

# 1 INTRODUCTION AND ADMINISTRATION



Board of Supervisors and General Plan team (from left: Supervisor Duane Chamberlain, Supervisor Jim Provenza, Supervisor Helen Thomson, Supervisor Mike McGowan, Supervisor Matt Rexroad, Marcus Neuvert, Beth Gabor, Wes Ervin, David Morrison, Heidi Tschudin, Pat Leary, Robyn Drivon, Dirk Brazil, Phil Pogledich, and John Bencomo) Source: Ana Morales

*The Yolo County General Plan was last comprehensively updated in 1983 based on the County's original General Plan from 1958. This is only the third General Plan for the County of Yolo since its creation in 1850 – a testament to the fact that the County has stayed focused on the same basic goals since its inception over 150 years ago. This chapter provides basic introductory and administrative information, including a summary of all the other chapters. A new component introduced in this chapter is a formal process for making and tracking interpretations of the General Plan. Additionally, this plan includes an Implementation Plan with assigned responsibilities and timeframes for each required action. This will create a bridge to the annual budget document and facilitate a detailed annual reexamination of implementation priorities.*



**A. Introduction**

The General Plan is a statement of the community’s land use values. It guides virtually all land use decisions in the County. Zoning, Specific Plans, Area Plans, subdivisions, capital improvements, development agreements and many other land use actions must be consistent with the adopted General Plan. In addition, the preparation, adoption, implementation and maintenance of the General Plan serve to:

- Identify the County’s land use, circulation, environmental, economic and social goals and policies as they relate to land use.
- Provide a basis for County decision-making, particularly as related to land use, land use regulation and proposals for development.
- Provide residents and property owners with opportunities to participate in the planning and decision-making process.
- Inform residents, property owners and decision-makers of the principles that guide land use decisions and regulation within the county.
- Define the County’s identity by establishing shared goals and assumptions concerning future land use.

**1. County Overview**

Yolo County was one of the original 27 counties created when California became a State in 1850. The county is located in the rich agricultural regions of California’s Central Valley and the Sacramento River Delta. It is directly west of Sacramento, the State Capital of California, and northeast of the Bay Area counties of Solano and Napa (see Figure IN-1, Regional Location Map).

Yolo County is a general law county, which means that the Board of Supervisors is elected by district and that principal officers of the County are regulated by statutes that assign their duties.

As shown in Table IN-1, the county’s total size is 653,549 acres (or 1,021 square miles). This includes both the incorporated area (the cities of Davis, West Sacramento, Winters and Woodland) which totals 32,325 acres and the unincorporated area, which totals 621,224 acres.

TABLE IN-1 **YOLO COUNTY ACREAGE  
TABULATION**

Davis	6,355 acres
West Sacramento	14,723 acres
Winters	1,629 acres
Woodland	9,618 acres
<i>Subtotal Incorporated Area</i>	<i>32,325 acres</i>
Unincorporated Area	621,224 acres
<b>Yolo County Total</b>	<b>653,549 acres</b>

The four cities have independent land use authority from the County and are not a part of this General Plan. The unincorporated



FIGURE IN-1 REGIONAL LOCATION





county contains several communities, including Capay, Clarksburg, Dunnigan, Esparto, Guinda, Knights Landing, Madison, Monument Hills, Rumsey, Yolo and Zamora. All of these unincorporated communities are under the jurisdiction of Yolo County and are considered in this General Plan.

There are other entities within Yolo County that have land use and related authority distinct from the County General Plan. These include UC Davis, the Rumsey Band of Wintun Indians, and in some circumstances the various school districts.

Established as the University Farm in 1906 and as a formal University in 1959, the UC Davis is the largest campus in the UC system, spanning over 5,500 acres in Davis, CA. The university is known for its agriculture, arts, humanities, life sciences, health sciences, veterinarian and engineering programs. Although the University is not subject to this General Plan, it is located within the unincorporated area and its resident student population and on-campus housing are factored into County policy.

The Rumsey Band of Wintun Indians is the only federally-recognized tribe with landholdings in Yolo County. The Rumsey Tribe operates the Cache Creek Casino Resort in western Yolo County and has become the County's largest private employer. Tribal trust lands are administered by the U.S. Department of the Interior, Bureau of Indian Affairs and are not subject to County jurisdiction. However, other non-trust lands owned by the Rumsey Tribe are included within this General Plan.

