Planning Commission Recommended Draft

August 8, 2013

Framework for Planning (Inland)

This page intentionally left blank.

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 and Circulation Elements (LUCE) is part of the San Luis Obispo County General Plan. It describes the official County policy on the location of land uses and their orderly growth and development and it correlates land use with transportation. The County General Plan is the foundation upon which all land use decisions are based. California Planning Law requires the adoption of a comprehensive plan. The plan has been prepared in accordance with state law, and it has been adopted by the County Board of Supervisors.

Note: The terms "Land Use and Circulation Elements (LUCE)" and "Land Use Element (LUE)" are used interchangeably throughout this document and the County Land Use Ordinance.

The Land Use and Circulation Elements are two of the seven required general plan "elements." In addition to the required elements, a city or county may adopt optional elements. The County has adopted five optional elements as shown in Table 1. Because all elements of the general plan have equal legal status, the general plan must resolve potential conflicts between or among the elements through clear language and consistent policy. The LUCE 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 LUCE also serves as a reference point and guide for future land use planning studies throughout the county.

Table 1	
General Plan Elements	**Descriptions**
Land Use and Circulation Elements Framework for Planning 4 Area Plans 13 Community/Village Plans Local Coastal Program (or Plan) Coastal Plan Policies	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 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. Maps and policies for transportation routes and modes such as vehicles and transit, correlated with the Land Use Element
Housing	A plan with analysis of existing and projected housing needs, and goals, policies and programs for the preservation, improvement and development of housing
Agriculture	A plan that focuses on wisely managing and protecting agricultural land resources and minimizing impacts to ongoing production agriculture.
Conservation and Open Space	A plan to preserve and protect important natural resources, air quality, biological and cultural resources, and water, while balancing the needs of the natural and built environments.
Noise	An analysis of existing noise problems and projected noise levels, with policies and implementation measures to minimize exposure to excessive noise
Safety	A plan for the protection of the community from unreasonable risks associated with earthquakes, geologic hazards, flooding and fires
Master Water & Sewer Plan	A plan for the collection, storage and distribution of water supplies and sewage disposal
Offshore Energy	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
Economic	Policies to establish a context and priorities for economic development
Parks and Recreation	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

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. 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. The land use maps illustrate long-term land use and growth policies, and they are adopted as the official zoning maps and used to evaluate current development proposals. 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.

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.

B. ORGANIZATION OF THE LAND USE ELEMENT

The Land Use Element has four major sections: Framework for Planning, the area plans, the community/village 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 (LUCE Part I)

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 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.

Framework for Planning also explains the criteria used in applying land use categories and combining designations to the land, and the operation of the Resource Management System. Combining designations are special map categories that identify areas of unique resources or potential hazards that necessitate more careful project review. (For example, areas that may experience flooding are included in the Flood Hazard combining designation to show where special construction techniques are needed.)

The Resource Management System (RMS), Chapter 3, is designed to assist county decision-makers by anticipating increasing needs for resources created by growth. The RMS assesses capacities of existing critical resources, and the timing for providing or upgrading resource delivery facilities. Such improvements are then accomplished by either the public or private sectors. The RMS is intended to support timely addition to a resource, or growth rate adjustment where a resource shortage would require longer to correct than remaining capacity allows.

The Area Plans (LUCE Part II)

Part II of the Land Use and Circulation Elements is comprised of four inland planning areas and their area plans: Carrizo, North County, San Luis Obispo, and South County (refer to Figures 1-2 and 1-3). The Area Plans document describes where land use categories are applied in the four planning areas. It also establishes policies and programs for land use, circulation, public facilities, services, and resources that apply 1) "areawide" (throughout the entire planning area), 2) in rural areas, and 3) in unincorporated urban areas adjacent to cities.

The Area Plans consolidates and reorganizes the content of 11 former area plans into four new regional planning areas. The geographic boundaries of the 11 former planning areas have been preserved as "sub-areas" of the four new regional planning areas. Figure 1-4 shows the sub-areas in each regional planning area.

Community/Village Plans (LUCE Part III)

Part III of the Land Use and Circulation Elements is comprised of 13 inland community and village plans, which contains goals, policies, programs, and related background information for the County's unincorporated urban and village areas in the inland part of the county. Figure 1-4 shows the community/village plans within each of the four planning areas.**The Official Maps (LUCE Part IV)**

As Part IV of the Land Use and Circulation Elements, the Official Maps, are on file in the County Department of Planning and Building. They show how the land use categories and combining designations are applied to each parcel of land in the county. The area and community/village plans contain land use reference maps for the rural portions of each planning area and the unincorporated urban and village areas for general information only. The Official Maps must be used to determine precisely what land use designations apply to particular properties.

Programs

Programs are actions that may be initiated by the County or other identified public agency to achieve specific community or areawide objectives. Because programs (some of which include special studies) are recommended actions rather than mandatory requirements, County implementation should be based on consideration of community needs and substantial community support for the program and its related cost. Standards, on the other hand, are mandatory criteria in the Land Use Ordinance that must be satisfied in development planning and construction to achieve consistency with the general plan.

