "grid" layout is encouraged; however, the grid may be occasionally interrupted (while still remaining in compliance with the design criteria in the Real Property Division Ordinance) in order to prevent "cut-through" traffic from adjacent neighborhoods. Multiple cul de sacs shall be strongly discouraged.
5. Driveway entrances should be avoided on arterials or other streets where needed to allow for uninterrupted traffic flow. Alleys may provide suitable access to rear-facing garages if designs are attractive, avoid through-traffic and provide for visual security, waste handling, infrastructure and maintenance.
6. Local residential streets should generally be interconnected while serving ~~designed to serve~~ limited, localized access needs, rather than through traffic.
7. All dwellings and structures should be readily accessible to emergency and service vehicles.
8. Street standards should be developed using the guidelines of the "A Policy on Geometric Design of Highways and Streets," "Guide to Urban and Rural Street Design" published by the American Association of State and Highway and Transportation Officials (AASHTO), with focused attention on new flexible standards.
9. Horizontal and vertical street alignments should be located to minimize grading and to incorporate natural ground contours as much as possible without creating hazards to traffic, and should be consistent with other design objectives.
10. Street layouts should be planned to avoid adverse concentration of storm water runoff.
11. Street design should promote safe bicycling by including the placement of bike lanes, routes and bikeways that will implement the County Bikeways Plan ~~provide for the safety of the cyclist as well as the automobile driver with whom they share the streets.~~

Local Street Intersections

Residential street layouts should generally be designed to minimize the use of four-way local street intersections by avoiding conventional gridiron street layout patterns.

Parking

1. Adequate off-street parking for residents and guests, including spaces for recreational vehicles, should be provided in both urban and rural areas. Off-street parking requirements should be reduced if it can reasonably be foreseen that proximity to public transit and essential commercial and public services will reduce the parking demand.
2. Parking lots for commercial development shall include shade trees of appropriate type, density and location to provide a minimum of 50% shade of total surface area during summer months.

Street Landscaping

- a. Street landscaping should be included in planned street designs to improve the appearance and aesthetic value of urban and village areas.
- b. Landscaping should be planned for safety and beauty, emphasizing appropriate use of native, drought tolerant species, to provide buffering and to minimize conflicts between streets, parking, structures, and pedestrian paths.
- c. New street development projects should include landscaping along with funding for its installation and maintenance, either through the county or other agencies such as community service districts.
- d. The design and construction of new roads or the expansion of existing roads, to the degree that right-of-way and traffic safety allow, should incorporate and preserve natural features, such as native woodlands or significant mature trees, rock outcrops and other landmarks.
- e. Implementation of street landscaping projects should occur after the assignment of departmental responsibilities for installation and maintenance and discussion of funding sources and methods by the Board of Supervisors. For example, the Public Works and General Services Departments may develop a coordinated program for design and a funding mechanism through the Public Works Department, and installation and maintenance by the General Services Department. These decisions should be made to avoid problems with inadequate staffing or financial capability to develop and maintain projects.

Alternative Street Design

Due to the considerations listed above, special street designs may be necessary in unique local situations, such as in private developments where public roads are not a consideration. In such cases, special design standards or criteria may be utilized that do not conform to the County Standard Improvement Specifications and Drawings.

Some special design needs are noted in the Land Use Element area plans as guidelines in the Circulation chapter programs or as requirements in Article 9 of the Land Use Ordinance (Community Planning Standards). Special designs that are available in ~~the~~ "A Policy on Geometric Design of Highways and Streets," "Guide to Urban and Rural Street Design," or other design guidebooks will be necessary to implement them. Other special design needs may come to light during review of applications for land use permits and subdivisions or

capital improvement projects, for example to preserve a woodland or to create a pedestrian or equestrian pathway separated from a street. In such cases, streets should be designed to accommodate those needs if traffic safety can be assured.

Street Construction

Before the construction of new or expanded streets and roads, detailed plans must be developed. At that stage, engineering feasibility studies and geometric designs should carry out the guidelines listed in the previous sections with the coordination of Planning and Building and Public Works Department staff as a general plan conformity report is prepared.

