

## **NEW PROPOSED CHANGES TO THE PUBLIC REVIEW DRAFT GENERAL PLAN**

The proposed changes outlined below are located in several General Plan Elements, including Air Quality, Agricultural, Circulation, Human Services, Open Space and Public Facilities. These changes are being recommended in order to:

- Address issues that the Board of Supervisors directed staff to report back on, including meeting with the agricultural and ranching communities and looking at outdoor lighting and light pollution; and
- Clarify/correct information and respond to requests from other County Departments and outside agencies subsequent to the release of the Public Review Draft General Plan in November 2006.

All changes are shown in underline/~~strikeout~~ format, with underlines signifying text additions and strikeouts indicating text deletions.

### **A. Proposed Changes to the Draft General Plan Based on Report Back Requests from Previous Workshops**

#### ***1. Outdoor Lighting and Light Pollution (Land Use Element)***

Staff is proposing the following changes be made to page 54 of the Land Use Element (under Urban Design) in order to address light pollution as part of the planning process:

#### **LIGHT POLLUTION**

**Objective: Reduced levels of light pollution in both new and existing communities.**

Intent: Nighttime lighting provides safety and comfort to communities and their residents, but excess and misdirected light creates the phenomenon known as light pollution. An increasing problem for metropolitan areas, light pollution is light not targeted for a specific task, creating an unhealthy and unsightly environment. This light originates from a number of sources including interior and exterior lighting on buildings, lights associated with advertising, streetlights, sporting venues and shopping centers.

There are number of environmental, ecological, quality of life, and human health implications associated with light pollution. Excess nighttime light wastes energy and harms the integrity of ecosystems. Artificial light interrupts the biological clock of organisms that depend on light (or lack thereof) to trigger behavioral activities. Upward-directed light creates skyglow above cities, impairing the view of the night sky, stars and planets. Light pollution has also recently caught the attention of human health researchers who have suggested links between light pollution and increased headaches, fatigue, stress, and risk of breast cancer. As Sacramento County continues to grow, efforts can be taken to reduce excess and inappropriate light on the surrounding social and biological environment

by ensuring lighting structures are designed to limit the distribution of forward light, backlight and uplight.

Policy:

LU-33. Strive to achieve a natural nighttime environment and an uncompromised public view of the night sky by reducing light pollution.

Implementation Measure:

A. Address and incorporate outdoor lighting measures in any Zoning Code update, community and specific plans, corridor plans, district plans, transit station plans or any other planning programs.

## 2. *Rural and Urban Open Space Definitions (Open Space Element)*

Staff recommends that the following changes be made to pages 1 and 2 of the Open Space Element (under Types of Open Space) in order to adequately address the various types of natural and recreational amenities found throughout the County (changes to the Public Review Draft Element text are shown in underline/~~strikeout~~ format):

### **Types of Open Space**

#### Rural Open Space

Open space areas are largely un-fragmented areas of undeveloped land that are set aside primarily to preserve and/or enhance the County's wildlife habitat, agricultural productivity and recreational opportunities. Recreational use of these areas is generally limited so as to conserve sensitive habitat and protect agricultural activities. Similar to other metropolitan regions with open space resources, recreational access is typically limited to non-motorized trail use that is not disruptive to agricultural activities or harmful to sensitive species. Sacramento County has identified six categories that define valuable open space uses that are important to preserve and protect. All can be effective community separators and most overlap.

- *Habitat:* Natural or actively farmed lands that provide foraging, nesting, and wintering habitat for mammalian, avian, invertebrate, reptile, amphibian and aquatic wildlife species.
- *Natural Resources:* Land of important ecological functions, natural resources, or cultural resources. This includes, but is not limited to forests, farmland, ranchland, fallow fields, rivers and streams, floodplains, wetlands, vernal pools, riparian corridors and native plant communities.