Figure 1-2: Land Use and Circulation Elements Organization

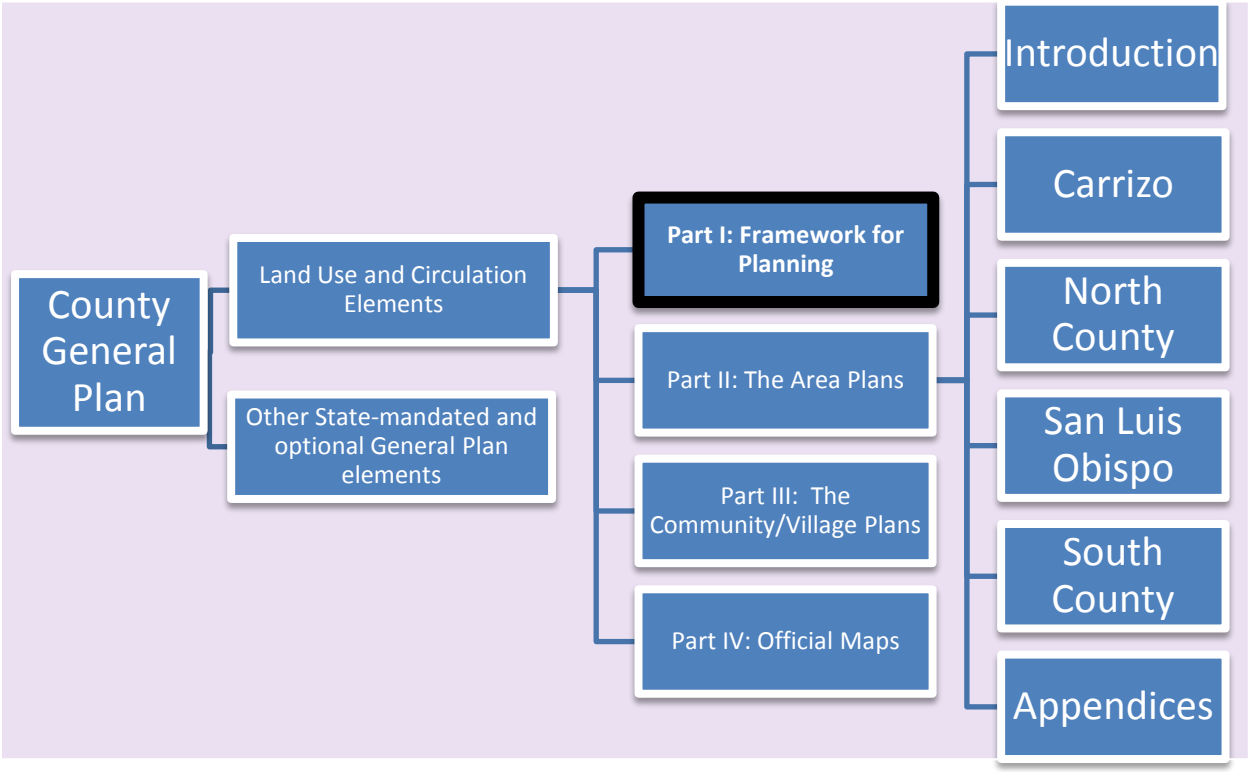
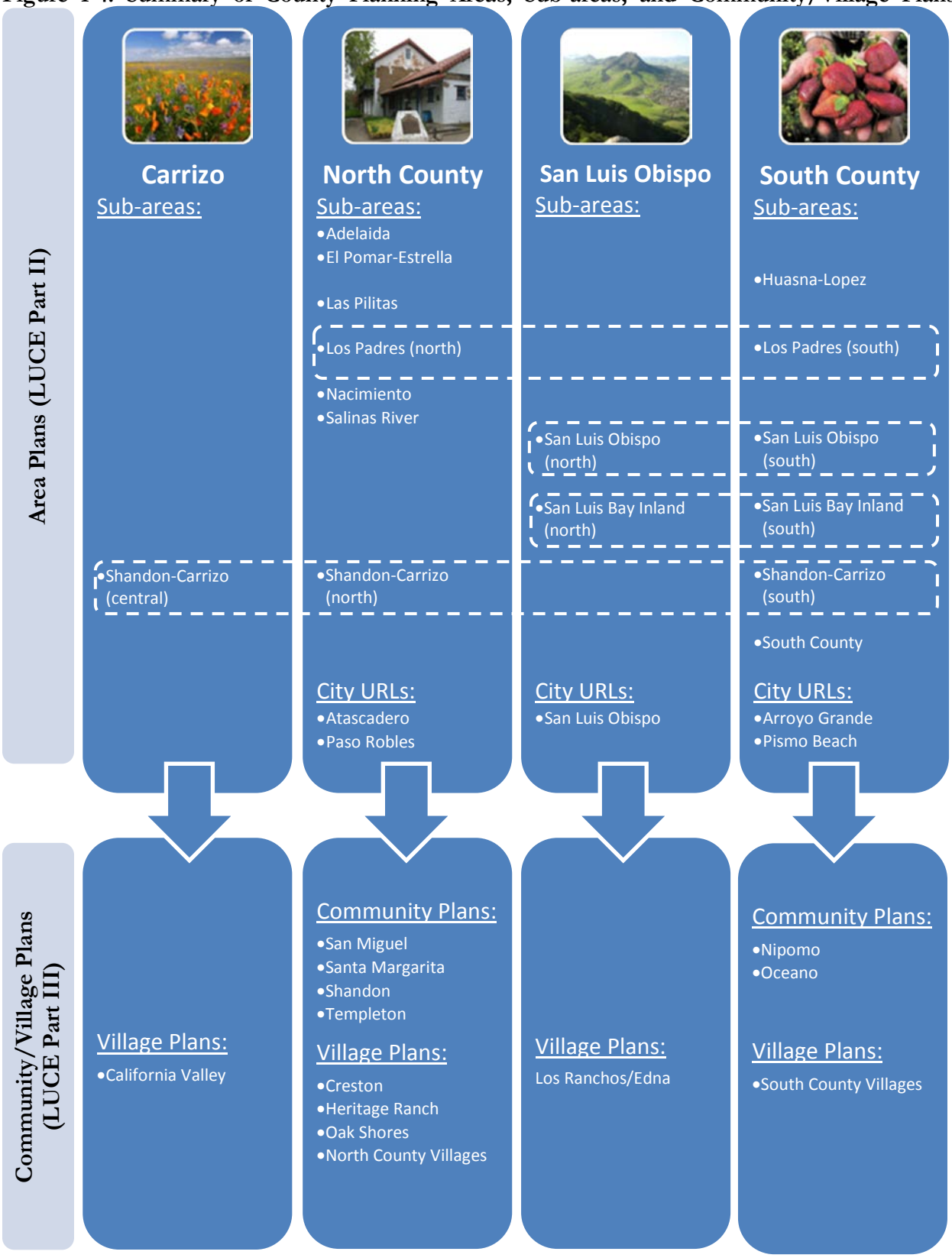


Figure 1-3: Inland Planning Areas

This page intentionally left blank.

Figure 1-4: Summary of County Planning Areas, Sub-areas, and Community/Village Plans



C. RELATIONSHIP TO OTHER ADOPTED PLANS

A Land Use Element for all unincorporated portions of the county was first adopted in 1941. It was later updated in 1947, and in 1966 when the Board of Supervisors adopted the Composite Land Use Plan, including all previous community plans with general county goals and standards. The Land Use Element has since been amended and updated in a major revision concluded in September, 1980, with adoption of the plan in its current structure. In 2013, the LUCE was reorganized to consolidate 11 inland planning areas into four watershed-based planning areas and to include 13 separate community/village plans for the unincorporated urban and village areas in the inland portion of the county.

A major goal of this Land Use Element is to achieve internal consistency among the various elements of the county general plan. This Land Use Element supersedes all land use plans previously adopted by the county, including general plans for unincorporated communities and county-adopted plans prepared by the cities, but it does not replace any of the other countywide general plan elements. Instead, the LUE complements the other elements by incorporating and implementing their land use concerns and recommendations.

The LUE refines the Agriculture Element and Conservation and Open Space Element by establishing land use densities which were not originally included, and also implements the Conservation and Open Space, Historic, Safety, Economic, Energy, and Recreation Elements by incorporating their broad-brush land use recommendations into detailed policies and standards applicable to specific geographic locations.

The LUE also includes the Circulation Element of the general plan. Framework for Planning contains general goals and policies. The Circulation Chapters of the area and community/village plans contain recommended objectives and projects. Circulation Maps in the area and community/village plans show existing and proposed collector and arterial streets.

In addition to collecting the land use policies of the various countywide general plan elements, the Land Use Element also is coordinated with the most recently adopted city general plans for land use within incorporated city limits. County policy recognizes that land use problems and opportunities have effects which do not stop at political boundaries, and that such issues can be adequately resolved only through cooperation between affected agencies. While a city general plan may include lands beyond the city limits, the county Land Use Element will be the policy administered by the county for development in unincorporated fringe areas. The city plans will still prevail within city limits.

D. IMPLEMENTING THE GENERAL PLAN

In San Luis Obispo County, all required elements of the general plan have been adopted. These elements are implemented through a variety of ordinances that are adopted as part of the County Code, as well as through plans such as specific plans and design plans. Figure 1-5 shows the relationship of the general plan to the following documents that implement the general plan.

- The Land Use Ordinance (LUO) provides the principal method for implementation of the general plan by setting requirements for how particular land uses may be designed and developed. For example, it contains development standards and permit procedures, including features of site design, such as minimum parcel size, required setbacks, building heights, number and design of off-street parking spaces, and standards for grading, drainage and tree removal.

The LUO also provides a legal basis for how the policies of the Land Use Element are implemented and enforced.

- The Real Property Division Ordinance contains the technical regulations and procedures for land divisions.

- The Building and Construction Ordinance, in conjunction with the California Building Code, Plumbing Code, Mechanical Code, etc., contains the technical code requirements for building construction also implements the general plan.

- The Growth Management Ordinance sets an annual rate of growth to ensure it does not outpace the available resources.

- The Address and Road Name Ordinance implements the general plan by specifying requirements and standards for naming of roads, addressing of properties and installation of road signs and individual addresses for structures. This ordinance was developed to aid public safety officials in locating properties during times of emergency.