An environmental determination is then made for the preliminary design of each project. The Public Works Department prepares construction drawings based on the process of plan development and the environmental determination.

F.G. SCENIC ROADS AND HIGHWAYS

The designation of scenic roads and highways is intended to promote ~~conserve~~ and enhance the natural scenic beauty occurring along portions of county and state highways. The rural areas of San Luis Obispo County have many scenic attributes that contribute to the pleasure of driving through them. Whether these features of the landscape are highly unusual, such as the volcanic Mmorros between San Luis Obispo and Morro Bay, or the more typical oak-studded ranch, they play an important role identifying the county as a special place. Agricultural operations and facilities, ocean views, mountain landscapes and unique geologic features in the rural areas ~~can also help make many of the roads very scenic and~~ contribute to the scenic quality of the rural areas of the county. These features are essential to the ~~Together, these natural and built features provide a scenic environment that encourages the growth of recreation and tourist industries that are major parts of the local economy. Development and enhancement of the scenic roads and highways system should be accomplished without undue restrictions on private property or unnecessary burdens on agricultural operations.~~

In recognition of these features, Highway One is designated a State Scenic Highway and National Scenic Byway from San Luis Obispo to the Monterey County line. Additional scenic state highways may be designated through a process with the California Department of Transportation (Caltrans) that is flexible for local evaluation and regulation to protect scenic quality. Local county roads may be designated as scenic corridors through a process that is outlined in the Agriculture and Open Space Element. This section of the Circulation Element incorporates the scenic highways element contained in the Open Space Element, which It includes a list of eligible state highways and county roads that qualify for a scenic designation, and more detailed mapped designations and policies for the designation protection of scenic highway corridors. The local scenic road designation process does not apply to the state or federal designation processes for scenic highways. The designation of additional scenic roads and highways should be accomplished without undue restrictions on private property, impacts to biological resources or unnecessary burdens on agricultural operations. The implementation policies in the AG/OS Element for designating scenic corridors should be actively pursued to protect the county's high-quality scenic character.

Policies for road and highway projects in designated scenic corridors

The following policies are stated to implement the Agriculture and Open Space Plan Policy OSP24 as it applies to all roads and highways that are designated as scenic highway corridors within the county:

1. Construction of improvements, realignments and new road facilities of designated scenic corridor roads and highways should maintain or enhance existing views and not obstruct or diminish them, as can be determined through the development permit process.
2. Road and highway construction projects of in scenic highway corridors should provide special attention to the location, siting and design of visible structures, access points, signs and other facilities within the right-of-way. Landscaping should include area native plants in strategic locations to enhance views and be used in revegetation. Place utilities underground where feasible as part of road improvement projects.
3. Ensure that the location, design and construction of each road or highway blends into and complements the scenic corridor, by coordinating among involved agencies for the integrated design of the project.
4. Provide special scenic treatment and design within scenic road and highway rights-of-way, to include highway directional signs, guardrails and fences, lighting, provisions of scenic outlooks, frontage roads, grading, vegetation and highway structures.

The following local objectives are stated to implement the Agriculture and Open Space Element policy that scenic highway provisions should be applied to all highways so designated within the county:

1. ~~Identify scenic areas and features within view of state highways, city streets, and county roads in the Agriculture and Open Space Element and incorporate them into the applicable Land Use Element area plan, designating them within Sensitive Resource Areas.~~
2. ~~Adopt programs in the Land Use Element area plans and standards in the Land Use Ordinance to protect the scenic quality of identified areas and to maintain views from designated scenic roads and highways. Provide special attention to the location, siting and design of visible structures, access roads and outdoor advertising, while ensuring that there will not be undue restrictions on private property or agricultural operations. Encourage area native plants in landscaping. Promote placing utilities underground where feasible.~~
3. ~~Ensure that the location, design and construction of each scenic road or highway blend into and complement the scenic corridor, by coordinating among involved agencies for the integrated design of the project.~~
4. ~~Promote special scenic treatment and design within scenic road and highway rights-of-way, to include highway directional signs, guardrails and fences, lighting, provisions of scenic outlooks, frontage roads, grading, vegetation and highway structures.~~

H. PEDESTRIAN CIRCULATION

To achieve walkable communities, pedestrian circulation needs to be planned from the outset in new projects and connected with existing and future routes of travel. Walking is critical to creating healthy communities, as it reduces vehicle travel and associated air pollution, including carbon dioxide emissions that contribute to

climate change, and it promotes physical and mental well being. Reducing the increase in vehicle traffic also will reduce the need for expensive street widening and intersection improvements.

