

INTRODUCTION

PURPOSE AND FUNCTION OF THE GENERAL PLAN

The General Plan is the foundation development policy document of the City of Arroyo Grande. It defines the framework by which the physical, economic and human resources of the City are to be managed and utilized over time. By providing a basis for rational decision-making, this document guides civic decisions regarding:

- land use and circulation;
- the design and/or character of buildings, open spaces, streets and other features;
- the conservation of existing housing and the provision of new dwelling units;
- the provision of supporting infrastructure and public services;
- the protection of environmental resources and agricultural uses;
- the protection of residents from natural and human-caused hazards; and,
- topics of other elements.

The General Plan acts to clarify and articulate the intentions of the City with respect to the rights and expectations of the public, property owners, and prospective investors and business interests. The Plan informs these citizens of the goals, objectives, policies, and standards for development of the City of Arroyo Grande and the responsibilities of all sectors in meeting these.

Statutory Requirements

California State law (Government Code Section 65300) requires that each city prepare and adopt a comprehensive, long-term General Plan to guide its future development. A General Plan must contain seven elements, including land use, circulation, housing, conservation, open space, noise and safety, and conform to the State of California General Plan Guidelines, published by the Governor's Office of Planning and Research. In addition to the seven required elements, state law permits cities to include optional elements in their General Plans, enabling local governments to address the specific needs, unique character and concerns of their jurisdictions. Arroyo Grande has three optional elements in its General Plan:

1. Agriculture;
2. Economic Development; and,
3. Parks and Recreation.

California State law requires that the day-to-day decisions of a city follow logically from and be consistent with the General Plan. More specifically, Government Code Sections 65860, 66473.5 and 656474 require that zoning ordinances, subdivision and parcel map approvals be consistent with the General Plan.

Amending the General Plan

The City may not amend any one of the mandatory elements of its General Plan more than four times in one calendar year. Typically, General Plan amendments are associated with privately initiated development projects. The General Plan Guidelines suggest the following criteria for General Plan amendments:

- The amendment must be in the public interest;
- The amendment must be consistent with other parts of the General Plan;
- If the amendment necessitates other changes to the plan, those changes must be considered at the same time in order to maintain internal consistency; and
- If the amendment necessitates changes in zoning or other ordinances, those changes should be considered within a reasonable time.

It is advisable that the City periodically update its General Plan to assure that the vision, goals and policies accurately and consistently outline the community's growth management intentions.

Purpose and Structure of this General Plan Update

The City of Arroyo Grande's General Plan was last updated in 1990. Significant changes in the City's existing conditions and community's vision have occurred since that time which necessitate the review and modification of the City's objectives, policies and implementation proposals. These changes include population growth, housing characteristics and needs, traffic conditions, economic development and commercial trends, concerns regarding conservation of small town character, and preservation of prime agricultural lands.

The City initiated this update process in 1998 and intends to complete the environmental review and adoption in 2001: This document is hereinafter called the 2001 General Plan Update.

Elements of the 2001 General Plan Update

The City of Arroyo Grande's 2001 General Plan Update includes the seven mandated General Plan elements (Land Use, Circulation, Housing, Conservation, Open Space, Noise, and Safety) and three optional elements: (Parks and Recreation, Agriculture and Economic Development). Open Space and Conservation were combined in the City's 1990 General Plan and in the 2001 Update include Agriculture, reflecting the added emphasis on the preservation of prime agricultural properties within and adjoining the Arroyo Grande urban area.

Relationship Among General Plan Elements

As a comprehensive strategy for the management of a city's diverse physical, economic, and social resources, there is a high level of interrelationship among the topics and elements of the General Plan Update. The Agriculture, Open Space, and Conservation Element define policy for the protection of significant natural resources, providing the setting or context for urban land use development and incorporated City areas including single-family and multi-family residential, office, commercial and Mixed Use development. The Land Use Element includes the Agriculture, Open Space and Conservation Elements by reference and also includes unincorporated "Fringe Area" Residential Rural and Residential Suburban north and southeast of the City, as prescribed in the County Land Use Element, San Luis Bay Area Plan-Inland. Although outside the City's jurisdiction, the development of Fringe Area residential, Agriculture, and other uses within the Planning Area directly impact on the Urban Land Uses within the City. The focus of the City General Plan Update is the Urban Land Use Element that provides for the types, density or intensity, design and distribution of existing and potential City areas, including single family residential, multiple family residential, community facilities, office, commercial and mixed-use development categories. The Circulation Element identifies the street pattern and other