Yolo County Housing (YCH) is an independent organization whose board of directors is appointed by the Yolo County Board of Supervisors. It receives funding from a variety of public and private sources to provide affordable housing and social programs for the County. Currently, the YCH owns and manages 431 conventional housing apartments and 301 migrant farm worker units. Those YCH projects that are located on County-owned land are subject to this General Plan.

## **2. Planning Background**

California State law requires each city and county to adopt a General Plan "for the physical development of the county or city and any land outside its boundaries which bears relation to its planning" (Government Code Section 65300). The California Supreme Court has called the General Plan the "constitution for future development." The General Plan expresses the community's development goals and embodies public policy relative to the distribution of future land uses, both public and private.

The Yolo County General Plan was first adopted in 1958, as part of a Master Plan that included the cities of Davis, Winters, and Woodland. The primary goals of the 1958 Master Plan were to preserve the rich soil resources in the county and to minimize urbanization. These continue to be core principles of the General Plan today.



Though some elements were revised in the 1970s, the original 1958 County General Plan was not comprehensively updated again until 1983. Since the 1983 document, the Board of Supervisors has approved various updates and additions, including the Dunningan General Plan in 2001, the Agriculture Element, Open Space and Recreation Element and Clarksburg General Plan in 2002, the Housing Element in 2003 and the Esparto General Plan in 2007. This document represents only the third comprehensive effort to revise the General Plan in County history.

In May of 2003, the Board of Supervisors gave direction to begin the process of comprehensively updating the General Plan. At the outset of the process, the Board of Supervisors elected to undertake an extensive process of public outreach and involvement. A comprehensive list of stakeholders was identified and throughout 2004 and 2005 over 20 public workshops were held throughout the county in the cities and unincorporated communities to gain input and ideas from the community. One of the workshops was a “Land Use Summit” which convened the first ever joint session of the four City Councils and the Board of Supervisors. As an important outcome of this stage of the process, the Board of Supervisors ultimately adopted a “principles and vision” statement to guide the update process, based on the 1983 plan and public input.

During this time, and into 2006, the County participated in regional modeling efforts and growth projections undertaken by the Sacramento Area Council of Governments (SACOG) to create the Preferred Blueprint Scenario, and convened its own Economic Development Panel which issued findings to help focus the economic goals and objectives of the County. Additionally, significant local research was undertaken during this period resulting in the following reports:

- General Plan Background Report
- Concepts for Rural Sustainability
- Market and Fiscal Considerations
- Agricultural Preservation Techniques
- County Infrastructure Conditions

These reports can be found online at [www.yolocounty.org](http://www.yolocounty.org).

Between September of 2006 and March of 2007, five key hearings were held before the Planning Commission and Board of Supervisors to explore and ultimately define the basic policy premise and Preferred Land Use Alternative for the Update process. Hundreds of people provided testimony during these hearings and the Board of Supervisors ultimately crafted the Preferred Land Use Alternative from six alternatives. Between March and September of 2007 two additional hearings were held to confirm the precise property mapping to be used with the Preferred Land Use Alternative. In September of 2007, the Board of Supervisors authorized the staff to move forward with various land use changes referred to as the Preferred Land Use Alternative. In November of 2007



and January of 2008, the Board of Supervisors gave direction to further explore the concept of agricultural districts that would allow for voluntary participation in various programs (such as targeted regulatory streamlining, financial incentives and specialized marketing efforts) to encourage agricultural business development and expansion. The Preferred Land Use Alternative was further refined during review of the Draft General Plan by the Board of Supervisors in January of 2008.

The Preferred Land Use Alternative focused on the following:

- The continuing primacy of agriculture and related endeavors throughout the county, particularly as related to economic development and job creation.
- Standards for sustainability, community identity, rural service standards, job-housing match and balance, energy conservation, protection of natural resources, smart growth, community health and safety, and efficient and responsible transportation options.
- Limited residential and other related community development primarily within the existing towns and only under certain sustainable conditions.
- Use of community-based planning processes for the development of agricultural districts and specific plans.

The first complete draft of the General Plan, entitled the Public Review Draft, was released September 10, 2008. This document incorporated the Preferred Land Use Alternative with complementary draft goals and policies reflective of direction from the Board of Supervisors provided in prior General Plan vision and mission statements. A detailed overview of the document was provided to the public at a joint workshop of the Board of Supervisors and Planning Commission held September 16, 2008. Following the joint public workshop, 29 additional community meetings, scoping meetings, and workshops were held. The Planning Commission then deliberated the document in a series of public workshops held November 3, 5, and 6, 2008 at which time they recommended acceptance to the Board of Supervisors.

