



# General Plan Update

## What is a General Plan?

Every city and county in California is required by state law to prepare and maintain a planning document called a general plan. A general plan is designed to serve as the jurisdiction's "constitution" or "blueprint" for future decisions concerning land use, infrastructure, public services, and resource conservation. All specific plans, subdivisions, public works projects, and zoning decisions made by the County must be consistent with the General Plan.

General plans provide guidance on reaching a future envisioned 20 or more years in the future (the proposed General Plan will look out 20 years to the year 2030). To reach this envisioned future, the updated General Plan will include goals, policies and actions that address both immediate and long-term needs.

The current program is designed to update the County's 1989 General Plan. The General Plan update program will:

- Provide the public opportunities for meaningful participation in the planning and decision-making process;
- Provide a description of current conditions and trends shaping Colusa County;
- Identify planning issues, opportunities, and challenges that should be addressed in the General Plan;
- Explore land use and policy alternatives;
- Ensure that the General Plan is current, internally consistent, and easy to use;
- Provide guidance in the planning and evaluation of future land and resource decisions; and
- Provide a vision and framework for the future growth of the County.



## Ways to Get Involved

### Website: [www.countyofcolusageneralplan.org](http://www.countyofcolusageneralplan.org)

The General Plan website contains schedules for future meetings and provides a location to download documents prepared during the project.

### Mailing List

The Planning Department will maintain a list of persons and organizations interested in staying abreast of the status of the General Plan update. If you would like to be added to this mailing list, please contact Tana Loudon, Colusa County Planning Department at (530) 458-0480 or [tloudon@countyofcolusa.org](mailto:tloudon@countyofcolusa.org) or 220 12th Street, Colusa Ca 95932.

### Newsletters

During the General Plan update, a series of newsletters will be prepared to provide an overview of the progress being made and the direction being pursued.

### Visioning Workshops

A series of five Visioning Workshops will be held at various locations throughout the County. All members of the public are invited and encouraged to attend one or more of the Visioning Workshops. See p.4 for workshop dates.

### General Plan Steering Committee

The Board of Supervisors will appoint a steering committee to help in the development of the General Plan. This steering committee is designed to work with County staff and the General Plan consulting team on refining the new General Plan. While not a decision making body, the steering committee's input is vital to preparing a plan that will work for the County. These meetings are open to the public and dates for each will be posted on the website.

# Colusa County General Plan Update

## General Plan Update Process

### Existing Conditions Report

Information on current conditions and trends.

1

### Issues and Opportunities Report

Describe issues, opportunities, and land use alternatives based on community outreach and Visioning Workshops.

2

### General Plan Goals, Policies, and Programs

Develop goals, policies, and programs to address identified issues and achieve desired land uses.

3

### Draft General Plan

Design a plan to reach the preferred vision of the County's future.

4

### Environmental Impact Report

Analyze the environmental effects of implementing the General Plan.

5

### General Plan Adoption

The Planning Commission and Board of Supervisors will consider the General Plan at a series of public hearings.

6

## What is Covered in a General Plan?

The General Plan will be organized into individual elements that address the “built environment” and “resource management”.

The built environment elements will address:

**Land Use**, including land use designations and patterns, and maps which provide a roadmap for growth over the next 20 years;

**Circulation**, including plans for roadway expansions to ensure that future growth can be accommodated by the County's transportation network;

**Community Services and Facilities**, including policies to ensure that the County is correctly planning for police and fire protection, schools and libraries and other services such as water and sewer services;

**Safety and Noise**, including policies to protect the public from hazards such as fires, flooding, and geologic hazards, as well as policies related to noise-generating uses and noise-sensitive land uses such as residences, hospitals and schools;

**Economic Development**, including policies to promote the creation of local jobs and to protect the local agricultural economy; and

**Housing**, including measures to ensure that housing affordable to all segments of the community are addressed and planned for.

Resource management elements will address:

**Conservation**, including measures to protect and improve air quality, biological resources, water management, and scenic resources;

**Open Space**, including measures to ensure that open space resources are protected and enhanced throughout the County; and

**Agricultural Resources**, including policies that will protect and enhance the County agricultural economy and provide guidance regarding the conversion of agricultural lands and the location of non-agricultural land uses in proximity to agricultural lands.

## Highlight on Housing

The Housing Element will be the first element of the General Plan to be prepared. Concurrent with the Visioning Workshops and preparation of the Existing Conditions Report, staff and consultants will be preparing a draft Housing Element. The Housing Element of the General Plan is the only element that has a specific legislative deadline. Due to requirements of state law, this element will be completed in advance of the Draft General Plan.