Pedestrian travel needs to be encouraged and facilitated by providing usable and attractive sidewalks, pathways and trails appropriate to their function. Residential neighborhoods may be served by all of these; however, commercial development may or may not accommodate trails or pathways. Narrow or dis-connected sidewalks do not serve pedestrians needs well. Pedestrians are typically attracted to wider, inviting routes that connect daily destinations, such as home, school, parks, work and shopping within a five- to ten-minute walk. Community planning and project design need to facilitate such connections. Pedestrian facilities should be buffered from traffic where feasible by street parking, landscaped parkways or separated pathways such as trails and paseos. Publicly and privately funded features should be included to provide interest and a sense of place, such as landscaping, above-ground planters, benches, way-finding signs, public art and symbols, and streetlights at a pedestrian scale.

Implementing Strategies for Pedestrian Circulation

1. Give high priority to pedestrian travel as a primary component of community planning and the design of all neighborhoods, districts and street corridors.
2. Plan for pedestrians to have maximum access and connectivity between land use destinations, fill in the gaps between disconnected sidewalk segments, and eliminate other barriers to pedestrian access along streets and within sites.
3. Give high priority to pedestrian facilities and amenities within the County budget process, traffic impact fee programs and the Council of Governments funding allocations.
4. Plan and provide multi-use trails that encourage pedestrian, bicycle and equestrian travel between residential areas and other destinations, to implement the trails section of the Parks and Recreation Element.

I. BIKEWAYS

Bicycling is an important component of the county transportation system. Bikeways are several types of facilities designed for safe bicycle travel, including fully separated paths, restricted bike lanes, or signed streets. The Circulation Element incorporates the Bikeways Element of the Regional Transportation Plan as though fully set forth here, for detailed planning and implementation of regionally significant bikeways. Local bikeways may be are addressed in the Circulation chapters of the Land Use Element area plans. The County Bikeways Plan provides for the advancement of bicycling and includes detailed guidance for developing of bike lanes, routes and separated paths.

Implementing Strategies for Bikeways

1. Give high priority to bicycle travel within and between communities in community planning, financing and improvement designs.

2. Bicycle travel should be encouraged through community outreach, fully implementing a network of bike lanes and paths and related facilities, including bike racks, and by changing standards and specifications, signing and related facilities as needed to achieve greater usage.
3. Regional trails that link communities should be provided consistent with the Parks and Recreation Element, to enable more alternative transportation between and through communities.

J. PUBLIC TRANSIT

Public transit serves the transportation needs of large numbers of people and low-mobility groups (disabled individuals and those without cars) more efficiently than automobiles. Transit policies and plans of the county are integrated with local and regional systems in the Transit portion of the Regional Transportation Plan, which is incorporated by reference as though it were fully stated here.

The county has an important role in planning, supporting and expanding the Regional Transit System because the road system in unincorporated areas is projected to be increasingly impacted by vehicle travel. A more productive and convenient transit system is ~~will be~~ necessary to offset increasingly congested streets and highways effectively.