circulation infrastructure and transportation systems needed to support the uses accommodated by the Land Use Element. The Housing Element provides for the manner in which existing housing will be conserved and new housing will be produced, in context of the residential and Mixed Use areas proposed for development by the Land Use Element including unincorporated Rural Residential and Residential Suburban uses. The Noise Element identifies the sources and outlines policy to protect land uses against adverse noise levels associated with necessary circulation and related activity. The Safety Element provides for the protection of lives and property from the adverse effects of natural and man-caused hazards. The Park and Recreation Element outlines these public facilities and services desired to support the City and area residents, businesses, and visitors' leisure-time activities. The Economic Development Element defines the objectives, policies and proposals for improved employment, business retention and expansion, and fiscal growth of the community.

Definition of Objectives, Policies, and Implementation Measures

Each element of the General Plan is made up of a set of objectives, policies, and proposed implementation measures. Some policies and proposals are expressed in maps and diagrams.

Objectives define general future goals relevant to the issues addressed within each element. They are expressed in the General Plan Update as desired end states rather than actions. As general expressions of community desires, they are qualitative and descriptive. In this General Plan Update, objectives are labeled numerically within each element; for example, within the Land Use Element, labeled LU1, LU2, etc.

Policies are set forth for each objective. Two types of policies are offered in this General Plan Update – general policy statements and implementing policies. **Policy statements** guide decisions in accordance with objectives. In this General Plan Update, each policy statement is listed numerically according to the objective it supports. For example, policies that support objective LU2 are listed as LU2-1, LU2-2, etc. Similarly each **implementing policy** (policy that provides definitions or more specific direction with regarding to implementing objectives) is listed beneath and labeled according to the policy it supports (e.g., implementing policies that support policy AG3-1 are labeled AG3-1.1, AG3-1.2, etc.).

Implementation measures are proposed actions, procedures, programs, or proposals that carry out General Plan policy. Often implementation measures support more than one policy. Therefore, a list of these implementation measures is provided at the end of each element.

Relationship to Other Documents and Planning Programs

Program EIR

In accordance with the provisions of Section 15166 of the California Environmental Quality Act (CEQA), an integral program EIR document is included in the 2001 General Plan Update to discuss the environmental impacts associated with its adoption and implementation and to outline mitigation measures as required.

Development Code/Zoning

Zoning is one of the primary means of implementing the General Plan. The City of Arroyo Grande's zoning is set forth within its Development Code. The Code divides land within the City into zoning districts and specifies permitted uses and development standards within each district, such as allowable density, minimum lot size, building height and setback limits, fence, sign and parking requirements. The Code requires that proposed uses are consistent with the General Plan.

Upon adoption of the 2001 General Plan Update, the City will initiate a comprehensive review and necessary revisions to the Development Code and zoning map for consistency. This process is expected to occur in 2002 and 2003.

The review and revisions of the Development Code and zoning map will involve additional public notice and hearings requiring one year or more to complete. In the interim, where the General Plan Update and Development Code/zoning map regulations differ regarding appropriate use or intensity of development, the more restrictive interpretation shall apply. However, an interim amendment should be initiated to enable Mixed Use developments in current VC, HC, GC, or I zones substantially as follows: Any combination of mixed uses, or any project proposing a residential component in a commercial or industrial district shall be considered pursuant to Conditional Use Permit approval (Development Code Section 9-03.050) or Planned Unit Development Permit approval (Development Code Section 9-03.160). In addition, where affordable housing is proposed in a Mixed Use designation, density incentives exceeding 25% may be considered.

Specific Plans/Planned Developments

Specific Plans are another tool for implementing the General Plan. They are especially useful for planning large projects and development of sites with unusual environmental constraints and opportunities. The City's Development Code recognizes Specific Plans and Planned Development zoning as appropriate procedures for development of large-scale, mixed-use developments. Specific Plans and Planned Developments provide detailed standards and design criteria, including the distribution, location, and extent of land uses and provision of infrastructure within the project area in order to support proposed development. Specific Plan or Planned Development should be consistent with the General Plan. Any interested party may request the adoption, amendment, or repeal of a Specific Plan but generally such applications are initiated by the property owner. Within the City of Arroyo Grande, Planned Development zoning has guided development of several large residential subdivisions within the hills and valleys composing the northwest part of the City. Specific Plans have been previously adopted for certain undeveloped properties surrounded by existing urban uses. Additional Specific Plans are proposed for large undeveloped properties and potential annexation areas to the southeast of the City.