- *Recreation:* Natural areas that provide for passive recreation such as wildlife viewing and pedestrian and bicycle travel, as well as wildlife habitat. It may encompass historic sites, scenic vistas, and trails.
- *Health/Safety (Flooding/Seismic):* Areas that require special management or regulation because of earthquake fault zones, unstable soil areas, high fire risks, floodplains, aircraft safety, high noise levels, and other hazards; and areas for the protection of watershed integrity, water quality and air quality.
- *Agriculture/Rangelands:* Active farms or ranchlands used for cultivating the land, producing crops, or raising livestock.
- *River and Stream Parkways:* Areas that are typically linear and follow the natural path of a river or stream. They are primarily used as corridors for pedestrians and bicyclists. Recreational uses focus on education and appreciation for natural resources. Parkways may also provide open space linkages, wildlife corridors and/or act as community separators.

As used in this plan, rural open space does not include developed agricultural parcels five acres or less in size, ~~required elements within a development such as private park and yard areas,~~ and landscaped or natural areas providing required separation between ~~buildings or~~ incompatible land uses. These examples do not represent all non-open space uses.

### Urban Open Space

Urban open space areas are typically undeveloped land within urbanized areas that are set aside to provide public recreational opportunities as well as the chance to experience natural areas and wildlife habitat. They may also be developed areas that are available to the public to provide a feeling of openness. Sacramento County has identified five categories that define valuable urban open space uses that are important to promote, preserve, and protect.

- *Recreation:* Areas that provide for active and passive public recreational uses, including County/Regional parks, community parks, neighborhood parks, pocket parks and activity areas within the American River Parkway. These are areas that provide recreational and meditative opportunities and are not required under the Quimby Act or other legislation. Some of these areas are depicted on the County's Land Use Diagram.
- *Trails and Parkways:* Areas with limited recreational uses that act primarily as corridors for pedestrians and bicyclists. They provide linkages from residential areas to schools, parks, commercial developments, as well as neighboring communities.
- *Stream and Canal Corridors:* Undeveloped areas along streams and canals that provide a buffer between the water and nearby development and can be used as pedestrian trails and/or wildlife corridors.

- Natural Resources: Areas that provide important ecological functions such as wetlands, floodplains, vernal pools, and urban forests. They may also offer educational opportunities for urban residents. This includes areas designated as Natural Preserves on the County's Land Use Diagram.
- Public Space: Areas with public access that act primarily as places for urban relief. They may or may not be landscaped, but all areas offer a place to experience a sense of openness within an urbanized area. Examples include public plazas, fountains, and courtyards. While these urban features provide valuable public space, they may not be counted toward mitigation requirements for loss of rural open space due to development.

The following land uses are **not** considered urban open space by the County. This list is not a comprehensive inventory but provides some basis for a better understanding of what is not considered open space by the County.

- Required elements within a development such as private park and yard areas.
- Land dedications required for public infrastructure such as strips of land adjacent to roadways, drainage canals or utilities, that do not provide for recreational and/or habitat uses.

### **3. Open Space Vision Diagram (Open Space Element)**

Staff is recommending that the following changes be made to the Open Space Element based on comments received from your Board and the public at Workshop # 25 on April 11, 2007:

#### **The Open Space Vision and Land Use Diagrams**

In this Element, the Open Space Vision Diagram and associated component maps illustrate the many important natural resources and habitats located throughout the County. The maps are described below and are included on the following pages:

#### ***Open Space Vision Diagram***

The Open Space Vision Diagram serves as an illustrative representation of lands that Sacramento County views as supporting its overall conservation vision. ~~It identifies existing and protected conservation sites, parks and agricultural lands, as well as general areas where future conservation may be directed.~~ This diagram identifies areas where acquisition of easements or land in fee title, from willing sellers, could be directed when funding is available. The identification of public and private lands on the map does not imply a designation of permanent open space or a loss of property rights. ~~Future mitigation and conservation will only be directed towards willing landowners.~~ The map was compiled from a review of the County's Open Space Component Maps which offer more specific delineations of important farmlands, ranchlands, environmental constraints, natural resources, and valuable habitat.

The diagram is a composite of four component maps. The four component maps identify agriculture and grazing areas, floodplains, high value habitat or areas where creation of greenbelts/community separators could be desirable. The priority area classification allows the County to direct financial resources to areas that would provide multiple benefits. A Priority one area for example will protect land that is within a floodplain, has the potential to be farmed or grazed, can act as a community separator and has wildlife habitat value. Highest priority areas under the Vision are considered to be those containing the attributes of multiple components. These components are as follows:

*Agriculture Component:* Identifies important agricultural land as determined by the California Department of Conservation's 2000 Sacramento County Important Farmlands Map. Categories include prime and unique farmland, farmland of statewide and local importance and sustainable ranching lands.