Implementing Strategies for Public Transit

1. Provide public transit with sufficient connectivity, frequency and hours and days of service to be competitive with the private automobile. Utilize transit planning as an equal consideration in decisions on using transportation funding for street and highway improvements, during the county budgetary process and the Area Coordinating Council's Unmet Transit Needs process.
2. Allocate LTF/TDA funds to fully fund public transit services before considering those funds for other transportation needs. Expand the land use planning process to include the consideration of transit facility needs in the location and intensity of development, by integrating commercial and residential areas with transit networks.
3. Work with the Regional Transit Authority and other transit agencies to coordinate transit routes, facilities and services with planned land uses and with specific development proposals.
4. Expand the consideration of transit facilities in the land use permit process, by encouraging Encourage mixed-use commercial and residential projects, planned unit developments, participation by and encourage developers to to in provide ~~ing~~ transit facilities, park and ride lots and implementation of vehicle trip-reduction programs.
- 5.4. Consider the enactment of Traffic Mitigation and Vehicle Trip-Reduction Ordinances that would reduce the amount of traffic from large-scale institutions, developments or employers that would occur at peak commuting hours, such as staggered hours or car pooling incentives.
- 6.5. Pursue transportation demand management strategies as contained in the Regional Transportation Plan that encourage will manage demand by encouraging people to drive less, for instance, with preferential parking for car poolers.

K. AIRPORTS

Airports provide base facilities for air transportation and air freight and meet recreational needs. The Land Use Element designates areas around airports for limited commercial, industrial, recreational or low-density residential uses, as well as agricultural and open space uses, based upon the characteristics of the individual airports. Specific development criteria for airport facilities and identification of types of land uses that may be compatible with airports are defined in the following documents:

1. ~~The Aviation Element of the county Transportation Plan.~~
2. The San Luis Obispo County Airport Land Use Plan.
3. The Oceano County Airport Land Use Plan.
4. The Paso Robles City Airport Land Use Plan.

Land use recommendations and standards of the above-mentioned documents are refined in the planning areas through application of the Airport Review combining designation, discussed in Chapter 7.

L. EQUESTRIAN TRAILS

In areas where there is interest in establishing equestrian trails, the county should work with equestrian groups, property owners, and agriculturalists to determine whether rights-of-way may be secured to serve this need while respecting and protecting adjacent uses and ownerships.

M. OTHER TRANSPORTATION MODES

In addition to streets, public transit and airports, other transportation modes affecting land use planning include harbors and seaports, pipelines, transmission lines, rail and transportation terminals. The area plans contain policies for the local development and use of those systems. The Regional Transportation Plan contains a specific discussion of issues, programs and policies for those components of the county circulation system and it is incorporated by reference as though it were fully included here.

Amend Chapter 6 of Framework for Planning (Inland), Part I of the Land Use Element of the General Plan, beginning on page 6-7, as follows:

CHAPTER 6: LAND USE CATEGORIES

[Text from 6-1 to 6-7 is not addressed and is omitted]

Guidelines for Land Use Category Amendments

In determining whether to approve a proposed land use category amendment, the Planning Commission and Board of Supervisors may consider, but shall not be limited to, the following items where appropriate for the proposed land use category change under consideration:

1. **Existing planning policies.** Whether the proposed land use category is consistent with the following:

- a. Applicable policies in the various elements of the General Plan (~~Land Use, Agriculture and Open Space, Conservation, Circulation, Housing, Safety, Noise~~);
 - b. The general policies goals in Chapter 1 of Framework for Planning (Part I of the Land Use Element);
 - c. The purpose and character statements for land use categories in Section B, description of land use categories;
 - d. Uses listed in Article 2 of the Land Use Ordinance, list of allowable uses;
 - e. The text and maps of the area plans (Part II of the Land Use Element); and
 - f. The planning area standards of Article 9 (Community Planning Standards) of the Land Use Ordinance.
2. **Area character.** Whether the proposed land use category is compatible with allowed land uses in surrounding land use categories. Whether the potential types of development resulting from a proposed amendment would adversely affect the existing or planned appearance of the countryside, neighborhood community character and style of development in the surrounding area.
 3. **Environmental impacts.** The proposed amendment should not enable development that would cause potential significant adverse environmental impacts as determined through an environmental determination, unless such impacts can be adequately mitigated or a statement of overriding considerations can be adopted in accordance with the California Environmental Quality Act.
 4. **Accessibility/circulation.** Whether the site of the proposed amendment is located with convenient access to a road system in the vicinity that is adequate to accommodate the traffic generated by the type and intensity of development allowed by the amendment.
 5. **Soils classification.** Whether the proposed amendment gives consideration to protecting prime ~~agricultural soils (SCS Class I and II, irrigated) for potential agricultural use~~ farmland and farmland of statewide importance as identified by the Natural Resources Conservation Service (NRCS). Proposals in other soil classifications should be reviewed together with other site features to determine if the proposed amendment could unnecessarily limit, reduce or eliminate potentially viable agricultural uses.
 6. **Slope and other terrain characteristics.** Whether site terrain would be predominantly retained in its existing configuration by development enabled by the proposed amendment. Whether development resulting from the proposed amendment would avoid excessive grading and retain the overall contour of a site such that more intensive development occurs on flatter land and low-density development is accommodated by steeper terrain.
 7. **Vegetation.** Whether the proposed amendment enables development that would retain significant vegetation such as oak woodlands or other mature tree forests and native plant communities that provide wildlife habitat or include rare and endangered plant or animal species.
 8. **Hazards.** Whether the proposed amendment has been evaluated with respect to potential building limitations due to flood, fire or geologic hazards, so that subsequent development will be feasible in relation to the uses allowed by the proposed amendment.
 9. **Existing parcel size and ownership patterns.** Whether the proposed amendment enables development of a type and scale consistent with surrounding parcel sizes and ownership patterns.