General Plan Related Information and Reference Materials

The 1990 General Plan preparation and many of the component elements provide a large volume of background information and reference materials that influenced the objectives, policies and implementation measures. While these documents are helpful in understanding how the City and its development policies have evolved, and the importance of various resources, constraints and opportunities that have influenced choice of development alternatives, it would be excessive and too complex to revise all resource studies and references as an integral part of the General Plan Update.

In the 2001 General Plan Update, these background materials and key reference documents are identified for information purposes and summarized where considered essential. The City of Arroyo Grande, Department of Community Development is compiling a "Planning Reference Library" that will be provided to the South County Branch Library at 600 West Branch Street, Arroyo Grande for public use. Some of the summarized information is contained in an "Informational Appendix" divided into the same chapters as the General Plan Update Elements and available at the Community Development Department, 214 E. Branch Street, Arroyo Grande as a supplement to the policy document. As time permits, the City will add additional technical reports and summaries to the Planning Reference Library and Information Appendix. These should not be interpreted as integral parts of the General Plan unless the City specifically refers to them as such. Otherwise, they are simply information sources and reference materials.

Community Participation and Input

In order to assure that the 2001 General Plan Update accurately reflects the community's perspectives and values and addresses current issues of importance to the citizens, public involvement has played an extensive role in the development of this General Plan Update. Interviews with community stakeholders, a community-wide survey, public workshops, and other opportunities have been provided to maximize the input of a broad representation of Arroyo Grande's residents, businesses, property owners, and other interested parties.

Community participation for this General Plan Update included the following:

Visions Workshop

On February 28, 1998, a workshop was conducted to enable members of the community to articulate their visions for the City's future. Approximately 150 people attended the three hour Visions Workshop. Participants indicated their ideas regarding numerous issues, including the future growth, agricultural land preservation and open space conservation, potential development of housing and residential neighborhoods, desired character of the Village and East Grand Avenue, and other commercial, public facilities and recreational areas. Although community members expressed differing priorities and direction for the City concerning some of the specific issues, the results provided a general direction with respect to the following key issues:

- **Growth Management.** Growth management is necessary to address development pressures in a way that will provide for economic benefits but also ensure the protection of a rural/small town character. There was a strong consensus against increasing housing density in existing residential neighborhoods and in favor of attracting and retaining job opportunities.
- **Preservation of Agricultural Lands.** The participants were in general agreement regarding preservation of agricultural lands in and adjoining the City for a variety of purposes, including food production, the provision of open space, promotion of the City's identity as a small town with rural character, for basic employment, and as a consistent regional planning policy requiring both City and County cooperation.
- **Residential Uses.** High-density residential uses and uniform tract housing were strongly discouraged, while residential uses that "fit" or reflect the community's environmental resources and small town rural character were encouraged.
- **The Village.** The participants expressed a desire to maintain the historic character of the Village by encouraging complementary uses such as outdoor cafes, community and tourist oriented shopping and cultural uses, promoting pedestrian oriented street improvements, and rerouting conflicting through and heavy truck traffic.
- **East Grand Avenue.** The results of the workshop indicate a strong community desire to improve the character of the East Grand Avenue commercial corridor by providing more attractive shopping, pedestrian oriented development, common architectural design theme and considering compatible Mixed Uses.
- **Park and Recreational Uses.** A desire for more open space, active and passive recreational parks was expressed at the workshop, including strong support for the development of a greenbelt and trail system along Arroyo Grande Creek system.

Alternatives Workshop

In response to the community desires expressed at the Visions Workshop, three preliminary alternative growth concepts were developed, illustrating different options for the future development of the City, presented at an Alternatives Workshop conducted on June 20, 1998. The primary difference proposed by these alternatives were the possible development of remaining agricultural properties: (a) preserve as is, (b) allow conversion for low density housing, and (c) conversion of agricultural lands for Mixed Use villages, containing housing, neighborhood centers, parks, and greenbelts. All three alternatives included a proposed future development of a business park in the southeastern portion of the City, to reflect the vision of economic development to accommodate new job opportunities.