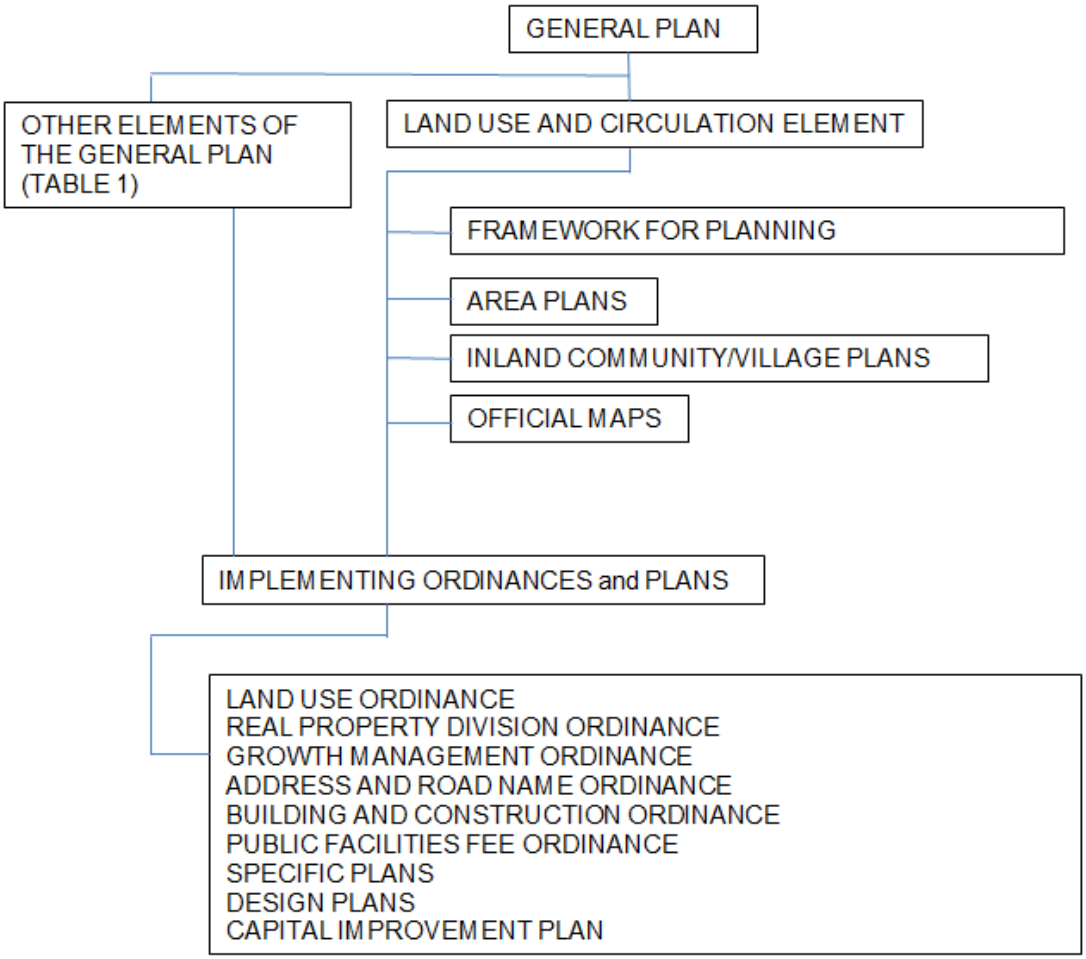
- The Public Facilities Fees Ordinance provides for the collection of fees from certain new development in order to help finance the construction, expansion and improvement of public facilities such as parks, fire stations, sheriff's substations, and libraries.

- Specific Plans are a tool for the systemic implementation of the general plan and are adopted as part of the Land Use Ordinance. They establish a link between general plan policies and the individual development proposals in a defined area.

- Design Plans are adopted as part of the Land Use Ordinance to provide design-related policies, programs and standards that supplement the planning area standards.

- The County Facilities and Infrastructure Five Year Capital Improvement Plan prioritizes facilities and infrastructure improvements, together with funding sources, which will be considered for development over a five-year time frame.

Figure 1-5: General Plan Organization and Implementation



E. SEVERABILITY OF PROVISIONS

If any chapter, section, subsection, paragraph, subparagraph, sentence, clause, phrase or word of the Land Use Element is for any reason held to be invalid, unconstitutional or unenforceable, such decision shall not affect the validity of the remaining portions of the Land Use Element. It is hereby declared that this Land Use Element and each chapter, section, subsection, paragraph, subparagraph, sentence, clause, phrase and word thereof would have been adopted irrespective of the fact that one or more of such portions of the Land Use Element be declared invalid, unconstitutional or unenforceable.

F. 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 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.
10. Communities lack affordable housing and well-paying jobs. Communities may not have adequate land for multi-family housing and commercial development in appropriate locations.
11. The semi-arid climate within the county is subject to limited amounts of rainfall and "recharge" of groundwater basins and surface reservoirs. Most communities and rural areas have developed without avoiding eventual water shortages, so that currently five of the six major groundwater basins are in critical or overdraft conditions. To better manage water resources, the potential impacts of land use patterns and water consumption should be recognized, with the understanding that more compact residential development consumes less water per unit than large-lot development.

G. PLANNING PRINCIPLES, POLICIES AND IMPLEMENTING STRATEGIES

The following principles and policies reflect the Board of Supervisors' adoption 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.

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

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 and supported by implementing strategies 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 G-1 in Appendix G, for timely achievement of the strategic growth policies.

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.

Strategically planned communities are urban or village areas with the following characteristics:

- Adequate resources, services and facilities for long-term growth (20 years),
- Inter-connected street systems, bicycle and pedestrian ways,
- Neighborhood areas that can accommodate a variety of housing types that are affordable to all income groups, which are located close to focal points serving daily needs,
- Adequate areas for commerce, employment, education, recreation, civic and social life.

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 and strategically planned 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.*

Together, the principles and policies define how land will be used and resources will be protected. They provide the basis for defining the 14 land use categories, 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 and community/village plans.

The policies 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.

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

Figure 1-3: Holister Peak

Policies

1. Maintain and protect a living environment that is safe, healthful and pleasant for all residents.

2. Keep the amount, location and rate of growth allowed by the Land Use Element within the sustainable capacity of resources, public services and facilities.

3. Preserve and sustain important water resources, watersheds and riparian habitats.

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.

5. Conserve energy resources by:

   a. Planning for energy efficiency and conservation in land use and transportation, and in subdivision and building regulations.

   b. Decreasing reliance on environmentally costly energy sources, increasing conservation efforts, and encouraging use of alternative energy sources.

6. Encourage the protection and use of agricultural land for the production of food, fiber and other agricultural commodities, and support the rural economy and locally-based commercial agriculture.

7. Give highest priority to avoiding significant environmental impacts from development through site and project design. Where such impacts cannot be avoided, minimize them to the maximum extent feasible.

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 resource capacities for long-term growth.
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 open space.
3. 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. Create an urban and rural forestry program that encourages property owners, developers and communities to plant, maintain and protect trees to enhance air quality and help offset carbon dioxide emissions.
5. Revise the Land Use and Conservation and Open Space Elements and County ordinances to give incentives for energy-efficient construction that minimizes its carbon footprint, especially in rural areas.

Principle 2: Strengthen and direct development toward existing and strategically planned communities.

Policies

1. Maintain rural areas in agriculture, low-intensity recreation, very low-density residential uses, and open space uses, 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.

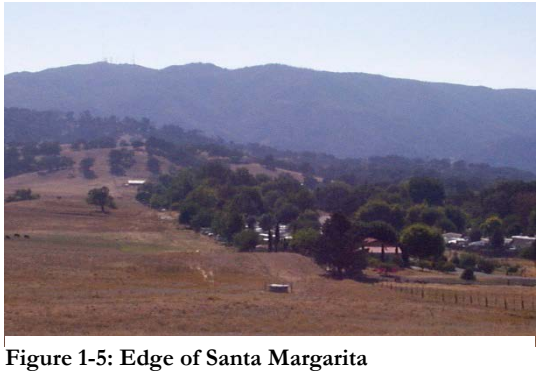


Figure 1-5: Edge of Santa Margarita

3. Plan for most future development to be within existing and strategically planned cities and communities.

4. Create complete communities with appropriate areas for housing, commerce, civic uses, schools, recreation and open spaces.

5. Create active and vital urban and village environments that are attractive, compact and orderly arrangements of structures and open space, appropriate to the size and scale of each community.

6. Plan adequate and convenient areas within communities for employment and economic development near transit and residential areas.

7. Phase 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 Land Use Element amendments when the available inventory of suitable internal or "infill" land is largely developed and only when resources, services and facilities to adequately accommodate the associated growth can be assured.

9. Give high priority to funding needed infrastructure improvements in a timely manner within existing and strategically planned urban and village areas.

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

10. The cost of additional services and facilities will be fairly shared among those who most immediately benefit and the entire community.

11. Provide adequate community amenities, parks, natural areas and trails in support of new development, which will support a high quality of life and a compact form of community development.

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 rural lands.

3. Work with communities to create and maintain distinct urban boundaries next to rural areas, while allowing for compact community expansion.

4. Work with agencies, cities, special districts, unincorporated communities and their advisory councils, to identify suitable strategic growth opportunity areas within and adjacent to existing communities for compact, affordable development, where supported by sustainable resource capacities.

5. Coordinate with the cities to consider accepting greater shares of overall countywide growth with corresponding reductions in unincorporated area growth. Consider compensating assistance from the County to offset the transportation, financial and other demands from this growth.

6. Develop a regional and sub-regional economic and land use strategy to stimulate creation of head-of-household jobs, improve the jobs-housing imbalance and strengthen the economy within each community.