The Revised Public Review Draft General Plan was released on January 20, 2009 for deliberation by the Board of Supervisors at a workshop held January 20 and 21, 2009. The Board at that time authorized commencement of the DEIR based on the January 20<sup>th</sup> document as modified.

The DEIR was released April 28, 2009 for a review period that extended through June 12, 2009. A hearing on the DEIR was held before the Planning Commission on May 14, 2009. The Final Draft General Plan dated June 10, 2009 was deliberated by the Planning Commission at a hearing held that same date. The Planning Commission recommended unanimous approval to the Board of Supervisors. The Board held a hearing



July 20, 2009 and passed a motion of intent to approve the Plan as modified. The Final EIR and General Plan were released October 29, 2009, and final action on the FEIR and General Plan was taken November 10, 2009 (Resolution No. 09-189).

### **3. Demographic Summary**

Lying directly between the rapidly growing regions of Sacramento and the Bay Area, Yolo County has experienced and will continue to experience, tremendous pressures to provide additional residential, commercial and industrial development. The ease of access provided by the Sacramento International Airport, the Capitol Corridor train, the Port of Sacramento and Interstates 5, 80 and 505, have all exacerbated existing growth pressures in the county.

The County's economy is primarily based on agriculture. Yolo County has led the State in agricultural preservation practices for the last several decades, primarily by directing growth into the incorporated cities where services are available and where development can occur more efficiently. This General Plan seeks to continue to preserve agriculture while also allowing for measured, appropriate residential and economic development focused within existing communities that will meet regional and local needs.

In 2008, the county's 653,549 acres were home to 199,066 people and contained 73,138 housing units. Approximately 88 percent of that population and 90 percent of the housing units lie within the four incorporated cities.<sup>1</sup>

Davis, with a population of 65,814 and 25,876 housing units, has a unique university and residential community internationally known for its commitment to environmental awareness and implementing progressive and socially innovative programs. Woodland, with a population of 55,866 and 19,451 housing units, is the County seat and is the center of the agricultural economy. It has a strong historic heritage which is reflected in an impressive stock of historic buildings in its downtown area and surrounding neighborhoods. West Sacramento, with a population of 47,068 and 18,254 housing units, sits across the Sacramento River from the State capital, Sacramento. It is home to the Port of West Sacramento, which ships out 1.3 million tons of Yolo County's many agricultural products, such as rice, wheat and safflower seed, to world-wide markets. West Sacramento is also home to a Triple-A baseball team, the Rivercats, as well as several State agencies. The City of Winters, with a population of 7,052 and 2,269 housing units, is a small farming town nestled at the base of the Vaca Mountains and offers unique shops, renowned restaurants, galleries and regionally acclaimed live entertainment. It is also the gateway to Lake Berryessa, which offers boating, kayaking, hiking, fishing and camping.

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<sup>1</sup> State of California, Department of Finance, E-5 Population and Housing Estimates for Cities, Counties and the State, 2001-2008, with 2000 Benchmark. Sacramento, California, May 2008.



Approximately half of the county's unincorporated population and housing units are located within existing communities and residential neighborhoods. The largest is Esparto, with a population of 2,534 and 905 housing units, which also serves as the gateway to the Capay Valley. Monument Hills (including the Wild Wings community) is defined by its large lot, rural residential character, with a population of 1,632 and 583 housing units. El Macero is a golf course community, adjoining the City of Davis to the east, with a population of 1,234 and 448 housing units. Knights Landing has a population of 1,064 and 380 housing units and is a popular area for hunting and fishing. Dunnigan is the highway commercial center for the northern county, located at the interchange of Interstates 5 and 505 and has 952 residents and 340 housing units. Clarksburg is the focus of the county's premier wine-growing region, with a population of 496 and 177 housing units. Yolo was once the County seat and currently has a population of 434 and 155 housing units. Madison has a long farming history and includes one of two Migrant Labor Camps in the county, with 384 residents and 137 housing units. Other communities include West Plainfield, Rumsey, Guinda, Capay, North Davis Meadows, Binning Farms, Willow Bank, Patwin Road, Royal Oaks, Willow Oak, West Kentucky, El Rio Villa, Zamora and the Rumsey Rancheria.

UC Davis accounts for much of the remaining unincorporated population, with 6,355 students and faculty living on campus. The agricultural areas are the final component, with approximately 7,000 residents and an estimated 2,350 housing units.