- ~~Important Farmland & Sustainable Ranching Map~~

*Habitat Component:* Identifies areas to direct mitigation for several state and federally listed endangered and threatened plant and animal species, as well as valuable habitat. These areas are identified by the South Sacramento Habitat Conservation Plan as areas of high habitat value.

- ~~Giant Garter Snake Mitigation Areas Map~~
- ~~Vernal Pool, Blue Oak Woodland, Oak Savannah, Fish & Swainson's Hawk Mitigation Areas Map~~
- ~~Valley Elderberry Longhorn Beetle Mitigation Areas Map~~

*Flood Protection Component:* Depicts portions of the 100-year floodplain as well as streams to be avoided in order to maintain their wildlife habitat, recreational, hydrologic, and flood attenuation values.

- ~~Stream Avoidance Areas & The 100-Year Floodplain Map~~

*Recreation & Community Separators Component:* Identifies existing parkways, as well as areas that would be suitable for use as buffers between neighboring communities and incompatible land uses. It also identifies existing and potential trail corridors.

- ~~Parks & Recreation Areas, Ag Res Areas, Community Separators Map~~

### Sacramento County Open Space/Rural Principles

Sacramento County has significant high quality natural/rural areas devoted to agriculture, natural resource protection, and recreational uses. As development continues to occur, it is important to protect these areas as they provide valuable habitat for both humans and wildlife as well as help retain the rural character of the County that makes it a desirable place to live. To meet this objective, Sacramento County has identified five open space/rural principles that serve as the basis for the Open Space Vision Diagram.

**Floodplain Protection:** As the County becomes more developed, rainfall runoff will become more of a challenge resulting in increased flooding and expanding 100 year floodplains for area creeks. Limiting the number of development projects within

floodplains will provide protection from flooding and help to maintain the integrity of the County's water quality and the regional water supply.

**Habitat Preservation:** Sacramento County is home to numerous threatened and endangered species and their habitats. Protection of vernal pools, wetlands, creeks, oak woodlands, and other native plant communities throughout Sacramento County will aid in the preservation/recovery of these species. Protecting these areas from encroaching development projects and incompatible uses will aid in the prevention of floods, preservation of endangered species, and provision of open space areas. These areas can also act as greenbelts and enhance residents' overall quality of life by providing a distinct community identity.

**Agriculture Protection:** Protecting prime, important, unique and local farmland and rangeland contributes to the economic stability of Sacramento County through the provision of locally grown food and the promotion of agri-tourism. Providing continued support to farmers and ranchers will also maintain the rural feel desired by community residents.

**Greenbelts/Parkways:** Maintaining areas for passive and active recreation contributes to the overall health and well being of County residents. Trails and parkways encourage pedestrian and bicycle travel while providing connectivity between open space areas. Through the incorporation of public use open space within development projects, above state requirements, a valuable sense of place is also created.

#### ***4. Proposed Changes to the Agricultural, Economic Development and Conservation Elements Based on Meetings with Agricultural and Ranching Interests***

Staff is proposing that the following changes be made to the Agricultural, Economic Development and Conservation Elements based on input received from the Farm Bureau and Cattlemen's Association:

##### Agricultural Element:

- a. Add the following definition in the Introduction section of the Agricultural Element (after definitions of prime, statewide, unique and local importance farmlands) (page 5) -

Lands with intensive agricultural investments are those lands that include a large economic investment in the land and have an active operational practice. Examples under this category include orchards, vineyards, dairies, and other intensive livestock and poultry operations. These particular lands do not necessarily have to be located on Prime, Statewide Importance, Unique or Local Importance farmlands as described above.

- b. Modify Policy AG-5 as follows:

Mitigate within Sacramento County the loss of prime, statewide importance, unique and local importance farmlands or lands with intensive agricultural investments ~~within~~

~~Sacramento County~~ through the specific planning process and individual project entitlement requests to provide in-kind protection (must be an equal or higher farmland category), such as easements for agricultural purposes of nearby farmland.