7. Plan commercial and/or industrial areas that are compatible with overall land use; convenient to patrons, neighborhoods and alternative transportation modes; and reflect market demand and neighborhood needs.

8. Revise the Resource Management System and the Growth Management Ordinance to give a higher priority to serving existing and strategically planned communities with adequate resources, streets and infrastructure, over outlying rural areas.

9. Conduct long-term planning (20+ years) to fund and provide additional, sustainable public resources, services and facilities in sufficient time to avoid overburdening existing resources, services and facilities.

10. Coordinate County land use actions with service districts to provide sufficient public resources, services and facilities.

11. Create an infrastructure policy that addresses the following goals:

- **a.** New development pays its fair share.
- **b.** The larger community pays its fair share for existing deficiencies and improvements providing general benefit.
- **c.** Infrastructure is in place or funded concurrent with the need.
- **d.** Funding mechanisms such as community facilities districts.

12. Amend the Land Use Ordinance to require that amendments to the Land Use Element or Ordinance, which propose increases in density or additional development where critical resource levels exist, shall not be approved unless they provide proof that adequate water and sewage disposal capacities then exist and are available to serve: 1) development resulting from the proposed amendment, 2) existing development, and 3) the allowed development on vacant parcels within the rural, urban or village areas that are subject to the RMS Levels of Severity.

13. Enact revisions to the Land Use and the Real Property Division Ordinances to revise or introduce regulations that will promote urban infill instead of prevent it. Consider

regulations such as, but not limited to parking, height limits, lot coverage, minimum lot size, minimum densities, setbacks, street widths and similar development standards.

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

Policies

1. Protect and restore the valuable history, cultures, images and identity of communities and rural areas.

2. Protect rural areas between communities to achieve well-defined communities within an attractive rural setting.

3. Establish and maintain a distinct edge between urban and rural areas to enhance community separation while allowing for appropriate and compact urban expansion at the urban edge.

Figure 1-7: Streetscape on a downtown street

4. Enhance the commercial identity and viability of downtowns.

5. Foster a strong local identity through appropriate design of public spaces and buildings.

Implementing Strategies

1. 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.

2. Revise the Land Use Element and Ordinance to 1) retain or create distinct urban boundaries and 2) require development intensities that create a clear difference between urban and rural areas.

3. Revise the Countywide Design Guidelines to encourage appropriate, place-based (locally relevant), pedestrian-oriented designs within communities.

4. Foster a strong sense of place by identifying local, valued aspects within each community ("placemaking").

5. Establish an inter-departmental team to fund and develop public facilities and amenities that preserve community character, such as public buildings, plazas, parks, and public art.

6. Hold an annual downtown improvements workshop and work with downtown stakeholders to form business improvement districts.

7. Encourage property owners to protect and conserve historic buildings and resources 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

1. Plan communities with schools, parks, public spaces, transit stops and commercial districts located as focal points within convenient walking distances of neighborhoods as illustrated in Figure 1-8.

2. Plan for maximum connectivity between different land uses through walkways or other means.

3. Create attractive street enhancements and public spaces that serve as gathering places on corridors and at connecting locations.

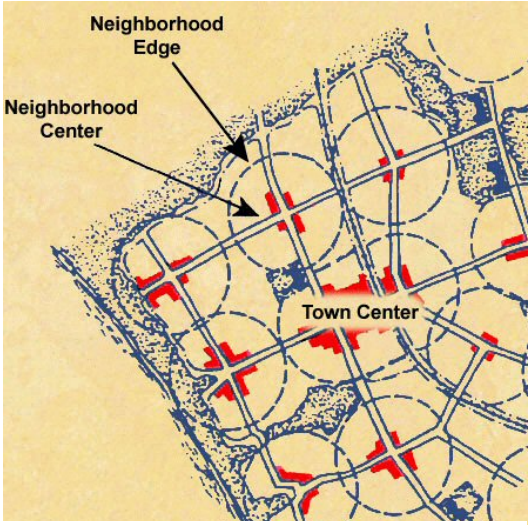


Figure 1-8: Walkable neighborhoods

4. Provide parks, natural areas and recreation facilities with new urban development to enhance a community's quality of life and improve public health.

5. Create neighborhoods and non-residential areas that minimize fear and crime through environmental and urban design.

Implementing Strategies

1. Update the Countywide Design Guidelines to create maximum connectivity between neighborhoods, streets and projects for pedestrian and bicycle travel.
2. Revise the Land Use Ordinance and Land Use Element to enhance neighborhoods with small-scale and appropriate commercial areas; parks and recreation areas; public spaces; and 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. Enhance downtowns and commercial areas with attractive civic and pedestrian facilities, events and promotions, and facilitate ways to finance them, for example, through forming business improvement and community facilities districts.
4. Pursue a street tree program on urban streets and public parking lots.
5. Enhance major boulevards and downtown streets with street trees, street furniture, textured crosswalks, planted medians and ornamental lighting.
6. Revise community plans, the Countywide Design Guidelines and the Land Use Ordinance to include features that will minimize fear and crime and strengthen a sense of community by environmental design methods.

Principle 5: Provide a variety of transportation choices.

Policies

1. Design a safe, reliable and effective transportation system that protects natural and scenic resources and minimizes environmental impacts.

2. Reduce and minimize the generation of air pollutants and greenhouse gases from existing and future development, with emphasis on reducing vehicle miles traveled.

Figure 1-9: Bike lane on a residential street

3. Coordinate land use and transportation planning 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 destinations within and between communities, to encourage alternative transportation.

5. Make communities more bicycle- and pedestrian-friendly with safe and attractive routes.

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 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. 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.

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

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

Policies

1. Plan for most new housing to be within urban or village areas and close to jobs while protecting residential areas from incompatible 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, and avoid creating adverse concentrations of affordable units.

Figure 1-10: Creekside Gardens affordable housing

Implementing Strategies

1. Implement the Housing Element to implement these policies.

2. Update the Land Use Ordinance and LUE area and community/village plans to encourage a diversity of housing (sizes, types, and costs) within subdivisions and neighborhoods.

3. Revise the Countywide Design Guidelines, community design plans and specific plans to illustrate how to integrate higher density development 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 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.

7. Modify the Land Use Ordinance to allow more affordable units without parking, for residents who do not wish to pay for it.

[END OF CHANGES TO CHAPTER 1]

CHANGES IN CHAPTERS 2 THROUGH 8

Chapter 2: Information Base

A. PHYSICAL SETTING

Page 2-1, Paragraphs 4 through 6

Though the policies of the Land Use Element are related to the population and economy, the principal consideration in LUE policy formulation has been the characteristics, capabilities and constraints of the county's physical environment. As a basis for Land Use Element policy definition, detailed information on the physical setting of each planning area was developed. Physical features including soils, slopes, hazards and areas of critical concern were all reviewed. The following sections briefly describe the important physical features of the county, later detailed in the area and community/village plans.

The county landscape is defined by five mountain ranges, forming five principal drainage basins aligned on a predominantly northwest to southeast axis. The ranges include the Santa Lucia, Temblor, Caliente, La Panza and San Luis mountains. While none of the ranges is particularly high, they are effective visual and climatic barriers between each of the regions they define. Most urban and intensive agricultural uses in the county occur in the valleys and coastal terraces of the westernmost ranges. A more detailed discussion of the physical features of the county can be found in the Agriculture Element and the Conservation and Open Space Element.

Review of land use changes during the past decade indicates definite trends in growth and development. Table A summarizes those changes and shows that increasing conversion of unused land to agricultural production has been accompanied by conversion of agricultural land to urban uses (source: State Department of Water Resources, "Southern Central Coastal Land Use Survey, 1985"). The associated construction activities can be accompanied by erosion problems, siltation of waterways and the loss of soil resources. In addition to a physical loss of arable soil, a loss of land productivity has resulted from the division of properties into parcels too small for economically viable commercial agricultural production. The Agriculture Element and the Conservation and Open Space Element refer to such areas as "Small Lot Rural." The increasing division of agriculturally productive land into rural homesites is a significant trend because of its potential for continuing and accelerating the displacement of agriculture as both a land use and an employment base. In 1985, county agricultural lands totaled 62,280 acres of irrigated and 341,730 acres of non-irrigated land (see Table A) (source: San Luis Obispo County Agricultural Commissioner's Annual Reports). These areas include both high quality soils (Class I & II), and other agricultural lands of lesser capability, which nevertheless may be economically productive partly because of sheer size. The land demands of anticipated population and economic growth must be balanced with the needs of viable agriculture for areas free from conflicting land uses.