Based on the public input obtained at this workshop, it was concluded that there is substantial public concurrence for the following features of these three alternatives:

- The preservation of existing agricultural lands. Alternatives that suggested conversion had very little support.
- The maintenance of the Village as a community and visitor oriented place, with in-fill projects limited to pedestrian-oriented and compatible uses, in scale with those that exist.
- The expansion of "Village-type" uses south along Traffic Way and east along E. Branch Street.
- The revitalization of East Grand Avenue corridor including pedestrian oriented streetscape improvements, and the establishment of Mixed Uses and improved community shopping east of Oak Park Boulevard.
- The establishment of a greenbelt/trail network along Arroyo Grande Creek system.

The most significant question concerned future annexation and development of property in the southeastern portion of the City enabling development of a business park. The 2001 General Plan Update proposes that this annexation and development alternative be considered separately as a General Plan Amendment or Specific Plan and EIR.

General Plan Update Citizens Survey

In order to provide the public with another opportunity to provide input regarding the 2001 General Plan Update, the City distributed a "General Plan Citizens Survey." The survey included fifteen questions regarding issues similar to those discussed at the public workshops, distributed to each household within the City. About 1,020 surveys were completed and returned to the City. The results of the survey reiterated the community's desire to:

- preserve agricultural uses,
- manage growth and development,
- maintain the small town, rural character of the community and the Village area,
- change the character of East Grand Avenue to provide more attractive shopping, and
- provide for more passive recreational uses including hillside open space and creek trail system.

Community Vision as the Basis for General Plan Update

Blending these expressed community desires and "vision" regarding the quality of life that people cherish and want to maintain and enhance, the City of Arroyo Grande's 2001 General Plan Update has identified five fundamental shared community values:

1. A "balanced" economy that offers a diversity of employment opportunities in agriculture, retail, service, professional and other industries, and which supports family-managed and other small businesses.
2. An "affordable" community where people who work locally can also afford to live and integrate their professional and personal/family roles, within a range of choices in housing type suitable for varied lifestyles and stages in life.
3. A "small town, rural character" community where residents and visitors can find relaxation, comfort and charm.
4. A "responsible" citizenry who understand ecological relationships and are willing to live within limits that protect sensitive and treasured resources, and who take into account the needs of others.
5. A "sustainable" community, where resources are conserved facilitating the continuity of historical legacies into a desirable future for following generations as well as the present one.

These principles underlie the objectives, policies and proposals expressed in the 2001 General Plan Update and each of the component elements, and should guide future amendments.

Background and Location

Location and Regional Setting

The City of Arroyo Grande occupies 5.45 square miles (3,388 acres) of land along Highway 101 in southwestern San Luis Obispo County, as shown on Map 1. It is immediately adjacent to the west and southwest to urban development within the Cities of Pismo Beach and Grover Beach, and unincorporated community of Oceano. Unincorporated lands adjoin the City to the north, east, and south. Residential Rural and Suburban development characterize unincorporated areas to the north and southeast of the City while Agriculture uses dominate the Arroyo Grande Valley that extends northeast and the Cienega Valley south of the City. Arroyo Grande Creek runs in a generally north-south direction through the eastern portion of the City.

Jurisdictional and Planning Area Boundaries

The focus of the 2001 General Plan Update is to provide a policy plan for future land uses within the City of Arroyo Grande. However, future land uses patterns and development within the City must be considered within the context of its surrounding areas. Therefore, the 2001 General Plan Update addresses future land uses within city limits, lands included within the City's "Sphere of Influence" and other adjoining and integral areas encompassed by the City within the larger "Areas of Environmental Concern," also referred to as the City's planning area.

The Sphere of Influence (SOI) includes lands within the City's ultimate service area as adopted by the Local Agency Formation Commission (LAFCO). It typically includes adjacent or surrounded areas. Changes to the SOI must be approved by LAFCO. As shown on Map 1, the City of Arroyo Grande's Sphere Of Influence includes approximately 760 acres of hillside

Residential Suburban land adjacent to the City's north boundary, a 185-acre agricultural parcel along the City's southeastern border, and a small area along the City's southern border that contains a mobile home park and vacant parcel. The 2001 General Plan Update proposes some revisions to the adopted Sphere of Influence areas, reducing the proposed Urban Reserve Limits.

Areas surrounding the City and Urban Reserve Limits that affect planning issues within the City are included in "Areas of Environmental Concern" (AEC). This Planning Area includes large areas of Agriculture, Residential Rural and Residential Suburban County lands primarily to the north, and southeast of the City. Portions of the Cities of Pismo Beach and Grover Beach and the unincorporated community of Oceano that border the west, southwest and south sides of Arroyo Grande, respectively are also within the City of Arroyo Grande's Planning Area and Area of Environmental Concern.