Approximately 65 percent of Yolo County residents live in single family houses and 35 percent live in multiple-family units.<sup>2</sup> As of 2007, the majority of Yolo County residents, or 58 percent, was white, with Hispanics comprising approximately 28 percent of the population and Asians representing approximately 10 percent of the population. As shown in Table IN-2, UC Davis was the largest employer in the county in 2007 followed by Cache Creek Casino Resort, the U.S. Postal Service and the State of California. According to 2005 California Employment Development Department data, approximately 36 percent of those employed in Yolo County work in government services.

#### **4. California Environmental Quality Act (CEQA) Clearance**

##### **a. Environmental Impact Report**

The Draft Environmental Impact Report (DEIR) for the Draft General Plan was released April 28, 2009 for a 45-day review period that ended June 12, 2009. Mitigation measures in the DEIR took the form of new or revised Draft General Plan policies and actions which were largely integrated into the Final Draft General Plan. The Response to Com-

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<sup>2</sup> State of California, Department of Finance, E-5 Population and Housing Estimates for Cities, Counties and the State, 2001-2008, with 2000 Benchmark. Sacramento, California, May 2008.





ments document was released October 29, 2009. The FEIR was certified by the Board of Supervisors November 10, 2009 (Resolution No. 09-189).

**b. Findings of Fact**

State law requires that the Board of Supervisors make several types of CEQA “findings” at the time of adoption of the General Plan. Findings describe the conclusions of the Board of Supervisors regarding particular issues, including specific evidence in support of those conclusions. The required findings for adoption of the General Plan are as follows:

- Certification of the EIR (CEQA Guidelines Section 15090) – These findings support the adequacy of the EIR for decision-making purposes.
- Findings Regarding Significant Impacts and Project Alternatives (CEQA Guidelines Section 15091) – These findings explain how the Board of Supervisors chose to address each identified significant impact, including the mitigation measures adopted or an explanation of why such measures are infeasible. A discussion of the feasibility of project alternatives is also required by this section (see also Section 15126.6f).
- Project Approval (CEQA Guidelines Section 15092) – These findings support the Board of Supervisors’ action to adopt a specified final General Plan.
- Statement of Overriding Considerations (CEQA Guidelines Section 15093) – These findings document the Board of Supervisors’ decision to adopt a specific final General Plan, despite the fact that unavoidable impacts may result, due to other overriding benefits of the plan.

These findings were adopted by the Board of Supervisors as a part of Resolution No. 09-189.

**TABLE IN-2 LARGEST EMPLOYERS IN YOLO COUNTY (2007)**

Company Name	Number of Employees
UC Davis	14,388 <sup>c</sup>
Cache Creek Casino Resort	2,400 <sup>c</sup>
U.S. Postal Service	2,300
State of California	2,119 <sup>a</sup>
Yolo County	1,710 <sup>b</sup>
United Parcel Service	1,251
Target Corporation	1,176
Raley’s Inc.	834
Woodland Healthcare	752
Wal-Mart Stores Inc.	712
Rex Moore Electrical Contractors & Engineers	700

<sup>a</sup> Includes 117 intermittent employees.

<sup>b</sup> Includes 133 temporaries.

<sup>c</sup>Numbers modified by staff based on BAE analysis, to be consistent with traffic modeling assumptions in General Plan EIR.

Source: Sacramento Business Journal, The Book of Lists 2007.



## 5. State-Mandated Requirements

California Government Code Section 65300 requires that the General Plan be comprehensive, internally consistent and long-term. Although required to address the seven elements and specific issues specified in State law, the General Plan may be organized in a way that best suits the County. The Plan should be clearly written, available to all those concerned with the county's development and easy to administer.

The Yolo County General Plan meets these requirements while also articulating a vision for the county's long-term physical form and development. It serves as a basis for future decision-making by County officials, including County staff, County Counsel, the Planning Commission and the Board of Supervisors.

The contents of each Element are described below in the Administration section. Table IN-3 indicates where each of the required seven elements is found.

## 6. Relationship to Other Plans

All elements of the prior General Plan are superseded by this General Plan Update. The list in Table IN-4 indicates where the relevant information contained in these prior elements can be found in this updated General Plan.

Other adopted components of the General Plan are addressed as indicated below in Table IN-5. These stand-alone, separately-bound plans will be updated on individual schedules and were not updated as apart of this comprehensive General Plan update.