Page 2-5, Paragraph 6

According to the county Master Water Plan Update (1986), the overall demand for water is expected to remain about the same through the year 2010. Urban demand is expected to increase between 67% and 88% depending on conservation measures. However, agricultural use is projected to decrease by approximately 14% due to improved irrigation efficiency and a trend toward crops requiring less water. While agriculture presently uses about 84% of total countywide water, it is anticipated to comprise 72%

of the county's use by 2010. It should be noted, however, that much of the water used by agriculture is returned to the groundwater supply and is not "used up" per se. The use of this water is essential for on-going agricultural uses, including the production of food and fiber, so this water is beneficial to the population of the county as well as the state and nation. Since agriculture uses a larger volume of water than urban uses, the small percentage decrease in agricultural use is estimated to offset the increase in urban demand. Further discussion of policy issues relating to water resources, and an assessment of the water resources and the population levels they can support, is found in the Resource Management System, Chapter 3. Local conditions and policies are described in the separate area and community/village plans. Additional background information on water resources can be found in the Agriculture Element, The Conservation and Open Space Element, and the Master Water Report..

B. POPULATION

Page 2-9, Paragraphs 2 through 5

North County - The area north of Cuesta Grade generally centered on the Salinas River, containing the communities of San Miguel, Paso Robles, Templeton, Atascadero and Santa Margarita. This area is considered in the Land Use and Circulation Elements as the North County planning area.

North Coast - The coastal terrace and adjacent upland areas south of the Monterey County line, including the communities of San Simeon, Cambria, Cayucos, Morro Bay and South Bay (the North Coast and Estero Planning Areas).

San Luis Obispo - The inland area surrounding the county seat which is the major employment and trade center of the county, but also includes the resort community of Avila Beach.

South County - The coastal terrace, upland and near-coast valleys concentrated along Highway 101, extending from Ontario Grade south to the Santa Barbara County line, including the communities of Pismo Beach, Arroyo Grande, Grover City, Oceano, Halcyon and Nipomo (the South County planning area).

Page 2-9, Paragraph 9

Development Potential Resulting from the Land Use Element
The question of how much land development and corresponding population growth the Land Use Element will allow can be examined in several ways. Each area and community/village plan contains data about the absorption capacity and build-out capacity for the amount of acreage within residential land use categories (where primary residences are allowed). These estimates are expressed as population in order to compare with projected growth rates. A third measure of potential population is holding capacity, which describes the projected population threshold when a resource capacity will be exceeded and is often used in the Resource Management System.

Page 2-10, Paragraph 2

Build-Out Capacity. Build-out capacity is an estimate of the likely ultimate population that can be expected within the land use categories for each area and community/village plan, including any limitations on density imposed by LUO standards. It represents the beginning of a transition from a growing population to a stable, slower growing population as most of the area's parcels are developed. As developable parcels become more scarce, they become more expensive and less likely to be developed, unless the supply is increased through plan amendments for higher densities. Build-out

population estimates indicate the threshold when a scarcer supply of land and physical development constraints interfere with full development of each land use category's maximum absorption capacity. Other assumptions that account for the build-out estimate include:

Page 2-10, Paragraph 5

The estimated build-out capacity for each subarea of the county is found in the area and community/village plans of the Land Use Element and in Appendix B. Appendix B also contains estimated dates that the build-out of individual communities or areas is projected to occur, using population projections in Appendix A, which assumes adequate resources and services and unconstrained growth.

Page 2-10, Paragraph 7

The estimated maximum population of about 150,000 that can be served without overdrafting existing developed water supplies has been exceeded (more related to the location of available supplies than the actual capacities of county water resources). The Resource Management section of each area and community/village plan shows the population levels at which additional resources will be needed if more people are to be accommodated. The Resource Management System, discussed in Chapter 3, utilizes resource capacity studies to determine the holding capacities for each planning area and community. The 1986 Master Water Plan also identifies the necessary supplemental water projects that can be developed to serve the Land Use Element build-out capacity.

C. ECONOMY

Page 2-13, Paragraph 1

Labor Force Characteristics
The following statistics apply to the county overall and are intended as general indicators of county work force characteristics. More specific statistical information is available in appendices. The area and community/village plans relate local information to conclusions on area economies.

Page 2-13, Paragraphs 7-10

Land Use Decision and the Economy
An important consideration in formulating Land Use Element policies is the need to anticipate land-related needs of the major economic sectors and providing for their continuing expansion. Planning and zoning decisions support the economy by reserving commercial and industrial areas for employment-generating activities. Long-range infrastructure needs can then be planned to serve such uses. Another way planning and zoning decisions affect the economy is their impact on the housing supply. They can directly affect employment in construction, and indirectly affect the availability of housing for new workers. Planning and zoning decisions also determine when and whether productive agricultural land is converted to other land uses.

The LUE area and community/village plans analyze the economic impacts of land use policies and consider the many variables that affect the amount of land needed for various economic activities. Areas and communities are evaluated in the area and community/village plan update process to ensure that sufficient developable land is available for continuing expansion of the economy during the term of the plan.

The update process also should consider achieving an appropriate balance between residential land, commercial/industrial development and agricultural land. A balance among types of development is desirable so that service and employment opportunities are available to the local population. This reduces the need for residents to travel long distances and provides an opportunity for communities to develop as unique and independent centers.

Economic activities are divided into four basic sectors: manufacturing; trade and services; government; agriculture; and new home construction. The relationship of each sector to the land use categories in the area and community/village plans is determined by the uses allowed in each category. Table E indicates which employment classifications are related to specific land use categories in each sector. The economic sectors are discussed separately because each has different relationships with the use of land. This information provides a countywide economic perspective, while the area and community/village plans contain more localized economic information.

Page 2-14, Paragraphs 2 and 3

Manufacturing, Trade and Service

This sector encompasses the entire private, non-agricultural segment of the economy. Its importance is reflected in the previously cited statistics which indicate that this sector employed 73% of the 1986 labor force, up from 66% in 1978. For the Land Use Element to affect the economy positively, enough land must be made available in the five land use categories that permit the economic activities of this sector so that goods, services and jobs can be provided for the increasing population (see Chapter 6 for a description of the land use categories).

To determine the effects of LUE policies on land availability for business, area and community/village plan updates utilize land use survey studies to review the acreage of existing land uses and the ratio between developed commercial and industrial acreage to the existing population. This relationship is compared with the available acreage in the land use categories designated for future commercial/industrial uses and with population projection. The availability of services and facilities and community needs are also analyzed to establish a relationship between economic activities and land use.

Page 2-14, Paragraphs 6 and 7

New Home Construction

New home construction is not being examined here as a portion of the work force but rather for its contribution to housing the expanding work force. Construction accounted for 7.3% of the work force in 1986, and in that respect it is addressed in the manufacturing, trade and services sectors. To ensure that enough housing is provided, the area and community/village plans compare the projected population with the buildout capacity. The buildout capacity is an estimate of the likely ultimate population that can be expected within the existing land use categories of the plan.

The land use patterns in the area and community/village plans provide sufficient developable land to accommodate a population greater than projected for the term of the plan. The Housing Element of the general plan also includes a policy to maintain an available supply of vacant single-family and multiple-family land, equal to at least 20% of a community's total supply.

Page 2-15, Paragraph 1

Economic Development
Land use policies have an important role in economic development and expanding employment opportunities. The area plans reflect the interrelationships between land uses, employment needs, housing demand and the provision of public services and facilities.

Chapter 4: Public Service Considerations

C. POLICIES AND IMPLEMENTING STRATEGIES FOR PUBLIC SERVICES

Page 4-2, Paragraph 1

Policies identify public desires to address planning issues and provide a reference point to determine how they should be resolved. The following policies are also listed in Chapter 1 along with other land-use and service-related policies. Objectives identify types of actions that relate to the major issues as well as implementing the general policies. More area-specific objectives and policies are provided in the area and community/village plans.

D. URBAN RESERVE LINES

Page 4-4, Paragraph 1, List Item #5

The proposal will not convert agricultural lands in accordance with Agriculture Policies in the Agriculture Element and the Conservation and Open Space Element.