- c. Add the following Implementation Measure under the “Urban Encroachment” section (page 9) –

Implementation Measure XX: Coordinate with the Assessor’s Office to distribute a notice to properties near agricultural operations about the Right-to-Farm Ordinance in the annual tax bills. (AGRICULTURAL COMMISSIONER)

- d. Modify Policy AG-10 as follows:

Cooperation shall be encouraged between landowners of prime, statewide importance, unique and local importance farmlands or land with intensive agricultural investments and landowners of natural resource preserves, including mitigation banks, mitigation sites, and wildlife refuges, so that ~~both habitat preservation and~~ standard farming practices are not disrupted or disturbed.

- e. Modify Policy AG-15 as follows:

Maintain private ownership by coordinating ~~Coordinate~~ with non-profit organizations to acquire conservation easements for preserving farmlands.

- f. Add the following definition of riparian areas to the intent language of the “Encroachment by Recreational Facilities” section:

Riparian refers to the transition area between a body of water (pond, lake, creek, or river) and the uplands. The plants and animals associated with the riparian area are heavily influenced by adjacent bodies of water because of water availability or disturbance due to flooding. Riparian areas often consist of trees such as oaks, willows and cottonwoods and shrubs such as wild rose, elderberry, poison oak, and blackberries. Riparian habitat can range from an open grassy bank to a closed canopy of large mature trees. Riparian habitat provides riverbank protection, erosion control and improved water quality.

- g. Modify Policy AG-19 as follows:

The County encourages the preservation of prime, statewide importance, unique and local importance farmlands ~~as open space~~, including opposing any residential or commercial development for the Cosumnes River or Deer Creek riparian areas which are not compatible with agricultural uses.

- h. Modify the first paragraph of the introduction language for the Agri-tourism section to read as follows (page 24):

Intent: Defined as the overlap between agriculture and tourism, Agri-tourism is an activity, enterprise, or business that combines primary elements and characteristics of

Sacramento County agriculture and tourism and provides an experience for visitors that stimulate economic activity and contributes to farm, ranch, and community income. Agri-tourism ~~addresses the need for~~ is a tool to assist the long-term economic sustainability, diversity and viability for some of the County's agricultural industry.

Economic Development Element:

- a. Modify Policy ED-14 as follows:

Support and promote a healthy and competitive agricultural industry whose products are recognized in local, national and international markets.

- b. Modify Policy ED-16 as follows:

Encourage the establishment of ~~small-scale~~ agriculture uses, specialty crops and specialized animal facilities ~~on existing small land parcels~~ in the Agriculture land-use category, including ~~specialty clusters and~~ complementary uses.

- c. Remove Policy ED-17:

~~Support and encourage trends in agricultural production that shift suitable land into higher value specialty crops.~~

- d. Modify Policy ED-18 as follows:

Support agricultural agencies, ~~and~~ marketing cooperatives and other agricultural organizations in their efforts to research global, domestic, and new markets for Sacramento County farm produce.

- e. Add the following policy to support commercial agricultural operations:

Support and encourage the maintenance and growth of commercial agricultural businesses in Sacramento County.

Conservation Element:

- a. Modify Policy CO-63 as follows:

Direct development away from prime, and statewide importance, ~~unique and local importance~~ soils or otherwise provide for mitigation that slows the loss of additional farmland conversion to other uses.

**5. *Proposed Changes to the Economic Development Element Based on Board Direction From Workshop #24 on March 27, 2007.***

- a. Add the following policy to page 7 under Commercial Corridor Revitalization addressing County employment centers and facilities:

ED-14. Support location of County employment centers and facilities in areas in need of revitalization, including commercial corridors.