There are other plan documents that are not considered part of the General Plan but rather separate planning documents that address a variety of topics. These documents must be reviewed to ensure consistency with the updated General Plan but will remain in place unless and until otherwise updated or rescinded. These include but are not limited to:

- 1989 County Waste Management Plan
- 1992 Watts-Woodland Airport General Plan
- 1993 Household Hazardous Waste Element
- 1998 Yolo County Airport Master Plan
- 2006 Parks and Open Space Master Plan
- 2006 Bicycle Transportation Plan
- 2007 Oak Woodland Conservation and Enhancement Plan
- 2007 Integrated Regional Water Management Plan

## 7. Climate Change

Yolo County is actively engaged regarding the issue of global warming, and has adopted a strong commitment to the reduction of greenhouse gas (GHG) emissions. The County was an early advocate of responsible growth with its long-time commitment to



**TABLE IN-3 STATE-MANDATED ELEMENTS**

Mandated Elements	2030 Yolo County General Plan Elements
Land Use Element	Land Use and Community Character Element
Circulation Element	Circulation Element, Public Facilities and Services Element
Housing Element	Housing Element
Conservation Element	Conservation and Open Space Element
Open Space Element	Conservation and Open Space Element
Noise Element	Health and Safety Element
Safety Element	Health and Safety Element

**TABLE IN-4 RELATIONSHIP TO PRIOR ELEMENTS**

Prior Organization	New Organization
1983 General Plan	Superseded
Administration Element	Chapter 1.0 (Introduction and Administration Element)
Circulation Element	Chapter 4.0 (Circulation Element)
Conservation Element	Chapter 7.0 (Conservation and Open Space Element)
Land Use Element	Chapter 3.0 (Land Use and Community Character Element)
Noise Element	Chapter 8.0 (Health and Safety Element)
Scenic Highway Element	Chapter 3.0 (Land Use and Community Character Element)
Historic Preservation Element	Chapter 7.0 (Conservation and Open Space Element)
Safety and Seismic Safety Element	Chapter 8.0 (Health and Safety Element)
2002 Agricultural Element	Chapter 6.0 (Agricultural and Economic Development Element)
2003 Housing Element	Chapter 9.0 (Housing Element)
2002 Open Space and Recreation Element	Chapter 7.0 (Conservation and Open Space Element) and Chapter 5.0 (Public Facilities and Services Element)



**TABLE IN-5 RELATIONSHIP TO PRIOR PLANS**

<b>Document</b>	<b>Proposed Disposition</b>
1958 Winters Area Plan	Rescind
1974 Madison Community Plan*	Retain and update as Madison Specific Plan
1976 Davis Area General Plan	Rescind
1976 East Yolo General Plan	Rescind
1980 Woodland Area Plan	Rescind
1982 Energy Plan	Retain and update as Greenhouse Gas Emissions Reduction Plan/Climate Action Plan
1982 Southport Specific Plan	Rescind
1982 Central East Yolo Specific Plan	Rescind
1983 Capay Valley Area Plan*	Retain and update <sup>3</sup>
1984 Monument Hills Specific Plan	Retain as applies to the Wild Wings Subdivision
1996 Cache Creek Area Plan	Retain
1996 Dunnigan Community Plan*	Retain and update as Dunnigan Specific Plan
1998 Delta Land Use and Resource Management Plan	Retain
1999 Knights Landing Community Plan*	Retain and update as Knights Landing Specific Plan
2001 Clarksburg Community Plan*	Retain and update
2007 Esparto General Plan	Retain and update

\*The original titles of these plans are proposed to be modified as shown upon adoption of this General Plan.

agricultural preservation and its adoption in 1982 of a countywide Energy Plan. The County has also taken many steps to reduce GHG emissions associated with County operations. This General Plan applies that same ethic to private development actions over which the County has discretionary authority.

<sup>3</sup> It should be noted that at the time of this General Plan update, an update of this area plan was also underway. It is anticipated that adoption of the updated area plan will follow adoption of this General Plan update.



Section J of the Conservation and Open Space Element addresses the issue of climate change and also contains a summary of the County’s efforts to date to reduce GHG emissions. Climate change policies also occur in every element of this General Plan and are denoted by the symbol “🌍”.

As documented herein, the accommodation of future urban development within the unincorporated county is comparatively modest. The relatively small amount of development that may occur is required to incorporate planning, design, and materials that will minimize, if not preclude, significant increases in greenhouse gases. However, because there will be relatively little new development, the goals, policies, and actions in this General Plan will have a minor impact on regional GHG emissions overall. What is significant in terms of the County’s policy commitments are the twin goals of protecting agricultural land and directing the majority of future growth to the existing cities. In combination, these goals discourage sprawl and encourage density, infill, compact community design, and development along transportation corridors, plus allow for local food production and recreational opportunities.