F. VILLAGE RESERVE LINES

Page 4-5, Paragraph 4

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 reserve lines are established for:

Black Lake	Heritage Village	Pozo
California Valley	Los Berros	Whitley Gardens
Callender/Garrett	Los Ranchos/Edna	Woodlands
Creston	Oak Shores	
Garden Farms	Palo Mesa	

Part III of the Land Use and Circulation Elements includes individual village plans for Creston, Los Ranchos/Edna, Heritage Ranch, and Oak Shores. Plans for the villages of Black Lake, Callender-Garrett, Los Berros, Palo Mesa, and Woodlands are combined into a single plan called the South County Villages. Likewise, plans for the villages of Garden Farms, Pozo, and Whitley Gardens are combined into a single North County Villages plan.

G. APPROPRIATE LEVELS OF SERVICE

Page 4-6, Paragraph 1

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 areas with urban, suburban and rural densities as shown in the Land Use Element area and community/village plans.

Page 4-7, Table H

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 Systems	Community Water Systems	Individual Wells
Public Sewers	Septic Tank Maintenance	Septic Tanks
Police Service	Police Service	Police Service
Fire Protection	Fire Protection	Fire Protection
Parks	Parks	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	
Cultural Facilities		
Schools	Schools	

*Note:

"Density" in land use planning is a term that refers to the average 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 and community/village plans. Urban areas normally have urban densities overall, although neighborhoods within village and urban areas may have urban or suburban densities.

Chapter 5: Circulation Element

A. INTRODUCTION

Page 5-1, Paragraphs 1 through 3

Transportation has greater significance in land use planning than being viewed simply as various means of travel. Transportation and land use are interdependent. Critical relationships and interactions exist between transportation and aspects of land use such as housing, open space, recreation and economic development. The close relationship between the circulation system and land use is also recognized in the state guidelines for preparation of a circulation element, which require coordination with the Land Use Element.

This chapter constitutes the Circulation Element of the San Luis Obispo County General Plan, in conjunction with the Circulation chapters of the Land Use Element (LUE) area and community/village plans. This Circulation Element supersedes and replaces the 1979 County Transportation Plan. Goals, objectives and policies in this chapter are implemented through the LUE area and community/village plans, which contain circulation plan maps and recommend street and highway projects.

Where noted in specific sections of this chapter, the Regional Transportation Plan (RTP), which is prepared by the San Luis Obispo Area Coordinating Council, is incorporated by reference as part of the County Circulation Element. Relevant information concerning all non-highway transportation, for example, public transit or bicycles, is more detailed in the RTP than necessary to repeat here. This chapter discusses the system-level considerations and terminology that provide the basis for discussion and recommendations in the area and community/village plans.

C. GOALS AND OBJECTIVES

Page 5-3, Paragraph 2

Objectives and Policies
With the perspective provided by these goals, the Circulation Element provides an analysis of issues and recommends actions through the Land Use Element area and community/village plans and in the Regional Transportation Plan where referenced. As area and community/village plans are updated, issues are identified and objectives are set for several types of actions. The area and community/village plans include programs for agencies to complete mapping locations of major thoroughfares, and descriptions of major transportation routes and public utilities, recommended right-of-way improvements. Standards for development and subdivisions are contained within the Land Use Ordinance.

E. CIRCULATION SYSTEM DEFINITIONS

Page 5-5, Paragraphs 1 and 2

The area and community/village plans of the Land Use Element provide road classifications on the basis of local circulation needs, with detailed information regarding the location of proposed improvements.

Where appropriate, the area and community/village plans also set special programs and standards for areawide or local improvements. In general, the Standard Improvement Specifications and Drawings, published by the Public Works Department, provide minimum standards and criteria for the design and review of proposed streets and roadways throughout the county.

The following definitions of the various components of the street circulation system are used in the Land Use Element to describe how roads function to carry traffic between destinations. The Circulation Plan Maps in the area plans show the locations of roads according to these functional classifications. Right-of-way (R/W) widths are mentioned for general information only, since the actual right-of-way widths are determined by the county Standard Improvement Specifications and Drawings, based on the volume of traffic. The improvement standards should be reviewed periodically for consistency with the objectives and policies of the Land Use Element area and community/village plans.

F. ALTERNATIVE STREET DESIGN

Page 5-7, Last Paragraph

Some special design needs are noted in the Land Use Element area and community/village plans as guidelines in the Circulation chapter programs or as requirements in Article 9 (Community Planning Standards) and Article 10 (Planning Area Standards) of the Land Use Ordinance. Special designs that are available in "A Policy on Geometric Design of Highways and Streets," 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.

Page 5-8, Paragraph 5 and 6

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 Open Space and Conservation Element. It includes a list of eligible state highways and county roads that qualify for a scenic designation, and detailed policies for the designation 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 Conservation and Open Space Element for designating scenic corridors should be actively pursued to protect the county's high-quality scenic character.

G. SCENIC ROADS AND HIGHWAYS

Policies for road and highway projects in designated scenic corridors
The following policies are stated to implement Conservation and Open Space Element Policies VR4.1, 4.2 and 4.3 as they apply 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.

I. BIKEWAYS

Page 5-10, Paragraph 1

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. Local bikeways may be addressed in the Circulation chapters of the Land Use Element area and community/village plans. The County Bikeways Plan provides for the advancement of bicycling and includes detailed guidance for developing of bike lanes, routes and separated paths.

Chapter 6: Land Use Categories

A. INTRODUCTION

Page 6-1, Paragraph 3

The text and maps of the Land Use Element apply the land use categories to properties as the adopted county policy for future growth and land use. The official maps, which are available at the Department of Planning and Building, show the actual locations of the land use categories. The LUE area and community/village plans include report maps that reproduce the official maps at a smaller scale, and they include text and programs that apply to the land use categories.

Page 6-2, Last Paragraph

Community-based or special focus programs are locations and standards established through community or area input where properties are eligible for consideration as specific sending and receiving sites and where there is a logical contiguous area (such as a planning area) or an area of special focus (such as a watershed area or the Morros). These areas are then designated through the individual area and community/village plans. The purpose of establishing these types of TDC programs is to allow a community or area to develop a TDC program that is tailored to the individual community's or area's goals.

Page 6-3, Paragraphs 1 and 2

Development of these programs can occur through an area or community/village plan update, through a request of the area property owners, or through an area's community advisory group. The request would be for an amendment to either an area/community/village plan or the Land Use Ordinance, or both. If a community-based or special focus program is requested outside of an area or community/village plan update and an amendment to an area or community/village plan is requested, that request will be considered for authorization and presented to the Board of Supervisors.

The geographic boundaries of individual adopted programs can be found in the "Combining Designations" chapter of each area and community/village plan. Properties within a community-based or special focus TDC program area may be designated with the Transfer of Development Credit Sending (TDCS) or Receiving (TDCR) Combining Designation. However this designation wouldn't have any effect until such time as development meeting the standards of the program is voluntarily proposed by the landowner and approved by the county. If special standards or requirements are established as part of the program, those would be found in Article 9 or Article 10 of the Land Use Ordinance.

Page 6-3, Paragraph 6

Population density will vary throughout the county depending on the location of each area and its population characteristics. Household population can vary since some unincorporated areas are bedroom communities with many young families and other areas are popular for senior citizens. Some communities such as Los Osos have many small parcels in older subdivisions; other towns such as Nipomo will develop with larger parcels now considered to be standard size. The local differences in density are addressed in the LUE area and community/village plans in the land use chapters and by the standards and criteria related to site location and characteristics in the Land Use Ordinance.

Page 6-7, Las Paragraph

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;
    b. The general policies 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);
    f. The text and maps of the community/village plans (Part III of the Land Use Element); and
    g. The planning area standards of Article 9 (Planning Area Standards) of the Land Use Ordinance.
    h. The planning area standards of Article 10 (Community Planning Standards) of the Land Use Ordinance.

Page 6-9, Paragraph 2

12. **Agricultural land.** Whether the amendment would 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 the Agriculture Element and the Conservation and Open Space Element for conversion of agricultural land.

Page 6-15, List Item (h)

Areas where small-scale neighborhood commercial and service uses may be appropriate in limited areas if consistent with the LUE area or community/village plan and Land Use Ordinance location criteria.

Page 6-21, List Item (a)

Areas located within urban service and reserve lines, with full urban services available or programmed to be available within the time horizon of the applicable area or community / village plan.