- b. Add the following section to page 12, after McClellan Park and Mather Field and before Regional and Local Partnerships and Programs:

AIRPORT SYSTEMS

**GOAL: Efficiently accommodate regional, national and international demand for air service for present and future use and provide opportunity for complimentary commercial and industrial uses.**

**Objective: Expand the role of the airport system as a gateway to and from the region and provide opportunity for related development and activity that stimulates the economic and commercial development to benefit the region.**

Intent: The Sacramento County Airport System serves as a significant economic resource to the community and the region. The airport system serves as a gateway for travelers and as a critical component of a transportation system that moves goods into and out of the region. An efficient and viable airport system is vital to our region's ability to remain competitive for job growth and business development. The policies contained in this document are to support the goals and objectives as articulated by the Sacramento County Department of Transportation and the Sacramento County Airport System.

Policies:

ED-30. Support the Sacramento County Airport Systems Master Planning efforts that advance the long-term economic interest of the County and the region and maximize economic growth in aviation and non-aviation-related areas.

Implementation Measures:

A. Preserve appropriate airport land boundaries to ensure that long-term aviation and economic development goals can be achieved. (ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT)

- c. Add the following section to page 20, after Sports, Tourism and the Arts:

INSTITUTIONS OF HIGHER EDUCATION

**GOAL: Provide a diversity of higher education opportunities within Sacramento County.**

**Objective: Attract new institutions of higher education to the region and further integrate new and existing institutions into the local and regional economy.**

Intent: Our Universities and other institutions of higher education make substantial contributions to the local and regional economies. Institutions of higher education serve as critical links between the public and private sector and play vital roles in the regional economy. Direct economic impact associated with the number of quality jobs created and the infusion of discretionary spending from faculty and students is beneficial. In addition, the entertainment, cultural and visitor spending normally associated with a university is also significant to the regional economy.

A quality educational system helps build a balanced, diversified and competitive economy in the region by preparing an educated and productive work force attractive to employers, transferring technology to the private sector, meeting the challenges of a global economy, incubating new businesses, and enhancing the quality of life in the community.

Policies:

ED-69. Attract additional institutions of higher education to Sacramento County.

ED-70. Support the continued integration of the regional institutions of higher education into the local and regional economies.

Implementation Measures:

A. Partner with and support institutions of higher education efforts to develop human capital and a quality workforce, transfer knowledge and technology, cultivate entrepreneurs, attract venture capital, license technology and foster dialogue for a regional economy. (ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT)

## ***6. Changes to the Human Services Element***

Staff is recommending the following changes be made to the Human Services Element based on comments received from your Board during Workshop #25 on April 11, 2007:

- a. Modify the fourth bullet under ‘Assumptions About Planning and Development’ as follows:

Continuing efforts of unincorporated areas to attain citihood can put an increasing burden on the County to provide government supported social services with decreased ability to bring in revenue through sales tax. ~~Cities have increased their interest in human services but are ambivalent about their role as it relates to the County’s responsibility, funding and joint planning.~~

- b. Modify policy HS-1 as follows:

To the extent feasible, Human service facilities shall be distributed throughout the county so long as there exists sufficient demand and the services are financially viable.

- c. Modify Implementation Measure D under ‘Building and Sustaining Safe, Healthy and Livable Communities’ as follows:

Allow and encourage public facilities no longer being used for their original purpose, ~~such as schools,~~ to be used for provision of human services. (Planning and Health and Human Services)

- d. Modify the intent language under ‘Establishing Human Service Infrastructure as a Component of Land Use Policy and Planning’ as follows:

Intent: Successful implementation of the Human Services Element will require understanding of human services assets and gaps as they currently exist in the county, as well as how the assets and needs of Sacramento County’s residents will change with time. As the County embarks on implementing the Human Services Element, periodic data review and analysis of demographics, as well as human service needs, usage, and access will be necessary. Collaboration and information sharing with Community Planning Advisory Councils, human service providers, and others is also necessary to proficiently project needs and promote placement of human services facilities as part of the planning process.

~~Policies contained in the~~ With the aforementioned information, the Human Services Element will be able to identify if an appropriate amount of land has been designated for human service usage. Examples of facilities that constitute human service facilities include, but are not limited to community centers, day care facilities, employment and training service centers, food and nutrition outlets, health care providers, housing and shelter facilities, mental health facilities, substance abuse treatment providers, etc. The Human Services Element will also be able to indicate what types of services are most needed in particular infill, commercial corridor, and new growth areas.