Erwin Meier Administration Building

Source: Yolo County



## ***B. Administration***

### **1. Contents**

The General Plan includes this introductory chapter, a vision statement and seven separate “elements” that establish goals, policies and actions for each given topic. Six of these elements cover the seven topics required by Government Code Section 65302. The Agriculture and Economic Development Element is an optional element prepared by the County to meet local needs and concerns.

The General Plan is organized into the following chapters:

#### **1. Introduction and Administration**

This section provides an introduction to the General Plan and information on how it will be administered.

#### **2. Vision and Principles**

This section discusses the Vision Statement adopted by the County Board of Supervisors, as well as guiding principles for implementation of the vision.

#### **3. Land Use and Community Character Element**

The Land Use and Community Character Element addresses the following land use issues: appropriate range and balance of land uses throughout Yolo County, preservation of agricultural land, growth management, Delta land use and resource management, equity in land use decisions, intra-County coordination and regional coordination. This element also addresses the following community character issues: preservation of rural character, community planning, planned development and project design.

#### **4. Circulation Element**

The Circulation Element addresses transportation, circulation and mobility issues throughout Yolo County, including: comprehensive and coordinated transportation systems, mode and user equity, service thresholds, environmental impacts, system integration, accessible transit, truck and rail operations, the Port of West Sacramento, air transport and transportation within the Delta.

#### **5. Public Facilities and Services Element**

The Public Facilities and Services Element addresses the following topics: sewer and septic systems, stormwater and drainage, community parks, law enforcement, fire and emergency medical service, schools, library services, childcare, solid waste and recycling, sources of energy, utilities and communication technology and general government services.



## **6. Agricultural and Economic Development Element**

The Agricultural and Economic Development Element addresses agricultural issues throughout Yolo County, including: preservation of agriculture, natural resources for agriculture, healthy farm economy, education and awareness, local preference and Delta agriculture. This element also addresses the following economic development issues: economic diversity, business climate and business assistance, community revitalization, expansion of tourism and economic sustainability.

## **7. Conservation and Open Space Element**

The Conservation and Open Space Element addresses: natural open space, biological resources, mineral resources, cultural resources, water resources, air quality, energy conservation, climate change and the Delta region.

## **8. Health and Safety Element**

The Health and Safety Element is organized into three sections as follows: 1) the Safety Section which addresses geologic and seismic hazards, flood hazards, wildland fires, hazardous materials, airport operations and emergency preparedness; 2) the Noise Section; and 3) Health Care.

## **9. Housing Element**

The Housing Element addresses the following: review of previous Housing Element, identification of housing needs, inventory of resources and constraints, community profile, goals and policies, quantified objectives and implementation.

Generally, each element of this General Plan consists of the four sections described below, which in most elements are Sections A, B, C and D, respectively.

- **Introduction** – The Introduction section describes the key policy aspects of the element and provides a summary list of subject contents. A summary of background information is also provided including current conditions relative to the subject of the element. The background information is generally taken from the General Plan Background Report.
- **Regulatory Framework** – The regulatory framework identifies the State General Plan requirements plus other relevant regulatory information.
- **Policy Framework** – Each element contains a section that presents a series of goals and policies to address key issues. The goals and policies in each element are based on the previous General Plan, subsequent input from the Board of Supervisors and the Planning Commission, the requirements of State law and the input of County staff and residents.



- **Implementation Program** – Each element or section within an element concludes with a list of actions the County will take to implement the goals and policies. Not all policies have a specific related action item

Goals, policies and actions, as articulated in this General Plan, are generally defined as follows:

- **Goal** – A goal is a description of the general desired result that the County seeks to create through the implementation of its General Plan. One or more goals are provided in each General Plan element.
- **Policy** – A policy is a specific statement that guides decision-making in working to achieve a goal. Policies, once adopted, represent statements of County regulation.
- **Action** – An action is a program, implementation measure, procedure, or technique intended to help to achieve the goals and policies of the element.

## 2. Horizon Year

The horizon year for this General Plan (with the exception of the Housing Element) is 2030. This reflects the 20-year planning period for the General Plan. It is not a target or goal for build-out.