10. **Availability of public services and facilities.** Whether the proposed amendment is located in an area with demonstrated availability of needed public services and facilities and, where applicable, whether it is suitable for on-site sewage disposal and has an adequate groundwater supply. To the extent that proposed amendments will create a demand for services, amendments in the urban and village areas should demonstrate that services for water supply, sewerage, streets, public safety, schools and parks are planned to be available within the horizon year of the applicable area plan, or a capital improvement program is in effect to provide for any such services that are currently deficient, or such services and facilities will be provided as a result of approved development following the amendment.
11. **Land inventory.** Whether the amendment, with the uses it would allow, is needed to provide an appropriate balance of land uses ~~a sufficient supply of land~~ for the population of the community or area ~~that is projected~~ within the projected capacity for natural ~~planned~~ resources, services and facilities.
12. **Mineral Resources.** Whether the amendment proposed in an area included within the EX (Energy and Extractive Resource Area) or EX₁ (Extractive Resource Area) combining designations on the official maps of the Land Use Element would preclude resource extraction or would result in uses which adversely affect the existing operation or expansion of extraction uses. Proposals within the EX or EX₁ combining designations which would preclude resource extraction, would allow minimum residential parcel sizes of less than 10 acres or would otherwise be incompatible with resource extraction shall be approved only when the need for the particular use is determined by the Board of Supervisors to outweigh the value of keeping the potential mineral resource available for future extraction. The proposed amendment shall not enable development that would adversely affect the continuing operation or expansion of an extraction use [Amended 1991, Ord. 2498].
13. **Agricultural land.** ~~Whether the amendment is located in an area where it would not protect enable conversion of agricultural land at the urban fringe and would allow an expansion of urban development into agricultural lands or encourage sprawl by allowing "leapfrog" development into agricultural areas. Such conversion of agricultural land to non-agricultural uses is discouraged unless other locations for development are physically, environmentally or otherwise not feasible in the foreseeable future. Requests for conversion shall be consistent with, at a minimum, be evaluated against the criteria established in the Agriculture and Open Space Element and the Conservation Element for conversion of agricultural land.~~

B. DESCRIPTION OF LAND USE CATEGORIES

This section describes the 13 land use categories in detail, including their purpose and intended character. The criteria listed for each land use category are the basis for determining actual locations where the categories should be applied.

The statements of purpose and character are to be used as criteria for evaluating whether a Land use Element amendment is appropriate for a specific site, neighborhood or community. The statements of category purpose and character are ~~not~~ to be used to evaluate development proposals. The purpose statements are objectives related to the policies goals in Chapter 1. Character statements identify suitable features or conditions for the location, extent and timing of designating a land use category. These statements also are the basis for establishing allowable uses in Article 2 of the Land Use Ordinance.

[Text from this section to end of chapter is not addressed and is omitted]