Chapter 7: Combining Designations and Proposed Public Facilities

A. COMBINING DESIGNATIONS

Page 7-2, Paragraphs 8 and 9

TDCS **Transfer of Development Credits Sending Site:** Applied to areas where a landowner has met the criteria and standards of the Land Use Ordinance for TDC Sending Sites and has entered into an easement that qualifies under either the Open Space Easement Act or the Conservation Easement Act granted to a qualified public or private non-profit organization created for the purposes of protecting and managing resources, that restricts the development potential of the property. May also apply to community-based TDC programs, (as set forth in Chapter 6 of Framework for Planning) identified through an area or community/village plan update or by request of the area property owners.

TDCR **Transfer of Development Credits Receiving Site:** Applied to areas where a landowner has met the criteria and standards of the Land Use Ordinance for TDC Receiving Sites and where a tentative map requiring the use of TDCs has been approved and recorded. May also apply to community-based TDC programs, (as set forth in Chapter 6 of Framework for Planning) identified through an area or community/village plan update or by request of the area property owners.

Page 7-3, Paragraph 1

The combining designations are applied through both the text and maps of the LUE, and are used together with the basic land use categories to guide future land use patterns. The designations are applied to the unincorporated portions of the county as detailed in the area and community/village plans.

Page 7-7, Paragraph 1

To identify for the purposes of the Land Use Element certain areas defined as "Open Space Lands" in the county Conservation and Open Space Element, or areas with unique or endangered resources as identified by local, state, or federal governments.

B. PROPOSED PUBLIC FACILITIES

Page 7-11, Paragraphs 1 and 2

Purpose
Because population growth and land development create increased demands for public services and their delivery systems, it is important to anticipate needs for the construction and expansion of new public facilities. It is appropriate for the LUE to suggest locations for new public facilities because the other policies of the LUE will be a major determinant of where new public facilities will be needed. The timing, financing, design and construction of such facilities can be subsequently accomplished through capital improvement programs. Recommended locations for proposed public facilities are shown by symbols on the combining designation maps in the LUE area and community/village plans.

Location Criteria
Symbols for the location of proposed public facilities are not site specific. When shown on area and community/village plan maps, they denote a general area rather than a particular property. A proposed facility can be established at any location within a specified distance of the symbol and still be found consistent with the Land Use Element. The various public facilities corresponding to the map symbols (and the radius within which facilities should generally be located) are shown in Table P.

Page 7-13, Paragraph 2

The following "development guidelines," the text of Chapter 6 as well as the combining designation maps of the applicable LUE area or community/village plan, will be used to determine the need for retaining public property. The development guidelines have precedence over identified public facility locations because their scope is broad in terms of ultimate community needs, particularly where specific facility sites have not yet been identified.

Chapter 8: Implementation and Administration

A. IMPLEMENTATION

Page 8-2, Paragraph 5

Open Space Preservation
While the county encourages agriculturally productive lands in any land use category to be entered in the agricultural preserve program, other non-productive open space lands may also be worthy of preservation. Such lands are identified by the Conservation and Open Space Element, the area and community /village plans of the Land Use Element and at the time of project review for subdivisions and development. Both extensive areas and small, environmentally sensitive portions of properties may be designated for preservation as natural resource areas, recreation land, scenic viewsheds, water management or natural hazard land.

Page 8-3, Last Paragraph

Status of Existing Plans
All previously adopted general plans for the unincorporated communities of the county have been repealed with the adoption of the LUE, and individual community plans are now contained within Article 9 and Article 10 of the Land Use Ordinance and the area and community/village plans of the Land Use Element. Countywide elements, however, (the Conservation and Open Space Element, Safety Element, etc.) remain in effect, and with the Land Use Element comprise the total San Luis Obispo County General Plan.

Page 8-4, Paragraph 5

Specific Plans and Other "Overlay" Plans
Several specific plans (defined by Government Code Sections 65450 et. seq.) for large residential developments have been included by reference in Article 10 of the Land Use Ordinance. The LUE maps show land uses in accordance with the adopted plans (except where the land uses shown in certain plans have been amended in conjunction with adoption of the LUE), and Article 10 of the Land Use Ordinance includes some applicable standards. However, the specific plans contain more detailed information and requirements applicable to their respective projects beyond the scope of the LUE and the Land Use Ordinance. Consequently, those plans are to be used with the Land Use Element and Land

Use Ordinance in reviewing projects proposed within specific plan boundaries to determine if they are consistent with the Land Use Element.

B. ADMINISTRATION

Page 8-5, Paragraph 1

Official Maps
The Official Land Use Maps of San Luis Obispo County constitute Part IV of the Land Use Element. They illustrate the land use categories and combining designations that are applied to specific parcels throughout the county. The official maps are available for review or purchase from the county Department of Planning and Building. While approximating the official maps as closely as possible given their smaller size, the maps in the LUE area and community/village plans are for preliminary reference only. The official maps themselves must be reviewed to determine the land use designations that apply to a particular parcel.

Page 8-6, Paragraph 3

The annual review of the general plan should occur before the Capital Improvement Program (CIP) is reviewed each year, so that decisions to implement general plan programs will be addressed in the CIP and integrated into the budget process. The following subjects shall be presented to the Planning Commission and Board of Supervisors for review:

1. Progress report on the scheduled implementation of the adopted General Plan Elements, reviewing the status of previously scheduled programs and planned new programs including Land Use Element programs that are contained in the area and community/village plans.

Page 8-7, Paragraphs 1 and 2

Update of the Land Use Element
The Land Use Element should be updated periodically consistent with state law so that area and community/village plans can be comprehensively reviewed. The purposes of the Land Use Element update are to review new information or conditions that affect land use policy and to review the effectiveness of policies in implementing plan goals.

Several steps are involved in updating Framework for Planning and each area and community village plan as indicated in Appendix E located at the end of this document.

Page 8-7, Paragraphs 6 and 7

The LUE may be amended by changing land use categories and combining designations, programs, standards, or any other provision or policy of the plan. These are processed either as separate general plan amendment applications, or are evaluated as property owner requests for changes submitted during an area or community/village plan update. Amendments may be initiated by any individual or group, by the Planning Director, Planning Commission, or the Board of Supervisors.

Processing of Amendments
General plan amendments may be proposed by filing an application with the Department of Planning and Building. An application will be accepted for processing once it is found to be complete, except for the time period between 90 days before the update of an LUE area or community/village plan is started,

and 30 days before the Draft Plan is scheduled to be released for public review. However, subject to Board of Supervisors approval, acceptance of applications for individual properties processing could be resumed two years after the start of an LUE area or community/village plan update if the plan update has not been completed. This provision for resumption of non-update amendment processing after two years would also apply to area or community/village plan updates that have already exceeded the 24 month processing time.

Page 8-8, Paragraphs 1 and 2

Timing. During the time period between 90 days before a General Plan Update is scheduled to start and 45 days before the draft plan is scheduled to be released for public review, an individual property owner request may be considered within the overall update procedure and corresponding time schedule. For example, an application filed on September 15th will not be accepted for separate processing if an update covering the proposed site has begun or is scheduled to begin the following December 15th (within 90 days). This requirement also applies to the situation where the county has scheduled a comprehensive update to other parts of the Land Use Element, Framework for Planning or to the Land Use Ordinance. The determination of when a separate amendment may be made, or when it must be included with an update as a property request for changes, is made by the planning director. However, the Board of Supervisors can consider accepting applications for separate processing if the applicable area or community/village plan update is not completed within two years after it is started or if the application qualifies for one of the following exceptions.

In some instances, individual property owner requests may need to be processed separately from an area plan or community/village plan update if the following circumstances apply to the requested change or proposal: 1) If the request is outside the original scope of work or budget, 2) If the request would adversely affect the completion times already established, and 3) If the request would be considered a "major" project.

Page 8-8, Paragraph 4

Examples of individual property owner requests that may not be considered as part of the update process include, but are not limited to, the following:

1. When an area or community/village plan update by itself would not result in significant impacts sufficient to require preparation of an EIR, any citizen requests that would result in significant impacts and the preparation of an EIR, shall be processed separately from the update.

Page 8-9, Paragraphs 1 and 2

Members of the public may recommend changes to the LUE land use categories or text as part of the area or community/village plan update process by either submitting written recommendations to the Department of Planning and Building prior to the public hearings on the draft plan or by presenting verbal or written comments at scheduled public hearings and workshops, during the area or community/village plan update process.