Map-1

Population Growth Trends

The City of Arroyo Grande's population has grown from a population of 3,291 in 1960 to 15,851 people (based on the 2000 federal census). Population growth during the 1960's occurred rapidly, some years exceeding 12 percent. In the 1970's, growth slowed to an average of seven percent, falling still further in the 1980's to two percent from 1980 to 1985. From 1985 to 1987 growth stopped during major national recession and from 1987 to 1990, growth resumed at an average of 2.5 percent per year. Annual population increases of less than one percent have marked the 1990's. According to the 2000 Federal census, the City of Arroyo Grande grew 10.2% since 1990 to a resident population of 15,851. Assuming an average annual growth rate of approximately 1% from the current estimated 2001 population of 16,000, the General Plan "build-out" capacity of about 20,000 would be reached by 2023. Average annual rates seldom occur, however, as the production of housing often occurs in cycles of above average and below average. For example, construction of 53 homes per year would constitute approximately 1% growth of current resident population assuming average household population for single-family owner-occupied housing. And past trends have varied widely based on market factors beyond the control of the City. Current estimates from San Luis Obispo Council of Governments project the City's "General Plan build-out population" at approximately 19,000 to 20,000 residents by 2023 at a rate of approximately 1% annual average. For General Plan Update purposes, the "build out" projection of approximately 20,000 residents coincides with a twenty-year planning period.

Identification of Issues, (Opportunities and Constraints)

Some of the significant issues and challenges associated with present and future land uses in the City of Arroyo Grande were summarized during Update formulation. These issues and challenges establish the context within which the 2001 General Plan Update is crafted, and which the General Plan Update attempts to address through its objectives and policies.

Regional Context/Relationship to Adjoining Urban Areas

- The City of Arroyo Grande is located along Highway 101, approximately midway between San Luis Obispo and Santa Maria. The 101 corridor between Santa Maria and Arroyo Grande includes the unincorporated community of Nipomo and adjoining Mesa areas where rapid suburban development is occurring in the unincorporated Nipomo area.
- For travelers heading north on the freeway, Arroyo Grande serves as a "gateway" to the "Five Cities" area, composed of Arroyo Grande, Pismo Beach, Grover Beach, Oceano and Shell Beach. As such, the character of the City as perceived along the freeway and certain arterial streets within the City plays a key role within a regional as well as local context. The "Five Cities" area implies that these once separate communities are merging as a single urban area, with little or no separation or distinction between the communities.
- In addition to the quality and scale of urban development within the City, the relationship of built environment to surrounding natural resources – particularly hillsides, canyons and ridges located to the north and east and agricultural areas to the northeast and south – play an important role in defining the character of the Five Cities area and the City of Arroyo Grande itself.
- The community has expressed the desire to retain a "rural, small town" character within the City and to avoid the types of suburban sprawl that have occurred in other locations, perceived by local residents as undesirable. The City faces the challenge of managing growth to counter predominant land development market forces that have contributed to "suburban sprawl" rather than urban in-fill and revitalization. Inherent in this challenge of managing growth to encourage urban in-fill and revitalization rather than low density "suburban sprawl" is the perceived or actual community and resident preference for large lot,

single-family housing developments rather than more intensive infill. Unless the community and housing market accept this type and density of housing and integrate it within the “small town, rural character” the single-family market forces may shift to other areas beyond the City of Arroyo Grande’s jurisdiction, such as Nipomo Mesa, creating “suburban sprawl” from the outside-in. It is therefore apparent that the City must coordinate its growth management policies with those of other jurisdictions in the region, particularly the County of San Luis Obispo.

Regional Context/Relationship to Agricultural Uses

- The Arroyo Grande Valley and La Cienega Valley, comprising approximately 2,500 acres of land along the Arroyo Grande Creek, contain some of the world’s most productive agricultural land. Two key factors influence the sustainability of agricultural production and the relationship of agricultural land to adjoining uses. Currently, Highway 101 and urban development within the City of Arroyo Grande divide agricultural areas north and south of the freeway. Development patterns within the City, particularly higher density residential developments adjacent to agricultural land have intruded into agricultural areas and additional divisions within agricultural areas north and south of Highway 101 threaten their viability. Pressure for conversion of agricultural land is a key issue within and adjoining the City. This issue must be considered in the context of potential effects on the larger pattern of agricultural uses within the Arroyo Grande Valley as a whole in the City and unincorporated areas.