## What is a Housing Element?

The Housing Element is the blueprint for future housing viability, through development of new housing and upkeep of existing housing. It includes goals, policies, and programs that direct decision-making for housing issues. Housing Elements must:

- Evaluate existing housing policies and programs.
- Conduct a needs assessment based on local demographics and housing conditions.
- Develop goals, objectives and policies defining the community's position on various housing issues and setting measurable targets for meeting housing needs.
- Develop an inventory of potential sites where housing may be constructed.
- Analyze any obstacles or constraints to housing production in the community.

The Housing Element will discuss how the County will accommodate its Regional Housing Needs Allocation of 902 units through 2014 and how the County will address the housing needs of special populations, including the elderly, the disabled, farmworkers, single parents, large families, and homeless persons. The County's RHNA, as assigned by the State, is shown in Table 1.

Income Group	Units	Monthly Housing Costs
Extremely Low (< \$16,750)	99	< \$419
Very Low (\$16,751 - \$27,900)	100	\$420 - \$698
Low (\$27,901 - \$44,650)	155	\$699 - \$1,116
Moderate (\$44,651 - \$66,950)	183	\$1,117 - \$1,674
Above Moderate (\$66,951 +)	365	\$1,675 +

## Questions for You to Consider

Over the past five years, how has the housing in the county affected you, your family, and your friends?

How should emerging environmental issues such as energy costs and global warming affect the location and type of future housing?

**Your input on the Housing Element Update is important.**

**To learn more, please attend a Visioning Workshop and participate in the Housing Element Update activities. Workshop dates and times are on p. 4.**

What type of housing options would seniors prefer? How about young adults and families? Are these choices available in the county?

What messages about housing would you like to give to key decision makers?

# Colusa County General Plan Update

## General Plan Documents

The General Plan update process will culminate in approximately two years, wrapping up near the end of 2010. As the General Plan is prepared, a number of major documents will be available for public review and comment.

**Existing Conditions Report.** This document will provide a snapshot of the conditions, trends, and regulations that are influencing the County today. The report will focus on development patterns, natural resources, economic conditions, environmental constraints, housing resources and demographics. The information on existing conditions will be used to better understand the issues facing the County and lead to the development of a plan that helps the County address each issue appropriately.

**Issues and Opportunities Report.** Based on public input from the Visioning Workshops, the analysis contained in the background report, and direction from the Board of Supervisors, this document will provide a summary of the critical policy and program issues to be addressed in the General Plan. The report will present alternative approaches that can be used to address each issue. This document will be used by the County to provide direction on the focus of the General Plan update. The report will include three land use alternative maps.

**Draft General Plan.** The General Plan will contain the goals and policies that will guide future development within the County. The General Plan establishes land uses and policies for the use and preservation of resources. It also identifies a full set of implementation measures that will ensure the policies of the General Plan are carried out.

**Environmental Impact Report (EIR).** The EIR prepared for the General Plan will meet the requirements of the California Environmental Quality Act (CEQA). The Board of Supervisors will use the EIR during their consideration of the draft General Plan to understand the potential environmental implications associated with the General Plan.

## Visioning Workshops

### Your input on the General Plan is important!

Please attend a Visioning Workshop and share your vision and goals for the County.

The first community outreach step is a series of five Visioning Workshops held at various locations throughout the County. The purpose of these workshops is to:

- Communicate the intent of the General Plan update
- Receive public input on community goals and priorities
- Develop a Vision Statement that guides the General Plan process
- Identify community goals and priorities
- Identify preferred land uses

Each Visioning Workshop will focus on the County-wide General Plan update. The topics discussed at each workshop will not focus solely on the issues pertinent to the community where each workshop is held. All members of the public are invited and encouraged to attend one or more of the Visioning Workshops.

### STONYFORD

Tuesday, **September 15, 2009 – 7 to 9 pm**  
Stonyford Community Hall  
249 Market Street, Stonyford

### WILLIAMS

Tuesday, **September 29, 2009 – 7 to 9 pm**  
Williams Library  
901 – E Street, Williams

### ARBUCKLE

Tuesday, **October 6, 2009 – 7 to 9 pm**  
Arbuckle Fire Department  
506 Lucas Street, Arbuckle

### COLUSA

Thursday, **October 22, 2009 – 7 to 9 pm**  
Colusa Industrial Properties Conference Room  
100 Sunrise Blvd, Colusa County

### MAXWELL

Wednesday, **November 4, 2009 – 7 to 9 pm**  
Maxwell Veteran's Hall  
250 Oak Street, Maxwell