As part of the authorization process, the Board of Supervisors may make exceptions to the above-described limitation on general plan amendment applications such that amendments could be processed during the update "window" under the following circumstances:

1. To correct obsolete references, statistics, or errors in text or maps.

2. To accommodate the development or expansion of a public facility, public works project, or major energy facility, or to change the land use category of a site which is being transferred between public and private ownership.

3. For proposed housing developments where at least 50% of the units will be affordable by low and moderate income households as defined by Section 50093 of the California Health and Safety Code.

4. To satisfy an immediate community need as determined by the Board of Supervisors.

5. For proposed projects that would offer a significant public recreation, economic, or environmental benefit, as determined by the Board of Supervisors.

6. For proposed projects that would involve the preparation of an environmental impact report that would provide important information that will assist the county in the LUE area or community/village plan update process, as determined by the Board of Supervisors.

7. Property owner requests for changes to text or map designations that are minor adjustments which do not significantly intensify development potential or contribute to major cumulative impacts, as determined by the Board of Supervisors.

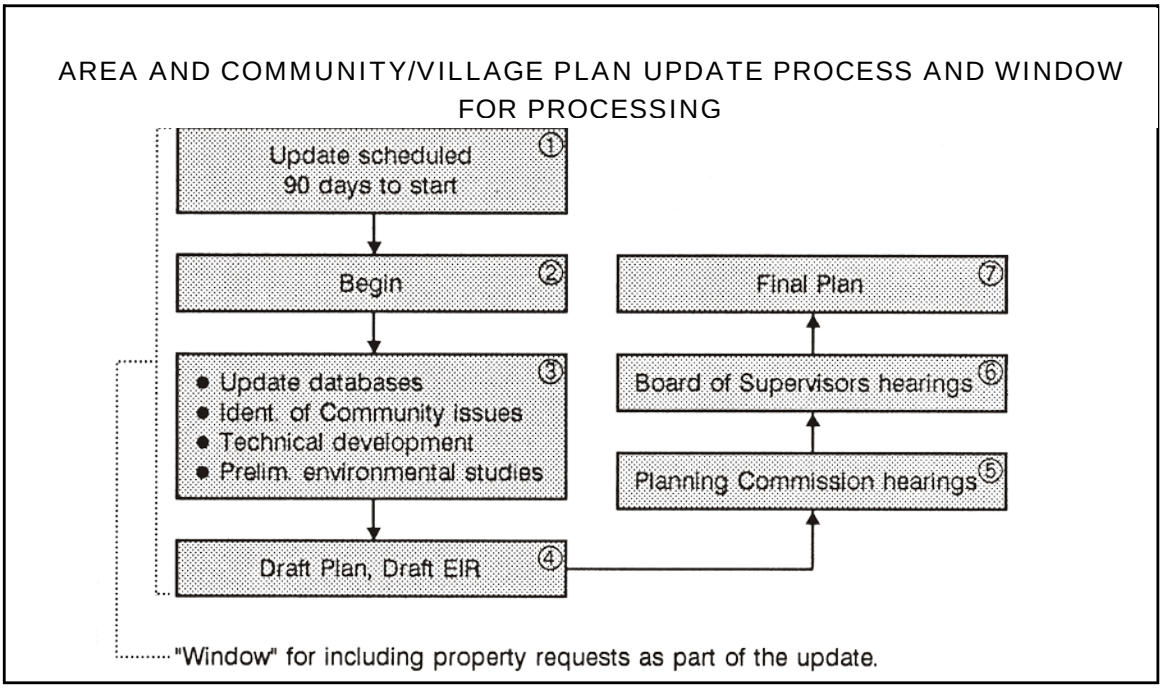


Figure 8-1: Area and Community/Village Plan Update Process, and Window for Processing

Appendix E

E: UPDATE OF THE LAND USE ELEMENT AREA AND COMMUNITY/VILLAGE PLANS

I. Plan Update Process

Several steps are involved in updating Framework for Planning and each area plan and community/village plan, as follows:

Data gathering and issue identification

1. Review statistical data, such as population projections, economic base, land development trends, changes in population density and building intensity, and resource usage.

2. Review any measures that were previously adopted to implement the general plan and mitigate adverse environmental impacts.

3. Survey community opinion and identify land use, economic, and environmental issues.

4. Hold public meetings and workshops, including meeting with community advisory committees, to discuss area issues and gain public input on possible amendments and the scope of the update.

5. Prepare a scope of work and project schedule for Board of Supervisors approval addressing the preparation of the plan update and environmental review document in response to data collection, public participation, and funding.

Plan and environmental document preparation

6. Prepare environmental and economic data base for area or community/village plan, identify environmental constraints to be considered in plan development.

7. Consider if potential impacts resulting from submitted citizen requests could be significant.

8. Concurrently prepare a coordinated draft plan and environmental review document, hold public workshops to review the economic and environmental analysis and draft plan alternatives.

9. Complete preparation of the hearing draft plan and a coordinated environmental document.

10. Prepare a staff report for the hearing draft plan in response to public comments and proposed mitigation measures in the environmental document.

11. Schedule Planning Commission public hearings on the draft plan and coordinated environmental document; Planning Commission to prepare recommendation to Board of Supervisors.

12. Schedule Board of Supervisors public hearings on Planning Commission recommended draft plan and environmental document and adoption of the final plan and environmental review documents; Board of Supervisors adoption of plan update.

13. Prepare and distribute public copies of the final plan and amended official maps.

II. Processing Individual Property Owner Requests for Changes During a General Plan Update Process.

The following procedure is to be followed in processing property owner requests for changes as part of a general plan update:

1. **Initial meeting.** Before submitting a property owner request for changes, applicants are encouraged to meet with staff of the Department of Planning and Building, and the Environmental Coordinator, to identify critical issues and possible alternatives to the request. In order to assist the applicant in making a decision on how to proceed, the applicant should be advised during the meeting if the proposed application has little likelihood for ultimate approval. Staff can also assist in completing the application, explaining the timing of the update, and locating supporting information.

2. **Property request filing.** The request is filed with the Department of Planning and Building on the required forms, accompanied by the filing fee established by the Board of Supervisors and any additional information described in the application package.

3. **Acceptance for processing in update.** After the request is determined to be complete and is accepted for consideration during the general plan update, the Department of Planning and Building notifies the applicant in writing.

4. **Consideration of property request for changes as part of an update.** During the analysis of proposed changes during the update, staff prepares a report that is a preliminary analysis of the major issues likely to be involved in the request including items that may need to be studied in more detail. The county considers the following factors and any other issues raised by the proposal:

    a. **Necessity.** Relationship to other existing LUE policies, including the guidelines for land use category amendments in Chapter 6, to determine if those policies make the proposed amendment unnecessary or inappropriate.

    b. **Timing.** Whether the proposed change is unnecessary or premature in relation to the inventory of similarly designated land, the amount and nature of similar requests, and the timing of projected growth.

    c. **Vicinity.** Relationship of the site to the surrounding area to determine if the area of the proposed change should be expanded or reduced in order to consider surrounding physical conditions. These may include resource availability, environmental constraints, and carrying capacity for the area in the evaluation.

    d. **Cumulative effects of the request.** Individual property owner requests for changes are evaluated in view of existing buildout, current population and resource capacity conditions, and other important information developed as part of the update process.

5. **Environmental Determination.** If it is determined that an area or community/village plan requires preparation of an EIR, all property owner requests(s) submitted prior to a board-approved scope of work should be included for consideration in the area or community/village plan EIR. If the private request is submitted subsequent to the scope of work approval date, the request will be included in the area or community/village plan update if it is an insignificant

change that will not result in a change to the approved scope of work or substantial time delay. On the other hand, major citizen requests that could result in potentially significant impacts, will not be included in the area plan update at this point and will need to follow the procedure outlined in Appendix F.

If it is determined that an area or community/village plan update, by itself, qualifies for a negative declaration, private requests shall only be included if they are minor changes that would not result in significant impacts. All other requests that could result in potentially significant impacts will need to follow the procedure outlined in Appendix F.

6. **Review and public hearing process.** When the environmental review process is complete, the updated plan is scheduled for public hearings before the county Planning Commission, and Board of Supervisors.

7. **Report progress of update.** Progress reports should be provided in at least six-month intervals to allow for careful monitoring of the update process.