The human services review will not add an additional stage to the overall review process. All aspects of human services review will occur within timeframes and structures in place in the existing review process.

- e. Modify policy HS-9 as follows:

Appropriate Pproject level development proposals shall be forwarded to the Human Services Coordinating Council for human services review, per the Planning Department’s application processing distribution program. ~~will be subject to a human services review per selection criteria established by the Planning Department in cooperation with a human services review body.~~

- f. Add the following policy addressing human services as part of the long-range planning process:

New growth and corridor planning processes shall address human service needs for proposed or surrounding populations.

- g. Modify policy HS-10 as follows:

Plans prepared for new growth areas ~~or commercial corridors~~ shall establish a new land use designation to identify sites for future human service uses such as day care facilities, clinics, hospitals, and other human services etc. This new designation shall have a sunset clause of seven years.

- h. Remove policy HS-11:

~~The County shall actively enforce the Good Neighbor Policy for all County facilities and contractors of the County, and will encourage all businesses to adopt this policy.~~

- i. Remove Implementation Measure B under ‘Establishing Human Service Infrastructure as a Component of land Use Policy and Planning’:

~~Establish a human services review body to review appropriate development proposals and to participate in the planning of new growth areas and commercial corridors (Board of Supervisors).~~

- j. Modify Implementation Measure D under ‘Establishing Human Service Infrastructure as a Component of Land Use Policy and Planning as follows:

~~D. C.~~ Consult and coordinate with ~~the human services review body~~ expertise early in the planning process to ensure that human service issues are addressed and incorporated in the new growth and commercial corridors areas. (Planning and Health and Human Services)

**B. Proposed Changes to the Draft General Plan to Clarify/Correct Information and Respond to Requests from other County Departments and Outside Agencies**

**Land Use Element**

1. Land Use Diagram:
  - Designate North Highlands Town Center as TOD
  - Replace old Folsom Boulevard corridor designation with more defined shape
  - Add Delta Protection designation
  - West of Watt UPA expansion area corrected to eliminate a single parcel at northern end
  - Label Agricultural Residential communities
  - Incorporate updates from General Plan Amendments adopted April 2003-current
2. The following figures were updated based upon addition of Grant Line East area to the UPA and the more refined Folsom Boulevard corridor shape:
  - Figure 1 – UPA and USB Boundaries – page 19
  - Figure 4 – Residential Infill Parcels – page 30
  - Figure 6 – Commercial Corridors – page 38
  - Figure 7 – New Growth Areas – page 44
3. Updated Figure 9 – Transit Oriented Development Districts, to reflect the addition of North Highlands Town Center as TOD, correct TOD boundaries to be consistent with those displayed on the Draft Land Use Diagram, and incorporate updates from General Plan Amendments adopted in December of 2006.
4. Updated Zoning Consistency Matrix to reflect addition of new Natomas Joint Vision overlay designation
5. Incorporated selected comments from the County’s Department of Health and Human Services (DHHS) regarding the connection between land use and public health

**Circulation Element**

1. Added a definition for grade separations under the *Existing and Future Grade Separations* section on pages 5 and 6.

**Open Space Element**

1. Figure 3 – Existing Buffer Lands – page 24: Include Sunset Sky ranch Airport.

**Conservation Element**

1. Figure 2 – New Growth Areas – page 11: Update with Grant Line East UPA expansion

**Agricultural Element**

1. Page 22: Implementation Measure A under "Pest and Fire Hazard Control" - should be MSA-DOT, not Agricultural Commissioner for responsible department.
2. Figure 2 – Williamson Act Contracts – page 16: Add footnote clarifying non-renewals and active non-renewals.
3. Super Williamson Act implementation measure change to correct cancellation language.

4. Correct error in Williamson Act introduction language about the percentage of lands in Williamson Act contracts.

**Public Facilities Element**

1. Made minor policy changes per comments received from, and subsequent meetings with, the Sacramento Municipal Utility District (SMUD)

**Air Quality Element**

1. Made minor policy changes per comments received from the Sacramento Metropolitan Air Quality Management District (SMAQMD)

**Economic Development Element**

1. Added new figure to identify Economic Development opportunity nodes