The planning horizon for Housing Elements is generally five years as dictated by State law (Section 65588 of the Government Code). Please refer to the Yolo County Housing Element for a separate discussion of the planning period for that element.

## 3. Revisions and Amendments

Requests for amendment to the General Plan by private parties are generally discouraged. Pursuant to Section 65358b of the Government Code, amendments are limited to four times per calendar year. Subject to the discretion of the County, final action on amendments may be managed so as to allow for several amendments to be considered together under one final action by the Board, or amendments may be allowed to move forward individually.

Amendments may be initiated by the Board of Supervisors, Planning Department staff, the property owner, or any authorized agent of the property owner.

Amendments to the General Plan shall be required when a proposal would:

1. Substantively change the boundaries or location of any land use designation within the plan.
2. Substantively change the text, figures, or tables of the plan.





Applications for amendment must first be heard by the Planning Commission, which shall make a recommendation to the Board of Supervisors. Amendments must be approved by resolution of the Board of Supervisors and shall be documented in the table of changes in the front of the General Plan.

Corrections and/or non-substantive changes to the General Plan do not constitute an amendment of the Plan within the meaning of Section 65358b. Corrections and/or non-substantive changes may be processed by the Planning and Public Works Director (Director), but must be approved by the Board of Supervisors in the form of a resolution of approval.

#### **4. Application Requirements**

Requests by private parties to amend the General Plan shall include the application forms, required documentation and applicable fee as established by the County and shall provide the following:

1. A detailed statement identifying the reasons for the request and demonstrating how the request furthers the vision and goals of the General Plan.
2. A detailed description of the General Plan text, figures and maps that would require modification as a result of the request.
3. Analysis as required by the California Environmental Quality Act (CEQA).

#### **5. General Plan Fee**

Section 66014b of the Government Code provides local governments with express authority for charging fees to cover the cost of General Plan updates. Yolo County has had a fee in place for this purpose since 2004. This fee is charged on building permits based on a percentage portion of the assessed valuation at the time the permit is issued. The fee is set at 0.004 percent of assessed value on Building Permits (or \$0.40 per \$100.00 of new construction).

#### **6. Interpretations**

The Director has the authority to make formal interpretations of the General Plan text, policies and diagrams, subject to appeal to the Planning Commission and Board of Supervisors. This chapter contains actions that will establish a process for tracking these interpretations as well as an appeal process.

The land use diagram and other figures included in this document reflect approximations of property lines, parcel sizes and road alignments. General Plan land use designations assigned to parcels within the county extend to roadway centerlines or water body centerlines. Minor variations from the land use diagram and other figures, based on actual



field measurements, engineering and/or surveying are within the authority of the Director to accept and interpret as substantially consistent. Such actions by the Director shall be tracked using the process described above.

To the extent that a proposal would modify a physical component of the General Plan, such as a minor shift in a roadway, a minor reconfiguration of the shape of a designated area of land use, or a minor adjustment to a design requirement, the Director shall make a determination as to whether or not said modification is "substantive," thus triggering an amendment of the General Plan within the meaning of Government Code Section 65358b, as described earlier in this section. To the extent that the original intent and purpose of the General Plan are still met, with no adverse effects on connectivity or livability and with no change in total area or amount of specific land uses, density, number of units, street capacity, amenities, roadway level of service, etc. said modification shall not be interpreted as "substantive."

#### **7. Using the Plan**

Each Element of this General Plan, whether mandatory or optional, is integral to the others and carries equal weight under the law. The goals, policies and actions of the General Plan are to be judiciously balanced with one another. Though potentially competing in some instances, no one set of goals, policies and actions are intended to have greater weight than any other.

#### **8. Implementation Plan**

The General Plan relies upon actions identified in each element that implement the policies. These implementation measures carry the same weight as policies in terms of guidance for County decision-making. Modification of the text of these actions will require amendment of the General Plan.

Each action includes a parenthetical reference to one or more related policies. This identifies the primary policy(ies) implemented by the action, but it is not intended to be exclusive. Individual actions may implement additional policies not identified. Not all policies have specific related actions.

"Responsibility" assignments and "timeframes" for each implementation action are advisory only. However, actions with specific timeframes are generally considered to have a higher priority than those defined as "ongoing." Modifications to responsibility assignments and/or timeframes do not require amendment of the General Plan unless the timeframe was a requirement of an adopted mitigation measure from the General Plan EIR. Where this occurs, it will be noted in the Implementation Program within each element section. Subsequent to adoption of the General Plan, all of the action items will be compiled into one Implementation Plan for budgeting.