Limited Remaining Undeveloped Land Within the City

- Land within the City of Arroyo Grande comprises gradual to steep hillsides to the east and north and relatively flat alluvial plain in the central, south and western portions of the City. Arroyo Grande Creek runs in north south direction through the eastern portion of the City. Development within the City historically was concentrated in central and southwestern portions of the City but recently spread to hillside areas north of Highway 101. Few vacant parcels remain within the City, and now a substantial portion of regional development pressures focus on agricultural parcels.
- The preservation of agricultural uses within and adjoining the City remains a fundamental goal within the community as confirmed by the input obtained during the public participation process for this General Plan Update. The City faces the basic challenge of accommodating economic development and growth within the City while maintaining agricultural preservation in and adjoining the City.
- The City has achieved commendable results with regard to preserving passive open spaces along stream corridors and wooded slopes within Planned Development areas north of Highway 101 and implementation of Neo-Traditional design principles on in-fill projects southwest of Highway 101. Few large undeveloped areas remain and future development will involve more intensive “Mixed Use” planned developments within previously developed parts of the City.
- Opportunities for continued economic growth involve redevelopment, in-fill, and revitalization of limited properties remaining which should be carefully utilized, with special concern for compatibility with existing adjoining development. Prime locations for such initiatives include areas along East Grand Avenue and El Camino Real as well as south and east of the Village.

Circulation Constraints Within the City of Arroyo Grande

- Highway 101 bisects the City and there is only one interchange with four-way access, at Grand Avenue. Oak Park Boulevard provides three directions of access, but two of them are offset. Other ramps at Brisco Road, Halcyon Road, Fair Oaks Avenue, Traffic Way, and

outside city limits at El Campo Road, are partial with termini that lead to complex routing on the local street system, or incomplete circulation.

- North-south connections between areas of the City on either side of the freeway are limited. Only two roadways (Grand Avenue and Oak Park Boulevard) provide arterial-crossing opportunities, while two others (Brisco Road and Fair Oaks Avenue) provide indirect access across Highway 101.
- State Highway 227 bisects the historic Village contributing to both commercial and residential traffic congestion and disruption of land use by through traffic. Although alternative routes have been considered to the southeast, lack of interchange connection with Highway 101 and bridge crossing of Arroyo Grande Creek have precluded serious consideration of these "by-pass" alignments. The 2001 General Plan Update Circulation Element proposes local "relief route study areas" instead.
- The possibilities of engineered solutions to these regional features of the circulation system are limited by existing developments and design standards as well as budgetary constraints. The constraints of the existing circulation system therefore are a fundamental concern to future land use development. The City wants to achieve Level of Service (LOS) 'C' despite existing deficiencies.
- As evidenced in the public participation process for this 2001 General Plan Update, the community of Arroyo Grande values and seeks to retain the existing character of its historic Village area. East Branch Street must accommodate demands generated by existing and future uses, yet through-traffic – particularly truck traffic – is incompatible with the desired pedestrian character of the Village.
- Pedestrian, bike and other non-auto modes are poorly developed in the City. Design and planning for increased reliance on such alternative modes would contribute toward energy efficiency, more sustainable land use development patterns and better reflect existing circulation constraints. The City will promote "multi-modal" circulation but it recognizes that established regional land use patterns are conducive to continued citizen preference to automobile use.

Citizen's Conservation Ethics

Because of its geographic location and history, citizens of the City of Arroyo Grande recognize a stewardship responsibility toward important factors that are unique to the City and define its character in a regional context:

- Given the fertility of its soils and historical association with agricultural activities in the Central Coast area, a responsibility for protection of its remaining prime agricultural land and the community's agrarian character.
- Given the integrity of the City's historic commercial core, a responsibility for preservation and sensitive enhancement of the unique ambiance and character of its "Village" area.
- Given its location as the southernmost of the "Five Cities" and its straddling of the Highway 101 freeway, recognition of its status and function as a "gateway", and a responsibility for defining the character and reinforcing the boundaries of urban development.

These three factors underlie the definition of objectives and policies within the Land Use Element and should be considered as fundamental considerations in any future amendments or Updates to the General Plan as well as the basic tests of consistency between Agriculture, Open Space and Conservation Element and the Urban Land Use Element.

Constitutional Compliance

Should any provision of this General Plan, including any Element thereof, cause a regulatory taking in its application to specific property, then that provision shall be relaxed to the least possible extent necessary to eliminate the regulatory taking, while continuing to preserve the intent of the provision and the General Plan.