At the time of adoption of this General Plan, the County, State and Country are in a severe economic and fiscal crisis that will affect the County’s ability to implement the General Plan in strict accordance with the targeted timeframes. Crippling budget cut-backs and extensive staff lay-offs face the County at this time. It is anticipated that this crisis will be resolved over time. In the meantime, implementation of the General Plan will be considered as part of the County’s annual budgetary process, subject to economic and fiscal realities.

**9. Annual Reporting Requirement**

As required by State law (Government Code Section 65400a2) and in Policy IN-4 below, the County will prepare an annual report on the status of the General Plan and its implementation. This report is intended to ensure that the County is making progress toward its goals, as included in the General Plan. The requirements include special reporting for the Housing Element portion of the General Plan. These focus on the County’s progress in meeting its Regional Housing Needs Allocation (RHNA) requirement and are reported using forms created by the State Department of Housing and Community Development.

**C. Policy Framework**

**GOAL IN-1      General Plan Administration. Ensure that the General Plan is adequate and is administered effectively and fairly.**

- Policy IN-1.1      Ensure that all land use development and related activities are consistent and carry out the spirit of the General Plan.
- Policy IN-1.2      Administer County-initiated discretionary projects, including capital projects and public works projects, consistent with the goals, policies and actions of the General Plan.
- Policy IN-1.3      Ensure that budgeting and program administration are consistent with the goals, policies and actions of this General Plan.
- Policy IN-1.4      Limit the number of amendments to the General Plan to no more than four times per calendar year, pursuant to State law (Section 65358).
- Policy IN-1.5      Encourage an efficient CEQA process.



Policy IN-1.6 Encourage partnerships with local, State and Federal agencies; local jurisdictions; community organizations; regional entities; and others to economically and efficiently implement the General Plan.

### ***D. Implementation Program***

Action IN-A1 Review all discretionary projects for consistency with the General Plan text and maps. (Policy IN-1.1)  
Responsibility: Planning and Public Works Department  
Timeframe: Ongoing

Action IN-A2 Revise the Administrative Policies and Procedures Manual to require that Agenda items address the consistency of the proposed action with the General Plan, where appropriate. (Policy IN-1.1, Policy IN-1.2)  
Responsibility: County Administrator's Office  
Timeframe: 2009/2010

Action IN-A3 Create and maintain a database of all map and text amendments to the General Plan. (Policy IN-1.1)  
Responsibility: Planning and Public Works Department; Information Technology Department  
Timeframe: 2009/2010

Action IN-A4 Establish and maintain a searchable database of all interpretations of the General Plan, by assigning each interpretation a numeric reference. (Policy IN-1.1)  
Responsibility: Planning and Public Works Department; Information Technology Department  
Timeframe: 2009/2010

Action IN-A5 Create a formal process for appeal of Planning and Public Works Director interpretations of the General Plan. (Policy IN-1.1)  
Responsibility: Planning and Public Works Department  
Timeframe: 2009/2010



- Action IN-A6 Update other County plans as appropriate to be consistent with the General Plan. (Policy IN-1.1)  
Responsibility: Planning and Public Works Department  
Timeframe: 2009/2010
- Action IN-A7 Pursuant to State law (Section 65358), this General Plan may be amended no more than four times per year. Implement a process to batch these amendments as efficiently as possible. (Policy IN-1.4)  
Responsibility: Planning and Public Works Department  
Timeframe: Annually
- Action IN-A8 Pursuant to State law (Section 65400a2), provide an annual report to the Board of Supervisors and the State on implementation of the General Plan including all goals, policies, and actions. (Policy IN-1.1)  
Responsibility: Planning and Public Works Department  
Timeframe: Annually
- Action IN-A9 Evaluate the General Plan Impact Fee to fund the various implementation actions contained within this General Plan. (Policy IN-1.2, Policy IN-1.3)  
Responsibility: Planning and Public Works Department; County Administrator's Office  
Timeframe: 2009/2010
- Action IN-A10 Establish a grants coordinator in the County Administrator's Office to pursue and coordinate the implementation of funding programs, for projects that carry out the goals and policies of this General Plan. (Policy IN-1.3)  
Responsibility: County Administrator's Office  
Timeframe: 2009/2010
- Action IN-A11 Pursue legislation seeking authority at the local level to charge fees for implementation of climate change programs. (Policy IN-1.3)  
Responsibility: County Administrator's Office  
Timeframe: 2009/2010

